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THE HANDBOOK OF **COURAGE**

Cultural Opposition and Its Heritage in Eastern Europe

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THE HANDBOOK OF COURAGE:
CULTURAL OPPOSITION AND ITS HERITAGE
IN EASTERN EUROPE

The Handbook of COURAGE: Cultural Opposition and Its Heritage in Eastern Europe

Edited by

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Institute of History, Research Centre for the Humanities,
Hungarian Academy of Sciences
Budapest 2018

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 692919



COURAGE Registry
<http://cultural-opposition.eu/registry/>



Proofreaders: Thomas Cooper, Thomas Szerecz, Kerry Tyrrell
Bibliography and Index: Lóránt Bódi and Heléna Huhák
Cover: Anna Gyórfy

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ISBN 978-963-416-142-4
DOI: 10.24389/handbook

Published by the Research Centre for the Humanities
of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences
Responsible editor: Pál Fodor
Prepress preparation: Institute of History, RCH HAS
Research Assistance Team; Leader: Éva Kovács
Page layout: Andrea Hudecz
Printed in Hungary by Prime Rate Kft., Budapest

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PART I
INTRODUCTION

BALÁZS APOR – PÉTER APOR – SÁNDOR HORVÁTH
– TAMÁS SCHEIBNER

Cultural Opposition: Concepts and Approaches

The COURAGE Handbook

The Handbook, which is the main publication that grows out of the COURAGE project, presents the initial findings of the research consortium. The main aim of the volume is to discuss the complexities and the legacy of cultural opposition from the perspective of the collections and suggest possible frameworks of re-conceptualizations of the history of dissent and non-conformism in the former socialist countries of Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe. Since the format of the publication is a handbook, the narrative aims to offer a synthesis of the existing scholarship, but also to break new ground at the same time. The structure of the individual chapters reflects this ambition.

The Handbook revolves around the material heritage of cultural opposition: the collections. It provides an overview of the history and typology of collections in the countries studied in the framework of the project and offers a concise analysis of the various types of cultural opposition from the perspective of collections. The volume is divided into three parts: the introductory chapters; the country chapters; and the thematic chapters. The introductory section of the book contains two chapters that outline the main aim of COURAGE, introduce the key concepts with which the book engages, and provide a general historical-sociological assessment of the collections represented in the COURAGE Registry. Part II of the handbook consists of concise overviews of the countries—or a cluster of countries—that were explored as part of the project. The country chapters reflect on the history and the material heritage of cultural opposition in the respective countries from the viewpoint of the collections that have shaped and continue to shape the legacy of dissent in the region. The focus of the volume shifts from countries to themes in Part III, which is the most substantial part of the handbook. The chapters in Part III analyze individual collections with regard to specific types or forms of cultural opposition. Each chapter consists of a brief yet comprehensive introduction to the overall theme, as well as a number of case studies discussing one or a small number of relevant collections. Although the narratives in the individual chapters were shaped by the specific stories that emerged from the collections, all chapters reflect on the history and social/political use (or abuse) of

the respective collections. While the thematic chapters present only a representative sample of the collections that were analyzed in the framework of COURAGE, they all follow a comparative approach and highlight the similarities, parallels, and transnational entanglements that the study of collections in different social and cultural contexts brought to the fore.

No single book could do justice to the spectacular diversity and richness of material contained in the collections of cultural opposition in Europe and, indeed, across the globe. Thus, the present volume should serve mostly as a first port of call and an essential guide for the curious reader who wishes to navigate through the muddled waters of cultural opposition and its material heritage in the post-Soviet world. The book seeks to demonstrate that the “hidden transcripts” of communist Eastern Europe matter and continue to shape political culture in the respective societies to a significant extent. The notion of “hidden transcript” is understood in the context of cultural opposition as defined by James C. Scott—“offstage,” unsanctioned discourses of power—but also in the literal sense, because collections very often contain actual texts that were hidden from the watchful eyes of communist authorities.¹ At the same time, the Handbook highlights the fluidity and elusiveness of the notion of cultural opposition and underscores the importance of analyzing situational factors, individual agency, and intentions behind practices of dissent and non-conformism in order to arrive at a sophisticated understanding of the phenomenon.

The handbook is the product of intense collaboration between over 60 scholars who come from diverse academic backgrounds and over a dozen countries in Europe and North America. While individual approaches to the topic may differ, the contributions are connected by a common thread: the continuing relevance of cultural opposition.

Studying Cultural Opposition: Key Concepts and Approach

Since the regime change, former socialist countries have been in the process of constructing and negotiating their relationships with their recent past, which includes the heritage of cultural opposition. Opposition, in this context, is typically understood in a narrow sense as referring to open political resistance to communist governments.² This book proposes a more nuanced historical conception of cultural opposition, expanding the concept towards broader frameworks of political participation to facilitate a better understanding of how dissent and criticism were possible in the former socialist regimes of Eastern Europe.

¹ Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*.

² Todorova, Dimou, and Troebst, *Remembering Communism*.

When authorities aim to control public speech and opportunities for democratic public debates are radically restricted, underground public spheres are likely to emerge, and nonconformist movements, whether democratic, Church related, or nationalist, may openly declare their oppositional stances towards the state. Although these kinds of movements are the ones usually associated with cultural opposition today in the memory culture of late socialism, dissident cultures were much more diverse.³ Several cultural groups with no explicit political program (e.g. punk groups, avantgarde artists, or alternative religious communities) were also branded oppositional by the authorities and, as a result, they were also forced underground.⁴ Even communities that formulated a dissident political agenda were not necessarily established with direct political aims in mind, but rather gradually came to accept the role assigned to them by the authorities and society.⁵ Studying “cultural opposition,” therefore, requires a shift in focus from mainstream narratives of politically articulate dissident groups and individuals towards a set of complex scenes of nonconformist cultural practices. Or, to put it differently, when we frame the question, the word “cultural” needs to be emancipated from the dominance of the word “opposition.”

Cultural opposition, no doubt, was partly a consequence of and response to socialist state practices. Any attempt to come to terms with cultural opposition, therefore, would be impossible without considering and examining the various practices of state control and the effects of these practices on citizens. However, while emphasizing the role of the state in shaping the definitions of cultural opposition, we also seek to further reflection on the agency of the citizens of the former socialist countries who engaged in autonomous or nonconformist cultural activities. This allows us to re-conceptualize cultural opposition to include both forms of deliberate dissent and autonomous exercises of cultural freedom. Certainly, what is perhaps most exciting in the individual cases of cultural dissent is the tension between these two forms of oppositional culture (deliberate and even programmatic on the one hand and more an incidental but no less meaningful part of cultural pursuits on the other), which were, more often than not, constantly shifting. Rather than creating a rigidly prescriptive definition of cultural opposition, we work with a more dynamic concept which takes into consideration both the diversity of its meanings in various nation states and periods and the fact that the concept of cultural opposition (and its definitions) is a historical product itself.

The most pressing methodological difficulty is how to address both the deliberately oppositional and the nonconformist agencies with a similar historical toolkit so that one can do justice to the complexity of the issue and, at the same time, create a common platform for discussion, comparison, and

3 See Falk, “Resistance and Dissent”; Falk, *The Dilemmas of Dissidence*.

4 Risch, *Youth and Rock in the Soviet Bloc*.

5 Bolton, *Worlds of Dissent*.

assessment of dissident activities. Some dissenters seriously contemplated their positions and produced elaborate texts, while others did not seek to reflect explicitly on their situations or their relationships to the socialist state. Emphasis on the former cases will necessarily lead to a one-sided understanding of cultural opposition. One way to deal with this difficulty is to consider the role of the collections in defining what cultural opposition means. Collecting and creating collections on cultural opposition became a cultural activity in and of itself: a context that framed the everyday lives of socialist citizens working outside or inside official institutions. By investigating this culture of archiving, one might open new perspectives on the world of dissent which would enable researchers to consider a greater variety of dissident activities. We propose to analyze the types of collections that were produced in the former socialist countries and, in particular, the ways in which the collections created implicit or explicit understandings of the political system and the roles of the regime in the genesis of these collections.

The attempt to decenter somewhat the state when understanding cultural opposition and recognize a wide variety of citizens as agents in the creation of the notion of cultural opposition itself has consequences for the periodization of state socialism in Eastern and Central Europe. Archival practices suggest a different chronology than political history, which typically takes 1953, 1956 and 1968 as turning points when it comes to the first decades of communist rule. In contrast, as has been the case in the study of the cultural history of the region in general, a look at archiving culture in the context of cultural opposition suggests a major shift in the mid-1960s. Until then, cultural opposition consisted predominantly of the often clandestine and persecuted preservation of pre-communist cultural heritage, rather than initiatives to create novel critical cultural forms and genres. Drawing a chronological distinction between the preservation of pre-communist traditions and the creation of new cultural practices furthers a more nuanced understanding of the continuities and discontinuities in the cultural heritage of cultural opposition and draws attention to different types of collections based on this (pre-communist and post-communist) heritage. This, in turn, will allow us further to differentiate forms of opposition that manifested themselves in elite and popular culture and oppositional aspects of the culture of everyday life, tastes, and lifestyles.

While we noted above that our approach aims to decenter the state to a certain extent in the study of cultural opposition, we nonetheless expect that, as we shed light on the histories of collections of cultural opposition, we will make significant contributions to the study of state practices as well. Historical scholarship often uses the term “state” as a rhetorical shortcut for the multi-layered complex network of centrally funded institutions and the related individuals in decision-making positions. There is a vast secondary literature on state socialism which examines decision-making processes and the often conflicting personal agendas of high ranked officials. A focus on the provenance of collections will complement this research, because in the cases of

state archives and museums, it will show how local authorities reacted, on the one hand, to grassroots initiatives and emerging new cultural scenes and, on the other, to central administrative measures. As such, this new approach might further a more refined understanding of how the state functioned. "Cultural opposition" is most commonly understood as evidence of the totalitarian control of the state *over* society, rather than as evidence of the complexities of the relationship *between* state and society.⁶ We propose to work in this direction, and we claim that cultural opposition should be seen as a historically shaped and socially contextualized phenomenon instead of a set of individual activities carried out by individual actors or communities.

The Changing Status of Collections: Towards a New Transitology

A typical approach adopted by the post-1989 governments of the region to this question was to take a proactive role and establish specialized archives, collections, and institutes of memory charged with the task of clarifying the "recent past," uncovering the "truth," and furthering the "search for historical justice."⁷ The genesis and trajectories of the private and public collections on the cultural opposition movements needs to be considered in this context. These collections often began as parts of civil rights movements in the 1970s and 1980s, but their place in the public sphere only became a key issue after 1989.⁸ The documents, objects, and audio-visual footage of the cultural opposition became artifacts during the transition from dictatorship to democracy.

In the former socialist countries, a variety of approaches emerged to the preservation of collections on cultural opposition.⁹ Victims' associations, often backed by pressure groups and public intellectuals, connected post-communist morality to questions of transparency and sincerity about the past: if the "perpetrators" or the "victims" *could* now be discovered, on moral grounds they *had to be discovered*. These campaigns were also conceptualized as an important test of post-communist society's moral strength to "face up" to its dictatorial past.¹⁰ Thus, the history of cultural opposition was determined by the ways in which the private collections on cultural opposition became open to the public and the ways in which they made, channeled, or masked the history of the former opposition, which became mainstream after 1989.

6 Mark, "Society, Resistance and Revolution."

7 Hayner, *Unspeakable Truths*; Stan, *Transitional Justice*; Nalepa, *Skeletons in the Closet*; Nedelsky and Stan, *Encyclopedia of Transitional Justice*.

8 Pollack and Wielgoch, *Dissent and Opposition*; Killingsworth, *Civil Society in Communist Eastern Europe*.

9 Light, "An Unwanted Past"; Light, "Gazing on Communism"; Young and Kaczmarek, "The Socialist Past."

10 Łoś, "Lustration and Truth Claims"; Ash, "Trial, Purges, and History Lessons"; Stan, "The Vanishing Truth?"

We aim to understand this process by focusing on the role of the collections as historical agents in this process. This requires interrogating the ways in which post-socialist cultures have produced knowledge of cultural opposition. The functions, social representation, and history of the collections, secret police archives, and institutes of national memory that have played key roles in the production and promotion of the idea of cultural opposition need to be examined. In addition, by making critical institutional histories the subject of inquiry, we also need to explore how these institutions themselves contributed to the production, reproduction, and shaping of the memory of cultural opposition.

Examining the birth and uses of the collections on cultural opposition is an important means of liberating their holdings from the fetishisation of artifacts as repositories of truth, which was the product of regional understandings of the communist experience. First, the artifacts of these collections enjoyed a widespread faith in their authenticity among the general population in post-communist societies, in part because, before 1989, they had been hidden. Second, unlike third-wave transitions, in which oral testimony was part of the work of state-sponsored efforts to salvage memory (in e.g. History Commissions), the written record was granted particular authority. Despite several important research initiatives, oral history remained marginal in the construction of the public image of the pre-1989 period.¹¹ This is true despite a number of important initiatives in both the late and post-socialist periods, such as the interview collections in the KARTA Centre in Warsaw or the 1956 Institute's Oral History Archive in Budapest. These emerged primarily from former dissident circles, and they sought to give a voice to other experiences under socialism. In a manner that at first glance may seem somewhat paradoxical, the collections that were originally created to safeguard the artifacts of cultural opposition did not always facilitate research into the documents or artifacts.

These collections remained relatively unfamiliar or obscure, both among academics and in public debates, in no small part simply because most of them acquired the status they enjoy today only after 1989. The collections, which were founded in acts of elaborately symbolic political ritual that were broadly publicized by the media, often with major political figures sitting on the boards of the institutions, were then required to grant the artifacts of the collections a particular status and protection, often out of concerns for the protection of information or personal privacy. In addition, they sometimes had very vaguely defined missions. Last but not least, these new institutions struggled with financial difficulties that left them vulnerable to governmental influence. It is high time to ask how different collections (institutions) reacted to similar problems.

11 Koleva, *Talking History*; Kovács, *Tükörszilánkok*; Kovács, "Mirror Splinters."

In recent decades, these institutions have undergone a change in image. Increasingly distanced from the politicized moment of their founding and blessed with an array of resources, they have drawn some of the best professionals away from other academic and archival posts. Parallel with this, they have increasingly attempted to present themselves less as institutions of the state and more as specialized collections and professional research institutes. Nevertheless, historians and archivists have often encountered professional conflicts, as their identities as state bureaucrats have been brought into conflict with their identities as scholars and historians.

In this story, the émigré collections fulfil a particularly significant role. Collections that were created by members of exile communities were partly returned to the home countries after the political transition and now are part of the mainstream historical literature and sources in national libraries and archives. These collections and archives were crucial in generating the idea of the “other Europe,” i.e. the anti-communist opposition. After 1989, as the storage sites of authentic evidence of cultural opposition, they provided templates for organizing similar domestic collections, and they shaped the understanding of cultural opposition both in Eastern and Western Europe.

Intellectuals and cultural figures left Eastern Europe in four major waves after World War II. Some fled to the West in fear of the Red Army and the consequences of Soviet rule or did not return to their home countries if they survived deportation in 1945. A larger wave left the region following the communist takeover in 1948–49, and another left after 1956. The fourth was provoked by the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia. Certainly, however, emigration continued later in the 1970s and 1980s as well, when the emerging opposition movements began to be persecuted by the communist authorities.¹² These intellectuals and opposition members formed exile communities, mostly in France, the UK (such as POSK, the Polish Socio-Cultural Centre and PUNO, the Polish University Abroad in London), West-Germany, and the USA, and they created important journals, publishing houses, and cultural societies.¹³ These institutions were important both in informing Western audiences about the other side of the Iron Curtain and in transmitting critical ideas and expressions of dissent back home. They regularly published the works of the domestic oppositions (in journals like *Párizsi Magyar Füzetek* or *KULTURA*, which was founded and edited by Jerzy Giedroyc, a resident of Maisons-Laffitte), and they supported these oppositional movements with technical equipment and mobilized the foreign media to support their political actions.¹⁴ The exile networks had a particular interest in documenting all possible forms of criticism of and opposition to the communist governments of Eastern Europe. They therefore collected documents of domestic underground, dissent, and nonconformist movements and intellectuals,

12 Major, *Behind the Berlin Wall*; Raška, *The Long Road to Victory*.

13 Jaroszyńska-Kirchmann, *The Exile Mission*; Olszewska, *Wanderers Across Language*.

14 Neubauer and Török, *The Exile and Return of Writers*; Stöcker, “Eine transnationale Geschichte.”

while also keeping records of their own oppositional activities. These exile groups thus created sizable archives that documented the international circulation of oppositional ideas¹⁵ and had a major impact on the modes, genres, and institutions of cultural dissent.

The Matrix of Studying the Culture of Dissent

When studying the history of collections representing cultural opposition in a way or another, there is a set of central aspects that we would like to highlight. We defined four focus points that will orientate research: the material culture of cultural opposition, the order of collections, the central agents related to the collections, and the networks in which the agents and institutions were embedded.

Material Culture

The material culture of socialism went rapidly into museums or archives after the political transitions, in particular into sculpture parks, museums of communism, archives of the former state security bodies, and archival collections of the communist parties.¹⁶ In a paradoxical way, the heritage of the opposition was not met with similar interest (neither in politics nor in the public sphere), in large part because it became an important political tool and thus “resisted” the transformation into a part of the “past.”¹⁷ Clearly, collections are more than neutral professional institutions concerned simply with the preservation of knowledge. Through processes of selection, processing, exhibiting, and the presentation to the public of their holdings, the archives and museums in this field take part in the production of knowledge. The modalities of selection and presentation chosen by these institutions constitute statements on the possible forms of culture and cultural opposition, the ideal role of culture in society, and the envisioned makeup of a culturally diverse society. By producing representations, the archives and museums under examination produce concepts of the past and social identities.¹⁸

Drawing on these insights, one might consider both the collections and their individual objects and documents as actors which participate in the production and negotiation of identities and knowledge. Social and cultural practices occur in the context of material objects. Debates on the meanings of culture (or cultural opposition in our case) in society tend to center on the inter-

15 Kind-Kovács and Labov, *Samizdat, Tamizdat, and Beyond*.

16 Troebst, *Postdiktatorische Geschichtskulturen*; Brunnbauer and Troebst, *Zwischen Amnesie und Nostalgie*.

17 Sarkisova and Apor, *Past for the Eyes*.

18 Crane, *Museums and Memory*.

pretation of works of art, artifacts, audiovisual footage, and material documents. Ideas about culture are linked to and are associated with objects, and the objects, in turn, trigger processes of interpretation.¹⁹ Therefore, the study of how the definitions of different categories of documents, objects, and media preserved in the collections have been shaped seems central to our endeavor.

The Order of the Collections

The insight that European modernity was concerned with the rational (re)ordering of archival and museum collections is central to our inquiries.²⁰ We seek to understand the transnational interactions that shaped the organization of the collections by answering the following questions: 1) do collections organize their materials according to national and/or international standards; 2) what patterns did they and do they use to preserve the collected documents/objects/media; 3) how have these organizational strategies influenced the typology of cultural opposition movements in the historical scholarship and cultural studies in the former socialist countries.

The strategies on the basis of which the collections have been organized are analyzed in the historical context of “entangled modernity,” which helps us understand how the collections incorporated, adapted, or rejected “modern elements” of preservation.²¹ Understanding how the collections reflected the power contests among the actors of the cultural opposition and the stakeholders of the collections seems essential in this regard. Recently, archival studies have pointed out how inquiries into the methods and procedures according to which archives are created and maintained yield important epistemological, historical, and cultural policy-related insights.²² Instead of merely creating institutional histories, we study collections as instruments of power which have been used to channel and shape cultural discourses.

Since the 1980s, as pointed out above, the role of cultural opposition has changed significantly, and this has had a significant impact on the emerging collections. In the late 1970s, dissident intellectuals and artists could effectively subvert the system of cultural administration by creating their independent, although illegal, fora of publicity. This “second” or alternative public sphere discarded the rules of the official public sphere when its representatives decided not to compete for opportunities within the institutional infrastructure and started to publish *samizdat* literature.²³ With the change of the political regime, the status of the collections also changed. The collections,

19 Latour, *Reassembling the Social*.

20 Foucault, *The Order of Things*; Bann, *The Clothing of Clío*; Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*.

21 David-Fox, “Multiple Modernities vs. Neo-Traditionalism.”

22 Cook and Schwartz, “Archives, Records, and Power.”

23 Kind-Kovács, *Written Here, Published There*.

which represented new political and cultural identities, became part of the national and international mainstream, while the majority of the cultural goods produced by small dissent communities remained relics of various sub-cultures. This process and the ways collections have been organized are inter-dependent and worth studying together.

Agents

The focus on collections provides a chance not only to approach well-known figures of cultural opposition from their involvement in archiving practices, but also to shed light on the less visible but important agents of dissident culture, like archivists, curators, and translators, who until now have remained largely hidden from historical scholarship.

In search of the people who took part in the production of cultural opposition and in the production of the relevant collections, we identified eight basic categories that might serve as points of reference from the outset. The first category consists of the members of the “hardcore” democratic opposition, who were banned during the socialist period.²⁴ Their secret collections (*samizdat*, photo documentations of cultural and political performances, footage, art objects, flying university lectures, etc.) were archived only sporadically, and it is high time to map these sources.

Secondly, we are analyzing the activities and networks of elite and intellectual groups of cultural opposition. Members of the democratic opposition became partly involved in socialist artistic and scientific production through their contacts with intellectuals who were employed by state institutions. This elastic but closed formation included both the prohibited non-conformist artists and scholars and intellectuals who sympathized with the democratic opposition in secret.²⁵ In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Eastern European art began increasingly to draw on contemporary European and North American avantgarde trends, such as Fluxus and performance art. Alternative networks emerged, in which artists developed new forms of social and cultural criticism addressing the repercussions of technological societies.

Thirdly, radical leftist and experimental theatre was also important. Late socialism offered opportunities for leftist groups to work within semi-official youth or theatrical environments; they were critical both of official socialism for having abandoned the cause of the working class or progressive avantgarde culture and of consumer society, which was identified with the *petit bourgeois* mentality, for cultivating mediocre popular culture. Several of these groups, such as Jerzy Grotowski’s *Laboratorium* and Péter Halász’s *Squat Theatre*, won international fame.

24 Pollack and Wielgohs, *Dissent and Opposition*; Wasiak, “‘Schleichwege’ in der Galerie.”

25 E.g. Haraszti, *The Velvet Prison*; Neubert, *Geschichte der Opposition*; Cârnelci, *Artele plastice în România*.

Fourthly, underground and nonconformist youth and popular culture offers a scene worthy of close examination. From the late 1970s on, many new forms of alternative mass and popular culture emerged, such as rock bands, dance house and folklore movements, hippies, and youth culture figures who developed their own autonomous spheres of cultural activism and criticism of the regimes. Rock bands practiced a kind of criticism of the social and cultural repercussions of political repression and cultivated new models of individual autonomy and communities. Folklore cultural networks, the dance house movement, and even architects (who drew on peasant traditions and ideas of “organic architecture”) developed various critical alternatives to late socialist industrial societies (often in the context of semi-supported professional or leisure organizations). Members of these youth subcultures and consumers of rock music were often cast in state politics not as symbolic representatives of a possible way of life, but as enemies of the state, the family, youth, and socialism.²⁶ The fifth type of agents belonged to various religious groups and institutions. They were particularly significant in community building on the local level. The Church became a protective umbrella for cultural opposition in many cases (e.g. Poland, Romania, and Lithuania), and it played a seminal role in sustaining a sense of national identity, especially with regards to the preservation of national languages and rites of passage.²⁷ At the turn of the 1960s and 1970s, for instance, a range of non-conformist Catholic groupings began to develop forms of religious practice that were critical towards of the communist state and of official Church authorities. Religious groups developed the idea of autonomous moral communities of everyday spiritual practice and called for a more active social presence of Catholics. These groups had grown into nationwide movements by the end of the communist period. During late socialism, transnational religious ideas and practices, mainly the Taizé and Focolare movements, influenced Catholic activist networks and, after 1989, contributed to the formation of broader European networks of Christian value-based solidarity.²⁸

A further category might be the employees of the cultural and scientific institutions that implemented the research agenda of the opposition. Several topics and disciplines (such as sociology, psychology, and other fields of the social sciences) were prohibited from academic institutions in the former socialist countries during the Stalinist period. However, as a result of “consolidation” and the modification of the socialist political system, some social science research was tolerated and given a place in academic institutions.²⁹ Nevertheless, scientific discourse was limited and censored. The scientific community and institutions produced material of the cultural opposition move-

26 Risch, *Youth and Rock*.

27 Garbowski, *Religious Life in Poland*; Luxmoore and Babiuch, *The Vatican and the Red Flag*.

28 Apor, Clifford and Townson, “Faith.”

29 Bock, *Scharf überwachte Kommunikation*; Haraszti, *Velvet Prison*.

ments, even in this censored and limited work atmosphere. This category partially overlaps with the one described in the second place above, but we count agents whose work was officially recognized and tolerated.

Some survivors of the Nazi and Stalinist persecutions played a special role in cultural opposition in the socialist era as people who collected and protected material and nonmaterial memories of Nazism and Stalinism in very secret and private ways. These people did not participate in the activities of secret groups and movements, nor did they come into any direct confrontation with the Soviet regime. Rather, they kept the material heritage of victims with the hope that it might be presented to the public and recognized as important once communism had fallen.

Finally, one might consider the roles of the “observers,” which can be studied on the basis of police files on cultural opposition. The institutions created with the purpose of maintaining the files of the former secret police services have had a seminal role in shaping the history of cultural opposition in the former socialist countries. The files they contain helped to create very particular post-communist scholarly understandings of dissent and collaboration. The secret police files were treated as a privileged kind of document, i.e. one that offered more promise of objectivity than the usual historical source.³⁰ The study of the ways in which the archives of the secret police services organize the files regarding cultural opposition movements will shed light on the ways in which they influence historical scholarship and the popular understanding of cultural opposition.

Networks

The question of networking is crucial to an understanding of the interactions among different actors of the cultural opposition and the collections during and after the socialist period. Several levels, forms, and “fields” can be identified, including local, individual (secret), national, and transnational, as well as private and public. Studies on political transition prove that the interactions between different types of actors of opposition was of central importance to the chances and modes of democratic change.³¹ We identify, on the one hand, the networks used in different countries for creating collections and, on the other, the types of networks of the actors of cultural opposition behind these networks. Studying the hierarchy and the organizational structure of this double network, which created the representative collections across the former socialist countries, will facilitate innovative uses of the documents, objects, and media in the collections as historical sources.

Different types and forms of meetings and collaborative undertakings show how actors of the cultural opposition were able to interact under social-

³⁰ Apor, Horváth and Mark, *The Faces of the Agent*.

³¹ Stark and Bruszt, *Postsocialist Pathways*; Welsh, “Political Transition Processes.”

ism. Personal networks were of crucial importance in the socialist social milieu. Cultural opposition society is built around relationships among individuals, groups, and organizations expressing themselves differently in different cultural settings. The private networks overwhelmed public institutions, in part because they had more specific objectives, target groups, and communicational activities.³²

Film festivals, cultural festivals, scientific conferences, and international cultural scientific scholarships and summer camps were the main sites of meeting and the exchange of ideas, implicitly providing opportunities for cooperation and networking for figures of the cultural opposition. For instance, the Hungarian “counter cultural forum” was organized as an underground satellite event of the officially promoted ‘85 European Cultural Forum. In Germany, the Lutheran initiative of Aktion Sühnezeichen (AS) played a similar role. Formally founded in the GDR in 1958, the AS operated in both German states as an alternative peace movement initiative and, thus, linked East and West German peace and cultural activists together.³³ As a result of the political transition in 1989, social networks in the post-socialist societies changed radically. Some of the cultural opposition groups disappeared, while others came out from hiding. Opposition members could get central positions in the new political systems, but they could also stay in their subcultures. The memory of cultural opposition and related identity constructions, however, continues to exert an influence on the local, national, and transnational level in all post socialist countries.

Summary: The Legacy of Cultural Opposition

While the persecution of opposition movements by the communist authorities and the nature of state oppression in general have fascinated both post-communist societies and the wider world, it is surprising how little has been written on the nature of communist-era cultural dissent and on the processes through which post-communist societies have sought to make sense of different forms and meanings of opposition and resistance and how opposition and resistance should be dealt with in the present. Much attention has been given to violent, political upheavals against Stalinist rule in 1953 or 1956 and to the generation of political reforms in 1968. Dissent has been typically approached as a path taken by intellectuals towards “politicization” in a normative sense and towards the creation of anti-communist politics.³⁴ The role of cultural networks, artists, and intellectuals is usually explored to arrive at an understanding of their contribution to the crafting of novel forms of political thought. This work is, no doubt, important to further an understanding of

32 Konopasek and Andrews, “A Cautious Ethnography of Socialism.”

33 Király, “Portable Projects?”; Legerer, *Tatort*.

34 Falk, *Resistance and Dissent*; Csizmadia, *A magyar demokratikus ellenék*.

the emergence of democratic politics in the former socialist countries and recognize the existence of an “other Europe.”³⁵ However, we would like to contribute to the growing recognition of various forms of non-political cultural activism and explore the roles this non-political cultural activism played in generating non-conformist, alternative, and dissenting sub-cultures that challenged one-party rule in multiple ways.

Popular (and often lurid) accounts of opposition tend to naturalize the concept as an obvious and incontestable characterization of communist-era dissent behavior. It might be worth interrogating, for a change, the ways in which post-socialist cultures produce the idea of and knowledge of anti-communist “opposition” and “cultural opposition.” By addressing the institutions that produce the concept and examining the functions, social representations, and histories of archives and institutes dealing with cultural dissent that create these histories of cultural opposition, researchers might demonstrate the remarkable complexity of these regimes and the everyday embeddedness of cultural opposition, as well as how they capture many important aspects of the ways in which these regimes were dismantled.

Cultural opposition in the former socialist countries is part of a pan-European culture. The circulation of ideas and cultural resources (such as literature and works of art) were essential to the scene, and transnational linkages emerged among various groups of artists and intellectuals. Countercultures played a central role in a growing awareness of regional identities that were fostered in part by these processes. Drawing on the idea of *l’histoire croisée* (entangled history),³⁶ we seek to further analyses of the different modalities of cultural opposition and the similar socio-cultural milieus in which they emerged in the various countries. From this perspective, there is a promising perspective from which to write the history of East and Central Europe that is not reduced to the sum of the histories of the different states. In contrast to the dominant comparative focus on East-Central European states, this project seeks to understand regional, cross-national processes that often transgressed the Cold War boundaries of East and West.

Finally, the COURAGE project highlights the positive values of the cultural opposition in the former socialist countries, which affirm a pan-European cultural legacy: democratic participation, civic courage, solidarity with the oppressed and the poor, and cultural diversity. This approach will break through the barriers that so far have hindered the discovery of the pan-European relevance of cultural opposition. By focusing on its cultural values, we will detach the legacy of the cultural opposition from its conventional narrow political framings, which have confined cultural dissent to a specific political system: Communism.

³⁵ Rupnik, *The Other Europe*.

³⁶ See Werner and Zimmermann, “Beyond Comparison”; Ther, “Beyond the Nation”; David-Fox, Holquist and Martin, *Fascination and Enmity*.

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The Registry: Empirical and Epistemological Analyses

Introduction

In this chapter we will discuss the methodological background of the core element of the COURAGE project – the Registry. At the intersection of sociological and IT methodology, the Registry came into being as an interdisciplinary, transnational and innovative online database on cultural opposition with the ambitious aim to create a new approach to analyzing cultural opposition during state socialism in Central and Eastern Europe. One of the main tasks of the COURAGE project was to create an electronic registry of representative collections of cultural opposition (online and offline, private and public) in all former socialist countries in Europe. The aim was to understand how private, public, hidden alternative and large mainstream collections operate, what functions and roles they serve in the respective societies, and how they present their holdings to the public. The online Registry is a transnational database of collections in both the original languages and in English (and, in a few cases also in minority languages), and is now accessible for European archival platforms. The Registry highlights the progressive aspects of the former cultural opposition movements such as democratic participation, autonomy and cultural plurality in times of oppression. Just as importantly, it affirms that civic courage and autonomous cultural values can thrive even under authoritarian rule.

Collections were established and continued to grow from the 1960s, and by the 1970s and 1980s, they had become a part of the opposition movements. Immediately after 1989, the governments and NGOs of the region quickly established specialized archives, collections, museums and institutes of memory, but the “memory fever”¹ of the political transitions had subsided by the late 1990s. Meanwhile, fundamental cultural changes emerged in the world with the widespread use of the World Wide Web and the expansion of the Internet in the second half of the 1990s, which posed a challenge for the archival profession, as well as researchers in the field of social sciences. “The place-specific learning that historical research in a pre-digital world required

1 Huyssen, *Present Pasts*.

is no longer baked into the process.”² The “transnational turn” and the “digital turn” went hand in hand in the past two decades. Source digitization and public digital registries have crucially influenced the practices and geographic scope of research projects. It became possible to conduct cross-border research without having to leave the reading room of the library. Web-based full-text search is currently a regular praxis worldwide, and over the last few years it has produced its own new vocabulary, such as “text-mining,” “distant reading,” “counting, graphing or mapping” digital sources, “big data,” etc.³ The COURAGE Registry takes advantage of these developments using the so-called linked data principle, and publishing structured, interlinked data that enables semantic queries.

The emergence of new conceptions of archiving had an impact on everyone involved in collecting or researching sources and material in different parts of the world. As Aleida Assmann has argued “[...] an archive is not a museum; it is not designed for public access and popular presentations [...] There is, of course, some order and arrangement in the digital archive, too, but it is one that ensures only the retrieval of information, not an intellectually or emotionally effective display. The archive, in other words, is not a form of presentation but of preservation; it collects and stores information, it does not arrange, exhibit, process, or interpret it.”⁴ In an ideal-typical sense, this is true. However, an analysis of the mission statements and the institutional histories of the collections in the COURAGE Registry reveals that the institutions and collections have performed more complex functions. The forms of preservation and presentation, the objectives of commemorative practices linked to the collections, the methods of retrieving information for historical research, and representations of emotion in mass education and artistic projects—in short: the use of digital collections in archives and museums—are varied. As explained in the previous chapter, the reasons for this are—in part—linked to the politicization of the memory of the communist past and the establishment of various institutions after 1989 that became responsible for “uncovering the truth” about the recent past.

The COURAGE Registry differs from conventional archival databases due to the particular “collecting-oneself”⁵ character that many of the collections have. As Richard Brown and Beth Davis-Brown wrote: “Archives are the manufacturers of memory and not merely the guardians of it.”⁶ It is not surprising that, simultaneous with the establishment of large digital archives, a new wave has appeared in the field of research, and private digitized collections have become frequent sources of mainstream historical and cultural in-

2 Putman, “The Transnational and the Text-Searchable,” 377.

3 Ibid.

4 Assmann, “History, Memory, and the Genre of Testimony,” 262.

5 Otto and Pedersen, “Collecting Oneself.”

6 Brown, and Davis-Brown, “The Making of Memory,” 22.

vestigations. The landscape has changed and considerable efforts have been undertaken to integrate these types of private memories and collections into historiography and public history, not only because the owners were prominent representatives of dissent, but also because these are the only sources that bear witness to certain historical events.

Increased and faster access to digital archives has many advantages and disadvantages. The research conditions can be more egalitarian, as well as more open or cost-effective with digitized sources than in the case of classical historical research in the archives. Online access has enabled many scholars who cannot travel extensively or spend months at different research locations to conduct comparative or transnational studies. However, digitization projects were initially completed in English and in other Western European languages, and digitized testimonies in other languages do not reach the same level of transnational visibility and recognition. Hence, certain international collections either in the English language or with an English search engine can be overrepresented, not only in comparative but also in microstudies or in national historiography written by Western scholars. The COURAGE Registry is unique because all descriptions have been produced in both the original language and in English. Due to the transnational character of the Registry, the database also places special emphasis on minority voices, as it includes ethnic, national and religious minorities, as well. The minority voice inherently represents a certain degree of deviation from, and thus opposition to, the official internationalist ideology of state socialism. The Registry thus sheds light on important, but thus far marginalized problems related to minorities in the region.

I. Mixed Methods

Capturing the specificities of the collections of cultural opposition in the Registry required special research methods. The research team developed a mixed approach which combined the practices and core concepts of historical, sociological and ethnographic research methods, resulting in a coherent database that captures the complexity and the uniqueness of the collections at the same time. In addition, we also developed an interview guideline that helped researchers to conduct interviews in an effective way. The guide organizes interview questions into thematic sections pertaining to the major themes of the COURAGE project. This structure enabled researchers to find quick answers to specific questions related to the subject. The guideline also contains instructions/suggestions to assist researchers in dealing with the narrative questions. Furthermore, we compiled a questionnaire to facilitate the gathering of information during desk research. Information for the Registry was gathered in accordance with both the interview guideline and the questionnaire.

The Collections

The Registry as a specific type of database is at the same time an archival, a sociological, historiographical and an IT project, which contains collections as basic units. ‘Collection’ as a concept is defined more broadly by COURAGE than by the specific institutions, and it also applies to cases where the items were not collected intentionally. Besides the large institutionalized collections which had already existed as established collections before COURAGE, such as archives, libraries, documentary centers, we have also included private collections and archives. In particular cases, certain items such as family relics have also been turned into collections as a result of the COURAGE project.

A good example of an established collection is the Václav Havel Library in Prague,⁷ founded in 2004 and containing various types of recordings on Václav Havel that are constantly being archived and digitalized. The Artpool Art Research Centre,⁸ founded in 1979, represents a similar case as an essential Hungarian archive for alternative arts. The well-known collections of Radio Free Europe could be mentioned here, too. Private collections were established according to a different logic. Their creation is typically linked to personal motivations—most commonly the spouse (usually the wife) or a descendant of an important figure would store documents or personal belongings, not necessarily with the purpose of creating a collection, but often just to create an archive for personal reasons. A good example is the collection of the works, letters and photographs of Vasyl Stus, a Ukrainian poet and human rights activist who died in a Soviet prison camp. His son and widow decided to entrust all of Stus’ materials to the Institute of Literature, which eventually turned into the Vasyl Stus Collection.⁹ The Ion Monoran Collection¹⁰ represents a similar case, where Ion Monoran’s materials—letters, manuscripts, including his poems and his army diary, and his typewriting machine—remained in the possession of the Monoran family, and are kept in their private home and preserved by Monoran’s widow.

A particular type of collection is represented by those that have been established with the purpose of self-archiving. This was the case of Lazar Stojanovic,¹¹ film maker of the Yugoslav Black Wave movement, and director of the scandalous cult film *Plastic Jesus*—an ironic work with subtle political im-

7 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Václav Havel Library”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

8 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Artpool Art Collection”, by Balázs Beöthy and Júlia Klaniczay, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018, doi: 10.24389/5123

9 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Vasyl Stus Collection”, by Orysia Maria Kulick, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

10 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Ion Monoran Private Collection”, by Cristina Petrescu and Cristian Valeriu Pătrășconiu, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

11 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Lazar Stojanović Collection”, by Jacqueline Nießer, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

plications. Stojanovic had been preserving his works since his arrest in 1971 when the journal *Vidici*, which he was editor of, made comparisons between the Yugoslav regime and Nazism. Manuscripts, magazines and films produced by him had been confiscated by the authorities numerous times, and only fragments of them have survived. The collection is currently kept by Stojanovic's widow, Suzana Jovanovic.

The majority of collections (86.7%) were already existing, meaning that they had already been defined and institutionalized as a collection related to opposition prior to the project. In cases where only some contents of a collection were deemed relevant for the database, or a collection had a very broad thematic focus, the term "*ad hoc* collection" was used. Only 13.3 % of the collections in the Registry are *ad hoc* collections. *Ad hoc* collection is a separate category within the Registry, and includes entries that were defined as a collection specifically by COURAGE. Most of the *ad hoc* collections are operated by governmental or state organizations (73.3%), thus the majority of such collections belong to large institutions. Only some countries have *ad hoc* collections in the database; Croatia has the most (26.9%). *Ad hoc* collections include works (typically political, art or academic) that are often not organized as a collection—as in the case of the collection *Only the Forbidden Newspapers Remain in History*¹²—or archival materials under a particular subject that belong together as relics of the resistance, but are stored in diverse locations. The *Black Church Restoration*¹³ illustrates the latter category, embracing different kinds of materials through different political systems from the late 1930s until 2000. It documents the restoration process which has involved issues of religious freedom, of ethnic self-representation of the Saxons in Transylvania, local politics and of the different aspects of political repression in Romania. Some unusual collections also fall into this category, such as the *Life Beyond the Patterns of Communism*,¹⁴ *which is the private collection of a Bulgarian school teacher and consists of photographs, books, articles and personal memoirs*.

The Main Questions about the Collections

In order to organize and categorize the collections in the Registry, it was essential to obtain informative and comparable data and metadata. This task was completed on the basis of a standardized set of questions in relation to:

- The history of the collection: how, when, and why it has been founded;
- Key agents; i.e. people and institutions that played an important role in establishing and/or managing the collection;
- The contents of the collection;

12 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Only the Forbidden Newspapers Remain in History", by Anelia Kasabova, Dr., 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

13 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Black Church Restoration Ad Hoc Collection in Braşov", by Corneliu Pintilescu, 2017. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

14 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Life Beyond the Patterns of Communism", by Anelia Kasabova, Dr., 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

- The operation of the collection (people and institutions) including the owners of, and contributors to the collection (founders, collectors);
- The financial situation of the collection;
- Typical items that represent the collection;
- Important events in the history of the collection;
- Access, visitors, publications.

At the beginning, there were three competing methodological approaches to the research: 1) the interview, which is a typical field method of qualitative sociological inquiry; 2) the questionnaire, which is the standard tool of quantitative research, and 3) archival research, which is generally applied in historical research. The consortium eventually decided to implement a mixed methodology, combining interviewing and data collection with desk research. An interview guideline was prepared which followed the structure of the Registry and enabled researchers to ask interviewees about the collections in detail. In general, researchers were instructed to aim at conducting an interview, instead of doing desk research only. The objective was to highlight the importance of primary sources, and make the database of COURAGE unique. Furthermore, the interview and the questionnaire also gave an opportunity to obtain data and metadata on small, marginal or less known collections, and where it was more difficult or even impossible to find archival information. A case in point is Gheorghe Muruziuc,¹⁵ a Moldavian worker, who put the Romanian flag on the factory building as an expression of resistance against the Soviet occupation. In addition, even in the case of well-known collections, an interview with the founder(s) could highlight the unique and authentic aspects of the history of the collections and bring them closer to the general public. An example of this is the Polish Exchange Gallery¹⁶ and the interview with its founder, Józef Robakowski. Since it was not always possible to conduct an interview researchers also used archival materials, available publications or audial materials (lectures) on the subject. 83% of all the collections have been described using one interview source. For 9% of the collections, two or more interviews have been used. 8% of the collections were described without using any interviews—in these cases, the researchers could describe their sources in a separate tab.

15 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Gheorghe Muruziuc Collection at SIS Archive Moldova", by Cristina Petrescu and Andrei Cusco, 2017. Accessed: October 11, 2018, doi: 10.24389/23399

16 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Exchange Gallery", by Xawery Stanczyk, 2017. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

II. The Digital Databank of the Registry

The Registry is based on a linked data structure. For this purpose, it was essential to structure the Registry—and the interview guidelines—around discrete entities that can be linked afterwards to highlight the rich connections between them. Research was organized, and data was collected around the following main entities:¹⁷

- The collection. It is the most important entity of the Registry; every other entity is connected to one or more collection(s). We investigated the history, provenance, the importance of a collection, its content, how it is accessible, who the visitors are, etc.;
- Interviews with knowledgeable persons who could provide information about collections;
- People, groups and organizations that had an important role in the history of the collection from its foundation to the present, such as:
 - owner(s),
 - founder(s),
 - operator(s),
 - others who do not belong to the above-mentioned categories but have an important stakeholder role,
 - creator(s) of the content in a collection,
 - creator of a collection,
 - supporters of a collection;
- Key events in the history of a collection;
- Featured items that are important/characteristic/interesting/typical of a collection;
- Roles. All the above-mentioned categories are connected with one or more collection(s) via one or more “roles(s)”. For example, a national library can have an operator role connected to several collections, and/or can be the owner of them. Or a person collecting interesting materials can have a founder or a creator role for the same collection. Data was also collected with regard to the characteristics of the roles. For example, under the operator role in the Registry, one could find information about employees, the budget, the networking activities and the structure of the organization operating the collection. The chronology of the collections can be traced due to the fact that all the roles have beginning and end dates.

The Registry stores data using the linked data model, which uses the following building blocks:

- X is of type T,
- X has OP property Y (object property),

¹⁷ There are many more.

- X has TP property: “...some text...” in language L (text property),
 - X has DP property: “some number, true/false, date” (data property).
- An example description of a collection could be:
- X is of Collection type,
 - X has founders Y (Júlia Klaniczay) and Z (György Galántai),
 - X has name “Artpool Art Research Center” in English,
 - X was founded in 1979, etc.

Therefore, we get typed connections between items which can be used in both directions: the founders of X, or the things founded by Y. This is the main advantage of linked data compared to traditional questionnaires; there is a greater number of described entities which are then reusable. The Archive of the Party History Institute of Soviet Lithuania,¹⁸ for example, figures several times in different collections. It appears as a founder for at least five different collections, as an owner for at least seven, as collector in five collections, and as a main actor in three others (with overlaps). The other advantage is the avoidance of duplication: if person X had two collections and the per collection description method was used, they could have two separate and somewhat different descriptions for each collection. In the COURAGE Registry, however, person X has a single description connected to all collections where they had a role (Figure A0).

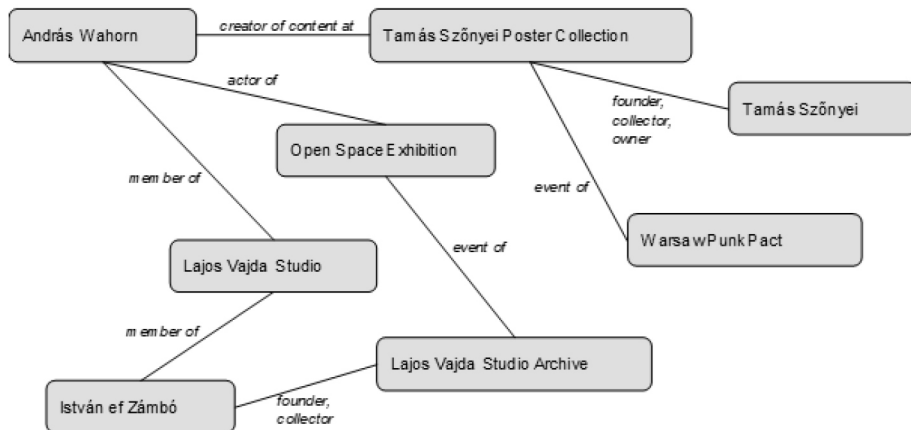


Figure A0. An excerpt from the connection network in the Registry

Furthermore, the types and properties have a predefined structure, which is called schema or ontology, depending on the complexity of constructs used. In essence, the properties an item may have depends on its type. Types and

¹⁸ COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Archive of the Party History Institute of Soviet Lithuania”, by Vladas Sirutavičius, 2017. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

properties may have one or more subtypes or sub-properties respectively, leading to a type and a property hierarchy. A part of the type hierarchy of the COURAGE Registry is shown in Figure A1. The main type is a Historical item, which is described for historical purposes. This type may have a name, a location, a short description, and a website. On the next level there are agents, assets, events and interviews. An asset can be a collection, an item of a collection or a publication (e.g. a collection catalogue), and as common properties they may have topics, they may be available in some languages and their reuse may be restricted in some way. Interviews are handled separately from assets and events, although interviews may have some common characteristics with both types, but the aim was to separate them as sources of information and personal statements from the other descriptive items. Events (such as exhibitions, donations, important acquisitions, publications) have a start and end date in common and are connected with collections and the related agents. For all date properties the database uses years, as exact dates are often difficult to establish. On occasion the year is only an estimation; in such cases a special comment field containing an explanation was added.

Agents have the most complex type of hierarchy. They share the ability to take roles for assets or events. An agent can be a person or a group, which in turn can be a formal organization with some legal documentation, an informal group, or a network. People are divided into three subtypes: *researchers* conduct interviews or desk research to describe the other two types of people:

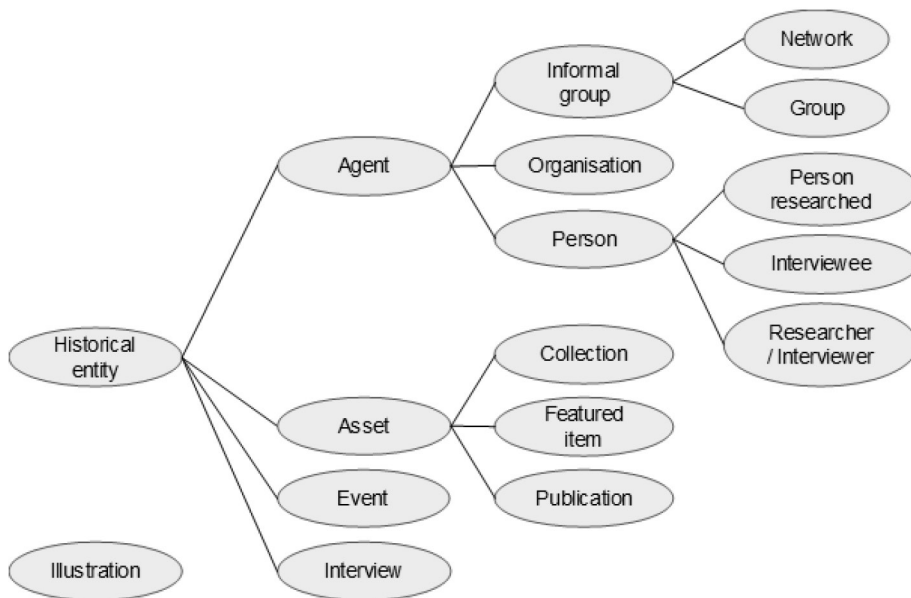


Figure A1. The main types of the Registry and their type hierarchy

the *people* who are *researched* and described in the COURAGE Registry, and people without a role in our focused research, of whom less data is provided; this is the category called *interviewee*. People naturally have common properties such as first and last name, birth place, birth date and other personal data.

The roles are also assigned a start and an end date (interval role), while the founder only has a single date property (Figure A2).

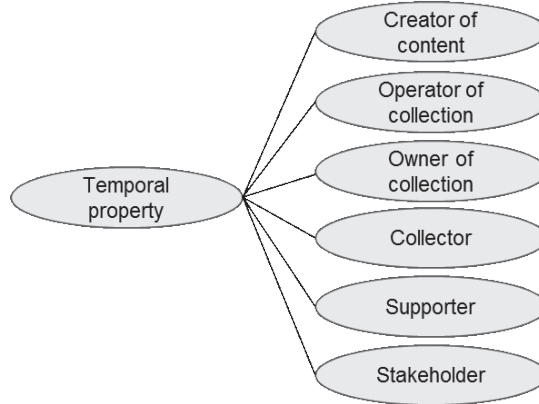


Figure A2. Role types of the Registry

Figure A3 shows how the subsequent owners of a collection are stored in the Registry using the owner role construct.

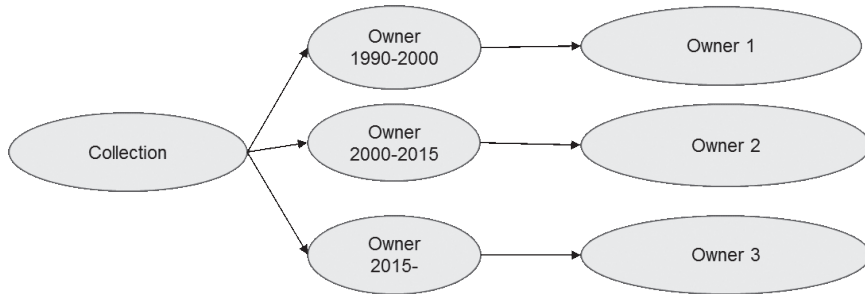


Figure A3. Example: the owner roles of Artpool

III. Some Characteristics of the Registry

It needs to be stressed that the current analysis does not focus on the collections of cultural opposition under socialism in general but solely on the collections in the Registry. Although the selection of the collections was a deliberative process at the beginning of the project, it was largely the responsibility of

the researchers to choose from a wide variety of different collections. Besides academic reasons, practical considerations also played a role.¹⁹ Nevertheless, the Registry of COURAGE grew to be the most comprehensive database on cultural opposition to date and thus provides a valuable source material for an analysis on the subject.

Content

There are almost 300 published collections in the COURAGE Registry (as of 27 September 2018). The project aims at describing 400–500 collections altogether by the end of the project. The collections can be categorized according to various typologies. They come from over 15 countries, include dozens of private, public and *ad hoc* collections, and cover hundreds of subjects related to cultural opposition, which demonstrates just how diverse the opposition was.

On the basis of who produced the materials it is possible to make a differentiation between collections “from below” and the ones “from above.” Most of the collections fall under the first category and contain collections representing the opposition of the “people” (artists, scholars, human right activists, church representatives, or just “ordinary” people), and documentary traces of their activities. Collections “from above” contain materials that were collected about the activists by the regime. There are numerous collections about KGB surveillance, including the Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, Moldavian KGB, and the activities of the *Stasi* in East Germany. The collections representing the voices “from below” are the most numerous in the Registry. Such collections also reveal details about the activities of various minorities, including the activities of national minority groups (Hungarians in Romania and present day Slovakia, Turkish minorities in Bulgaria), ethnic groups (the Roma), or sexual minorities (gay activists in Poland and in Hungary).

The content of the collections is very diverse, with 65% containing two or more types of content. 20 categories were identified to describe the type of materials a collection can contain. The researchers were able to specify as many categories as they found appropriate. The category “legal manuscripts” is the most common, approximately 49% of all the collections in the Registry contain such materials. Both publications and photos were represented in approximately 45% of the collections. Grey literature with 33% was the fourth most common content type.

The numbers of collections in each country represented in the Registry are the following:

19 Practical considerations may include good personal or institutional relations with collections or their operators.

Number of collections by countries		
	N	%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	0,3
Bulgaria	12	4,1
Croatia	37	12,6
Czech Republic	38	13,0
Estonia	9	3,1
Germany	14	4,8
Hungary	44	15,0
Kosovo	1	0,3
Latvia	7	2,4
Lithuania	22	7,5
Poland	22	7,5
Republic of Moldova	14	4,8
Romania	36	12,3
Serbia	12	4,1
Slovakia	9	3,1
Slovenia	3	1,0
Turkey	1	0,3
Ukraine	6	2,0
United Kingdom	3	1,0
United States of America	2	0,7
Total	293	100,0

Nodes

Due to the linked structure of the database, it is possible to identify the most significant nodes of the Registry: points where many collections connect. The five largest nodes of organizations are the following: Soviet Moldavian KGB; Croatian State Archives; Museum of Czech Literature; the Securitate (Romania), and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia. These institutions have the highest number of connections to different collections in the Registry.²⁰ The persons who are connected to the highest number of collections and institutions are the following: György Galántai and Júlia Klaniczay from

²⁰ The project partners adopted different strategies in completing the Registry: some of the partners added many persons to an institution/collection, others only added the most important organizations, or individuals.

Hungary, Václav Havel from Czechia, Igor Cașu from Moldova, and Jiří Gruntorád from Czechia. These nodes do not necessarily reflect a ranking of these people in terms of their significance in the history of cultural opposition; they merely indicate their position(s) in relation to collections on specific topics. The nodes are also determined by the number of collections from a specific country in the Registry.

The average ratio of female employees among the persons, groups or institutions operating the collections is 56%.²¹ This means that women are slightly overrepresented as employees. In the Registry, however, approximately 74% of the researched persons are male. This seems to be a substantial disparity. It requires further research to establish whether such a discrepancy is due to the sampling of the collections in the project, or due to the overrepresentation of men in cultural opposition.

Topics

One of the most important aims of COURAGE is to highlight the rich diversity of alternative cultural scenes that flourished in Eastern Europe despite strict state control before 1989. In order to present the complexity and the variety of cultural opposition in the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe, 35 thematic categories (topics) were identified for the Registry. The researchers were free to select the topics to best describe their collections. Due to some overlaps between the different topics, researchers were able to describe collections as accurately as possible, without a limitation on the number of topics that they could choose. The topics are (1) alternative forms of education (e.g. flying universities), (2) alternative lifestyles and everyday resistance, (3) avant-garde, neo-avant-garde, (4) censorship, (5) conscientious objectors, (6) critical science (against state-supported), (7) democratic opposition, (8) emigration/exile, (9) environmental protection (e.g. antinuclear movement), (10) ethnic movements, (11) film, (12) fine arts, (13) folk culture (e.g. folk dance movements) (14) human rights movements, (15) independent journalism, (16) literature and literary criticism, (17) media arts (digital arts), (18) minority movements, (19) music (rock, punk, alternative, classical, etc.), (20) national movements (patriotic opposition), (21) party dissidents (outcasts from the party), (22) peace movements, (23) philosophical/theoretical movements (neo-Marxists, Maoists, reform socialists, etc.), (24) religious activism, (25) samizdat and tamizdat, (26) scientific criticism, (27) social movements (general), (28) student movement, (29) surveillance (various), (30) survivors of persecutions under authoritarian/totalitarian regimes, (31) theatre and performing arts, (32) underground culture, (33) visual arts, (34) women's movement (35) youth culture.

21 COURAGE has information about approximately 89% of the current operators.

Topic	Number of times mentioned	%
alternative education	11	3,8%
alternative lifestyle	54	18,0%
avantgarde	38	13,0%
censorship	35	11,9%
conscientious objectors	2	0,7%
critical science	10	3,4%
democratic opposition	73	24,9%
emigration	52	17,7%
environmental protection	10	3,4%
ethnic movements	5	1,7%
film	11	3,8%
fine arts	25	8,5%
folk	10	3,4%
human rights	54	18,4%
independent journalism	13	4,4%
literature	47	16,0%
media arts	8	2,7%
minority movements	11	3,8%
music	24	8,2%
national movements	50	17,1%
party dissident	11	3,8%
peace movements	7	2,4%
philosophical movements	11	3,8%
popular culture	16	5,5%
religious activism	27	9,2%
samizdat	51	17,4%
scientific criticism	14	4,8%
social movement	14	4,8%
student movement	18	6,1%
surveillance	24	8,2%
survivors of persecutions	22	7,5%

Topic	Number of times mentioned	%
theatre	13	4,4%
underground culture	36	12,3%
visual arts	35	11,9%
women	7	2,4%
youth culture	34	11,6%

More than one topic was assigned to the majority of the collections. The graph below shows the average number of topics selected by researchers per collection:

Number of topics		
	N	%
1	38	13,0
2	67	22,9
3	101	34,5
4	46	15,7
5	22	7,5
6	4	1,4
7	4	1,4
8	5	1,7
9	3	1,0
10	2	0,7
17	1	0,3
Total	100	100,0

Most of the collections cover three (35.0%) or two (22%) topics.²² 13% of the collections are single topic collections. Collections with more than 5 topics are very rare in the Registry. In a very extreme case, 17 topics were assigned to a single collection (Memory Nation from the Czech Republic).²³

The Registry consists of collections from 17 different countries, with small differences noticeable in the number of topics they cover.

²² The number of topics chosen for a collection was undoubtedly dependent on the researchers' subjective considerations and attitudes to the topic, as well.

²³ COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Memory of Nations", by Anna Vrtálová, 2017. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

Number of topics by countries											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	17
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0,00%	100,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Bulgaria	0,00%	8,30%	41,70%	16,70%	16,70%	0,00%	0,00%	16,70%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Croatia	5,40%	18,90%	43,20%	21,60%	2,70%	0,00%	2,70%	5,40%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Czech Republic	5,30%	7,90%	31,60%	21,10%	13,20%	5,30%	2,60%	2,60%	2,60%	5,30%	2,60%
Estonia	11,10%	33,30%	22,20%	22,20%	11,10%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Germany	7,10%	21,40%	35,70%	7,10%	21,40%	7,10%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Hungary	18,20%	25,00%	31,80%	9,10%	9,10%	2,30%	2,30%	0,00%	2,30%	0,00%	0,00%
Kosovo	0,00%	100,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Latvia	57,10%	28,60%	14,30%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Lithuania	31,80%	50,00%	9,10%	9,10%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Poland	13,60%	27,30%	27,30%	31,80%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Republic of Moldova	0,00%	0,00%	78,60%	14,30%	7,10%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Romania	8,30%	25,00%	52,80%	5,60%	8,30%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Serbia	25,00%	25,00%	16,70%	25,00%	8,30%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Slovakia	33,30%	44,40%	11,10%	11,10%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Slovenia	0,00%	33,30%	33,30%	33,30%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Turkey	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	100,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Ukraine	0,00%	16,70%	16,70%	50,00%	0,00%	0,00%	16,70%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
United Kingdom	33,30%	0,00%	66,70%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
United States of America	0,00%	0,00%	50,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	50,00%	0,00%	0,00%

There is a relatively high rate of single topic collections (over 10%) in Latvia (57% of all the Latvian collections), Lithuania (32% of all Lithuanian collections) and in Hungary (18% of all the Hungarian collections). Collections from Czechia, Estonia, Poland and Ukraine are characterized by rich thematic relations, and most of these collections include four or more topics.

Democratic Opposition

Even though an explicit aim of the project was to bring the less known and less represented collections to the foreground instead of reproducing already existing narratives of the democratic opposition, the most frequent topic in the collections in the Registry is democratic opposition. Democratic opposition was selected as a topic for 90 collections (31% of the collections), and it appears most frequently in collections from the Czech Republic. However, while 26% of such topics are assigned to Czech collections, the topic also features prominently in collections from Germany (67% of the collections) and in Bulgaria (58% of collections). COURAGE also anticipated a more prominent representation of the fine arts and the avant-garde in the collections. However, these topics only feature in a small minority of the collections (with 8.5% of the collections covering fine arts and 13% concerning avant-garde, with some overlaps).

Environmental Movements

At the same time, environmental movements, which had a great influence on the crystallization of the opposition in several countries (Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, the Baltic states etc.), appear to feature less prominently in the Registry. The theme is covered by 13 collections (1%), which include collections about the Danube movement²⁴ in Hungary, the protests against the Daugavpils plant²⁵ in Latvia and the anti-chlorine pollution demonstrations in Ruse, Bulgaria.²⁶ These ratios are far from being representative, as the total number of collections in the respective societies remains (and will remain) unknown. Nevertheless, they demonstrate the challenges of producing new narratives on cultural opposition in the region.

Data in the Registry also shows that collections related to democratic opposition are mainly operated by governmental/state organizations, and are therefore, connected to other collections in larger institutions. This indicates that the heritage of the democratic opposition has mostly been archived by

24 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Documents of the Danube Circle's Association", by Zoltán Pál, 2017. Accessed: October 11, 2018, doi: 10.24389/16054

25 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Protest campaign against construction of the Daugavpils HPP in 1986–1987", by Daina Bleiere, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

26 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Ecological protests against the chlorine pollution in Ruse", by Anelia Kasabova, Dr., 2017. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

governmental institutions. The diagram below shows the collections that include “democratic opposition” among the topics assigned to them (the column labeled with “yes”); the ones that do not include material relevant to this topic (the column labeled with “no”); and the overall average (column without a label).

Democratic opposition collections by current operator type			
	no	yes	total
association	4,7%	16,7%	7,8%
corporation	0,5%	0,0%	0,4%
Government/State orga-nisation	50,7%	56,9%	52,3%
international organisation	0,5%	0,0%	0,4%
other for-profit organiza-tion	0,5%	0,0%	0,4%
other non-profit organi-zation	12,8%	6,9%	11,3%
partnership	0,5%	2,8%	1,1%
private foundation	6,6%	2,8%	5,7%
public foundation	3,3%	4,2%	3,5%
person or group	19,9%	9,7%	17,3%

Alternative Lifestyles

The themes of alternative lifestyle (*Aktionsgruppe Banat*²⁷ in Romania, the Polish Punk Collection of Anna Dąbrowska-Lyons),²⁸ human rights (Jan Patočka Archives),²⁹ samizdat (Havel collection),³⁰ national movements (the Promethean movement³¹ coordinated by the Polish military intelligence), religious activism (The Jesuit Order in Hungary),³² avant-garde (the FV 112/15 Group

27 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Aktionsgruppe Banat Ad-hoc Collection at CNSAS”, by Cristina Petrescu and Corneliu Pintilescu, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

28 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Polish Punk Collection by Anna Dąbrowska-Lyons”, by Xawery Stanczyk, 2017. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

29 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Jan Patočka Archives”, by Michaela Kůželová and Anna Vrtálková, 2017. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

30 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Václav Havel Collection of the Czechoslovak Documentation Centre”, by Anna Vrtálková, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018; COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Václav Havel Library”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

31 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Prometheus Collection”, by Mikołaj Kunicki, 2017. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

32 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Archives of the Jesuit Order Hungary”, by Béla Mihalik and Zoltán Pál, 2017. Accessed: October 11, 2018, doi: 10.24389/10677

Collection³³ in Slovenia), and literature (Danilo Kiš Collection)³⁴ also appear repeatedly in the Registry. Literature as a topic was selected in more than 16% of the collections. Other topics such as alternative education, minority movements, women, ethnic movements, folk movements are rarely represented in the Registry. From the perspective of the topics, the collections of the Registry can be regarded as heterogeneous.

Operators

Among the current operators of the collections, approximately 24% are archives, 19% are museums, 16% are libraries and 17% are private persons. Other types of operators (societies, or galleries, for example) feature in the collections much less frequently. More than half of the organizations in the Registry operating a collection are government or state organizations, 11% are non-profit organizations, 17% are private individuals or groups.

Approximately one third of the collections employ 1–8 employees, with 15% of all the collections are run only by a single employee, usually the owner of the collection. In such cases the term “employee” does not necessarily involve formal employment. Another third of the collections have 9–65 employees; the last third consists of large collections with more than 65 employees. Networking seems to play a fairly important role in the lives of these operators: approximately 80% of them take part in some networking activities (archiving, digitizing, etc.) involving other institutions.

Approximately 12% of operators have no financial support for managing the collections.³⁵ The mean yearly budget in EUR is 1,915,703, but the standard deviation is very high. This high figure is generated by a relatively small number of large organizations. For all the operators we have information on, the median yearly budget is approximately 530,000 EUR. This means that 50% of all the operators have a budget lower than the median. The figures in the Registry often include the entire budget of the institution operating the collection, and therefore indicate the size of the institution that hosts the collection. However, the figures do not normally include the amount of money dedicated to the management of a single collection. The institutions in the Registry operating with the largest budget come from Germany, followed—after a large gap—by Croatia. The amounts in EUR are shown below.

33 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[FV 112/15 Group Collection](#)”, by Marta Rendla, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

34 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[Danilo Kiš Collection](#)”, by Sanja, Radović, 2017. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

35 There is no information about the budget for 16% of the operators.

country	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Bulgaria	867885,5	8	1157895,31
Croatia	3379436,94	35	2679495,737
Czech Republic	1111826,53	34	2301084,775
Estonia	2369571,43	7	2631693,615
Germany	13523137,5	8	35779969,44
Hungary	1475783,19	27	2650699,556
Kosovo	700000	1	.
Latvia	1448164	7	2142642,258
Lithuania	978854,79	19	541662,691
Poland	736686,87	16	1281423,461
Republic of Moldova	0	3	0
Romania	761107,94	36	962357,94
Serbia	502965,5	4	308815,679
Slovakia	773465	2	1093844,693
Slovenia	350000	1	.
Ukraine	207271	1	.
Total	1915703,6	209	7276286,395

Germany's position on the list is mostly due to the substantial annual budget of EUR 101,970,000 of the Federal Commissioner for the Records of the State Security Service of the former German Democratic Republic (BStU). The institution in the Registry with the second largest budget (12,761,667 EUR) is the Hungarian Heritage House, followed by the National Gallery in Prague with a budget of 12,583,000 EUR. The most frequent current operators and those with the largest budgets are government or state organizations, followed by (a very small number of) partnerships:

Type of the operator	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
association	158555	18	162628,125
Government/State organization	3011956,95	119	9410530,384
other for-profit organization	675675	1	.
other non-profit organization	566284	15	1436556,337
partnership	2850000	3	0
private foundation	218881	12	300251,78
public foundation	2079838,56	9	4331585,658
person or group	1253	32	7070,52
Total	1915703,6	209	7276286,395

IV. Conclusion

This chapter introduced the methodological background and the construction of the Registry as a particular type of database, and an interdisciplinary product at the cross-roads of archiving, sociology, historiography and IT, with collections as its basic units. The Registry has clearly benefited from the changes in archiving practices in recent years: it applies the so-called linked principle, which enabled semantic queries and the interlinking of data. The Registry is unique in the sense that it allows the interactive updating of data with the special “collecting-oneself” character.

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PART II

COUNTRIES

SAULIUS GRYBKAUŠKAS
– VLADAS SIRUTAVIČIUS

The Baltic States

Cultural opposition: Controversies of the Concept

Several problems arise when discussing the historiography of cultural opposition in the Baltic States. First, and most importantly, Baltic academics and historians have not offered any clear scientific definition of what constitutes cultural opposition. As a result, we are left to consider what the concept of cultural opposition *does not mean*. In our view, this unclear definition is the product of various factors. As the three Baltic states each fought for and won state independence, historians from these nations have dedicated most of their attention to discussions of the armed resistance, the operation of Soviet repressive structures and the repression of peaceful civilians. The selection of these themes as research topics can be explained by the fact that such subjects were off limits during the Soviet period, and academics were to conduct academic research according to the prevailing ideological and political parameters. In addition, in the post-Soviet scholarly environment, the positions of various social groups and individuals were described in a simplistic way, with the help of three schematic categories: collaborators who expressed active support for the Soviet regime; the freedom fighters, who are usually identified with the armed resistance movement; and conformists, who have received limited attention thus far. Research agendas were also heavily influenced by the Cold War totalitarian paradigm that postulated that Soviet-type political regimes in Eastern Europe were all monolithic and totalitarian, and there were only minor and insignificant differences between them. Moreover, the totalitarian framework contributed to the blurring of differences between the Stalinist and post-Stalinist periods. In sum, “cultural opposition” in works by Baltic historians was first of all understood as unarmed opposition, i.e., non-violent resistance to the Soviet regime’s political, ideological and cultural pressure.

Historiography

Emigre historians from the Baltic States before 1990 dedicated most of their attention to the analysis of the Soviet political regime, and the government’s socio-economic, cultural, educational, and cadre policies.¹ In other words,

1 Stanley, *Lithuania under the Soviets*; Karklins, *Ethnic Relations in the USSR*.

they analyzed the process of the Sovietization of societies and discussed how respective societies reacted to this process.² In the second half of the 1980s, influential works about the anti-Soviet partisan war emerged, while³ attempts were made to discuss “intellectual culture” in the Soviet period, to search for a “critique” of the “official culture” and expressions of intellectual autonomy,⁴ and to analyze the works of artists and writers from the post-Stalinist period.⁵ Such studies attempted to explain the factors that affected the position of different social groups, especially the intelligentsia with regard to the Soviet regime. Such works were not usually written by historians, and only published sources were used to support their arguments and conclusions. In contrast, émigré authors merely stated that once the armed resistance had ended, other non-violent forms of resistance emerged in the Soviet Baltic republics. They paid particular attention to the activities of religious groups—primarily the Catholic Church and individual members of the clergy—and to the movement for believers’ rights.⁶

Romualdas Misiūnas from Lithuania and Rein Taagepera from Estonia are two emigre scholars who presented one of the most comprehensive accounts of cultural policy during the Soviet period in the Baltic states. (Their monograph was first published in 1983, and a revised edition came out in 1993).⁷ It is not without reason that reviewers considered the monograph by Misiūnas and Taagepera to be a thorough, academically grounded and “hitherto unsurpassed analysis of the Soviet regime in the Baltic States.”⁸ Misiūnas and Taagepera discussed the formation of Soviet political-economic structures, the evolution of Sovietization, and the scale of the armed resistance and repression. Nevertheless, probably the most fascinating and valuable of the authors’ contributions were related to Soviet cultural policy and to social and cultural responses to such policies. According to Misiūnas and Taagepera, de-Stalinization in 1954–68 created conditions that were conducive to the self-expression of the cultural elite in the three republics. The literature and

2 Shtromas, “Official Soviet Ideology and the Lithuanian People,” 57–73.

3 In Lithuanian historiography, see: Girnius, *Partizanų kovos Lietuvoje*. The book was re-released in Lithuania in 1990.

4 The Lithuanian émigré Vytautas Kavolis described intellectual culture as follows: “Intellectual cultures are traditions of unceasing concern with ideas of universal human significance. Intellectuals are individuals who participate intensely in these traditions. [...] A restricted mode of thought that does not transcend the limits of a particular field of specialization [...] does not belong to intellectual culture...” According to the scholar, the “intellectual ... not only judges that which exists but also develops alternatives (political, scientific, or artistic) to that which in his surroundings is thought to be ‘reality’.” Kavolis, “On the Deformations of Intellectual Culture,” 34–35. This definition of intellectual culture corresponds with conceptions of cultural opposition discussed earlier in this chapter.

5 Grinius, “Literature and the Arts in Captive Lithuania,” 197–214.

6 Vardys, “The Role of Churches,” 151–64.

7 Misiūnas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States*.

8 Kasekamp, *A History of the Baltic States*, X.

art of the time rejected the obdurate elements characteristic of the socialist realist canon, instead featuring more experimentation and a search for creative inspiration and innovation in the nation's historic past, and in its cultural traditions. It is no wonder that scholars have described this period as the "re-emergence of national cultures."⁹ According to this narrative, the social and cultural activist groups that emerged in the context of de-Stalinization played a very important role in the formation of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian national movements during Gorbachev's perestroika.

The restoration of independence in the early 1990s witnessed the release of the first works by historians that focused primarily on the themes of armed resistance and Soviet mass repressions.¹⁰ Research in the field became even more popular in the Baltic states—practically simultaneously—in 1998, with the establishment of historical commissions that became responsible for examining crimes committed by the Nazis and Soviets.¹¹ (Major document compilations were also published that reflected the activities of Soviet repressive institutions).¹² Even though the research projects supported by international historians' commissions were primarily aimed at analyzing Soviet repressions and the anti-Soviet partisan war, gradually works started to appear that discussed non-violent forms of resistance as well.¹³ Later on, studies and monographs were written that analyzed various movements and groups of the intelligentsia that advocated religious rights. This theme had a greater appeal to Lithuanian historians, primarily due to the significance of the Chronicle of the Catholic Church in the Lithuanian samizdat movement, but academics from the other Baltic states also engaged with the topic.¹⁴ New research results, in contrast to the publications of émigré authors, were based on the rich archival material that became accessible to researchers after the archives of the KGB and the Communist Party were opened.

9 Misiūnas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States*, 131–203.

10 Truska, *Lietuva 1938–1953*, 125–76; Strods, *Latvijas nacionālo partizanu karš*. In 1999, a joint paper by three Baltic historians was released which was mostly dedicated to the partisan war: Anušauskas, *The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States*.

11 The International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania, see <https://www.komisija.lt/en/tyrimai/>; Estonian International Commission for Investigation of Crimes Against Humanity, see <http://www.historycommission.ee/>; The Commission of the Historians of Latvia, see <https://www.president.lv/en/activities/commissions-and-councils/commission-of-historians>. Accessed October 7, 2018. All these commissions were established by state presidential decree.

12 Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje 1944–1953*.

13 See, for instance, research conducted by Latvian historians: Bleiere, "Resistance of Farmers to the Soviet Policies in Latvia (1945–1953)"; and Rimšāns, "Manifestations of Youth Resistance against the Communist Regime in the Latvian SSR (1965–1985)."

14 Streikus, *Sovietu valdžios antibažnytinė politika Lietuvoje (1944–1990)*. See also works by Latvian and Estonian historians: Altnurme, "Padomju okupācijas režīms Baltijā 1944–1959"; and Zikmane, "Relations between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia and the State (1944–1959)."

At the beginning of the 2000s, Baltic historians started producing substantial publications dedicated to the Soviet period which discussed the political, economic and socio-cultural aspects of the past. They analyzed not only the partisan war, but also various forms of un-armed resistance. Such narratives did not only discuss the political dissident movement (the activities of the so-called Helsinki groups), or movements for religious rights, but also various forms of “civil opposition” (also called “passive”), such as the folk movement, various non-conformist youth movements (the hippies), and illegal rock festivals.¹⁵ Incidentally, these studies did not discuss problems such as the politicization of “civil opposition,” or explain what determined the regime’s approach and policies; for instance, why was a relatively tolerant approach towards the folk movement replaced by a more repressive one? At around the same time, several comparative historical syntheses of the Baltic states were published. It needs to be noted that in such works, the Soviet period only comprised one part of an often fragmented historical account. This explains why such studies contained practically no new insights on, or assessments of non-violent forms of resistance (cultural opposition).¹⁶

New archival data that had previously been inaccessible for academics, the emergence of new research trends, such as cultural memory studies, and the application of new methodological approaches (for example, social network analysis) all contributed to the further development of research on the Soviet past in the Baltic countries. One could identify certain research topics that historians gave special attention to. Latvian historians have studied in the detail the phenomenon of “national communism” in the 1950s, interpreting it as an attempt to gain a degree of autonomy from Moscow by the way in which the Latvian leadership adopted political and economic decisions and furthered the development of national culture.¹⁷ Incidentally, these attempts were repressed by Moscow, which significantly shaped the subsequent political and national-cultural development of Latvia. There were studies which discussed more than just the cultural policy of the Soviet regime and the attempts of various government institutions to control creative processes (such as censorship). Such works also analyzed the aspirations of intellectuals to preserve creative autonomy, resist political pressure and/or challenge the established ideological canon.¹⁸ Researchers have also become increasingly interested in non-conformist artists and their experimentation with various art

15 Arvydas, *Lietuva 1940–1990*, 516–33; Bleiere, et al., *Latvija navstrecu 100-letiju strany*. The first history of Latvia in the twentieth century was written by the same authors, and was published in 2005.

16 Kasekamp, *A History of the Baltic States*; Plakans, *A Concise History of the Baltic States*.

17 Bleiere, “Latvijas Komunistiskās partijas etniskais sastāvs un nacionālkomunisma problēma 1944–1965.” In Lithuanian historiography: Grybkauskas, *Sovietinė nomenklatūra ir pramonė Lietuvoje 1965–1985*, 111–38; Sirutavičius, “National Bolshevism or National Communism.”

18 Švedas, *Matricos nelaisvėje*; Ivanauskas, *Įrėmintą tapatybę*; Satkauskytė, *Tarp estetikos ir politikos*.

forms that aimed at highlighting the importance of national traditions.¹⁹ These trends became more pronounced in the 1960s–1980s, although they were expressed to different degrees in the Baltic states.

Studies in cultural memory have recently gained popularity in Baltic academic circles. The notions of cultural and communicative memory, advocated by Jan and Aleida Assmann, has allowed scholars to examine Soviet and post-Soviet commemorative practices more closely. The first such studies appeared in the beginning of the 2000s, and attempted to identify similarities and differences in post-Soviet societies in the Baltic states.²⁰ It is generally acknowledged that the memory of communism—especially post-war repressions and deportations—is one of the key elements in post-Soviet identity building processes in Baltic societies. Moreover, the experience of Soviet occupation is usually used as a “filter through which meaning is attributed to the entire twentieth century in a sense transforming other, less dramatic periods into commentaries on the occupation experience.”²¹ The “traumatic memories” of national minority groups in Baltic societies are also researched extensively in an attempt to explain the interaction of cultural/historical memory between the titular nations (Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians) and the national minorities. Scholars analyze how perceptions of the Soviet period changed in post-Soviet memory culture in the context of changing memory regimes and memory politics.²²

Another theoretical paradigm which has significantly shaped research on cultural opposition is social network analysis. In seeking to explain the emergence of social movements in the Baltic republics during the period of *perestroika*, scholars have studied networks of various informal cultural and professional circles, and other social groups.²³ The object of research thus shifted away from politicized forms of opposition, such as advocates of the rights of the Catholic Church or illegal (*samizdat*) publishers, to various ethnic and cultural movements that were tolerated by the government, such as youth sub-culture, informal intellectual-artist communities, or heritage protection groups. Researchers claimed that such movements in the late Soviet period paved the way for social mobilization, which culminated in the emergence of independence movements in the three Baltic States.

19 Naripea, *Estonian Cinescopes*; Matulytė, “Fotografijos raiškos ir sklaidos Lietuvoje sovietizavimas.”

20 Mikhelev and Kalnačs, *We Have Something in Common*.

21 Joesalu and Koresaar, “Continuity or Discontinuity.”

22 Davoliutė and Balkelis, *Maps of Memory*; Pettai, “Debating Baltic memory regimes.”

23 Ramonaitė and Kavaliauskaitė, *Sąjūdžio įtakų beiškant*; Ramonaitė, *Nematoma sovietmečio višumenė*.

What Do Baltic Collections Say About Cultural Opposition?

The more than 70 collections from the Baltics that are described in the COURAGE project evince the persecution of cultural figures by the Soviet authorities, and contain material collected by Soviet institutions of power about writers, artists and university lecturers. They also hold documents on the activities of creative unions, art, and science institutions, and private collections about figures who were important in cultural life at the time, and whose activities and cultural expressions were censored and restricted in some way. The collections show that in the Baltic states cultural opposition varied both in terms of form and content. Manifestations of cultural opposition ranged from the ambition of literary figures, cinematographers and artists to introduce prohibited authors, themes and art forms into cultural life and education, through the activities of the early anti-Soviet dissidents, their independently published works, to human rights or religious rights groups, and the armed anti-Soviet resistance.

The collections from the Baltic States are testimony to the large number of cultural figures—writers, poets, artists, cinematographers and scientists, who experienced repression, imprisonment or deportation (see the Knuts Skujenieks²⁴, Kazys Boruta²⁵, Antanas Miškinis²⁶, Bronislava Martuževa²⁷, Kurts Fridrihsons collections²⁸), or restriction of their professional activity (see the Rimantas Vėbra,²⁹ Rimantas Jasas³⁰ and other collections). One could identify active female participants of cultural opposition who were not only visible in the public life of the time, but were also involved in cultural activities, maintaining broad-scale correspondence with prominent figures in the fields of art and science, and urging them to embrace bolder, more original themes. Such cultural figures include Aldona Liobytė³¹ (1915–85), Vanda Zaborskaitė,³² and

24 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Knuts Skujenieks collection", by Daina Bleiere, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

25 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Kazys Boruta Collection", by Vadas Sirutavičius, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

26 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Antanas Miškinis collection", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

27 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Bronislava Martuževa collection", by Daina Bleiere, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

28 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Kurts Fridrihsons", by Daina Bleiere, 2016. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

29 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Rimantas Vėbra collection", by Darius Staliunas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

30 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Rimantas Jasas collection", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2017. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

31 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Aldona Liobytė collection", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

32 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Vanda Zaborskaitė collection", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

Meilė Lukšienė³³ in Lithuania and the Sirje Kiin Private Archive³⁴ in Estonia. In Lithuania, these women were part of a close-knit oppositionist network which included core members of the Vilnius University Literature Department. Due to their activities, Vanda Zaborskaitė and Meilė Lukšienė were forced to abandon their positions at Vilnius University, while Aldona Liobytė lost her managerial position at the Literary Fiction Publishing House. Despite such measures, they continued with their oppositional activities and constantly attracted the attention, and provoked the criticism of ideologues. For instance, in 1973 the official publication *Komunistas* (The communist) published a critical article about the journal of Lithuanian philosophers, *Problemos* (Problems). It generally attacked philosophers and their works in the country, but also condemned Meilė Lukšienė's publications, in particular.³⁵

The Estonian journalist Siirje Kiin who actively participated in public life, and helped prepare the so-called appeal of 40 intellectuals to the government in 1980 tended to operate from behind the scenes. (She did not actually sign the petition.) However, similarly to Aldona Liobytė, through her actions she created an atmosphere and an infrastructure which established connections among the cultural community. Without these links, any activity would have been difficult. Another important figure in the creation of cultural networks in the Baltic states was Irena Pliuraitė-Andrejevienė who was active participant in the ethnographic folk movement in Lithuania. She served as an important link between Dr Viktoras Kutorga, the founder of the ideology of humanistic socialism and a former member of the anti-Nazi underground, and Vytenis Andriukaitis, one of the leaders of the Kaunas Ethnographic Club (see the Strazdelis Underground University collection).³⁶ Thanks to Pliuraitė, the acquaintance of these two men ultimately developed into the establishment of the underground humanistic Strazdelis University. Pliuraitė herself, much like Sirje Kiin in Estonia, helped to create connections, and prepare and translate documents from Russian.

Cultural opposition can be approached not only from the perspective of the intentions of individual activists and the range of activities they were involved in, but also from the perspective of the regime itself. The themes of repression and persecution are clearly represented in the party archives and in the collections the KGB and institutions of censorship of the time left behind (see the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee collections,³⁷ Antanas

33 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Meilutė Lukšienė collection", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

34 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Sirje Kiin Private Archive", by Mari-Leen Tammela, 2017. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

35 Gaidys, et al., "Leidiniui 'Problemos' – penkeri metai," 74.

36 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Strazdelis Underground University", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

37 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee Collection (1953–1962)", by Vladas Sirutavičius, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

Sniečkus, various documents of Lithuanian KGB departments;³⁸ Second Directorate of the Soviet Lithuanian KGB;³⁹ Glavlit (Lithuania),⁴⁰ files of political prisoners 1940–1986; completed investigative files of the Soviet Estonian KGB; collection of documents of the Central Committee of the Latvian Communist Party;⁴¹ Veljo Tormis' manuscript collection at the Estonian Theatre and Music Museum).⁴² However, there were cases when critical voices, due to certain subtleties in expression, managed to avoid censorship. The article in *Komunistas* – well known in historiography but never thoroughly researched – which criticized *Problemos*, is case in point. In this article, the polemic is between the ideologue G. Zimanas on the one side, and the philosophers B. Genzelis and R. Ozolas who were also the editors of *Problemos* on the other (see the Romualdas Ozolas and Lithuanian Philosophers' Opposition collections).⁴³ Even though the article was viewed as an attack, it could also be considered an intellectual critique which accurately identified the sophisticated arguments of the authors of *Problemos* that diverged from official interpretations of Marxism. However, from the perspective of academic ethics, the critique went beyond the boundaries of a "fair" intellectual dispute, by leveraging ideological force and thus limiting any potential for discussion. In this case, the Zimanas group took the position of ideological establishment, and demonstrated to the academic community that that which defines the key concepts of national and social policy also defines the most important theoretical categories.

The condemnation of the philosophers under the direction of Zimanas highlights the significance of the theoretical component that is often missing from analyses of cultural opposition. For example, criticisms of the book by A. Ramonaitė, J. Kavaliauskaitė and others, who attempted to reveal the origins of *Sąjūdis* (the National Front) and the restoration of Lithuania's independence⁴⁴ (see the Invisible Society in Soviet-era Lithuania collection)⁴⁵ through

38 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Antanas Sniečkus collection", by Darius Staliūnas, 2017. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

39 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Second Directorate of the Soviet Lithuanian KGB", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

40 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Glavlit (Lithuania) collection", by Vilius Ivanauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

41 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Uncompleted investigative files of the Soviet Estonian KGB", by Darius Staliūnas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming); COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Completed investigative files of the Soviet Estonian KGB", by Mari-Leen Tammela and Triin Tark, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

42 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Veljo Tormis' manuscript collection at the Estonian Theatre and Music Museum", by Mari-Leen Tammela and Triin Tark, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

43 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Romualdas Ozolas and Lithuanian Philosophers' Opposition", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

44 Ramonaitė and Kavaliauskaitė, *Sąjūdžio ištakų paieška*; Ramonaitė, *Nematoma sovietmečio visuomenė*.

45 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Invisible Society of Soviet-era Lithuania", by Darius Staliūnas, 2017. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

an analysis of networks of social scientists, highlighted that a discussion on how these networks actually functioned was missing from the narrative. The debate about *Problemos* shows that a certain degree interaction between representatives of the regime and its critiques was possible within the confines of cultural/intellectual networks, and that sophisticated theoretical views could also be expressed.

Even though there was an armed anti-Soviet resistance in all the Baltic republics after World War II, it was in Lithuania where the struggle was the most intense. Armed opposition in Lithuania was accompanied by intense anti-Soviet counter-propaganda, that manifested itself in the publication of newspapers, booklets, and artistic postcards (see the Lithuanian Partisans' Collection in the Lithuanian Special Archives).⁴⁶ Cultural resistance was also represented in poetry, especially in works by the partisan poet Bronius Krivickas (see the Bronius Krivickas collection).⁴⁷

Another important aspect of cultural opposition—not only in Lithuania and the other Baltic republics but in the whole USSR as well—was religious opposition. It was directly related to religious dissidence and the demand for political rights for believers. The Latvian Paulis Klavinš and Estonian Karl Laantee, for example, advocated such rights from beyond the borders of the USSR (see the Action of Light⁴⁸ and Karl Laantee personal archive⁴⁹ at the University of Tartu Library collections). Religious opposition in Lithuania was multifaceted, which is clearly reflected in the project's collections: it ranged from a firm intransigence with the Soviet system, dissident activity and an underground press, such as the Chronicle of the Catholic Church (see the Catholic Press in the Soviet Lithuania collection),⁵⁰ to attempts at finding a common ground or means of co-existence with the regime, as demonstrated by the activities of Vaclovas Aliulis (see the Vaclovas Aliulis collection)⁵¹ and the monk, Father Stanislovas (see the Father Stanislovas collection).⁵²

In neighboring Estonia, it was youth movements and civil rights opposition in the cities rather than religious groups that dominated cultural opposi-

46 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Lithuanian Partisans' Collection in Lithuanian Special Archives](#)", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

47 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Bronius Krivickas collection](#)", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2017. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

48 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Action of Light Collection](#)", by Daina Bleiere, 2017. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

49 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Karl Laantee personal archive at the University of Tartu Library](#)", by Darius Staliunas, 2017. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

50 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Catholic Press in the Soviet Lithuania](#)", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

51 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Vaclovas Aliulis](#)", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

52 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Father Stanislovas collection](#)", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

tion. Noor Tartu (see the Young Tartu collection),⁵³ the Estonian Students' Building Brigade archive at the National Archives of Estonia, and the Circle of History Students collections demonstrate that students took an interest in their historical heritage and the organization of conferences for young scientists (involving also their colleagues from Lithuania; see the Students Science Society of Vilnius University collection).⁵⁴ Moreover, even initiatives of communist youth organizations, such as the Komsomol, could create space for cultural opposition. Construction brigades, for example, that were gradually transformed, could inadvertently turn young people's enthusiasm towards non-Soviet purposes.

The cleansing of the national communist leadership in Latvia in 1959 left a significant mark on the history of the country. It resulted in a narrower dialogue between the party leadership and society, which undoubtedly impacted on the trajectory of cultural opposition. This is evident from the collection of documents of the Central Committee of the Latvian Communist Party. Latvia was the Baltic republic which suffered the most from the rapid Soviet industrialization that had a damaging impact on the region's social, economic and ecological situation. Therefore, in Latvia initiatives of cultural opposition were concentrated on preserving local traditions and the natural environment. Sometimes these activities seem confined to local areas like the museums in Madona which attempt to preserve the pre-Soviet historical legacy and cultural distinctiveness of the region (see Madona Local History and Art Museum).⁵⁵ Other intellectual initiatives were very targeted and sought concrete tasks to preserve nature and culture. For example, in March 1958, a group of 55 well-known scientists, writers and public figures signed a petition against plans to build a hydroelectric power plant (HPP) on the Daugava (the Pļaviņas HES). The plans envisaged the flooding of one of the most beautiful parts of the river's glacial valley, including many natural and historical monuments. The Elza Rudenaja, First River Daugava Festivity in 1979 collection reveals efforts of the opposition to draw the attention of society towards the issue of the Daugava river in the late 1970s. Such local or limited initiatives eventually turned into large scale mass protests; the protest campaign against the construction of the Daugavpils HPP in 1986–87 (see collection).⁵⁶ It was the first issue in Latvia that involved the wider public, and became the first step on the path to the restoration of national independence. The environmental movement also played a crucial role in mass mobilization in Lithuania and

53 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Young-Tartu collection", by Mari-Leen Tammela and Triin Tark, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

54 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Students Science Society of Vilnius University", by Saulius Grybkaskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

55 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Madona Museum of Local History and Art", by Daina Bleiere, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

56 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Protest campaign against construction of the Daugavpils HPP in 1986–1987", by Daina Bleiere, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

Estonia. For example, Estonian journalist Juhan Aare initiated a letter campaign against the planned phosphorite mines in Northern Estonia in February 1987 (see Juhan Aare collection).⁵⁷ The campaign turned out to be successful and expanded from sending letters to organizing mass protests. It became known as the Phosphorite War, and was a starting point of revolutionary transformations in Estonia in the late 1980s.

Although the collections in the Baltic republics are focused solely on the region, the material they contain also contribute to our understanding of cultural opposition in the neighboring countries, especially in Soviet Russia and Poland. The Sergei Soldatov personal archive collection, for example, tells the story of one of the most active dissidents in Estonia. A lecturer at the Polytechnic Institute in Tallinn, Soldatov had graduated from the Leningrad Technical Institute and maintained close ties with the Soviet Union's democratic movement, in which he was one of the most active members. The Helsinki Group also maintained close ties with all dissidents in the USSR (see the Viktoras Petkus collection),⁵⁸ while the Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania was the longest running samizdat publication in the USSR (1972–89). In terms of its format, it was comparable to the underground publication “Khronika tekushchykh sobytii” that was distributed in Russia, reporting news about Russian life, and the persecution of the democratic movement.

Chronology: Linear Interpretations and the History of Cultural Opposition

Narratives of the development and dynamics of anti-Soviet and non-Soviet opposition, often follow a similar pattern: they first discuss the emergence of underground circles and their activities, and then analyze open expressions of anti-Soviet sentiments, such as protests.⁵⁹ Such linear histories match the narrative of *Lūžis prie Baltijos* (Breakthrough by the Baltic Sea),⁶⁰ which represents the totalitarian approach in Soviet studies. However, as COURAGE demonstrates, events did not necessarily unfold in this direction. While open protests and manifestations of anti-Soviet sentiments often grew out of clandestine networks, it was more often the case that the opposite was true. The de-Stalinization process that took place during the Khrushchev period encouraged illusions of liberalization, and prompted more intense opposition activities from the creative intelligentsia and the youth, especially students. Lukšienė, Zaborskaitė and others were dismissed from their positions at Vil-

57 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Juhan Aare collection”, by Triin Tark, 2017. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

58 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Viktoras Petkus Collection”, by Vidas Sirutavičius, 2017. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

59 For example, Tamoliūnienė, *Laisvės proveržiai sovietiniame Kaune*.

60 For more about the descriptions “Kovojanči Lietuva” and “Lūžis prie Baltijos,” see: Grybkauskas, *Sovietinė nomenklatūra ir Pramonės plėtra Lietuvoje 1965–1985 metais*; Ivanauskas, *Lietuviškoji nomenklatūra biurokratinėje sistemoje*.

nus University for their anti-Soviet activities. Ideological rhetoric forced both party activists and the security organs to find explanations for why young people got involved in anti-Soviet activities; it was usually considered to be the result of weak or ineffective ideological indoctrination. Over time, participants in cultural opposition networks understood this attitude themselves and became more cautious. Those who became victims of repression as a result of their involvement in oppositional activities would often revert to more subtle forms of action, as did Vanda Zaborskaitė, Meilė Lukšienė and Aldona Liobytė.

However, somewhat paradoxically, in the first half of the 1970 and at the very beginning of the stagnation period, these more subtle forms of cultural opposition were not expressed. It could be said that at this time, many of the figures featured in the collections became in some way associated with one another. The dismissal of Jonas Jurašas from his position as the Kaunas Drama Theatre director due to his refusal to obey censors and remake his play in accordance with the demands of cultural administrators (see the Jonas Jurašas collection),⁶¹ and the banishment of Modris Tennison, the founder of one of the first pantomime troupes in the USSR, from the Kaunas Musical Theatre (see the Modris Tennison's Pantomime Team collection)⁶² illustrate the tension and conflict between the Soviet regime and the representatives of cultural opposition at the time. The prominent intellectual and former Soviet political prisoner Juozas Keliuotis (1902–1983) gathered around him cultural people who were unhappy with the Soviet regime, attracting them with his firm, uncompromising position and intellectual erudition. In 1972 he finally cracked, having been surrounded by a dense network of secret informers. We can get a sense of just how important an obstacle Keliuotis was to the Soviet regime not only from Soviet Lithuanian KGB documents, but also from the USSR KGB report to the Central Committee of the CPSU about his retraction from anti-Soviet activities. The success of Soviet security institutions to finally crack one of the pre-war Lithuanian intellectual authorities, Keliuotis, was overshadowed by the protests following the events in Kaunas that same year and the subsequent distribution of anti-Soviet leaflets (see the Romas Kalanta collection).⁶³

Unlike in Lithuania or Latvia, the collections from Estonia demonstrate that the most intensive expressions of cultural opposition took place from the late-1970s to the early-1980s. Therefore, it was no accident that when Gorbachev implemented his reforms in the USSR in the mid-1980s, Estonia was

61 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Jonas Jurašas collection", by Darius Staliunas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

62 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Modris Tenisons' Pantomime Team collection", by Darius Staliunas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

63 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Romas Kalanta collection", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

the first of the Baltic republics where major political and social transformations started to take place.

Between Cultural Opposition and Dissidence: The Opinion of Ex-Oppositionists and Experts

When attempting to summarize the various definitions of cultural opposition given by experts during the course of this project, one may notice a relative, yet essential difference between the notions of “cultural opposition” and “dissidence.” The contrast between these concepts is an important one, as it allows us to bring the project’s findings in line with discussions about society during the Soviet years that are taking place in historiography. Defining, substantiating, and most importantly discerning the activities of cultural opposition is a complex, albeit important undertaking, as it opens new avenues of research on the Soviet system. A comparative assessment of definitions of “dissidence” and “cultural opposition” reveals that these two forms of critical engagement with Soviet rule differed in terms of the content of the activities they refer to and the aims of the individuals and groups that were involved in them. Dissidents addressed mostly political questions, while the participants in cultural opposition movements were more engaged with cultural questions. The historian Arūnas Streikus has outlined this difference accurately, doubting in an interview whether Catholic independent publishing (*samizdat*) could actually be considered as cultural opposition. While cultural opposition challenged the cultural values promoted by the government, and did not openly seek to abolish the Soviet order, the dissident movement, which would most definitely include Catholic underground publishing, should without a doubt be considered as political opponents of the regime (see the Catholic Press in Soviet Lithuania collection).⁶⁴

Political dissidence and cultural opposition are different by nature. Dissidence was a direct result of the loss of independent statehood and the subsequent struggle to regain it, seeking to exploit both international political developments and the opportunities within society itself (see Vytautas Skuodis,⁶⁵ *Periodical Auseklis* collections).⁶⁶ The origins of cultural opposition lay within a symbiotic relationship with the regime: the disappointment and the conflict that were provoked by limitations on the freedom of one’s professional or creative activity. Naturally, political dissidence and cultural opposition overlapped and often supplemented one another. This was accurately noted by

64 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “*Catholic Press in the Soviet Lithuania*”, by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

65 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “*Vytautas Skuodis Collection*”, by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

66 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “*Periodical Auseklis Collection*”, by Daina Bleiere, 2017. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

Andriukaitis who stated that dissidents acted on the currents of resistance and the cultural opposition that surrounded them, even though cultural opposition did not openly confront the system itself (see Strazdelis Underground University collection). When discussing the bond between dissidents and cultural opposition, it is important to note that even if cultural activists were aware of the difference between their activities and those of the dissidents, they were still the main consumers of dissident literature. They read what dissidents wrote and published in samizdat literature, and were involved in its distribution (see, for example, Manuscript magazines at the Estonian Cultural History Archives).⁶⁷

There are numerous observations testifying to the carefully considered line between dissidents and the cultural opposition that the cultural activists did not wish to overstep, understanding that they would be able to do much more by remaining with the framework of legality. Film director Jonas Jurašas and the historian Vytautas Umbrasas could be considered examples of this. Their disagreement with the system arose not only from the sense that there was a limit to one's professional or creative life but also from a certain need for moral and intellectual development. Soviet censorship restricted and oppressed any attempts at self-improvement, social engagement or horizontal communication links, and thus provoked the dissatisfaction of cultural activists, and prompted a search for ways to overcome these restraints. As a type of resistance, cultural opposition was a very effective form of expressing disagreement with the government that allowed people to creatively search for opportunities for cooperation and self-expression while avoiding any direct conflicts with the regime.

The activities of philosophers illustrate the various considerations and ideas about cultural opposition. The school where philosopher E. Meškauskas taught was not anti-Soviet in its stance, it was merely concerned with a deeper understanding of the origins of Marxist philosophy. However, as has been mentioned previously, due to criticisms articulated by Genrikas Zimanas—the most important Soviet Lithuanian ideologue of the time—and his followers, the philosophers that were under attack even discussed the possibility of publishing samizdat. The school ultimately rejected this idea and searched for legal forms of cultural opposition instead. In this context, much like in the case of Jurašas, there was a certain boundary that the philosophers were reluctant to cross. It is likely that this decision had to do with their understanding and knowledge of the Soviet system, and the belief that more could be achieved by operating legally within the cultural field.

67 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Manuscript magazines at the Estonian Cultural History Archives](#)", by Mari-Leen Tammela and Triin Tark, 2017. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

Problems and best practices

Perhaps the most complicated field in the legacy of cultural opposition in the Baltic States is the visual arts. There are only a few works that are kept at the Lithuanian National Art Gallery that demonstrate aspects of national opposition in art and sculpture (see the Lithuanian National Art Gallery Collection).⁶⁸ The relative and situational nature of opposition is highlighted by the activities and works of Vincas Kisarauskas (see the Vincas Kisarauskas collection)⁶⁹ and his wife Saulė Kisarauskienė (see the Saulė Aleškevičiūtė-Kisarauskienė collection).⁷⁰ These were two of the most famous graphic artists in Lithuania, but they were also administrators, who followed political orders from Moscow, and found hints of formalism and other “unsuitable” forms of expression in their own work. In Estonia, Indrek Hirv’s art⁷¹ and Heldur Viires’ private collections⁷² more openly expressed oppositionist views, and the authors of the works in the collections also experienced repression themselves. Nonetheless, the collections were, and remain inaccessible. The Hirv art collection was assembled from gifts to the owner and to his parents, whereas the Viires collection evolved unintentionally. For this reason, the impact of these collections on society is limited. In contrast, the Paul Kondas painting collection and Kurts Fridrihsons collection present good examples of joint state private initiatives to preserve and display the legacy of opposition in visual arts. While the paintings of Estonian amateur artist Paul Kondas and the Latvian Kurts Fridrihsons were not accessible to a wider audience during Soviet times, Rein Joost, the former director of the Museum of Viljandi (Estonia) and writer Gundega Repše (Latvia), initiated the transfer (acquisition or donation) of works from private collections to state museums, thereby making them available to society.

Concluding Remarks

It could be argued that not enough attention is being given today to the preservation of the legacy of cultural opposition and to the understanding of its social significance in the Baltic states. This partly has to do with the politics of memory in these countries, which accentuates the importance of Soviet re-

68 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Lithuanian National Art Gallery”, by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

69 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Vincas Kisarauskas Collection”, by Vilius Ivanauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

70 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Saulė Aleškevičiūtė-Kisarauskienė”, by Vilius Ivanauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

71 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Indrek Hirv’s art collection”, by Külli Kuusik, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

72 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Heldur Viires’ private collection”, by Liisi Hint and Triin Tark, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

pressions, such as the murders and deportations conducted by USSR security organs; the armed partisan struggle against Soviet rule; and the anti-Soviet dissident movement. For this reason, the cultural opposition that subsisted in a grey zone, and engaged in negotiations with the regime over interpretations of cultural heritage, language and history, is less visible in public life today, and the documentation of its activities has practically been left to private initiatives. In Lithuania, for example, state archives and museums are more concerned with documents with the status of special collections. Such documents include the files of the Lithuanian Communist Party, Soviet state security and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. At the same time, the Lithuanian Special Archives was entrusted by the state to actively search for, and archive sources in relation to the anti-Soviet armed resistance. Other state archives in the country administer and store documents that already belong to their collections, and do not conduct searches for new documents. This is the main reason why ensuring the survival of collections of cultural opposition and granting access to researchers and the public remains the concern of private individuals—former representatives of cultural opposition and their heirs. The description of these collections during the course of the COURAGE project revealed that personal archives contain large volumes of interesting material, although they often remain uncatalogued. A case in point is the cooperation between the society of history students at Vilnius University and Noor (Young) Tartu, the association of young historians at Estonia's Tartu University (see the Young-Tartu⁷³ and Students Science Society of Vilnius University collections).⁷⁴ The historical topics that were discussed and the social and personal links between the students had drawn the attention of not just academic administrators at the time, but also of Soviet state security. During the project, the COURAGE researcher was given letters and other interesting material on the basis of which a new collection was created in the Manuscripts Department of the Lithuanian Institute of History. This example demonstrates the importance of cooperation between archives, museums and researchers in the preservation of the legacy of cultural opposition.

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73 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Young-Tartu collection", by Mari-Leen Tammela and Triin Tark, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

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- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Madona Museum of Local History and Art", by Daina Bleiere, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Manuscript magazines at the Estonian Cultural History Archives", by Mari-Leen Tammela and Triin Tark, 2017. Accessed: September 20, 2018.
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Meilutė Lukšienė collection", by Saulius Grybkaukas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Modris Tenisons' Pantomime Team collection", by Darius Staliunas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Periodical Auseklis Collection", by Daina Bleiere, 2017. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Protest campaign against construction of the Daugavpils HPP in 1986–1987", by Daina Bleiere, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018.
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Rimantas Jasas collection", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2017. Accessed: September 20, 2018.
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Rimantas Vėbra collection", by Darius Staliunas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Romas Kalanta collection", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Romualdas Ozolas and Lithuanian Philosophers' Opposition", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Saulė Aleškevičiūtė-Kisarauskienė", by Vilius Ivanauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018.
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Second Directorate of the Soviet Lithuanian KGB", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Sirje Kiin Private Archive", by Mari-Leen Tammela, 2017. Accessed: September 20, 2018.
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Strazdelis Underground University", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Students Science Society of Vilnius University", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Uncompleted investigative files of the Soviet Estonian KGB", by Darius Staliunas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Vaclovas Aliulis", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Vanda Zaborskaitė collection", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Veljo Tormis' manuscript collection at the Estonian Theatre and Music Museum", by Mari-Leen Tammela and Triin Tark, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Viktoras Petkus Collection", by Vladas Sirutavičius, 2017. Accessed: September 20, 2018.
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Vincas Kisarauskas Collection", by Vilius Ivanauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018.
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Vytautas Skuodis Collection", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018.
- COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Young-Tartu collection", by Mari-Leen Tammela and Triin Tark, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

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Czechoslovakia

Introduction

Two different periods are usually identified in relation to Czechoslovak oppositional activities and movements in the socialist era.¹ The first one, connected with the years of establishing communist rule in the country after 1948, is usually called the anti-communist resistance. Oppositional activities, however, were not too visible and numerous after February 1948. Students' protests or several isolated armed actions were exceptions. Oppositional movements were then affected by the communist repressions focusing on potential "enemies," such as non-communist politicians, representatives of the Church, army, state and economic administration, non-communist World War II resistance figures, and many others. The second period was the so-called normalization, which followed the socialist attempts at reform of the 1960s and the Prague Spring in 1968, when opposition was enriched by many active ex-communists. Since the 1970s manifest opposition inside the communist party was almost completely absent. On the other hand, civil opposition began to grow from various milieus ranging from political-oriented intellectual opposition to alternative youth scenes. Such chronologies are, however, only a starting point for a deeper understanding of the conceptual changes and various individual stories inside the composite groups of cultural opposition. Despite the decisive efforts of the state and party representatives towards cultural homogenization, not even official culture represented an immobile and unified system. The boundaries between official and forbidden or tolerated cultural production were variable and sometimes not very easy to grasp.²

It is important to stress also that the Czech and Slovak parts of the country were not always developed in the same manner. Divergences can be seen also in the quality and extent of historical scholarship on cultural opposition, dissent, and exile issues for the period 1948–89. In the Czech Republic these topics enjoyed much more attention than in Slovakia. This informational gap is visible also in processing oppositional collections, general knowledge about topics, and public demands to deal with these issues. In post-1989 Slovakia the period of the Second World War and the history of the Slovak state are

1 Blažek, "Typologie opozice a odporu proti komunistickému režimu," 10–24; Tůma, "Czechoslovakia," 29–49; Veber, *Třetí odboj ČSR v letech 1948–1953*.

2 Alan, "Alternativní kultura jako sociologické téma," 13.

predominant themes. Contrarily, in the Czech Republic, normalization and “coming to term with the communist past” became essential for academic and public debate. This difference is visible in the production and activities of institutes of national memory, institutions that aim at keeping awareness on the activities of totalitarian regimes and democratic opposition.³

Types, Persons and Turning Points of Cultural Opposition in Czechoslovakia

The era after the communist takeover of power in February 1948 was accompanied by intensive censorship and the elimination of non-communist press, centralization of cultural policy, nationalization of enterprises, and the intensified repression of individuals and groups of the population; this was often done in a preventive and disciplinary manner. The Communist Party propaganda promised to implement “a new social order,” and to fight “against bourgeois elements.” Such “elements” referred not only representatives of the First Czechoslovak Republic upper class; this term was used by communist propaganda to portray non-communists and potential enemies in general. This period was characterized by the strong persecution and intimidation of people not in line with the regime.⁴ After the communist party came to power, spontaneous, unorganized protests appeared, but they did not grow into an organized, united opposition movement due to the systematic repression and, last but not least, to a non-negligible support of the communist measures by the Czechoslovak society.⁵ However, no more significant opposition attempts were successful, and the state authorities participated in systematic repressions against selected individuals and groups of the population. The result was a further wave of emigration, changes in the society’s structure, as well as significant changes in the nature of official cultural production based on a Stalinist version of the Marxist-Leninist philosophy and so-called socialist realism in art. They did not allow any possibility of autonomous coexistence.

Restrictions upon artistic and intellectual creation also provoked a response. A group of authors that emerged from surrealist decay, began to produce a samizdat edition of *Půlnoc* (Midnight), the name of which is probably an allusion to the illegal French edition *Les Editions de Minuit* from the period of World War II. The formation of this group was also conditioned by the critical attitudes towards the contemporary society and represented by the aesthetic theory of so-called embarrassing poetry and overall realism. For the

3 Kovanic, “Institutes of Memory in Slovakia and the Czech Republic,” 81–104; Sniegón, “Implementing Post-Communist National Memory,” 97–124.

4 Kaplan and Paleček, *Komunistický režim a politické procesy v Československu*.

5 Veber, Bureš and Rokoský, *Třetí odboj*.

subversion *ad absurdum* artists used a lot of elements of Stalinist mythology, and by purposefully naive imitations of Stalinist aesthetics they were actually straining it. They did not try to erase it and moralize it. Because of their anti-authoritarian and anti-elitist attitude, and their underground lifestyle, they were equated to the beat generation.⁶ The edition was founded by Egon Bondy (Zbyněk Fišer) and Ivo Vodseďálek at the turn of 1950/51 and about 49 works were published.⁷ Egon Bondy, in particular, had a great influence on Czechoslovak underground culture until the 1990s. His anti-utopian novel *Invalidní sourozenci* (Invalid Siblings), from 1974, became an important manifest of the underground lifestyle.⁸

In the second half of the 1960s, the time of gradual release from, and critical reflection upon, the previous era became a part of public discussion, accompanied with some kind of return of suppressed topics and discussions according to the economical, historical, and cultural issues. For example, the very critical and subversive Czechoslovak New Wave in film production emerged. Films as *The Firemen's Ball* (1967), *All My Countrymen* (1969), *The Cremator* (1969), *Larks on a String* (1969) and *The Ear* (1970), become iconic and subsequently banned works.⁹ The Prague Spring was a period of defiance and intellectual and artistic freedom that resurrected various non-communist and liberal intellectual traditions in public discourse. Especially alternative leftist traditions increased. The military invasion was often represented by the dissenters and exiles as a veritable national catastrophe: the moral, spiritual, social, political, economic, cultural, and ecological destruction of the country. The new era was also marked by mass expulsion from the communist party in 1969–70, when more than half a million members were not renewed for the party membership.¹⁰ Many intellectuals and artists lost their jobs and the chance to act publicly. Some of them were even forced to leave the country. By the early 1970s, a vibrant civil society was heavily pacified. The so-called period of normalization, i.e. the attempt to reverse the political reform process initiated during the Prague Spring of 1968, was followed also by different forms of control and repressions, limitations of freedom of movement, the restoration of censorship, bans on publication, blacklisting, etc. In the everyday life of Czechoslovak society this led to strict differentiation between private and public discourses.¹¹

Adaptation of the Final Act on Security and Cooperation in Europe, signed in Helsinki in 1975 by Czechoslovakia, provided an important legal

6 Machovec, *Pohledy zevnitř*, 61–69, 101–14.

7 Edice Půlnoc. Accessed September 11, 2018. <http://www.slovníkceskeliteratury.cz/showContent.jsp?docId=1806>

8 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Acquisition of ‘Invalid Siblings’ by the Museum of Czech Literature”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2018. Accessed: September 27, 2018.

9 Hames, *The Czechoslovak New Wave*.

10 Maňák, *Čistky v Komunistické straně Československa 1969–1970*.

11 See e.g. Simečka, *The restoration of order*.

framework for dissident movements. Another very important impulse is connected to the trial with the members of the Czech underground bands The Plastic People of the Universe and DG 307 in 1976.¹² The musicians got strong support from dissidents and established a common platform—Charter 77. Also, the international response to the establishment of Charter 77 was extraordinary.

The declaration of Charter 77 is a document of informal and open civic initiative which first publicly appeared in January 1977, and attracted until January 1990 1,886 signatories. Chartists criticized the failing implementation of human rights and individual freedom in the country (freedom of speech and expression, privacy, education, confession) as well as the subordination of the state apparatus to the communist party. Argumentation was built from legal positions with the aim to promote the civil society with a voice in a platform of “non-political politics.”¹³ The movement included people from a wide range of opinion groups. Signatories came often from very different social and cultural backgrounds and had various life experiences. From the beginning, reform Communists excluded from the party played an important role. Conservative or liberal-democrat-oriented intellectuals, leftist students, members of the underground, as well as the representatives of different religious environments were significant supporters of the idea of Charter 77 as well. Spreading the text of the document was considered a political crime. Until the end of 1989 many of the chartists were imprisoned. For example, Václav Havel was imprisoned three times since the 1968 invasion for a total of five years, with the longest term from 1979 to 1983. Aside from the imprisonment, chartists were often more affected by other forms of persecution, e.g. by different kinds of harassment and restrictions.

Some (not only) chartists were affected by the so-called “Assanation Action,” which was organized in 1977–84 by the State Security with the aim of decomposing the opposition structures and forcing selected activists to leave the country. The treatment of Charter 77 signatories prompted the creation of a support group, the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Prosecuted (Výbor na obranu nespravedlivě stíhaných – VONS). Despite unrelenting harassment and arrests, VONS continued to issue reports on the government’s violations of human rights.¹⁴ In these circumstances closer cooperation with exiles also began to develop. At the end of 1978, nuclear physicist František Janouch, who for political reasons was expelled from his employment, founded in Stockholm the Foundation of Charter 77, which mainly helped families of Czechoslovak (political) prisoners and supported various dissident activities.

¹² Stárek Čuñas and Kudrna, *Kapela*.

¹³ Císařovská and Prečan, *Charta 77*.

¹⁴ COURAGE Registry, s.v. “VONS collection of Libri Prohibiti”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

Charter 77 met with less success in Slovakia: only a few Slovaks signed Charter 77 and some of them were already based in Prague, such as historian Ján Mlynárik or writer Dominik Tatarka. However, this does not mean that in Slovakia no oppositional activities emerged. Slovaks created a special model of oppositional behavior primarily built on clandestine Christian activities. Good examples of these were Christian pilgrimages. The underground church was predominantly led by a charismatic person, a priest or a lay animator who led the communities, cells of several believers. Such communities originated in the early 1970s in Bratislava and spread across the country. In these cells, people met for the purpose of spiritual development, socialization, as well as the exchange of information. The cells of the Christian families created an alternative to the regime. This involved meetings in the houses or flats of someone in the group, where various prayer meetings, activities for children (carnivals, games, music) were organized, as well as the distribution of forbidden literature, music, and films.¹⁵ The role of Christian churches was less significant in the Czech lands, but not absent. The famous pilgrimage to Velehrad in South Moravia in 1985 became an important and symbolic anti-communist manifestation, attracting more than 100,000 worshippers.

In addition to the above-mentioned oppositional actions, different kind of subversive cultural practices emerged with the effort to establish a critical response to official cultural politics. These attracted mostly writers, academics, and artists who were banned from their previous positions and had no chance to present their work officially. From the middle of the 1970s they reinforced the organization of various unofficial cultural happenings, the production of samizdat literature, and they started to create their own independent forms of cultural environments and thinking.¹⁶ Representatives of the other subversive group—underground—organized in 1974, in the small village Postupice, a musical festival of so called “second culture.” In 1975 the most prominent figure of this scene, Ivan Martin Jirous, declared a struggle against the establishment with his very influential document *A Report on the Third Czech Musical Revival* (Zpráva o třetím českém hudebním obrození). People from the underground movement refused to be part of the system and propagated an idea of authentic and independent art (mostly music and poetry). An important mediator of that lifestyle was a samizdat periodical *Vokno* (Window), established in 1979. Because of the strictness of the regime, many of these representatives of unofficial culture were persecuted. Jirous, for example, was jailed five times, totaling 8,5 years of imprisonment.¹⁷

The dissident Václav Benda appeared in 1978 with a similar idea about a parallel society. His concept of “parallel polis” was seen as a tool to escape the

15 Múčka, “Štát chcel prerobiť ich deti, tak ho oklamali.”

16 Otáhal, *Opoziční proudy v české společnosti 1969–1989*, 111–23.

17 For discussion about “second culture” see: Accessed September 11, 2018. <http://www.disent.usd.cas.cz/temata/druha-kulturaunderground/>.

official communist regime and build independent social structures. The main idea was to build another system for the protection of civic rights and freedoms, education and research abilities, and media – channels for spreading information, economic, and political structures.¹⁸

Writers, who lost their opportunity to officially publish after 1968, were probably the best organized informal oppositional group. From 1972 samizdat literature began to flourish and was seen by the authors and publishers as a way around the publishing restrictions against them.¹⁹ While samizdat publications appeared in Czechoslovakia already shortly after February 1948, the word samizdat was used only from the 1970s. Over the next few years, various editions emerged. The major editions of samizdat series, e.g. *Edice Petlice* (Padlock Editions) founded by Ludvík Vaculík in 1972, or *Edice Expedice* (Expedition Edition) co-founded by Václav Havel in 1975, produced hundreds of titles and thousands of copies of “banned literature.” Most of the banned authors published their works via those channels.²⁰ Despite many quality publications, it is clear that we do not have a precise picture about the overall scope of samizdat activities. Recent research shows that this phenomenon was far more extensive than it was thought to be. Nowadays the Libri Prohibiti collection contains more than 17,000 units of samizdat publications from the 1950s to 1989.²¹ The Encyclopedia of the Czech Literary Samizdat mentions more than 120 publishers or editions labelled as literary samizdat.²² Dozens of editions of non-literary samizdat of different focus (religious, philosophical, historical, sociological, ecological, esoteric, musical, art, etc.) should be added to this number.

Moreover, a large amount of samizdat periodical volumes was published about many kinds of issues. The Collection of the Libri Prohibiti contains more than 440 Czech samizdat periodical titles.²³ We can mention just a few influential examples: *Historické studie* (Historical studies), *Kritický sborník* (Critical proceedings), *Střední Evropa* (Central Europe), *Obsah* (Contents), and *Host* (Guest). The main periodicals from the Czechoslovak exiles were *Listy* (Letters) issued by ex-communist Jiří Pelikán in Rome and *Svědectví* (Testimony) issued by prominent representative of anti-communist exiles Pavel Tigrid in Paris.

18 Benda et al., “Parallel Polis,” 211–46.

19 Bolton, *Worlds of Dissent*; Bolton, “Palmy za polárním kruhem,” 900.

20 Few other editions e.g. *Edice Půlnoc* (Midnight Editions), *Kvart* (Quarto Editions), *Česká Expedice* (Bohemian Expedition), *Krameriova Expedice* (Kramerius’s Expedition), *Popelnice* (Garbage Can Editions) etc.

21 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Czech Samizdat Collection at Libri Prohibiti”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

22 About recent research see: Příběh, “Úvaha nejen pojmoslovná.”

23 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Czech Samizdat Collection at Libri Prohibiti”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

Very successful in spreading information and cultural diversity in the sphere of music was a Jazzová sekce (Jazz section) community, with a large number of public events and semiofficial or later samizdat publications and unofficial events.²⁴ Important producers of independent materials were also the religious communities.²⁵ Conspiracy and secrecy were an important condition in all kinds of samizdat production. The Czechoslovak Jehovah's Witnesses reportedly published millions of samizdat copies in secret printing offices, using cyclostyle and even offset technology. This unique achievement was developed in perfect isolation and in no communication with other samizdat activities.²⁶

Thematic variability and the amount of samizdat literature produced was significantly higher in the Czech part of the state. But various samizdat issues could also be found in Slovakia. For example, a philosophical-theological samizdat called *Orientácia* (Orientation) was published there since 1973. Later František Mikloško, Ján Čarnogurský and Vladimír Jukl published *Náboženstvo a súčasnosť* (Religion and Present). Other known samizdats were, for example, *Bratislavské listy* (Bratislava papers), *Katolícky mesačník* (Catholic monthly), and *ZrNO*.²⁷ Liberal journals were *Kontakt* (Contact) (1980–85), *Altamíra* (Altamira) (1985–87) and in 1988–89, *Fragment K*.²⁸ The most famous samizdat coming from Slovakia was the *Bratislava/nahlas* (Bratislava/aloud) brochure, published in 1987 by Slovak dissident Ján Budaj, which drew attention to the catastrophic situation of the environment. The publication gave rise to a considerable response. Approximately 30,000 brochures circulated in the form of copies, and the State security police was unable to effectively prevent their spread.²⁹

Some samizdat publishers cooperated also with the exile community. Copies of all kinds of samizdat publications were sent through several couriers—for example to Vilém Prečan, who catalogued, archived and disseminated these materials. A former historian, Prečan was, in 1970, released from the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, expelled from the Communist Party and prosecuted as one of the editors of the documentary publication *Seven Prague Days 21–27 August 1968*, the so-called “Black Book,” documenting the occupation of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact troops. In 1976 he emigrated from Czechoslovakia and settled in West Germany. There he played an important role in collecting and smuggling literature and providing technical assistance to the Czechoslovak opposition. These activities were institutionalized by establishing the Czechoslovak Documentary Center of Independent Literature

24 Bugge, “Boj magického razítka,” 346–82.

25 Holečková, *Cesty českého katolíckého samizdatu*.

26 Machovec, “The Types and Functions,” 17.

27 Šimulčík, *Svetlo z podzemia*, 15–26.

28 Čarnogurský, “Zárodky otvorenej spoločnosti,” 113–17.

29 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “*Bratislava/nahlas*”, by Magdaléna Stýblová, 2018. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

in Scheinfeld-Schwarzenberg in 1986 under his supervision. As a result of the collaboration with Czechoslovak dissidents and exiles, many books of banned writers were released by Western publishing houses.

Education was an important part of the culture of dissent. So-called underground universities or home seminars started at the end of the 1940s in order to preserve students' contact with professors expelled from universities. These meetings were open for anyone and were attended mostly by those who found themselves outside the official system. Discussed topics were chosen according to the audience's interests. In other cases, more attention was paid to educate the dissidents' children and the general youth. Even scholars from abroad were invited to teach. As a result, the Jan Hus Educational Foundation and Association of Jan Hus were established at the end of the 1970s in the West to support underground education in Czechoslovakia. This kind of education was found in Prague, Brno and Bratislava. Participants were also incorporated into a broader network of independent activities including exhibitions, performances and music festivals.³⁰

Other areas of culture were also affected by normalization. Some performers were banned and many balanced precariously between official and non-official culture. Bohumil Hrabal, for example, was banned from publishing and some of his works were published in samizdat. In 1975 he made a self-critical statement, which enabled some of his work to appear in print, in heavily edited form, and some of his writings continued to be printed only in samizdat. The tradition of oppositional theater was maintained from the period of the World War II. Under communist rule a famous actress, Vlasta Chramostová, organized hidden performances in her own living room for small groups of guests.³¹ Jindřich Štreit organized informal exhibitions, concerts and theatre performances in Sovinec.³² An important and diverse group of alternative musicians emerged around the Jazz section and were influenced by New Wave Music. Although these musicians were not banned, they also were not 'official'. Another important phenomenon of semi-official culture was the folk scene with its so-called Porta festivals.

When Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in the Soviet Union in early 1985, Czechoslovak authorities eased up on political pressure and dissidents invented new forms of action against the regime, including petitions and demonstrations. In the years of perestroika, samizdat publishing in Czechoslovakia reached its peak: more series of editions and samizdat and fanzine periodicals were founded. The next generation of underground artists originated around the samizdat *Revolver Revue* (established in 1985). A great number of magnitizdat issues (tape recordings, cassette recordings) were pro-

30 Day, *The Velvet Philosophers*.

31 Just, "Divadlo v totalitním systému," 10–18.

32 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Jindřich Štreit in Sovinec Collection](#)", by Štěpánka Bielešová and Anna Vrtálková 2018. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

duced and distributed by dissident Petr Cibulka from Brno, who recorded diverse musical events and sometimes circulated them in spite of the authors' explicit objections. With financial assistance from exiles, a dissident video magazine—called *Originální Videojournal* (Original Videojournal)—was produced from 1987.³³

In the case of alternative music, the subversive and protest potential of punk and new wave was recognized by state authorities as a “diversion of the western life style” and as “anti-socialist attitudes.” As a response, a massive campaign of repression against these styles was carried out by the Secret police.³⁴ Some punks were involved also in cooperation with the underground movement and dissidents, but punk rock was not primarily about politics, it was based on rebellion, provocation, and nonconformism, and it often involved a self-destructive lifestyle.

At the end of the 1980s, many independent initiatives and civil movements started to operate. In 1987, the popular monthly samizdat *Lidové noviny* (The people's newspaper) was established. In Slovakia the criticism was highly concentrated on topics like religious freedom or ecology. In 1988, massive demonstrations for religious freedom took place in Prague and in Bratislava. The most massive anti-regime gathering for religious freedom in Slovakia, *Sviečková manifestácia* (Candle demonstration), took place on March 25, 1988. Against the peaceful gathering of 3,000 to 4,000 worshippers with candles in their hands, the state stormed violently, with water-cannons and truncheons.³⁵ In December 1988, for the first time, a public demonstration was held to mark the 40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Prague. In January 1989, “Palach's Week” was held in Prague on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the self-immolation of Jan Palach. In June, a successful petition called *Several sentences* was announced, with a request to open a free and democratic discussion and to end the state control of cultural production.

After November 17, 1989 many dissidents became active in the Civic Forum in the Czech part of the country and in the Public against Violence in Slovakia, and they took influential positions in the new state administration. The fall of the regime also meant new possibilities for preserving the cultural heritage of the opposition. Since 1993, Czechoslovakia has been divided into a separate Czech and Slovak Republic.

33 Lovejoy, “‘Video Knows No Borders’,” 206–20; COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Original Videojournal Collection”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2018. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

34 Vaněk, *Byl to jenom rock'n'roll?*, 446–51.

35 Šimulčík, *Čas svitaní; Sviečková manifestácia I*; Korec, *Bratislavský veľký piatok*; COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Candle demonstration”, by Magdaléna Stýblová, 2018. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

Types, History, and Sociology of Collections

The collapse of state socialism was crucial to the history of the collections on cultural opposition in Czechoslovakia. Secretly kept collections and manuscripts suddenly appeared as an important part of post-socialist transformation processes. At the beginning of 1990s many unofficially distributed textual and musical works were published and became an influential part of recognized cultural production and anti-communist legacy of the new political order. Special collections documenting cultural opposition in Czechoslovakia emerged after 1989 as well. Thus, there is today a wide range of institutions in the territory of former Czechoslovakia that are collecting and preserving the materials associated with the activities of dissent and cultural opposition. Some collections are unique not just in the case of Czech and Slovak history, they also represent important artifacts of European dissent and exile.

There are state-owned or state-supported institutions, independent foundations, and private collections. Most of these do not specialize on the issue of opposition activities, but by the archival law are concerned to collect historical artifacts and documents. The Czech state also supports institutions by a grant system. There are also internationally recognized specialized foundations continually providing a lot of energy in collecting and spreading information about dissent and exile before 1989.

However, these collections would not exist today without previous preserving and collecting activities, personal courage, and the ingenuity of the real members of the dissident and non-conformist circles. Collectors were various people and institutions ranging from state institutions to individuals, often dissidents. As an example of good practices of the official institutions, we could mention the Museum of Czech Literature, where purchases of materials produced by banned authors took place before 1989 as well as after the “Velvet Revolution.”³⁶ The significant role of this institution in preserving the heritage of pre-1989 cultural opposition is illustrated by the fact that artists, mainly writers, themselves offered their documents to the Museum. Before 1989, these purchases were officially carried on through antiquarian bookshops. Thus, employees of these bookshops participated in collecting as well. Purchases were a kind of support of banned artists and writers and could be realized thanks to employees of these state institutions (best known is Marie Krulichová from the acquisition department of the Literary Archive of the Museum of Czech Literature). Similar purchases were realized also by the National Museum. Besides financial support for oppositional artists, these activities also led to the preservation of valuable historical sources for future generations. The significant role of the Museum of Czech Literature during the era of state socialism is illustrated by the fact

36 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Museum of Czech Literature”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

that in 1966 the American experimental group Fluxus, being on their East-European tour, performed here.³⁷

The Czechoslovak liberalization period of the 1960s saw a significant development of art collections, including works by non-conformist artists, and including photographs, manuscripts, illustrations, paintings, and graphics. For example, the Benedikt Rejt Gallery was founded at that time with the aim of collecting contemporary trends in the visual arts. The head of the gallery, Jan Sekera, was known for supporting purchases of works by unofficial artists. The other notable art collector was Jiří Hůla, who established the Fine Art Archive in 1980s.³⁸ This collection is now stored in the popular and frequently visited DOX gallery in Prague. Important collections of art were purchased also in exile. In 1968 Jan and Meda Mládek bought a broader collection from an exhibition of Czechoslovak art that took place in Washington and began to establish their own collection of unofficial Czechoslovak and East European art. After 1989, Meda Mládková moved back to her homeland and her collection became a basis for the Museum Kampa, now a very popular and significant institution.³⁹ Nowadays, pre-1989 works by unofficial artist could be found not only in private galleries and museums, but in public (regional) galleries all over the Czech Republic as well. Some art collections are stored in academic institutions. This is the case with the Video-Archive of the Academic Research Centre of the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague, which contains also many pre-1989 non-conformist works.⁴⁰

The richness of today's collections would not have been achieved without the courage of several individual dissidents who risked their own freedom. Persecution of samizdat producers and distributors was mostly based on accusations of "antistate," "antigovernment," "antisocialist," and "anti-Communist," attitudes. This is especially the case of Jiří Gruntorád, a publisher and collector of samizdat literature and signatory to Charter 77, who was twice imprisoned because of his samizdat activities. His pre-1989 samizdat collection has been significantly expanded since the fall of the communist regime in Czechoslovakia and now constitutes only a fraction of present samizdat and exile collections of the Libri Prohibiti Library founded by Gruntorád in 1990.⁴¹ Libri Prohibiti was established as a foundation, with the aim to collect in one place exile and samizdat literature and make this accessible to the public in order to spread a "message about past times," and show how the

37 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Exhibition: Performance of the Fluxus Group, 1966", by Johana Lomová, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

38 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Fine Art Archive", by Jiří Hůla, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

39 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Jan and Meda Mládek Collection", by Johana Lomová, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

40 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Video Archive of the Academic Research Centre of the Academy of Fine Arts", by Johana Lomová, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

41 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Society of Libri Prohibiti", by Michaela Kůželová, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

communist regime in Czechoslovakia functioned. Jiří Gruntorád was convinced that such a library should be private and independent. Libri Prohibiti's samizdat periodicals collections were listed by UNESCO in the Memory of the World Register. Besides Jiří Gruntorád, another iconic collector was Jaromír Šavrda, a Czech writer, dissident, and signatory to Charter 77, who was also imprisoned for many years for disseminating samizdat literature in the 1970s and 1980s.

The role of Czechoslovak exiles was very important in spreading information about the suppression of human rights in Czechoslovakia, as well as in preserving alternative cultural production. We can mention for example the activities of the Czechoslovak Society of Art and Sciences based in the United States with several branches around the world, or the exile politicians like Jiří Pelikán and Pavel Tigrid. A very special institution in this sense, the Czechoslovak Documentation Center for Independent Literature, was founded in 1986 in the Federal Republic of Germany by significant exile personalities. The Center has the combined functions of a literary archive, a specialized library, and research, study, information and publishing facilities. Original samizdat texts and periodicals were copied there and regularly distributed to large Western libraries. The Center has also organized books, magazines, documents, and the smuggling of technical equipment for producing samizdat literature back to Czechoslovakia. The collections of this Center are now stored in the Archives of the National Museum.⁴² Several foreign institutions played important roles in preserving Czechoslovak (or East European in general) collections. These are mainly academic institutions or libraries, as for example the Research Centre for East European Studies in Bremen, the Library of Congress, the British Library, the Royal Library of Belgium, the University of Nebraska – Lincoln,⁴³ and the Hoover Institution at Stanford University.⁴⁴

Nowadays, literary materials are probably the most numerous types of collections documenting the Czechoslovak unofficial cultural activities before 1989. For example, in the Literary Archive of the Museum of Czech Literature, dozens of collections of banned, unofficial, or non-conformist writers, poets, or publicists can be found.⁴⁵ Thus, for the Czech Republic, a large number of

42 COURAGE Registry, s.v. *"The Czechoslovak Documentation Center Československé Dokumentační Středisko, O. P. S."*, by Jitka Hanáková, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

43 Especially the Charter 77 Collection.

44 E.g. Personal collections of Czech poet Karel Šiktanc, journalists Stanislav Budín and Ferdinand Peroutka, historians Vilém Prečan and Karel Kaplan, writer Josef Škvorecký and many others.

45 E.g. Personal collections of Ivan Blatný, Ferdinand Peroutka, Dominik Tatarka, Jan Zahradníček, Ludvík Vaculík, Václav Černý, Jiří Kolář, Ladislav Mňačko, Jan Lopatka, and many others. Apart from personal collections, Video and audio library of the Literary Archive of the Museum of Czech Literature is also an important source of materials documenting Czechoslovak cultural opposition before 1989.

(not only literary) collections stored in big state or public institutions (the Museum of Czech Literature, the National Archive, the National Museum, the Security Services Archive) is characteristic. As the majority of these are situated in Prague, we can thus define this system as rather centralized. For example, experts of the National Archives have collected a large number of personal and institutional papers and collections of dissent and exile members and organizations.⁴⁶ Useful materials of cultural opposition are reachable also in institutional collections, like the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia stored now in the National Archives—e.g. in documents from Political Bureau or Secretariat meetings or in materials of the Ideological Commission of the Communist Party. The Security Services had also produced and collected a rich amount of data, which became a part of many public controversies after the establishment of the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes in 2007. Although there are not specific collections in the Security Services Archives dealing primarily with cultural opposition, many materials connected to this topic can be found in various collections, e.g. in documents of State Security Units or in Operative Files (mainly materials related to surveilled persons). The Central Press Supervision Authority Collection documenting the control of the press and newly issued publications in Czechoslovakia from 1953 to 1968 is an example of a more-specifically oriented collection.⁴⁷

This does not mean, however, that private or smaller institutions, or institutions outside Prague, are not important in preserving pre-1989 cultural heritage in the Czech Republic. As mentioned below, private institutions like the Libri Prohibiti Library and Museum Kampa, or many others, are crucial to the process of storing, preserving, and disseminating the heritage of Czechoslovak cultural opposition. As many Czechoslovak dissidents were writers and numerous books (authors) were banned in Czechoslovakia, mainly since the 1970s, cultural opposition is usually seen from the dissident-literary perspective. This type of perspective is embodied in a very dynamic private institution—the Václav Havel Library. The establishment of the library was initiated by Václav Havel's wife Dagmar Havlová with the involvement of Sociologist Miloslav Petrusek and politician Karel Schwarzenberg. The Library is gradually gathering, digitizing, and making accessible written materials, photographs, sound recordings, and other materials linked to the person of Václav Havel, and is very active in popularizing Havel's legacy and in organizing public discussions about oppositional movements. Important personal collections dealing with cultural opposi-

46 E.g. Personal collection of Czechoslovak dissidents Petr Uhl and Milan Hübl or materials of Jazz Section.

47 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Central Press Supervision Authority Collection at the Security Services Archive", by Petr Šámal, 2018. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

tion are held also in the Moravian Museum⁴⁸ and the Moravian Land Archives in Brno,⁴⁹ or in the Brno and Ostrava City Archives.⁵⁰

Last but not least, we cannot forget to mention the role of academic and research institutions. Several Czech universities, for example the Archives of the Charles University in Prague⁵¹ or the Archive of Masaryk University in Brno,⁵² are preserving also materials dealing with cultural opposition, mainly from the students' point of view. The Jan Patočka Archive, focusing on the famous Czech philosopher's legacy, is operated together by the Charles University and the Czech Academy of Sciences within the Center for Theoretical Study. A unique oral history collection, partly related also to cultural opposition, is administrated by the Oral History Center of the Institute of Contemporary History of the Czech Academy of Sciences. Czechoslovak exile activities could be studied in specialized institutions like the Center for Czechoslovak Exile Studies within the Palacký Olomouc University,⁵³ or the private Museum of Czech and Slovak Exile of the 20th Century in Brno.

However, during the so-called normalization, underground music gradually also became a visible symbol of cultural opposition in Czechoslovakia. Although it is naturally easier to preserve written material than unofficial music production, some collections dealing with alternative music production can be found: for example, in the Audiovisual section of Libri Prohibiti Library,⁵⁴ in the Literary Archive of the Museum of Czech Literature, in the National Archives, and last but not least in the Popmuseum, a private institution which specializes in the history of popular and rock music.⁵⁵

Recently, a new trend using the internet in collection dissemination has been emerging. First, some institutions focus on digitalizing their collections, as for example the private Václav Havel Library, the public Security Services Archive, or the website Scriptum.cz.⁵⁶ Second, some institutions create databases, registries, or online catalogues, usually intended for both the general public and professionals. Thus, these online activities help to popularize col-

48 E. g. Personal collections of Pavel Kohout, Milan Uhde, Milan Jelinek, Božena Komárková, Jan Trefulka, Jan Tesař, Jiří Gruša or the above mentioned (British branch of) Jan Hus Educational Foundation.

49 E.g. Personal collection of Czech dissident Jaroslav Šabata.

50 E.g. Personal collections of dissidents Jaromír Šavrdá and Dolores Šavrdová or Karel Biňovec.

51 E.g. Personal collection of Czech philosopher and dissident Ladislav Hejdlánek or Student movement collection.

52 E.g. Personal collection of Czech historian and dissident Jaroslav Mezník.

53 E.g. Radio Free Europe Collection, The Council of Free Czechoslovakia Collection, Exile periodicals and publications Collection.

54 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Audiovisual Section at Libri Prohibiti](#)", by Michaela Kůželová, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

55 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Popmuseum](#)", by Jan Bárta, 2018. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

56 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Scriptum.cz](#)", by Anna Vrtálková, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

lections and pre-1989 cultural heritage. These databases deal mostly with arts collections (Artlist.cz, Artarchiv.cz).⁵⁷ Moreover, several collections of oral history are currently online, as the collection of the already mentioned Oral History Center of the Institute of Contemporary History of the Czech Academy of Sciences,⁵⁸ or the online collection of interviews, Memory of Nations, of the non-profit organization Post Bellum.⁵⁹ Apart from institutions, individuals also use the internet as a platform for presenting artifacts of cultural opposition. This is the case of František Stárek Čuñas, former dissident, publicist, and politician, who administrates his website Cunas.cz containing many unique digitized materials.⁶⁰

Czech archivists and librarians are very successful in collecting private and personal materials, which is visible in a high number of accessible personal collections deposited in a variety of the institutions mentioned above. The reason for this can be found in long-term conceptual work reaching up to the 1960s, personal and institutional credence, and also in the permanent interest of the public about topics such as dissent, samizdat, and different forms of cultural opposition.

Public and private collections on the territory of Slovakia are predominantly in Bratislava and its surroundings, in the archives of major institutions. The Nation's Memory Institute (ÚPN)⁶¹ was established in 2003. The central figure responsible for the establishment of the ÚPN and its direction was the dissident and post-revolutionary politician Ján Langoš.⁶² ÚPN is dedicated to educating young people, regularly organizing the Freedom Festival, producing documentary films, and organizing exhibitions. The most prominent collections of cultural opposition in the ÚPN are The collection of samizdat and exile literature,⁶³ The Independent Culture Collection, Printer Krumpholtz,⁶⁴ and Bratislavské listy Editorial Office Archive,⁶⁵ a Christian-political samizdat that was created between 1988 and 1989.

The most abundant representation of opposition material is in the Slovak National Archive, which takes over, protects, scientifically processes, and makes available archival documents originating from the activities of the cen-

57 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Artlist", by Anna Vrtáľková, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

58 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Interviews Collection of the Oral History Center", by Anna Vrtáľková, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

59 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Memory of Nations", by Anna Vrtáľková, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

60 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Cunas.cz", by Jonáš Chmátal, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

61 Nation's Memory Institute. Accessed 28 September, 2018. <http://www.upn.gov.sk>

62 Balogh, Ján Langoš.

63 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Collection of exile literature and samizdat", by Martina Benčuriková, 2018. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

64 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Printer Krumpholtz", by Martina Benčuriková, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

65 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Bratislavské listy Editorial Office Archive", by Martina Benčuriková, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

tral authorities of the Slovak Republic and their legal predecessors as well as those of national importance or acquired by purchase, or on the basis of closed deposit contracts. The collections that provide a picture of the period of communism from the government point of view, and have a great importance for researchers, are the Fond of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Slovakia and the Fond of the Slovak Press and Information Office.⁶⁶ On the other hand, the Slovak National Archive offers samizdat collections of significant importance, such as the Collection of Vladimír Jukl samizdats. The Public Against Violence Collection contains correspondence that can be used to find personal testimonies and life stories of people who declare their belonging to opposition or cultural opposition before 1989.⁶⁷ Documents related to cultural opposition can be also found in the archives of other state institutions, such as the archive of the Slovak Radio, Slovak Television, The National Film Institute, The Monuments Board of the Slovak Republic, The Theater Institute, The Slovak National Museum, The Bratislava City Museum, The Museum of the Slovak National Uprising, or in the libraries.

Unlike the Czech Republic, Slovakia still has a significant amount of private collections. Diverse material is in the Michal Šufliarsky Collection, representing someone who smuggled samizdat and made copies of forbidden films and music.⁶⁸ In contrast with the situation in the Czech Republic, in Slovakia the private collections of prominent personalities of opposition are usually not accessible, or some materials are deposited in Prague.

After the change of regime, many collectors of materials documenting pre-1989 cultural opposition in Slovakia got rid of their collections for various reasons, such as the weaker cultural awareness, or lack of resources or space. Some, on the other hand, handed over their collections to public institutions or non-governmental organizations. An example of such a well-functioning non-profit public and non-governmental organization in Slovakia is the Forum Minority Research Institute,⁶⁹ founded in 1996. Its mission is to research national minorities living in Slovakia, and document their history, culture, and related monuments. In this archive we can study collections of individuals⁷⁰ and documents of the Czechoslovak Hungarian Workers' Cultural Asso-

66 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Slovak Office for Press and Information", by Barbora Buzassýová, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

67 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Public Against Violence", by Magdaléna Stýblová, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018; Abaffyová, Lenka. *Dopisovanie s revolúciou*.

68 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Michal Šufliarsky Collection", by Magdaléna Stýblová, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

69 Accessed 28 September, 2018. <http://foruminst.sk>

70 See collections of politicians and historians as: Rezső Szabó Personal Collection, László A. Arany Papers, József Gyönyör Legacy, Sándor Varga.

ciation (CSEMADOK) Archive,⁷¹ which contains various documents from the provenance of the largest cultural organization of Hungarians in Slovakia.

And finally, the strong religious activism in Slovakia, which went hand-in-hand with the production of samizdat, is well visible in the online collection samizdat.sk.⁷² The website was launched in 2016 and contains the reproductions of dozens of Slovak Catholic samizdat from 1982 to 1989, which are freely accessible. Religious activities are also related to the creation of songs that have been created over time, and their authors are mostly anonymous. This so-called gospel music has its origins in Slovakia in the 1970s.⁷³ It began with the preparation of tapes with prayers and music, later with spiritual songs. The tradition of these songs continues to this day. See for example a collection of the University Library of the Catholic University in Ružomberok⁷⁴ or the Collection of Gospel Music⁷⁵ at the Music Museum of the Slovak National Museum. In addition to institutional collections, we also find private collections of people active in this gospel-music sphere, such as in the Anton Fabian Collection.⁷⁶

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71 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Czechoslovak Hungarian Workers' Cultural Association (Csemadok) Archive", by Barbara Bothová, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

72 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Slovak Samizdat Online Collection", by Martina Benčuriková, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

73 Kajanová, *Gospel music na Slovensku*.

74 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Collection the University Library of the Catholic University in Ružomberok", by Yvetta Kajanová, 2018. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

75 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "University Pastoral Center Bratislava", by Yvetta Kajanová, 2018. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

76 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Anton Fabian Collection", by Yvetta Kajanová, 2018. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

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ALBERT BING – JOSIP MIHALJEVIĆ –
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Yugoslavia

Cultural Opposition and Dissent in Yugoslavia: Different Shades of Red

“A human without alternatives is not a human,” said sociologist Nebojša Popov.¹ Investigating the possibilities for alternatives in authoritarian systems beyond the political sphere can be a way to approach the topic of cultural opposition. To what extent was the regime able to infiltrate and control society, and how were “spaces (or niches) of freedom” possible in socialist Yugoslavia? These are questions which cannot easily be answered. For many, Yugoslavia was a strange entity, somewhat like a “platypus”: a conglomerate of people and a unique geopolitical synthesis emerged on the ruins of two multicultural polities, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire. Josip Broz Tito’s Yugoslavia was described as a country with “six republics, five peoples, four languages, three religions, two scripts and one Tito.”² Tito, the most prominent figure of Yugoslav communism, the guerrilla leader who gained the respect even of his ideological opponents during the Second World War, ruled the country with a “steel hand in velvet gloves.” Tito’s Yugoslavia had many features of totalitarianism: an all-powerful one-party apparatus with a charismatic party leader who was also the (lifetime) president of the state, a cult of personality, a capillary system of social oversight based on censorship and ideological commissions, and a privileged elite of “sociopolitical” workers. However, under Tito’s “sceptre,” some forms of liberties emerged in Yugoslavia which were inconceivable in other communist countries.

Titoism as a distinct Yugoslav version of the communist system had developmental phases. The most important was Tito’s break with Stalin in 1948. According to Ivan Supek, “at first, schools, arts, and science were subordinated to strong ideology. The majority of social scientists, about 90 percent, were members of the Party (...) The Communist Party established its Marxist cadets in the faculty departments or institutes of importance as guardians of its order, (...) the interpretation of history and society could not be avoided by ideological mystification.” However, “the very fact that [the Yugoslav com-

1 Kanzleiter and Stojaković, 1968 in *Jugoslawien*, 185–200.

2 Ahtisaari, *Beogradska zadaća*, 23. Although this quote refers to the diverse and complex ethnic and religious setup of Yugoslavia, the country’s cultural diversity was far more complex than suggested by the author.

munists] were endangered by Stalin was pushing them to the West and loosening the original hard Bolshevism.”³

One of the important consequences of the rift between Yugoslavia and the USSR was the opening of the country to the West and its influences. Although it was a complex political and social process that had its victims (Tito's methods of dealing with political opponents in the period did not differ significantly from Stalin's), this process was new and unique at the time in the history of communism, and culture played a significant role in it. This rift explains many of the ambivalences of Yugoslav culture. The compelling repertoire of Communist reveille and the cult of Tito was pervaded with jazz and rock 'n' roll and admiration for American film actors.

Given these ambivalences, German historian Wolfgang Höpken warns against assessing Tito's Yugoslavia as authoritarian, though he stresses that its repressive character has been underemphasized in recent research. Höpken calls for a differentiation of ruling periods and for acknowledgment of the specificities of the Yugoslav system. He proposes the formula “controlled freedom” [*durchherrschte Freiheit*].⁴ As observed by Czech director Jiří Menzel, socialist Yugoslavia, as a country open to Western influences, was perceived in the communist bloc as an “America of the East.”⁵ In a similar vein, the Belgrade historian Radina Vučetić coined the term “Coca-Cola Socialism” to describe the Yugoslav popular culture of the 1960s.⁶ President Tito was the symbol of Yugoslav (socialist) patriotism, unifying (mostly) South Slavic people (Albanians and Hungarians forming rather big minorities) under the formula of “brotherhood and unity.”

A vital lever used by the government was the cultural policy in which Tito played the crucial role as supreme arbitrator. When promoting self-management of the working people in the 1950s at the National Assembly, Tito “predicted that its success ‘would depend on the intensity of cultural development.’”⁷ Never before had the state invested as much in public education as it did after 1945, undertaking significant efforts to eliminate illiteracy, promote health education, introduce and enforce compulsory schooling, and provide financing for libraries and cultural centers.⁸

Parallel to the party propaganda apparatus, many distinct “spaces of freedom” emerged. Culture experienced the same turbulent and non-linear metamorphosis as Yugoslav socialist society as a whole; from the Stalinist phase of fighting against the “national enemies” until the early 1950s, which was a period of strict censorship and rigid party control over all aspects of life (including culture); through a phase of liberalization, particularly from the

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

4 Höpken, “Durchherrschte Freiheit,” 64.

5 Menzel, *Moja Hrvatska*.

6 Vučetić, *Koka-kola socijalizam*.

7 Matvejević, *Jugoslavenstvo danas*, 128.

8 Calic, *Geschichte Jugoslawiens*, 186–87.

mid-1960s until 1971/72, to the end of the 1980s when communist officials publicly stated that they were no longer able to control the social processes that ultimately led to the emergence of political pluralism. One of the film directors of the critically oriented "Black Wave" in Yugoslav cinematography, Đorđe Kadijević, whose films came under censorship (*Praznik, Pohod*), described the paradox of Tito's "soft Stalinism." He said: "My films, although forbidden, were taken to world festivals and met with great success. Although an adversary of modern art, Tito's 'soft Stalinism' enabled him to speak in 1962 explicitly against abstract art and at the same time let him build the Museum of Contemporary Art, quite unhindered. A similar paradox is the fact that the writer Borislav Pekić was imprisoned [...], but afterward received prestigious awards."⁹ Tito hence applied a broad range of strategies to cope with critical minds: parallel to repression or intimidation, he also successfully teased and won over adversaries by allowing them some degree of (controlled) freedom.¹⁰

The final rejection of the Stalinist matrix comes in 1952, when the Sixth Congress of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia criticized state centralism and Stalinism, and proclaimed self-management as the Yugoslav path to socialism.¹¹ The historian Marie-Janine Calic argues that Yugoslav self-management meant a "quasi real existing denial of state socialism."¹² Historian Predrag Marković stresses that the Yugoslav system was proclaimed not only in contrast to the East, but particularly as superior to the parliamentary democracy of the West.¹³ In that period, the conditions for the gradual opening-up of Yugoslavia were created. This opening-up found manifestation in ever-increasing trade and cultural cooperation with the West. Tito skillfully maneuvered between the two blocs, promoting an "alternative path to communist internationalism." Tito's "third way" and "peaceful coexistence" crystallized in the Non-Aligned Movement at the beginning of the 1960s.¹⁴

The Copernican inversion in Yugoslav art at the beginning of the 1950s—related to the rejection of the Zhdanov Doctrine and Stakhanovism in USSR—led to the affirmation of abstract art tendencies, which had produced remarkable artistic achievements, recognized even abroad. With the performance of the group EXAT 51 (Experimental Atelier in 1951) in Zagreb, "the thesis on the equality of abstract painting with other contemporary tendencies was proclaimed, and at the same time, the freedom of artistic expression was chosen for the first time not only in socialist Yugoslavia but also in the entire socialist bloc."¹⁵ The break with the dogma of social-realism through the affirmation of

9 Cukić, "Đorđe Kadijević o Titu." About Pekić, see also Cvetković, *Portreti disidenata*, 139–74.

10 Vučetić, *Monopol na istinu*, 49.

11 Supek, "Refleksije na prekretnici milenija," 811.

12 Calic, *Geschichte Jugoslawiens*, 194.

13 Marković, *Beograd između Istoka i Zapada*, 515.

14 Jakovina, "Jugoslavija na međunarodnoj pozornici," 434–84.

15 Župan, *Pragmatičari, dogmati, sanjari*, 13.

abstract art represented an “expression of creative freedom unprecedented for the Eastern Bloc.”¹⁶ In 1952, at the Third Congress of the Yugoslav Writers’ Union in Ljubljana, the leading Croatian writer and one of the most prominent Yugoslav intellectuals, Miroslav Krleža, opposed socialist realism and announced the liberation of literature from ideological bonds. Broad cultural activity developed and, within it, various cultures of dissent.

Similar phenomena can be observed in all areas of creative expression. In 1964, for instance, a group of Zagreb Marxist philosophers and sociologists began publishing the *Praxis* journal, and they opened a summer school in Korčula, in which Yugoslav intellectuals and some of the most prominent philosophers from all over the world participated. In their work, philosophers and sociologists of praxis orientation discussed the issues of the time, including critical attitudes towards the policy of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY). The culmination of *Praxis*’ work was related to the student protests of 1968 against communist bureaucracy and social injustice which were held in many cities in Yugoslavia, with the most important events taking place in Belgrade.¹⁷ The Praxis philosophers were labelled “anarcho-leftists” and condemned by the party; finally, in 1974 they were forced to cease their activity. Some intellectuals were publicly excluded from the party and even dismissed from their places of employment. Some of the protests in 1968 were nationally motivated, such as the demands of Albanians in Kosovo for self-determination.¹⁸

A complementary theme of the culture of dissent in Yugoslavia is the emergence of a parallel “space of freedom,” in emigration in which many dissidents and oppositionists ended up. Mihajlo Mihajlov, one of the most famous Yugoslav dissident writers, who lived in the USA and left his personal papers at the Hoover Institution (HI), was one such dissident. HI also holds the personal papers of Milovan Đilas, the most famous Yugoslav political dissident, who until the early 1950s was one of Tito’s closest associates. For his criticism and his advocacy of greater democratic input into decision-making, Đilas was dismissed from all political functions and sentenced to prison. While he was in jail, he managed to get his books published abroad.

Most dissidents and oppositionists in emigration were, however, anti-communist and anti-Yugoslav. One of the most prominent Croatian pro-democratic intellectuals in emigration, Bogdan Radica, stated that “the legitimacy of the Croat people and their destiny must be taken over by free Croats” because “only they have the right to speak in the name of the captured Croat people.”¹⁹ After the victory of Yugoslav communism, two fundamental paradigms relevant to the culture of dissent appeared: the one that

¹⁶ Ibid., 14.

¹⁷ Fichter, “Yugoslav Protest,” 99–121.

¹⁸ Limani, “Kosovo u Jugoslaviji,” 251–78.

¹⁹ Radica, “Titov smrtni skok.”

emerged within Yugoslav society and the one linked to political émigrés in the democratic states of the West. Both developed critical reflections relevant for understanding the complex Yugoslav political and cultural heritage. Whereas Croatian and Serbian emigrants took particularly fierce anti-Yugoslav stances, the situation for emigré Bosnian Muslims was different. They were more loyal to the Yugoslav project, because Bosnian Muslims were acknowledged as a nationality in the 1960s only as a consequence of the socialist experiment of Tito's Yugoslavia.²⁰

The impact of literature, film, and music, ranging from pop culture to avantgarde trends, found manifestation in actions that had political implications. In an interview with COURAGE, the conceptual artist Vladimir Dodig Trokut states that members of the 68-generation were considered "a group of humanists, nihilists, anarchists, anarcho-liberals, anarcho-humanists, dialectics, disbelievers, rivals, and party renegades." As Trokut states, everything was happening under the watchful eye of the authorities, who made sure that the behavior of the "rebels" did not escape control; there were even occasional sanctions. On the other hand, some Communist leaders and intellectuals, such as Vicko Krstulović, Koča Popović, and Jure Kaštelan, guarded and supported the alternative path of the younger generation.²¹ This personal patronage was an important reason behind the circulation of certain liberal cultural expressions, while others (those without patrons) were inhibited. Marković holds that many exemptions from state repression can be explained by "camaraderie" (a form of old boys' club formed in the trenches of the war, the members of which shared a loyalty which transcended the socialist ideology).²² If someone belonged to the group of "comrades," he would be treated in a different manner than others (like the writers Branko Ćopić in the 1950s and Dobrica Ćosić in the 1960s and 1970s).

In the period, immediately after the break with Stalin, Yugoslav cinematography opened to Western film, and Soviet films were censored until Stalin's death. Film director Želimir Žilnik (1942–) states that in his youth he watched "the complete French new wave, American underground movies, the young Buñuel, the complete Italian neo-realism," while the films of prominent Russian authors could only be seen after 1965.²³ Žilnik belonged to the "Black Wave" Yugoslav film movement. In the 1960s and 1970s, the member of this movement portrayed Yugoslav reality from a critical perspective. Žilnik's films and the films of many other Yugoslav filmmakers won prestigious awards at festivals abroad but were also subjected to criticism by the authori-

20 In the 1971 Yugoslav census, the category "Muslim" was included as a national category, rather than a confessional ascription. The category applied to Slavic speaking Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Southern Serbia (Sandžak), but not Muslim Albanians. Lučić, *Im Namen der Nation*.

21 Dodig Trokut, Vladimir, interview by Albert Bing for COURAGE-project, December 22, 2016.

22 Marković, *Beograd između Istoka i Zapada*, 517.

23 Žilnik, "Praxis i 'crni talas' u filmu."

ties, and some were even banned (*Rani Radovi* [Early Works] in 1969). Despite the “hot-cold” relationship between the Communist state and the intelligentsia and the occasional persecution of political dissidents, Yugoslavia became an increasingly open country.

After the fall of the powerful minister of interior and chief of the State Security Service (UDBA) Aleksandar Ranković in 1966, further liberalization occurred even in the party circles themselves. The rector of the Zagreb University Ivan Supek witnessed these events: “Censorship and many controls were falling, people wrote more freely in the newspapers and spoke more freely at meetings ... society was acquiring a more and more pluralistic composition.”²⁴ The Croatian cultural revival started, so the Croatian reform movement (“Croatian Spring” or “Maspok”),²⁵ which was led by Savka Dabčević-Kučar and Miko Tripalo, culminated in the national demands for decentralization and economic reforms. However, in late 1971 “Tito and the senior leadership condemned the events in Croatia, undermined the ‘deceived’ Croat Communist leaders, and urged a return to Leninist Bolshevism.”²⁶ The results of the defeat of the Croatian Spring were mass arrests, a ban on public appearances or role for many intellectuals, and a new wave of political emigration.²⁷ Repressive measures were taken in other republics too. In the first six months of 1972, 3,606 people were imprisoned as “political criminals” (60 percent of them were from Croatia), compared to 1,449 in the three years of 1969–1971.²⁸ The legitimacy of the LCY was seriously threatened. The liberally oriented Serbian party leadership, including figures like Marko Nikezić and Latinka Perović, were dismissed for their “anti-Soviet” and “anti-Titoist” positions; the leaders of Slovenia and Macedonia also lost their positions. Political cleansing at the beginning of the 1970s clearly showed the boundaries of Titoism regarding tolerance for opposition to the Yugoslav state. Immediately after the cleansing, the centralizing-etatist ambitions of the Communist authorities were enforced in all spheres of life, although this was “in fundamental contradiction with the proclaimed principles of full equality

24 Supek, “Refleksije na prekretnici milenija,” 812.

25 The term *Maspok*, actually an acronym for “mass movement,” was derogatory in LCY parlance in 1971 and therefore it was not used by the Croat reformers, but rather by their critics. The massiveness of the movement is often held as an argument against it. The term “Croatian Spring” has now become the standard term used in Croatian historiography.

26 Supek, “Refleksije na prekretnici milenija,” 812.

27 The aspirations of Yugoslav dissidents who initiated the national question at the beginning of the 1970s did not meet with sympathy in the West, in contrast with the aspirations of dissidents from the Eastern Bloc who had raised the national question in the 1960s. Spehnjak holds that the West’s support for initiators of national questions in the Eastern Bloc rested on a political strategy that strived to weaken the Soviet sphere. Since Yugoslavia, since 1948, did not belong to the Soviet political block, the events in Yugoslavia at the beginning of the 1970s were considered dangerous to the integrity of Yugoslavia and therefore were not supported. Spehnjak, “Disidentstvo kao istraživačka tema,” 13.

28 Marković, “Where Have All the Flowers Gone?,” 119.

of the Yugoslav peoples."²⁹ Nevertheless, by the 1974 Constitution, the republics were defined almost as states, thus creating the preconditions for a more pronounced decentralization of the federal state. Tito, as the primary integrative factor of Yugoslavia, was once again proclaimed lifelong president and Supreme Commander. This reverberated in the reinforcement of Tito's personality cult, which "had never been as exaggerated and omnipresent as now [in the 1970s]."³⁰

Tito's strike against liberal cultural expression at the beginning of the 1970s must be read against the backdrop of economic growth based on foreign credit, massive imports, imported energy, and migrant workers, each of which furthered the opening-up of Yugoslavia towards the world. The spread of Western influence could not be stopped anymore. Free travel to Western countries also had an impact on ideas about lifestyle, and it offered first-hand familiarity with Western living standards.³¹ After Tito's death in 1980, various forms of informal pluralistic relations, relative freedom of the press, and social criticism took place outside the party and state forums. Changes were possible within and despite the system. For example, the youth magazines *Polet*, *Studentski list*, *Mladina*, *Student*, and others, which initially had had an official communist ideological basis, became significant representatives of alternative civic culture and cultural opposition to a bureaucratized communist ideology.³²

Rock music in Yugoslavia had a somewhat specific status compared to the rest of the communist countries. Initially, Yugoslav rock music was not necessarily oppositional, or it was less oppositional than in other (more rigid) communist cultures.³³ In late socialism however, and especially in the 1980s, some "music movements" (New Wave, New Primitivism, and New Partisans) used rock to criticize the country's cultural and political developments.³⁴ At socialist Yugoslavia's end, rock artists were channelling rebellious voices against the system, while at the same time its "majority stood against the violent dissolution of the state, which was both a pragmatic and an emotional attitude in that a stable Yugoslav polity represented first and foremost a large and established market and an audience which numbered in the millions."³⁵ As Catherine Baker suggests, "Yugoslavia's rock music movements outlasted their country," and this music "continues to provide old and new fans with a consciousness of belonging to a cultural community larger than the confines of their own successor state."³⁶

29 Macan, *Susret s hrvatskim Kliom*, 61.

30 Marković, "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?," 119–20.

31 Sundhaussen, *Jugoslawien und seine Nachfolgestaaten 1943–2011*, 148.

32 Zubak, *The Yugoslav Youth Press 1968–1980*.

33 Zubak, "Pop-Express (1969–1970.)," 25–26.

34 Mišina, *Shake, Rattle and Roll*.

35 Spaskovska, "Stairway to Hell," 3.

36 Baker, "Dalibor Mišina," 308.

In the second half of the 1980s, the Slovenian cultural and media scene, on which the controversial political-artistic group *Neue Slowenische Kunst* (New Slovene Art) left a significant mark, became a hotbed of demands for radical social changes (democratization and the construction of civil society). Many intellectuals, especially from Croatia, joined the Slovenian movements. The popular columnist for Zagreb's weekly newspaper *Danas*, Tanja Torbarina, although Croat, in 1987 declared her political orientation as "Slovenian" saying: "I am a Slovenian by political conviction."³⁷

With the intensification of interethnic conflicts, the focus of cultural dissent shifted increasingly from the demand for democratic reforms to national confrontations, which ultimately led to the collapse and decomposition of the Yugoslav state. The rise of nationalism in Yugoslavia can be explained as a consequence of the inconsistencies and failures of Tito's "Sonderweg" experiment.³⁸ The socialist translation of a multi-cultural reality which embraced ambivalences and syncretism to a state-policy based on ethno-national categories eventually resulted in a radical invalidation of diversity, particularly after the political and economic instability aggravated in the 1980s.³⁹ The multiplicity of national, supra-national, and other loyalties could no longer be kept as a particularity of the socialist Yugoslav project. Rather, one had to choose one side. Many Serbian dissidents, such as Dobrica Ćosić in the 1980s and 1990s, embarked on nationalistic politics, and their engagement prompted or met with nationalistic responses in other republics.

After nationalism had become the mainstream system of meaning, cultural resistance found manifestation in anti-nationalist and anti-war activism, but with no significant impact on further developments, which soon led to bloodshed.⁴⁰ From the perspective of the culture of dissent, the case of the magazine *Danas* is also interesting. This high-circulation weekly magazine, sold all over Yugoslavia, was an indicator of social change; ranging from the affirmation of the freedom of the press to a chronicle of social interactions announcing the emergence of political pluralism, as well as the profound chronicle of the dissolution of the Yugoslav state. Abroad, *Danas* was perceived as "the media and pluralistic intellectual paradigm in the state on the edge of the 'civil war'."⁴¹

Yugoslavia had "despite its 'Western' trappings and greater tolerance of dissent [...] an essentially illiberal regime, in which breaches of human and civil rights were endemic."⁴² The almighty party personnel, also exposed to constant review of their social role, continued to control the army (to a certain extent), the police, much of the media, and the most important government

37 Bing, "Tjednik *Danas* i percepcija razvoja političkog pluralizma," 204

38 Miller, *The nonconformists*.

39 Miller, "Faith and Nation," 144.

40 Spaskovska, "Landscapes of Resistance, Hope and Loss," 37–61.

41 "Svijet o *Danasu*."

42 Dragović-Soso, *Saviours of the nation*, 256.

institutions. Nevertheless, in the cultural sphere, Yugoslavia was a more liberal communist fellow. By maneuvering between the two blocs, Yugoslav culture and everyday life became largely westernized, whereas political life and the economy remained basically "Eastern."⁴³ This constellation caused tensions in the social fabric, the "cracks, ... dysfunctionalities, and dangers" of which were mirrored in counter-culture.⁴⁴ A peculiar culture of dissent emerged through informal social networks ("camaraderie"), diplomatic calculi (liberal image making towards the West, claims of socialist particularity towards the East) and a radical federalization of the state and the party. Last but not least, a significant change of living standards (brought about by industrialization, education, consumerism, and free travel) marked the period of Yugoslav socialism and facilitated cultural alternatives.

Collections

After the collapse of communism, all of Yugoslavia's former republics became independent states (some sooner, some later), with the former Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo concluding the process after separating from the Republic of Serbia in 2008.⁴⁵ The COURAGE Registry therefore contains collections from seven states: Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Kosovo.

Most of the collections described in the Registry are located in Croatia and Serbia. In the COURAGE Registry, there are over fifty collections in Croatia, more than twenty in Serbia, and around ten in Slovenia. In the cases of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Kosovo, and Montenegro, the numbers are much smaller. Most of the collections are held in public institutions in the capital cities of the post-Yugoslav countries.

In the case of collections in Croatia, the topics related to diaspora, national movements (the Croatian national movement), and state and party control are found. Furthermore, the topic of Croatian national movement is represented in most of the emigrant collections and in the vast majority of collections on state and party control and censorship. The most representative collections of Croatian emigrants are the Vinko Nikolić Collection at the National and University Library in Zagreb and the Bogdan Radica Collection in the Croatian State Archives (HDA). The national question preoccupied Croatian intellectuals in Croatia who were also the key figures behind the national reform movement (the so-called Croatian Spring). In this movement, the most influential organization was the *Matica hrvatska*, the Croatian cultural institu-

43 Marković, *Beograd između Istoka i Zapada*, 524.

44 Voncu, "Alternative Culture and Political Opposition," 289.

45 The Republic of Serbia does not recognize Kosovo's declaration of independence. More than half of the UN member states have recognized Kosovo.

tion which was founded in the first half of the nineteenth century and the archives of which are located in the HDA. In addition to institutions, political dissidents also left a significant mark on the Croatian Spring. That was the case of Miko Tripalo, whose collection is held in the Center for Democracy, which was named after him. The national movement in Kosovo is covered through *ad-hoc* collections at the Archives of Kosovo, beginning with the demonstrations of 1968 and lasting through the 1981 demonstrations. There is also a collection on the underground groups "Illegalia." Cultural societies that cultivated national culture have also been suspended, as evidenced by the case of the Serbian Cultural Association Prosvjeta and its collection, which is found in the HDA.

The topic of state and party control is covered well in the Registry. Such collections are mostly found in state archives, such as the HDA in Zagreb (e.g., the Collection of the Commission for Ideological and Political Work of the People's Youth of Croatia) and the Archive of the Republic of Slovenia (the Collection of the Slovenian State Security Service on monitoring Slovenian scientists in the period from 1945 to 1962). Collections of a similar type are in state archives in other cities (Belgrade, Novi Sad, Vinkovci, Sisak, Pula). Two collections on the notorious labour camp for political prisoners on "Bare Island" (Goli Otok) in the Adriatic document the repressive character of the system (one collection is held at the Croatian History Museum, and the other at the Serbian Academy of Sciences, or SANU). Tackling "Goli Otok" in the arts and in literature in particular was "one of the biggest taboos of the Yugoslav public sphere" during Tito's reign, as exemplified by the 1969 ban on the play "When the pumpkins blossomed," based on the novel by Dragoslav Mihajlović.⁴⁶

One topic related to state control is censorship. Censorship in film is documented by the holdings in the collection of forbidden films of Nikša Fulgosi, which is kept in the archives of the Croatian Cinematheque. The HDA contains the Iljko Karaman Collection of Court Records on Censorship and the Aleksandar Stipčević Personal Papers. Informal and self-censorship also merit mention, albeit it is more difficult to track historically. Such forms of limiting free expression occurred through telephone calls, informal talks, professional "advice" by theatre and film committees and editorial boards, and media campaigns.⁴⁷ In the Registry, incidents of informal and self-censorship are told in the Oral History interviews and in debates in the literary and cultural journals, like *Književne novine* and *Polja*.

Several collections concerning the art scene are also described in the Registry. In Croatia, the neo-avantgarde visual and conceptual arts had many essential representatives. Works by these artists are found in several collections of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb, in the EXAT 51 and New

46 Münnich, "Jugoslawische, literarische Geschichtskonzeption," 207.

47 Vučetić, *Monopol na istinu*, 48–49.

Tendencies Collection at the Tošo Dabac Archive, and in the No Art Collection of Vladimir Dodig Trout Anti-Museum. In Serbia, there are several collections at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade, and at the Museum of Contemporary Art Vojvodina in Novi Sad. The Collection of Gordana Vnuk (EUROKAZ) bears witness to neo-avantgarde art in the performing arts. A commune in the countryside of Vojvodina is described as a niche of freedom in the collection of the "Family of the Clear Streams" collection of Božidar Mandić. Cultural opposition in film is represented mostly by the so-called "Black Wave" movies. Among many important filmmakers, Lazar Stojanović stands out as the most prominent representative of the second generation, primary due to his film "Plastic Jesus" (1971), which was declared anti-communist propaganda and led to Stojanović's imprisonment for three years. His collection contains his personal compilation, which was assembled over the course of the previous decades and consists of books, newspapers, posters, catalogues and video materials/films, including "Plastic Jesus," one of the most famous and striking acts of dissidence in socialist Yugoslavia.

(Neo)avantgarde in theatre is relevant, as this part of Yugoslav culture seemed particularly free, with Samuel Beckett's "Waiting for Godot" being staged in Yugoslavia as early as 1956, for instance. As the collection of the Belgrade International Theatre Festival (BITEF) clearly shows, however, culture served to maintain a certain liberal image relevant for Yugoslavia's position as a non-aligned country. Research on avantgarde culture in Yugoslavia helps decipher what Vučetić refers to as the "deep schizophrenia of Yugoslav society."⁴⁸

Intellectual dissent in Yugoslavia is palpable in the phenomenon of the neo-Marxist philosophy and sociology, which left a significant heritage in Yugoslavia. The relevant material for this phenomenon in Croatia is found in the Rudi Supek Personal Papers, and the Praxis and Korčula Summer School Collection. In Serbia, the Ljubomir Tadić Collection and the Nebojša Popov Collection represent the Belgrade circle of the Praxis orientation.

Of the works which were censored in Yugoslavia, most were books.⁴⁹ However, as mentioned above, censorship rarely occurred in a direct way, as the Danilo Kiš Collection at the Archives of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SANU) exemplifies. This collection on one of the most important non-conformist writers of Yugoslavia illustrates the ambivalences of Yugoslav cultural policy, as Kiš won the prestigious NIN award (for Yugoslav literature) in 1972, but was accused of defamation in 1978. Kiš was acquitted by the court, but left Yugoslavia after the devastating media campaign launched against him during the proceedings. Nevertheless, his ex-wife Mirjana Miočinić stressed in the interview with COURAGE that Kiš never per-

48 Vučetić, "Između avangarde i cenzure," 705.

49 Nikolić, Cvetković and Tripković, *Bela knjiga-1984*, 20.

ceived himself as a dissident, but rather as a non-conformist writer.⁵⁰ The press clipping collection of writer Ivan Aralica offers insights into the situation in Croatia, and the Collection of Edward Kocbek shows the case of the author who wrote a volume of short stories entitled “Fear and Courage”⁵¹ in 1951, which made him a *persona non grata* in Slovenia. The example of Dobrica Ćosić, the most famous Serbian novelist and the “father of Serbian nationalism,” stresses the importance of a cultural perspective on the developments in Yugoslavia. Ćosić’s intellectual and political career illustrates “that nationalism was more than a tool for cynical and needy politicians and less an ancient bequest than an unsurprising response to real conditions in Tito’s Yugoslavia. [...] In their very humanism the seeds of failure sprouted, since the Tito regime was unwilling or unable to satisfy this one’s desire to develop a new universalist culture, that one’s faith in the regime’s commitment to social justice.”⁵²

The theme of opposition to the regime by religious institutions in the COURAGE Registry is primarily related to the Catholic Church in Croatia and Slovenia. In Slovenia, the most important collections are the Antun Vovk Collection and the Alojzije Šustar Collection. In Croatia, there is a rich collection of Catholic priest and journalist don Živko Kustić and a collection of Smiljana Rendić, a columnist of the *Glas koncila* (Voice of the Council) - the first journal in Croatia published without the influence of the communist authorities, who was sentenced to one year in prison for her writing. The Bek-tashi Mysticism in Macedonia is described in one collection as an alternative spiritual space.

Youth sub-culture and music are represented in the FV 112/15 Group Collection, which offers testimony to the Slovenian alternative music scene, which was the strongest in Yugoslavia.⁵³ In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Zenit Đozić Collection on New Primitivism (*Novi primitivizam*) contains materials on a subcultural movement established in Sarajevo which found expression in music and comedy on radio and television in the 1980s. In Croatia, there is a significant collection of rock and disco culture in Rijeka (Velid Đekić Collection), and the photo archive of Goran Pavelić Pipo offers exciting insights into youth sub-culture and the new wave music scene of Zagreb. The theme of the student movement is covered in the Operation Tuškanac Collection in State Security Service files of the Socialist Republic of Croatia (at HDA). The “Last Youth of Yugoslavia” *ad-hoc* collection based on an exhibition at the

50 Miočinović Mirjana, interview by Sanja Radović for COURAGE-project, January 14, 2017 and December 26, 2016.

51 Kocbek, *Strah in pogum*.

52 Miller, *The nonconformists*, xi.

53 It should be emphasized that through the research, we also discovered some other important collections containing materials relevant to the counterculture and artistic scene in Slovenia, especially about the creative group *Neue Slowenische Kunst*, but the owners of the collections did not want to cooperate with the COURAGE project.

Museum of Yugoslavia provides insights into the alternative and pop culture of Belgrade's youth circles between 1977 and 1984.

The theme of counter-cultural activities of sexual minorities is covered in the Lesbian Library and Archive ŠKUC-LL in Ljubljana and the History of Homosexuality in Croatia Collection at the Domino Association (Queer) in Zagreb. The Feminist Movement is represented in the collection of the Women's Studies Center in Zagreb, the Žarana Papić Collection at the Center for Woman Studies in Belgrade, and the Women's Activism Collection of the Kosovo Oral History Initiative. There is also the Lydia Sklevicky Collection at the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, which contains the personal papers of one of the pioneers of the feminist movement in Yugoslavia.

Human rights movements were strongest in Slovenia, as is reflected in the collections. The topic can be explored on the basis of the Alenka Puhar Collection, the Collection of Testimonies at the Study Centre for National Reconciliation and the Archives of the Peace Movement in Ljubljana. The Alenka Bizjak Collection testifies to the existence of the ecological movement in Yugoslavia, and the Pugwash Movement Collection shows the development of the antinuclear movement and the influence that Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs had in Yugoslavia.

Most of the collections are kept in public institutions, and the state is usually their owner. Most are found in public archives. These collections are usually archival funds of the state institutions and associations and personal funds of individuals whose heirs donated their collections to the archives. In addition to archives, libraries and museums also hold most of the collections in the Yugoslav successor states.

In collections that were created through the work of institutions and organizations, the history of collecting and preserving generally does not involve significant cultural-opposition stories. In most of the cases, the law mandated the acquisition of these collections by the state archives. Regarding the personal funds, the situation is different and usually far more interesting. Perhaps one of the best examples is the story of the Lazar Stojanović Collection. Some parts of his collection, especially the most politically sensitive items, were confiscated during several police investigations against Stojanović in the 1970s and 1980s, and they have not been recovered. Other parts are lost due to his changing places of residence. The story of Stojanović also illustrates how cultural opposition can become a lifetime activity despite changing political systems. After Yugoslavia, the author and film director returned to Serbia from abroad to engage in the anti-war movement and participate in the activities of human rights circles. The COURAGE Registry also contains stories about the efforts of Radica's daughter Bosiljka and Ivo Banac, who on three occasions (in 1996, 2001, and 2006) organized the transfer of the Bogdan Radica Collection from the United States to Zagreb.

The size of the collections varies from tiny collections, such as the No Art Collection, which numbers only ten items, to collections of more than 100 ar-

chival boxes of documents, such as the Rudi Supek Personal Papers. The COURAGE Registry also contains more than a dozen *ad-hoc* collections. These collections do not exist as independent units but as part of more extensive collections which contain various materials. This is the case with the sizeable archival fund of the State Security Service of the Socialist Republic of Croatia at the HDA, which contain four *ad-hoc* collections that are in fact the subdivisions of a single archival fund. The situation is similar in the collections of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb and Belgrade. Also, the collections of the magazine *Vidici*, *Student*, and *Književne novine* do not represent a separate library unit, but are kept as part of the “Periodicals” collection in two institutions, the National Library of Serbia and the University Library of Belgrade. Literary and cultural journals are relatively well represented in the Registry, not only because they are well preserved (except the forbidden, still unavailable issues), but also because they illustrate the wealth of intellectual activities unfolding within and despite a restrictive system. The former editor of *Polja*, Jovan Zivlak, maintained that since political opposition was impossible, cultural opposition should be understood as “mastering and learning freedom.” He emphasized the “belief in culture” and offered the following explanation: “There was a kind of deep consent among intellectuals, among the largest number of intellectuals in this former country. It was a consent that culture, literature, and philosophy are the foundation of our freedom. It was as if you were sharing something, some kind of secret. That was this cultural revolution or cultural resistance.”⁵⁴

Some of the essential collections are in private hands and are now unavailable to the public. Suzana Jovanović, the widow of Lazar Stojanović, is the owner of his collection, with no financial support from any additional source. Zenit Đozić has plans to establish a cultural centre to commemorate the phenomenon of New Primitivism, but the financing is still uncertain. Anti-authoritarian activists, like Borka Pavićević and Dragomir Olujić (Open University Collection), have valuable material but no institutional capacity to archive and store this material, which is held in their private flats or houses. Other collections are in the private hands of researchers (CADDY Bulletin Collection, Mysticism in Macedonia, Srđan Hofman Electronic music Collection). These collections are significant to the history of the cultural opposition, but their fate is uncertain because they are funded mostly by the owners themselves, who may have limited means.

Most public collections are rarely funded with direct or special funding. In this sense, the Zoran Đinđić Library, which was financed by the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Belgrade, is more the exception than the rule. Collections that are held in public institutions (archives, museums, libraries) are normally financed through the financing of the institutions by the state (Ministry of Culture). Direct funding occurs through special events,

54 Zivlak Jovan, interview by Željka Oparnica for COURAGE-project, September 25, 2017.

such as publications or exhibitions on anniversaries of historical events, as happened for the 40th anniversary of the Belgrade International Theatre Festival (BITEF collection) at the Historical Archives of Belgrade.

The fall of Communism is the most important event in the history of most of the collections in the post-Yugoslav countries. It meant the end of an era after which people were able to begin gathering testimonies about cultural opposition and dissent. Institutions opened their doors to the public, and many individuals handed over various materials and collections to archives, museums, and scientific institutions. Sometimes, this happened through a personal initiative: when Branka Prpa was the director of the Historical Archives of Belgrade (2002-2010), she directly asked important non-conformist intellectuals like Nebojša Popov to bequeath their personal collection and library to the archives.⁵⁵ The collapse of Communism was a call for those people who had amassed collections in secret, far from the prying eyes of the communist authorities, to open their collections to the public or donate them to institutions that would make them more accessible. Most of the collections described in the Registry, however, are rarely used. For instance, COURAGE researcher Sanja Radović was the first person to access the Zoran Đinđić collection at the Archives of Serbia.⁵⁶

The potential of these collections is not sufficiently exploited academically, and even less so socially. Most of the people who have used the collections are researchers, primarily historians. Although most collections are fully or partially available for research, only a few are available online. A good example is the Praxis and Korčula Summer School Collection, which is entirely digitized and available to the public, or the Zoran Đinđić Virtual Museum, which is partially digitized, and the entire *Polja* – Magazine for Culture and Art collection. In a social sense, only a few collections have attracted substantial media coverage. In Croatia, remarkable public interest was triggered by the exhibition “A Century of Croatian Periodicals from the Croatian Diaspora from 1900 to 2000” in 2002. In Slovenia, the exhibition “FV: Alternative Scene of the 1980s,” which was held in 2008, reached out to the public, as did the 70th anniversary exhibition of *Student* magazine in Serbia. Sometimes, the COURAGE project itself has kindled public interest in the collections, as in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s “History Fest.” In general, outreach events, such as exhibitions, publications, and film screenings, give the collections public relevance.

The most original elements of the COURAGE research project are found in the Oral History Interviews. The heritage of cultural opposition is ambivalent, multifaceted, and even dissonant; it could be perceived not only as a history of triumph, but also as a history of trauma.⁵⁷ Eye-witness accounts

55 Prpa Branka, interview by Jacqueline Nießer for COURAGE-project, June 24, 2017.

56 Kostić and Mihajlović, “Đinđićeva zaostavština.”

57 Dragičević Šešić and Stefanović, “How Theaters Remember,” 13.

help us forge a path towards a nuanced understanding of how “niches of freedom” were created in unfree systems.

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NATALIA HRISTOVA – ANELIA KASSABOVA
– ULF BRUNNBAUER

Bulgaria

Introduction

The debates about the nature of the socialist system in Bulgaria have been intense since the end of communist rule. Political liberalization allowed the public expression of viewpoints that for many years had been forbidden and persecuted in Bulgaria. The participants in this debate, many of whom have strong emotional involvement, expressed different, sometimes incompatible views based on their personal experiences and political orientations. These range from the demonization of state socialism as a criminal regime to openly apologetic views. As a result, there is still no consensus in Bulgaria about the communist period.¹

The memory of the socialist period is to a large extent determined by the post-socialist reality. Today, almost 30 years after its inception, the so-called transition in Bulgaria is marked by sentiments of betrayed hopes, which result in declining confidence in state institutions and pessimism about the future. In political debates, history – and in particular the recent past – is used for political purposes by political actors. The politicization of history contributes to the decline of differentiated/in-depth knowledge of the socialist period. In 2014, on the question of which event marked the end of Communism, “40 percent of the youngest generation (16–30 years old) could not say whether it was the collapse of the Berlin, Moscow, Sofia or Chinese Wall.”²

At the same time, the socialist past remains a contentious political subject. In 2000, parliament passed the “Law on Declaring the Criminal Nature of the Communist Regime in Bulgaria,” which was amended in 2016. The amendment called, among others, for the removal of symbols of communism from the public realm. Such attempts to establish certain “truths” by law indicate the importance of the preservation of divergent legacies of state socialism as a countermeasure: archives of experience highlight different realities of interaction between the state and society. They are a source of knowledge about human agency but also the constraints it faces from powerful state structures. The archives of the cultural opposition in particular tell a powerful story of

1 See e.g. Todorova, Dimou, and Troebst, *Remembering Communism*.

2 Alpha Research National Representative Survey in 2014. Accessed February 18, 2018. http://alpharesearch.bg/bg/socialni_izsledvania/socialni_publicacii/prehodat_mitove-i-pamet-25-godini-po-kasno.831.html.

struggles of usually powerless individuals not only to gain control over their lives but also to change society. Whether one agrees with their agendas or not, they are testament to the force of ideas and hopes for a better future.

A brief sketch of political developments, 1944–1989

The specificities of cultural opposition in Bulgaria can be understood only against the backdrop of the main features of communist rule in the country. This story began on September 9, 1944, one day after the Red Army had crossed the Romanian-Bulgarian border. Under the watchful eyes of Soviet troops, the anti-fascist coalition of the Fatherland Front took power on September 9. Although Bulgaria subsequently joined the Allied Countries in their fight against Nazi Germany, it was considered a defeated country after the end of the war. Until the signing of a peace treaty, it was under allied control. This implied that the communists had to contain their urge to seize absolute power. A certain pluralism was maintained until 1947, with non-communists in the government and opposition parties present in parliament.³

At the same time, the government took harsh and swift measures against those who were considered supporters of the ancient regime. Under the slogan “Rooting out Fascism,” thousands of members of the former elite were brought before so-called People’s Courts between December 1944 and April 1945. An estimated number of 9,000 to 11,000 people were sentenced, and circa 2,700 of them were sentenced to death and executed. Among them were sixty-seven members of the previous national assembly, twenty-two former government ministers, forty-seven generals of the Bulgarian army, the three regents (who acted in lieu of the king, who was a minor), and three former prime ministers.⁴ This purge of the old elite left a lasting mark of terror, especially on the consciousness of “bourgeois” families.

After the signing of the peace treaty in February 1947, the Bulgarian communists quickly moved to obliterate the remaining vestiges of democracy. The remaining opposition parties were disbanded and their “progressive” factions merged with the communists. Opposition deputies in parliament lost immunity. The most influential opposition politician, peasant party leader Nikola Petkov, was arrested on trumped-up charges in August 1947 and sentenced to death; his execution in September marked the beginning of one-party rule in Bulgaria. Apart from oppositional parties, church leaders were persecuted as well. The small Catholic Church and various protestant denomina-

³ Baeva and Kalinova, *Bŭlgarskite prehodi*, 70. For a good overview of the political and social history of the People’s Republic of Bulgaria, gathering leading Bulgarian historians, see Znepolski, *Istoriia na Narodna Republika Bŭlgariia*. A note on transliteration: we follow a simplified version of the Library of Congress’s standard.

⁴ Baeva and Kalinova, *Bŭlgarskite prehodi*, 60.

tions received particularly cruel treatment because of their transnational structure.

The communist regime was very repressive especially during the years of Stalinism. One reason for this was the Soviet-Yugoslav break in June 1948: after that, real or alleged supporters of Tito were purged in Bulgaria as well. More than 6,000 individuals were arrested, 3,700 of them were sent to labor camps, and 1,500 were executed.⁵ The most prominent victim was Traycho Kostov, one of the leaders of the Bulgarian Communist Party and former Deputy Prime Minister, who was executed after a show trial. More than 100,000 party members were expelled from the party, having been accused of sympathies with Tito or other ideological deviations, after party membership had grown at breakneck speed in the preceding years.

Bulgaria's location at the geo-political fault line between East and West was one of the reasons for the continuously high degree of political control. It was the only Warsaw Pact country bordering two NATO member states (Greece and Turkey), and Yugoslavia was for years considered a hostile country as well. Until 1953, more than 4,000 families—many belonging to Muslim minorities—were forcefully resettled from the border areas. Another wave of repression hit the country in 1956–57, in the wake of the aborted Hungarian revolution. Recent research concluded that between 1944 and 1962, more than 23,000 people were sent to labor camps, 15,000 for political reasons. COURAGE collections document the horrors of the most notorious camp on the Belene Island in the Danube.⁶

A lasting legacy of repression was the substantial extension of the size and scope of the State Security (*Dürzhavna signurnost*).⁷ It grew into a massive institution of surveillance and repression, comparable to those in other state socialist countries. Party chief Vŭlko Chervenkov called it the “eyes and ears of the party.” It belonged to the Ministry of Interior, but superior control lay with the General Secretary of the Communist Party. In 1962, the State Security disposed of 6,200 personnel, including 4,300 operative officers. By the late 1980s, the number of agents had grown to between 12,300 and 13,000, who were aided by 50,000 to 65,000 secret informants and contributors. The State Security especially surveyed intellectuals, minorities, religious communities, people travelling abroad, and members of the younger generations.

One important reason for the growth of the repressive authorities was the armed resistance that emerged immediately after the takeover by the Fatherland Front. Throughout the country, armed groups emerged that fought

5 Lilkov and Hristov, “*Bivshi hora*” po kvalifikatsiata.

6 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Tower Museum of Petko Ogovski”, by Anelia Kasabova, Dr., 2018. Accessed: September 25, 2018.

7 The Commission holding the archive of the former state security has launched a series of edited documents: “*Iz arhivite na DS*”; see: <https://www.comdos.bg/>. For recent research on the State Security see Metodiev, *Dürzhavna signurnost*; Metodiev and Dermendzhieva, *Dürzhavna signurnost—predimstvo na nasledsvto*.

against the new government. They were called *goriani* because many of them hid in forests and the mountains. Similar to the situation in Romania, though, these groups had no consistent ideology or any central coordination. While their resistance did not jeopardize communist rule, it strengthened anxiety among the regime and the government's willingness to use force to crush opposition. Information about armed resistance was suppressed during communist rule and came to be known only after 1989.⁸

While direct physical repression was greatly reduced after the mid-1950s, the party-state kept constant pressure on real or presumed opposition—not least in the arena of cultural opposition. All Bulgarian collections described by COURAGE are testimony to this. Large scale physical repression was reserved for the Muslim minorities who resisted forceful assimilation by the state beginning in the first half of the 1970s. The single most massive campaign was against the large Turkish minority in the 1980s, members of which were forced to take Bulgarian names. The regime called the assimilation campaign the “Rebirth Process” (*vŭzroditelen protses*).⁹

At the same time, the Bulgarian communists also attempted to build legitimacy, that is, to rule by consent. A rise in material standards of living, evident especially in the 1960s and 1970s, was an important element of this. The party-state also made full use of culture in order to generate support, which is why the “cultural front” was so important.¹⁰ Party leader Zhivkov portrayed himself as a patron of the arts, giving privileges to writers and artists who toed the party line. The emphasis of patriotic themes by party propaganda was also an attempt to win over non-communist, nationalistic intellectuals. Ludmila Zhivkova's reign at the helm of official culture was emblematic of these developments. The daughter of Todor Zhivkov was Head of the State Department of Culture from 1975 until her death at a relatively young age in 1981.¹¹ We can speak of a limited liberalization of cultural life in order to help the regime gain some legitimacy.

However, many individuals continued to challenge fundamental principles of communist rule (see below). In these cases, the state mobilized its full repressive potential. One of the best known Bulgarian dissidents, the writer and journalist Georgi Markov, was killed by a State Security agent while in exile in London in 1978.¹² Critically-minded intellectuals were often in an on-and-off relationship with the state, as shown by the COURAGE collections on the filmmaker Binka Zheliazkova. She was a principled communist but still had some of her works banned, while others were officially praised despite her continuous critique of the regime and her innovative artistic approach.

8 *Gorianite, Sbornik dokumenti*; Giaurski, Kasabov, “Vŭorŭzhena sŭprotiva.”

9 See for example the collection COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Resistance of Turkish Minority in Bulgaria”, by Anelia Kasabova, Dr., 2018. Accessed: September 25, 2018.

10 Elenkov, *Kulturniia front*; Brunnbauer, “*Die sozialistische Lebensweise*.”

11 Atanasova, “Lyudmila Zhivkova.”

12 Peleva, *Georgi Markov*; Hristov, *Ubiite “Skitnik*.”

The underlying problem was that the red line which defined what the regime would consider acceptable criticism and what it would not was deliberately kept unclear. This created constant insecurity among artists and intellectuals. There was a large and moving grey zone between the endorsement of official ideology and its rejection in the cultural sphere, as exemplified by research on the younger generations.¹³

Another reason for the ultimate instability of the communist regime in Bulgaria was the increasing openness of Bulgarian society to the West. This included a growing flow of information, thanks also to the 1975 Final Act of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Ultimately, Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika* proved one challenge too many for a regime that stressed its proximity to the Soviets. Bulgarians who are traditionally sympathetic with Russian culture eagerly read books and journals coming from the rapidly opening-up Soviet Union. It is indicative that the first mass protests against the regime began in the 1980s in protest against the forced renaming campaign against the Bulgarian Turks.¹⁴ The opposition against this measure included not only Turks but also different Bulgarian intellectuals. It initiated the appearance of the first informal opposition organizations. A transnational issue triggered open mass protests: in November 1987, the citizens of the town of Ruse started to demonstrate against terrible air pollution. The polluter was a chemical factory located on the other side of the Danube in Romania. Yet the inhabitants of Ruse had grown angry at their government, which had done nothing to protect them and had withheld information. This local protest, described in a collection at the historical museum in Ruse, ultimately grew into a national cause.¹⁵

On November 10, 1989, the Politburo of the Communist Party forced Todor Zhivkov to resign. Very quickly, his successor Petar Mladenov initiated broad political liberalization. Free and fair multiparty parliamentary elections in June and the election of the former dissident Zheliu Zhelev as President of the Republic in August 1990 formally marked the successful transition to democracy.

History of Cultural Opposition in Communist Bulgaria

This role of Bulgarian intellectuals under communism, although often criticized as unsatisfactory by the intellectuals themselves and by contempo-

13 See e.g. Taylor, *Let's Twist Again*.

14 See Trifonov, "Miusulmanite v politikata"; Stoianov, *Turskoto naselenie*; Ialamov, *Istoriia na turskata obshtnost*; Ivanova, *Othvürulenite priobshteni*; Gruev and Kalionski, "Vüzroditelnia protses"; Levi, ed. *Istinata za vüzroditelniia protses*; Angelov, ed. *Strogo poveritelno!*; Angelov, *Borba bez orüzhie*.

15 A chronology of *Ekoglasnost* is provided in Aleksandrieva and Karakachanov, *Nezavisimo sdruzhenie Ekoglasnost*.

rary analysts, is, in fact, in full accordance with the concept of “dissent” during the Cold War.¹⁶ In the Bulgarian intellectual landscape, the conventional definition of “dissent” is accepted without much objection. The only people who strongly oppose the use of the label “dissident” to describe them are actually indisputably dissidents: they were or are the most popular and significant intellectuals, whose creative and moral presence had the strongest moral impact on different groups of Bulgarian society from the 1950s to the 1980s.

Yet what is contentious is the influence of “dissent” on political and public life: while during the time of socialism many analysts considered dissidents relatively insignificant, some post-socialist observers tend to exaggerate their importance. Adding to that confusion is the fact that multiple self-proclaimed dissidents came forward in the last three decades—people little known or completely unknown in the recent past. After 1989, a variety of previously unknown creative and civil actions in opposition to communist rule became known. Some of them were represented by a small number of long-term political prisoners, who had gained fame only in a very limited circle of people, i.e. without public impact. The problem of the lack of publicity makes the concept of “dissent” even more complex.

Preconditions

Bulgarian “dissidence” was distinctive, which does not mean that it was ineffective. Its specificity was largely determined by the legacies from the time before the establishment of communist rule. Ever since the establishment of the modern Bulgarian state in 1878, substantial violations of democracy were usually met only by individual but not organized opposition. Leading intellectuals repeatedly expressed their frustration that they had failed to organize massive civil protests for the protection of democracy in extreme moments, such as after the coups d’état of 1923 and 1934. This tradition continued after World War II.

During the first three decades of socialism, Bulgarian “dissent” was therefore expressed primarily through individual acts of opposition. This opposition aimed to capture the attention of the wider public, to fight fear, and to foster a critical consciousness among the people. Opposition meant not so much one-time events but rather the consistent defense of certain positions over the years. Bulgarian “dissent,” similar to that in other Eastern European countries, was mostly intellectual in its composition and nature. It did not perceive itself as dissident, neither did it accept heroic poses or expect rewards. It was a personal choice, but also a mission that imposed a high price and real consequences on its activists.

¹⁶ Popov, *Cheshkiat intelektualets*, 15.

One of the main issues related to “dissent” in Bulgaria is the question of its origins. A useful approach to this question is to frame “dissent” as the rejection of adaptation to the norms of the systems, when individuals for example insist on their individual opinion on certain aesthetic questions. The first open counter-adaptive actions appeared right after the Twentieth Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1956) and the subsequent party forums in other socialist countries. Until then, socialism had been imposed in Bulgaria mainly through repression. In 1956, political life in Bulgaria changed: the leadership of the party was reshuffled (Todor Zhivkov became the unquestioned leader) and the public climate changed towards a certain degree of liberalization.¹⁷

At this point most Bulgarians had accepted socialism as a fact to which they had to adapt. Using numerous tools, the ruling party managed to create the impression and even the belief that there was no alternative to socialism. The defeated revolution in Hungary in 1956, which was an attempt to shake off Soviet domination, showed the futility of such efforts in a world divided by the two Super Powers. In 1968, this impression was reinforced by the fate of Czechoslovakia’s attempt to give socialism a “human face.” Meanwhile, in the face of numerous injustices in everyday life, critical and derogatory attitudes towards the state also emerged in Bulgaria, although they were not translated into public political acts.

The seeds of the expression of critical views had been sown in the 1940s and 1950s. For a period of ten years after the communist takeover, new names of artists and intellectuals gained recognition in public spaces. They created works of great popularity. In the early years after World War II, these intellectuals had supported the socialist ideal, in which they sincerely believed. Then, they benefited from the new institutions governing artistic life, such as the creative unions, and they were able to make themselves heard through the press and radio. Whether they were members of the Communist Party or non-party members, they were offered means by the state to gain public recognition.

This reputation was an indisputable premise and necessary precondition for the wider impact of critical messages, which some of them made after the so-called April Plenum of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party in 1956. The new “moral” authorities were mostly representatives of the artistic elite. Scholars in the humanities also belonged to this group, but they reached a far more limited range of people—mostly colleagues and students, insofar as that was possible in a system of universal state control in terms of security services whose employees were almost everywhere.¹⁸ Intellectuals and artists who had acquired popularity through public media and had been given the opportunity to express openly their counter-adaptive position acted

17 BHA, u. 1B, op. 5, a.e. 196, item 1, lines 3–10; Marcheua, *Todor Zhivkov*, 45–59.

18 Znepolski, *Kak se promeniata neshitata*.

as a corrective to the socio-political reality. They enjoyed wide popularity and influence thanks to their presence in the public space. Such people (like the prominent historian Nikolay Genchev) had a clear sense of their effect and devoted themselves to their roles as public speakers. Particularly extensive were the opportunities to impact public opinion for writers and artists working in cinema and theatre. They affected society through creative work and their civic positions. Their works showed how a person could integrate into society without losing his/her personality.

For these intellectuals, this kind of position of reflective distance from power, while not being directly confrontational, was quite natural. Most of them were members of the Communist Party and many had direct involvement in the antifascist activities before the end of World War II. They had faith in an ideal but most of them experienced a sense of disappointment about its realization. Still, they were confident enough in their beliefs and had the courage to respond to the conditions of their time. They lived with the belief of “the big idea—the conservation of faith in goodness.”¹⁹ Their biographies made it very difficult for the party-state to portray them as counter-revolutionaries. The government could not find easy ways to penalize or compromise them in front of the public. For non-party figures in various professional communities and for many ordinary citizens, the messages of these artists were extremely important. They were the most trusted moral authorities; their political fervor was admired by the young, who subsequently became their followers.

Individuals

The expressions of opposition among members of the artistic community and also certain representatives of the academic intelligentsia culminated immediately after the April Plenum in 1956. It was so big that it provoked fears in the ruling party and doubts about its ability to deal with it. Voices were heard demanding true freedom of artists and questioning the hegemony of Socialist Realism. Painters—as shown by the Collection “Forms of Resistance”—were among those who visibly created new forms of artistic expression. In 1957, several books were published revealing negative phenomena of socialism, such as the play *Fear* by Todor Genov, the short stories *Laskov Family* by Liuben Stanev, and *A False Case* by Emil Manov.

The party responded by ordering publications in specialized journals and the popular press that refuted these claims.²⁰ The party also organized meetings with the disobedient artists and backed sympathetic artists, who entered into polemics with the critical intelligentsia. It also resorted to repression. The poet Krum Penev, for example, was expelled from the Communist

19 Interview with Valeri Petrov from November 13, 1997. Interviewer: Natalia Hristova.

20 *Literaturen front*, nos. 41, 42, 48 (1957).

Party in 1958. This reaction, however, made the critical texts and their authors even more popular. The short story *A False Case* was printed in successive issues of the journal *Plamak* (Flame). It was spread from hand to hand, it was copied on typewriters, and collective readings and discussions of it were organized. Emil Manov received numerous letters of support from readers across the country.²¹ The following year, the films *Na malkia ostrov / On the Small Island* (screenwriter Valery Petrov, director Rangel Valchanov) and *Zhivotът si teche tiho / Life Flows Quietly* (sc. Hristo Ganev, dir. Binka Zheliazkova) were completed. Both were criticized by the Central Committee, and the latter was not allowed to screen. In May 1956, the cafe *Bamboo* in Sofia was opened. It became a place of free thought, heated discussions, and dissemination of works that were hard to find due to censorship. Radoy Ralin and Krum Penev composed poems and epigrams against the Central Committee, which eventually became an integral part of urban folklore in Bulgaria.

In 1960, the country experienced a similar intellectual rebellion, again followed by government repression. In 1961, the editorial board of the satirical newspaper *Stŭrshel* (Hornet) was changed and a number of intellectuals were expelled from the party. However, artists continued to embrace the illusion of genuine creative freedom, as a result of which the satirical *Improvisations* by Valeri Petrov and Radoi Ralin appeared.²² These works ignited a heated discussion about free speech, the essence of which is most accurately expressed by the poem of Liubomir Levchev "I love you free verse, even for the word freedom, which bears your name." Radoi Ralin issued his *Safety Pins*, and as a consequence was dismissed from the newspaper *Starshel*. The Burgas Theatre was for years a place for free thought and new creative experiments, led in no small part by directors Iulia Ognianova, Leon Daniel, Metodi Andonov, and Vili Tsankov. Critical writers Hristo Fotev and Stefan Tsanev published their first works of poetry, and the most avant-garde Bulgarian poet, Konstantin Pavlov, was also published during that time. The new movies *A biahme mladi* (We Were Young, 1961, screenplay by Hristo Ganev, dir. by Binka Zheliazkova), *Pleneno iato* (Captive Flock, 1962, screenplay Emil Manov, director Ducho Mundrov), and *Slŭntseto i siankata* (Sun and Shadow, 1962, screenplay Valeri Petrov, dir. Rangel Vŭlchanov) were brought to the screen. They all recalled the lost ideals of the heroes of the anti-Hitler resistance, a form of criticism to which the government was particularly susceptible.²³

In 1964, Emil Manov's play *Greshkata na Avel* (Abel's Error) became of great interest. It was staged by the Dimitrovgrad theatre director Asen Shopov, and in the summer of the same year it was selected for the National Review of Bulgarian Theatre, an annual meeting of new theatre productions of all around the country. During the presentation in Sofia, which was followed

21 Hristova, *Bŭlgarskiiat sluchai*, 111–31.

22 Ibid., 240–53.

23 Ibid., 194–204.

by public discussion, it was sharply criticized by some, but also stubbornly defended by authors and critical intellectuals. As a result of political pressure, the play was cancelled and the theatre in Dimitrovgrad was closed. This mobilized the townspeople, who sent protest telegrams in support of the authors of the play and their theatre. Visiting Dimitrovgrad, Todor Zhivkov was heckled, and he never visited this model socialist town again.²⁴

In 1968, another attempt to discipline intellectuals became emblematic of government repression. This concerned the book with revised folk epigrams by Radoi Ralin and Boris Dimovski entitled *Liuti chushki* (Hot Peppers). They were fired from their jobs in the publishing house *Bulgarian Artist*, as was any other member of the staff who had had any role in the publication of the book. The government made public 20 names of artists whom it regarded as “rightist” in order to put pressure on them; this included some of the most noted Bulgarian writers and artists of the time, such as Blaga Dimitrova, Hristo Ganev, Valeri Petrov, and Radoi Ralin.²⁵ All but three of the people on the list were members of the BCP, and all had the symbolic asset of participation in the antifascist movement before September 9, 1944.

In 1969, another play was subjected to merciless criticism: a staging by the Burgas Theatre of the play *Nie sme na 25 godini* (We are 25 years old), authored and directed by Nedialko Yordanov. It was dropped from the repertoire, but the popularity of the Burgas Theatre and of the poet Yordanov became so great that people from all over the country travelled to this seaside town to watch his other new productions. In the same year, the poetry book by Marko Ganchev *Biagashto dŭrvo* (Running Tree) was sanctioned with accusations of pessimism and unacceptable criticism of socialist reality. In 1970–71, the writers Gocho Gochev, Hristo Ganev, Valeri Petrov, and Marko Ganchev were expelled from the Party, and Blagoi Dimitrov was expelled from the Union of Bulgarian Writers, because they did not join the Party’s protest against the award of the Nobel Prize to Soviet writer Solzhenitsyn.²⁶

In the 1970s, discussions in creative circles became more and more liberated, while at the same time the number of repressive measures taken by the government increased. This period brought back the memory of the dynamic literary life of the 1920s and 1940s. The two books by Blaga Dimitrova and Iordan Vassilev *Mladostta na Bagriana i neinite spŭtnitsi* (Bagriana’s Youth) and *Dni cherni i beli* (Days of Black and White), published in 1975, were officially criticized, and the authors were not given any opportunity to defend themselves. But again, the repressive measures only increased readers’ interest in the works and authors, thus yielding the opposite result of what the government had hoped to achieve.²⁷ Creative protest in the upcoming years not only

24 Hristova, *Spetsifika*, 258–61.

25 BHA, u. 1B, op. 40, a. ed. 22.

26 Hristova, *Vlast i inteligentsiia*.

27 Hristova, *Spetsifika*, 337–38.

did not slow down but became stronger, even in the face of new instances of repression. The Polish Solidarity movement in 1980–81, for example, heightened the fears of the Bulgarian communists. This prompted them to seize the book *Fascism* by the philosopher Zheliu Zhelev and the novel *Litse* (Face) by Blaga Dimitrova in 1982 and to halt distribution of the film *Edna zhena na 33* (A Woman at 33) by Boian Papazov and Hristo Hristov. The authors were punished, and this made them more popular. Zhelev's *Fascism* became one of the most widely read and influential scientific studies of the time. Critical theatre also attracted thousands of spectators to its salons, where the bond between actors and audiences was so strong that it created the sense of a collective, albeit only creative rebellion against the ruling party.

As the Courage Collections from Bulgaria show, this model of conscientious individuals who struggled to preserve moral integrity and cultural freedom was replicated on the level of lesser known figures of cultural life.²⁸ The government's affirmation of culture and the extensive network of state sponsored cultural institutions also created spaces for counter-adaptive appropriations and for the expression of non-conformist thoughts.

Organizations

The beginning of 1988 marks the beginning of organized "dissidence" in Bulgaria. The first informal organizations that openly challenged the regime were created: the Independent Society for the Protection of Human Rights in Bulgaria, headed by the former long-time political prisoner Ilia Minev; the Committee on the Protection of Religious Rights, Freedom of Conscience, and Religious Value, led by Hristofor Sabev (a graduate physicist, who later became a monk); the Independent Trade Union *Podkrepa* (Support), led by Konstantin Trenchev.²⁹ The creators of these organizations and their members were usually unknown to the general public. Their symbolic legitimacy was rooted in "martyrdom." Therefore, we should consider them not as "dissidents," but rather as figures of an emerging political opposition.

Two other civil fora, founded in 1988, were made up of intellectuals and were "dissident" in structure and content. The first was the Public Committee for the Environmental Protection of Ruse, known as the Ruse Club, established in March at the House of Cinema in Sofia after the screening of the documentary *Dishai / Breathe* (directed by Iurii Zhirov). This film documented the terrible air pollution in Ruse and the protests by the city's inhabitants against it. The council of the Committee included popular personalities led by the writer Georgi Mishev. All of them were members of the BCP.³⁰ Influential

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ivanov, *Politicheskoto protivopostaviane*, 124–39.

³⁰ One of the collections in the COURAGE Registry is devoted to the ecological protest movement in Ruse: COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Ecological Protests against the Chlorine Pollution in

personalities of cultural life, such as the writer Evtim Evtimov and the chairman of the Union of Bulgarian Artists Svetlin Rusev, published articles supporting the Committee and the movie. The government refused to register the Committee, and the party expelled some of its members.

The second major non-formal organization with political objectives, the Club for the Support of Openness and Reconstruction (*Klub za podkrepa na glasnosta i preustroistvoto*), was formed in November 1988 at Sofia University. The initiators of this “dissident” club were prominent Bulgarian intellectuals who had consistently defended aesthetic, scientific, and civic values. Again, it is no surprise that most of them were members of the Communist Party and had pre-1944 anti-fascist credentials. The membership of the Club soon rose from initially eighty-one (in some documents ninety or ninety-two) to 214 in June 1989.³¹ The Club was a closed intellectual organization, although it had declared itself open to all civilians. It was not anti-communist, as the participants constantly talked about the democratization and humanization of the system in the framework of “reconstruction.” But they also organized a number of petitions against the forced renaming of the Bulgarian Turks; they gave interviews for Radio Free Europe, and they held closed discussions on economic, demographic, and environmental issues, as well as on issues of Bulgarian history and culture. The authorities searched the homes of club members and resorted to persecution and arrests. Three people were expelled from the party and dismissed from their jobs.

Both organizations enjoyed considerable popularity, especially in large cities. Immediately after November 10, 1989, they organized rallies and they cofounded the first oppositional party, the Union of Democratic Forces.

“Dissidents” between memory and oblivion

In the years after communism in Bulgaria, “corrective” culture and “dissidence” were doomed to oblivion. While in 1990 the names of popular personalities from the cultural opposition were present in the public space, their stance as moral authorities soon began to erode. Gradually, they were pushed out of the media environment; new personalities, mostly experts involved in the transformation and a new class of professional politicians, came to the fore. The model of prominent individuals acting as a corrective on power had apparently lost its place in the post-communist public sphere. Intellectuals such as the Radoi Ralin, Hristo Ganev, and Zhelju Zhelev, who became president in 1990, managed for a while to translate their authority earned as critics of communist power into a moral guidance role in the early years of transition. But ultimately, attempts to maintain or reinvigorate the public role of the “dissenter” in a time of political pluralism failed.

³¹ *Rusev*, by Anelia Kasabova, Dr., 2017. Accessed: September 25, 2018..

³¹ Vasilev, *Patila i radosti*, 281–82; Ivanova, *Bŭlgarskoto disidentstvo*, 141–47.

Only the writer and émigré Georgi Markov enjoys considerable and stable popularity. The explanation for this—apart from his tragic fate (see above)—is his influential book *The Truth that Killed (In Absentia Reports)*, which he had read on Radio Free Europe. Fans of Markov focus on the anti-communist pathos of his texts. They use his biography very selectively, almost neglecting the part of his life and work in Bulgaria until 1969, which they believe would cast a shadow over his personality.³² It seems that some admirers of Markov attribute to him a more important historical role than to Zheliu Zhelev, the dissident philosopher-turned-president. It is indicative that a monument for Georgi Markov was erected in an elite neighborhood of Sofia, whereas late Zheliu Zhelev is commemorated only by a memorial plaque on his native house in the village of Veselinovo.

This also shows that the sustainability of the memory of the authors of corrective culture and “dissidence” can be achieved only through the preservation and presentation of their legacies. This is one of the goals of the COURAGE project, but it is also a goal of projects like “Living Memory. Intellectuals on Socialism and Post-Socialism” at New Bulgarian University, Sofia. This project conducts video interviews with selected representatives of the humanities and of artistic life in Bulgaria. It aims to document living memories represented by these individual stories and the reflections of the respondents about their creative paths.

The COURAGE Collections—Memory and Debates

The collections from Bulgaria in the COURAGE registry do not aim to impose “the truth” about the socialist period and dissent. The aim is to present the manifold forms of cultural opposition, increase the possibilities for comparisons, link collections with research efforts, and make them known to the wider public. While the selection of Bulgarian collections does not allow for a genuinely sociological survey (e.g. of ownership patterns), the collections do illustrate the wide variety of collecting practices in use.

The selection of collections for Bulgaria followed two main criteria: first to present the diversity of institutions and collectors; second to present different arenas, genres and forms of cultural opposition. In total it can be said that the achievements in collecting, storing, and promoting material pertaining to the socialist period in Bulgaria have been substantial. The leading role belongs to state “institutions of memory”: Archives State Agency (ASA), the National Library “St. St. Cyril and Methodius” (NLCM), and the Bulgarian National Film Archive (BNFA). Pursuant to the Law on the Compulsory Deposit of Printed and Other Works and the Law on the National Archival Fonds,

32 An exception of this trend is the book Peleva, *Georgi Markov*, which offers an in-depth critical reading of his work before his emigration and presents a complete portrait of the writer.

these institutions store large funds of materials related to the development of culture during the period. They also undertake search activities and, to the extent that their limited financial resources permits, they purchase new materials. The registry includes several collections from these organizations devoted to notable critics of communist rule and the realities of state socialism, such as the funds on Hristo Ognianov and Zheliu Zhelev at the State Archive in Sofia³³ and the ad hoc collection on Binka Zheliazkova at the BNFA. These collections show expressions of counter-adaptive or corrective positions in several cultural fields: journalism, philosophy, and cinema. They highlight the importance of exile (Ognianov) and the potential political pathways of dissidents (Zhelev).

So-called ad hoc collections were created in the process of describing collections. They indicate ephemeral events (which did not leave a physical collection) or they refer to documents that are stored in an archive, but not in one coherent fund. An example of the former is the exhibition “Forms of Resistance” at the Sofia City Art Gallery—the paintings that were shown as examples of deviations from Socialist Realism are now back with their owners. An example of the latter is the “collection” of banned newspapers and of Samizdat journals at the National Library. It does not exist as a separate collection there, but the COURAGE entry “Only the forbidden newspapers remain in history!” (taken from an interview with a repressed editor) brings them to life. So, our collections put artefacts into new contexts and create relationships that open new perspectives on the history of cultural opposition.

Some of the collections give a good overview of the way in which the Bulgarian Communist Party tried to maintain absolute control in the sphere of culture. This rested not only on the shoulders of the secret police, but also on economic dominance and institutional structures. The collections show how the Bulgarian government followed the Soviet model of organizing culture, which meant state ownership of all cultural institutions. The centralized state established institutions with a clearly hierarchical structure that operated as gatekeepers. Professional associations, such as the Bulgarian Union of Writers, the Union of Bulgarian Artists, etc., were placed under direct party control and were charged with the task of distributing material privileges to their members but also with the task of acting as overseers. The state tried to liquidate private initiative in the cultural sphere.³⁴ The collections contain examples of punitive measures taken by the state against recalcitrant writers and artists, such as expulsion from the BCP and from professional unions (which amounted to a prohibition against pursuing an artistic profession). The pro-

33 Selecting funds from the ASA, access to them was crucial. The personal funds of intellectual dissidents such as Radoy Ralin, Todor Tsonev, and others are currently being organized and arranged and are not open for use.

34 Elenkov, *Kulturniat front*.

tagonists of our collections were subject to bans of their works; they experienced dismissals and other forms of censorship.

The State Security was one of the main instruments of the communist regime in the maintenance of control over intellectuals, who were always regarded as potential critics of the government. The collection of the Commission for the Disclosure of Documents and Announcing Affiliation of Bulgarian Citizens with the State Security and the Intelligence Services of the Bulgarian People's Army (so-called Commission on Dossiers) gives insights into the patterns used in the recruitment of members of the intelligentsia by the State Security. In some cases, cooperation was on a voluntary basis on "patriotic grounds." But there were also examples of people being pressured with threats to discredit them or their families. The small private collection "Seeds of Fear," for example, shows the pressure used by the authorities on the immediate families of people classified as politically "unreliable" or as "enemies of the people."

However, the collections are a powerful testimony to the fact that, despite surveillance and persecution, many people dared to challenge the regime through the means of culture. The range of possible opposition activities was broad, as stated by an eyewitness: opposition could be "expressed in a series of non-eye-catching acts, gestures and words, such as a non-traditional reading of a work; an 'inappropriate' statement at a teachers' meeting; a reference to a forbidden fact or an author in front of students; reading with students of forbidden or semi-forbidden books; education in fearlessness and disobedience; singing of Russian White-Army songs; giving lessons for free, i.e. refusal to participate in the natural exchange of services against goods," says Teodora Panayotova, who together with her sister Boriana created the family archive "Life Beyond the Pattern of Communism." Private collections also reveal the diverse "seeds of courage and freedom," such as the defense of one's principles and faith. These could take place in esoteric movements, such as the White Brotherhood, or in rock music.

These experiences should not be belittled as mere personal stories.³⁵ Rather, they help us arrive at a more complex and nuanced picture of socialist Bulgaria. Assessing communism requires self-critical consideration. Edvin Sugarev stated that we need to "destroy the Berlin Wall in ourselves." Despite the manifold examples of conformism with and accommodation to the communist regime, this period can hardly be summed up as one marked by "indifference, cowardice and absurdity."³⁶

One aim of the selection of Bulgarian collections in the registry is to highlight the plight of ethnic minorities and the activities of those who fought for their rights under communism. A private collection, which so far has been

³⁵ Sugarev, "Berlinskata stena e oshte v nas," Accessed August 22, 2018. <http://www.librev.com/index.php/component/content/article?id=739:2009-11-16-20-55-30>.

³⁶ Ibid.

unknown in Bulgaria, in the Turkish city of Bursa contains interesting material on one of the most researched but also debated topics in Bulgarian historiography: the regime's attempt to assimilate the Turkish minority by force. The collection of more than 100 autobiographical video interviews documents the fate of Turks who fled the country. The terms used by the author of the collection, such as "namecide" and "ethnic genocide," might provoke heated responses. But it is important in the registry to document the self-presentation of participants in cultural opposition, which is an interesting field of study in its own right. The registry is a source which, like any other historical source, must be subjected to critical analysis.

In general, one of the aims of the Bulgarian collections is to shed light on lesser known moments of everyday life and forms of everyday opposition through lifestyles, such as in the collections "Everyday Life in Southwestern Bulgaria" and "Roma Archive." Both were created by one of the first centers for oral history in Bulgaria, the NGO Balkan Society for Autobiography and Social Communication at the University of Blagoevgrad. These collections present the point of views of "ordinary" people from different religious and ethnic communities. The personal stories reveal little known moments of everyday life, such as the experiences of and the resistance to collectivization; the encroachments of the state on the cultural traditions in villages and hidden forms of resistance. Especially valuable is the presentation of the daily life of the Roma minority, whose experiences are largely excluded from official historical narratives.

All Bulgarian collections present the constant pressure exerted by the state on free thinking artists and intellectuals, but they also present the practices of self-assertion and opposition used by artists and intellectuals. They reject the myth of the total obedience and conformism of Bulgarian intellectuals, which was purposefully created by the communist authorities. The collections also reveal new aspects of the emergence of mass protests and informal dissident organizations in the late 1980s. The collection "Ecological Protests against Chlorine Pollution" at the Regional Museum of History in Ruse shows how activities of museum curators can lead to enriching funds with new materials which reveal new perspectives on well-researched phenomena.

Also important is the fact that all represented institutions promote their collections by various means: they organize exhibitions, conferences, public presentations, and seminars; they participate widely in media events and look in particular for ways to attract young audiences and the general public. There is also a visible tendency of increasing trust between private collectors and state institutions (archives, libraries, museums). Petko Ogoyski, who created his own "Tower Museum" with original artefacts from his time in the Belene labor camp, is a case in point: he donated the main part of the original documents to the Central State Archives in 2012. Many founders and collectors of collections feel a sense of mission; they are developing activities to promote sharing the collected knowledge, sometimes by using new technologies. Some

of the collections—both private and public— reach wide audiences and thus stimulate critical thinking and public activism today, when it is easy to have the impression that we “have crashed in one place, with dreams broken,” as two famous Bulgarian music journalists commented.³⁷

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³⁷ “BG rokat na 80te paleshe revoliutsii. Interviu na Iskra Krapacheva s Rumen Ianev i Emil Bratanov,” *Standart*, June 7, 2015.

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PÉTER APOR

Hungary

Introduction

Oppositional culture is largely associated in Hungary with the emerging circles of intellectual dissent in the 1980s and the semi-legal non-conformist art which began to emerge in the 1960s.¹ Groups that cultivated non-communist and critical cultures were more numerous, however, and had existed practically since the establishment of the dictatorship in the country in 1948–49. In addition to groups which practiced or engaged in forms of (1) intellectual dissent and (2) non-conformist art, there were also (3) religious groups and (4) underground youth subcultures. These groups, on the one hand, show remarkable inner diversity and may be typified further. On the other, their frontiers were often porous, and participants often belonged to multiple networks and even organized common activities. In many ways, their borders were also relatively open towards official and mainstream institutions: members occasionally journeyed across the borders which divided these spheres and established complex webs of social-political critical activism.

The major turning points in the history of cultural opposition in Hungary are partly connected to political upheavals and changes in the country. 1948 and 1956 were years in which dictatorships were (re-)established, and these dictatorships suppressed alternative voices and, thus, triggered exile and forms of concealed domestic cultures. The mid-1960s (including 1968) was an important period in the emergence of novel forms of critical and alternative cultures in the arts, social thought, and popular culture.² These networks were instrumental in shaping the last decade of cultural opposition in socialist Hungary. At the turn of the 1970s and 1980s, novel genres of youth subculture,³ social movements, and underground intellectual cultures appeared in Hungary, which now could link themselves to earlier alternative subcultures in a variety of ways.

Although cultural opposition in Hungary had a distinctive national trajectory (as was the case in other Eastern European countries), the pivotal moments of this trajectory were closely connected to transnational occurrences.⁴ This was particularly true in the late socialist period. Beginning in the mid-

1 Csizmadia, *A demokratikus ellenzék*; Klaniczay and Sasvári, *Törvénytelen avantgárd*.

2 Rainer, *Muddling Through in the Long 1960s*.

3 Horváth, *Kádár gyermekei*; Szőnyi, *Az új hullám*.

4 Mark and Apor, "Socialism Goes Global"; Harms, "Living Mitteleuropa."

1960s, Hungary started gradually to open up to contemporary Western culture. Furthermore, regional linkages, particularly links to the experiences of the Prague Spring and the Polish Solidarity movement, were established among many dissent groups. Even in the 1950s, when the country was more isolated from the West, groups which represented oppositional mentalities were not inimical to transnational influences. In particular, exile and émigré cultures impacted domestic religious and intellectual opposition at home in this decade too.

Types of cultural opposition in Hungary, prominent individuals, and important turning points

Doubtlessly, the first major turning point in the history of cultural opposition in Hungary was the establishment of the communist regime in 1948–49. The creation of a Stalinist-type of government meant the suppression of forms and groups of cultures that the authorities considered non-communist. Attempts to centralize and closely monitor cultural activities in the country were particularly harmful for religious communities, urban middle-class intellectual cultures, literature, and the arts, which had been the backbone of pre-war national culture. Nonetheless, the militant cultural policy supervised by the Stalinist ideologue and cultural politician József Révai also marginalized alternative progressive and leftist traditions, particularly in the fields of philosophy, literature, and education.

The first non-communist dissent groups to oppose the Sovietization of Hungary were, arguably, religious communities.⁵ They were typically non-conformist groups, meaning that they often were critical of their respective Church hierarchies as well or represented various exiled individuals and societies. Of these, the *Bokor* (Bush) Community played an exceptional role. Bokor was established in 1948 by Pious Monk György Bulányi. It focused on the spiritual values of poverty, non-violence, and love. Bulányi was arrested in 1952 by the communist authorities. Although he was released in 1960, his group remained under constant surveillance, and the official Catholic Church also refused to protect the group. Bokor maintained its influence as an important channel for the new religious movements of the 1960s and 1970s, and for a short period it became part of the network of grassroots and underground cultural initiatives ranging from leftist critical intellectuals to nationalist critiques of official socialism.

The outcome of the radical politicization of culture was that the revolution in October 1956 was, in many ways, an act of cultural opposition. Literary authors like the populist Gyula Illyés and the leftist Tibor Déry played spectacular roles in fostering the anti-Stalinist and anti-government atmosphere.

5 Szabó, *Die katholische Kirche*.

The days of the revolution, in turn, witnessed the resurrection of various non-communist intellectual traditions in public. One of the most influential of these was the legacy of interwar critical sociology, which had focused on the poverty and marginalization of the working class in areas of the country outside of Budapest and, particularly, in the rural population. This tradition was illustriously represented by the distinguished poet Gyula Illyés. A nationalist culture focusing on the protection of the cultures of small nations was also resurrected in public, headed by the leading intellectual of the decades of the interwar period, László Németh. Besides, 1956 triggered the abrupt distancing of the young generation of postwar Stalinism from official socialism and accelerated their discovery of alternative leftist and progressive traditions.

The suppression of the revolution, therefore, meant a serious blow to cultural traditions of dissent in Hungary. Many people were forced into exile, particularly members of the younger generation of progressive intellectuals around Imre Nagy, the Prime Minister of the Revolution, for instance, as well as Tibor Méray, Péter Kende, or the young Miklós Krassó. Nonetheless, the revolution was not only important as a trigger of subsequent repressions targeting potentially anti-communist cultures. Sustaining the memory of the revolution itself became the heart of constructing dissent cultures. The democratic legacy of 1956 was embedded in several cultural traditions over the course of the subsequent decades. The values of autonomy, national sovereignty, and democratic participation were centerfold in the works of writers and political thinkers Árpád Göncz, who was jailed after 1956, and István Bibó, who was ousted from public as the repercussion of his participation in Imre Nagy's government. Another important figure in the preservation of the memory of 1956 was the former leftist freedom fighter György Krassó, the brother of Miklós Krassó, who lived in exile. 1956 served as a shortcut to a culture of dissent later on, too. In 1986, the editorial board of the Szeged cultural periodical *Tiszatáj* (Tisza Region) was removed because it had published a poem by Gáspár Nagy on 1956. That year, the dissent artist group Inconnu initiated an open-air exhibition to commemorate the revolution, but the exhibition was banned.

The mid-1960s was a crucial period that shaped the outlook of late socialist cultural opposition in Hungary. In this period, a new generation came of age which had been socialized during the first decade of socialist statehood in Hungary. More importantly, in this period Hungary, like Poland and Yugoslavia, was relatively open towards the West. Cultural transfers which mediated the spirit of New Left social criticism, novel forms of art (such as actionism and Fluxus), new forms of popular culture (like the hippie lifestyle and rock music), and new religious movements stimulated by the Second Vatican Council had a considerable impact on the young generation of Hungarians.

This impact was especially important in shaping the modalities of intellectual dissent. Intellectual dissent is a category which embraces a diverse array of groups, traditions, and trajectories. The most well-known group of

intellectual dissent is the network of Marxist heretics and leftist radicals of the 1960s. People like János Kis, György Bencze, and Miklós Haraszti developed criticism of official socialism based on an alternative reading of Marxist and broader leftist traditions and became the primary representatives of political dissent in the 1980s. For them, the experiences of 1968 were crucial as a prompting to develop new forms of intellectual criticism. Disappointment with democratic socialism was important, as it motivated them to explore non-leftist cultural traditions, particularly liberalism, and also opened them up towards the appropriation of the legacies of 1956. In this respect, their trajectories are similar to the careers of a somewhat older generation of 1968ers, like Ágnes Heller and Mihály Vajda. These former Marxist revisionists distanced themselves from socialism following the suppression of 1968 and started to embrace liberal Western philosophy. Heller eventually went into exile in 1973.⁶

Art was impacted by various forms of performance and action programs, which all concerned the social responsibility of the artist in a way. A central place for the creation of alternative and critical art in Hungary was the Chapel Studio of György Galántai by Lake Balaton. In this studio, important neo-avant-garde artists of the period met with representatives of intellectual dissent. Important performances by Tamás Szentjóby (St. Aubrey), Gyula Pauer, and Katalin Ladik were linked to this 1968er network.⁷ Theatre was also significantly impacted by the spirit of new global social and intellectual movements. The alternative theatre group Orfeo experimented with a commune in Pilisborosjenő and was centered on a strong ethos of anti-consumerism and the critique of social alienation. Péter Halász's street and studio theatre held performances which investigated the conditions of human freedom and power. Halász was influenced by contemporary experimental theatres like Jerzy Grotowski's Polish theatre, but also by events which were taking place in North America and Western Europe. Halász eventually had to go into exile, and he established a successful theatre group of his own first in Amsterdam and then in New York.

Important religious youth groups of the late 1960s and early 1970s, such as Bokor and Regnum Marianum (which had been created before the war), were led by the spirit of the Second Vatican Council to shape criticism of conventional Church practices in Hungary. They were interested in making Christianity an appealing and powerful social force again. For that purpose, they appropriated novel forms and religious practices, like religious beat and youth festivals. Thus, they engaged in two forms of cultural opposition: while they remained in conflict with Church hierarchies, they were also harassed by the state police.

The turn of the 1970s and 1980s witnessed the emergence of new, underground grassroots cultures of dissent. The turn had two important transnation-

⁶ Tormey, *Agnes Heller*.

⁷ Hock, *Gendered Artistic Positions*.

al contexts. For intellectual criticism, the samizdat and illegal activism of the Polish and Soviet underground provided a powerful template. For a popular alternative culture, the protest music of punk and the birth of independent media and dissemination networks proved crucial. Through samizdat publishing and the meetings and activities held by the so-called flying universities the Hungarian dissent reached out to broader intellectual circles arriving from urban middle-class culture (Ferenc Kőszeg), youth subculture (János Kenedi), and critical academics in the field of economics (Tamás Bauer) and sociology (István Kemény). Their activities also overlapped with artistic non-conformism (for instance the work of György Galántai), and occasionally they also cooperated with religious groups like Bokor. Furthermore, the “democratic opposition” (as they tended to classify themselves) also established linkages to earlier traditions of intellectual dissent via individuals, for instance the “third way” intellectuals of the 1950s, István Bibó and Árpád Göncz.

In some ways, Göncz and Bibó exemplify the particularity of intellectual dissent in Hungary. The legacy of Marxism and especially the critical distancing from it played an important role in shaping intellectual dissent in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Hungary. Hungary, however, also produced a powerful agrarian intellectual tradition as well, which fuelled critical intellectual cultures throughout the period of dictatorial rule. The program of emancipating the rural peripheries was conducive to a distinct leftist tradition in interwar Hungary, which particularly, through the figure of the poet Gyula Illyés, was appropriated by the next generation of intellectuals in the 1960s. Poets like Sándor Csoóri and Gáspár Nagy were critical of official socialism, which they identified as an essentially imperialist system which suppressed small nations. The focus on the protection of authentic national cultures and indigenous folklore led them closer to ethnography, both as an academic discipline and as a broader intellectual culture. They were thus linked to previous, pre-communist traditions of ethnography which had been preserved by scholars like László Lajtha. Their focus on the protection of national minority cultures and the development of rural societies at home helped these intellectual groups institutionalize their criticism in the mid-1980s. The establishment of the Gábor Bethlen Foundation, named after a 17th-century Hungarian Transylvanian prince, was important as a means of solidifying the network and the identity of “populist-nationalist opposition,” in part in contrast to their “democratic” counterpart. The populist-nationalist language of dissent was easily accessible by intellectuals in rural areas. It also harmonized well with their traditional concerns with national culture and local development. This is pertinently illustrated, for instance, by the themes of the prohibited journal *Tiszatáj*, which was published in Szeged, a major provincial city.

Youth subculture is a similarly broad category which includes a colorful variety of topics and movements. The most eloquent forms of youth subculture were the punk and underground pop bands and their audiences in the late 1970s and 1980s. Even these music-centered groups were very diverse in

their makeup and genre. A few of them were real artistic projects, such as the famous *Albert Einstein Bizottság* (Committee), which was founded by non-conformist artists of the Lajos Vajda Studio in Szentendre. Links to contemporary art were apparent in Hungarian underground music, as illustrated by their homemade concert posters. These intellectually formed bands were not the only ones to tour the country at the time, however. Punk groups like *Beatrice*, *Auróra*, and *Qsss* represented a more working-class type of protest with their focus on experiences of social marginalization and poverty.

The types, histories, and sociologies of collections

The trajectories of collecting alternative and countercultures ran parallel to the history of cultural opposition itself. Collecting began almost immediately after the communist takeover, as autonomous cultural forms and groups began to be persecuted. These activities did not necessarily mean the deliberate and purposeful collecting of material with regard to cultural opposition. Instead, they represented the will to preserve and save important material and forms of behavior with which groups which were then persecuted identified. The typical collections that were generated in this era were, hence, either materials gathered privately and often clandestinely or archives created by people in exile. Church and religious groups were particularly active in the area in this period. György Bulányi, the founder of Bokor, initiated the gathering of manuscripts and other unpublished materials created by the members of the community already in 1945.

The members of Bokor disseminated texts they had written as illegal samizdat publications, which constituted an important element of the life of the community. In the 1980s, Bokor tried to connect with the groups of the democratic opposition. In 1988, a demonstration was organized by Bokor members in support of the introduction of a professional military (in contrast with obligatory military service, which remained the system in Hungary for many years even after the fall of the communist regime). Bokor remains an active community today. Its archive was founded by the leadership in 2000. The collection is held in Bokor's common flat in Budapest, the so-called "*Bokor-porta*." The purpose of the collection is to save the documents for future generations and keep the papers together for possible later publications.

A similar role was played by István Viczián, who in his private apartment kept materials related to the activities of the Calvinist youth group in the Pasarét district in Budapest.⁸ Members of the banned Order who remained in

8 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Collection of the Calvinist youth congregation of Pasarét", by Kristóf Erdős and Zoltán Pál, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018; COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Archives of the Jesuit Order Hungary", by Béla Mihalik and Zoltán Pál, 2017. Accessed: October 09, 2018, doi: 10.24389/10677

the country collected and preserved the records of the pre-war archives illegally. In addition, Jesuits in exile began to search for and collect relevant documents and objects, and they founded new archives in exile in Leuven, Nijmegen, and Vienna. In the first decade of the socialist state, the major form of cultural opposition consisted of efforts to safeguard pre-communist cultural heritage, as the religious collections clearly illustrate. Other secular traditions confirm this. Members of the interwar scout organization recreated their organization and recorded their activities in exile. These endeavors were largely dependent on the willingness and energies of private individuals, who made efforts to collect and preserve documents.

The anti-Stalinist revolt in October 1956 constituted an important turning point in the history of collections of cultural opposition. Several former participants who were persecuted after 1956 resolved to preserve the memory of the revolution and began collecting records and documents related to the event. In institutional terms, these collections were strikingly similar to their predecessors: they were kept by private individuals either in hiding or in exile. The most important people to create and maintain these kinds of private archives were Árpád Göncz and István Bibó. The leftist Marxist revisionary exile established the Imre Nagy Institute, an archive in Brussels. Collecting materials related to 1956 and forms of cultural opposition was a means of sustaining a positive identity by challenging the counter-identity which the authorities sought to prescribe with democratic, patriotic, and egalitarian values. It was a means of preserving a cultural heritage which the authorities demonized as tyrannical, anti-national, and anti-humanist.

The mid-1960s bore witness to the emergence of interesting new forms of collections. More and more intellectuals and artists began to realize that they had little or no chance of having any kind of public presence in the official sphere and, thus, of having ties to official institutions of memory. Several of them set out on their own paths and decided to create collections of material related to the (counter)cultures in which they were active. From the outset, György Galántai, the owner of the Chapel Studio, deliberately and conscientiously record the activities in which he and members of his group engaged related to the arts. Furthermore, many genres, such as mail art or the production of an underground art magazine, were themselves documents and works of art at the same time. They were forms of self-archiving, or as Galántai called his initiative, "living archives." In 1979, Júlia Klaniczay and György Galántai established Artpool, an alternative art institution which focused on innovative concepts of art at a time when the only works of art which appeared in public were compositions that harmonized with the principles of the official cultural policies. Artpool sought to break the isolation which had been imposed on Hungarian art at the time and to serve as a center for information in the field. Furthermore, it strove to document art events in the country which were marginalized by the cultural policies of the period. The archives, which are a product of these activities, make it possible for members of the younger

generations to examine the alternative art initiatives of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s in their original contexts.⁹

Somewhat similarly, when the alternative theatre group *Orfeo* moved to a shared house and studio which they filled with handmade furniture, stage design items, and masks, they also created a “living museum” which preserved the traces of their countercultural activities. Replacing formal institutions with everyday practices which combined creative activity with collecting, these groups produced their own counter-archives.

Possible counter-narratives also emerged in a few public institutions. In this period, some state museums started collecting non-conformist art. State museums and galleries regularly collected contemporary art, since they intended to depict the trajectories of socialist, modern, or progressive art. In the 1950s, this art embraced primary officially sanctioned works. Beginning in the mid-1960s, however, a few art historians and gallery personnel realized that the many genres of the neo-avant-garde were the most innovative and paradigmatic representatives of contemporary art. People like László Beke, Marianna Mayer, and Ferenc Tóth were important in shaping the modern collections of galleries, including, for instance, the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest and the Savaria Museum in Szombathely. Other institutions offered opportunities for alternative interpretations rather unintentionally. Museums, for instance the National Gallery, had no conscious policy of collecting neo-avantgarde. However, it occasionally bought and displayed works of art by artists who belonged to these genres as part of modern and contemporary exhibitions. The fact that non-conventional modernism appeared in public challenged official narratives of socialist modernism and opened up new ways of interpreting culture in late socialist Hungary.

In many ways, the silent cooperation of private individuals and state institutions remained the rule of collecting alternative cultural products in Hungary in the last decades of socialist statehood. There were concerned individuals who themselves were also part of the emerging underground and punk youth subcultures and who documented the performances and everyday lives of these networks. The young Gábor Klaniczay, who later became a distinguished historian of art and culture in the Middle Ages, was interested in various forms of counterculture and alternative lifestyles, ranging from Bread and Puppet’s experimental theatre to Patti Smith’s art punk. As he increasingly descended into the underground of 1980s Budapest, he preserved recordings and documents of performances by bands like Trabant, as well as samizdat publications like a book by Iván Szelényi and György Konrád, the heretic sociologists, which had been banned.¹⁰

9 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[Artpool Art Collection](#)”, by Balázs Beöthy and Júlia Klaniczay, 2018. Accessed: October 07, 2018, doi: 10.24389/5123

10 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[Gábor Klaniczay’s private collection](#)”, by Heléna Hunák, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018..

Tamás Szőnyei, who toured the outskirts of Budapest in the 1980s, was also motivated by personal (private) interests to attend concerts by underground bands like *Kontroll* and *Európa Kiadó*. He started to keep their home-made posters, which gradually developed into a sizable collection of visual representations of contemporary underground culture. He received the first poster from his brother in 1978, and he was fascinated with the visual world of the new wave and art punk. Szőnyei became a journalist who commented on the events of the emerging new wave and punk subculture. Naturally, he was very much present in the underground scene. He took a little scalpel in his pocket wherever he went: he enriched his collection by taking the posters off the walls with this handy tool. He also was donated posters, but the majority of the collection is from the streets. He gave up systematic collecting with the evaporation of punk subculture in the early 1990s.

Similar activities also took place outside the capital. The photo journalist Ferenc Kálmándy in Pécs photographed performances by underground bands and works by experimental artists in his home town merely as part of the pursuit of his own interests. Kálmándy himself was also part of contemporary neo-avantgarde photography. More importantly in terms of collecting, however, he was employed by the Gallery of Pécs, which was headed by avant-garde artist József Pinczehelyi. As an institution, it often provided room and, thus, shelter for non-conformist culture.

The protection which was provided, at times, by state institutions was crucial in the genesis of many collections on dissent and protest, in particular in academic fields. Critical sociology flourished in late socialist Hungary because the Institute of Sociology was home to several research programs that eventually opened new ways of articulating subversive readings. István Kemény, Ilona Liskó, Péter Ambrus, and Pál Diósi collected interview and documentary material on marginalized social groups, the poor, prostitutes, and the Roma in Hungary. In and of itself, this activity constituted a form of criticism of the failures of socialist integration.¹¹ They were able to engage in social critical research because the party leadership itself was interested in obtaining relevant information on the social structures and lifestyles which prevailed in Hungarian society. Beginning in the late 1960s, research programs on social structures and the “socialist ways of life” was introduced and funded, and this prompted several researchers to pursue work in these areas. Nonetheless, as they realized the subversive potential of the official research program, the authorities clamped down on them. Kemény was forced to flee into exile, and others kept important parts of their research collections unpublished and private.

State institutions, in general, pursued a Janus-face policy towards collecting materials pertinent to cultural opposition in this period. On the one hand,

11 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Diósi Pál’s collection”, by Zoltán Pál, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018..

many of them were indifferent, so they allowed employees to gather and store related material within their walls. The party member and loyal communist director Ferenc Botka of the Petőfi Literary Museum even tolerated staff members (for instance György Gadó and Csaba Nagy) bringing samizdat publications to store in the Museum. Nonetheless, the Museum developed a politics of secrecy in this matter. The existence of such materials was not advertised, they were put on closed circuit systems, and if conflicts arose with the authorities, the institutional leadership did not always protect staff members. While Botka's authority in the Party provided a shield for Csaba Nagy and his colleagues for such activities, it divided the leadership of the Museum as some protested against collecting samizdat in a state institution. The actual size of the samizdat collection was revealed only after the regime change, when Csaba Nagy and his colleagues organized an exhibition of the materials. People then realized that the collection was one of the most significant samizdat collections in the country. This part of the former Closed Stack collection is now part of the regular collection.¹²

The collapse of state socialism constituted an important turning point in the history of the collections on cultural opposition in Hungary. Clandestine, hidden, secretly kept collections suddenly appeared as important assets which might well offer intriguing insights into the other side of socialist Hungary. It meant, first of all, the growing institutionalization of these kinds of collections. Many hidden collections suddenly became mainstream. Galleries and museums of fine art in particular realized that some of their previously marginal collections had now become mainstream and, indeed, could provide ammunition for carving out progressive and often also anti-communist identities.

The most spectacular and, in many ways, unexpected institution to open as a collection on cultural opposition was the Historical Archives of the State Security. The Archives, which began to function as a public institution in 1997, left researchers and the public inundated with oceans of unknown records on groups and individuals that the state police had once considered opponents of socialism. This act proved important in shaping the debates on cultural opposition in two ways at least. First, it revealed in abundant detail how the secret police itself was crucial in defining the meanings of cultural opposition. Second, in turn, it once again made it difficult for the voice of the underground to come to the surface. Histories of cultural dissent are written on the basis of the institutionalized sources created and/or used by the secret police. These sources, however, left little or no room for the counter-histories preserved in the private and alternative collections of former countercultural activists.

There are parallel attempts to institutionalize counter archives, however. One of the most important is the Blinken-OSA Archives (originally the Open Society Archives) at Central European Society. It is unique in two ways. First,

12 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Samizdat Collection at Petőfi Literary Museum \(PLM\)](#)", by Tamás Scheibner, 2017. Accessed: October 09, 2018, doi: 10.24389/5847

the activities of the Archives are funded by private donations, primarily by philanthropes George Soros and Donald and Vera Blinken. Second, the OSA is a regional archives that collects material relevant to counter cultures from all over Eastern Europe. OSA is a counter archives in two ways. First, its core collection contains the former research and records of Radio Free Europe, which had created counter archives itself by observing the Cold War other. Second, OSA actively collects material from participants in communist-era countercultural activists. Thus, OSA now holds parts of the records of Hungarian samizdat publisher Gábor Demszky and the documents of the Budapest international dissent meeting, the Countercultural Forum.¹³

OSA also hosts an important attempt to render relevant the heritage of dissent culture and make it available to the broader public. *Voices of the 20th Century* is an endeavor undertaken at the initiative of sociologists in Hungary to collect, preserve, and make public the records of critical sociology of the socialist era.¹⁴ Funded originally by the National Scientific Research Fund, *Voices* was established in 2009. The original motivation was primarily academic and was manifested in terms of methodology: *Voices* aimed to reveal and preserve the distinct heritage of a methodological school in Hungarian sociology, qualitative research based on oral interviews. Nonetheless, as this school, which emerged in the 1970s in Hungary, had both an ethos of protest and political implications stemming from its social critical content, the project inherently began to endorse the heritage of intellectual dissent, as well. The working group based at the Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences examines and systematizes the interviews and other research materials which sociologists have produced on marginalization, exclusion, and deviance in socialist Hungary. *Voices* pursues a novel form of collecting: it actively contacts and encourages researchers to submit material. With its archiving experiences, OSA is a partner of the Institute of Sociology in this activity. The most important state institution that actively seeks ways to expand its collection on socialist era counterculture is the Archives of Budapest.¹⁵ It focuses particularly on social movements and private diaries. At the moment, it is home to the records of the 1980s-ecological dissent movement, the Danube Circle,¹⁶ as well as György Krassó's records.¹⁷

13 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Open Society Archives", by Péter Apor, Béla Nóvák, and Zoltán Pál, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018..

14 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Voices of the 20th Century Archive and Research Group", by Zoltán Pál, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018..

15 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Budapest City Archive", by Zoltán Pál, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

16 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Documents of the Danube Circle's Association", by Zoltán Pál, 2017. Accessed: October 09, 2018, doi: 10.24389/16054.

17 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Documents of György and Miklós Krassó (1956–1989)", by Pál Zoltán, 2018. Accessed July 2, 2018.

In terms of ownership, the relevant collections of countercultural materials show a balanced picture. While a few organizations and institutions own several collections, there are also individuals who keep their records privately. There is even a relative balance in the size of their holdings. The art collections of museums are not necessarily larger than those of individuals like László Beke or Soft Geometry owner Géza Perneczky.¹⁸ Nonetheless, in terms of funding, there are obvious disparities. State institutions can count on a relatively predictable budget, which covers their staff and storage costs, even though it is often insufficient to fund new acquisitions. Besides, the most important archives and museums, and in particular the libraries, archives, and museums in Budapest, perform relatively well in European Union and national application schemes. Private owners, in contrast, are more vulnerable to shortages of resources, including insufficient storage space and the lack of opportunities for applications.

Up to this day, there has been little effort to use counter-archives as sources in the writing of histories of the socialist period. Histories that were produced on the basis of cases of cultural opposition, for instance on Galántai's alternative art studio, remained within a more specialized audience and were not used to make the message broadly available. In fact, the typical users of collections on the cultural opposition are academics who are interested in pursuing their own research agendas. In other cases, for instance the archives of the secret police, individuals who were once subjected to surveillance form an important group of users. Museums and galleries can reach out to audiences who normally visit museums, typically tourists or school groups, beyond the usual consumers of art. There are many reasons for this. First, these collections resist nationalist framings of history-telling. They do not speak of victimized nations suffering under imperialist great powers. In contrast, they tell the stories of courageous individuals who dared to pursue their own agendas of creating and preserving culture, which were comparable in many countries and often also occurred in a transnational context. Second, these collections also often undermine the totalitarian framing of the socialist past which is often too quick to divide societies into victims and perpetrators. As the records of counter culture show, being victimized was not the only viable alternative: there were always individuals and groups who chose actively to defend their values and causes. Indeed, highly popular and well-promoted public representations of the socialist era, such as the House of Terror, do not use any records from these collections, and possibly no authentic records at all.

18 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[The Soft Geometry Archives](#)", by Balázs Beöthy, 2017. Accessed: October 09, 2018, doi: 10.24389/8039

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CRISTINA PETRESCU

Romania

Research into the communist past of Romania which aims to highlight what has been referred to as cultural opposition must overcome a triple handicap as compared to similar research on circumstances in other former communist countries, in particular the former Yugoslavia or the countries of the Visegrád group. The first handicap concerns the poverty of dissent and opposition to the former dictatorial regime in this country, which implicitly means that previous research on this topic is scarce. The second derives from the conflict between the concept of cultural opposition, which the COURAGE project proposes, and the existing discourse on dissent and opposition during the communist period in Romania, which has already been established as the canon of remembering the recent national past. The third originates in the methodology of the project, which measures acts of cultural opposition in accordance with the existing collections which have preserved their material or digital remnants. The preservation of such items involved greater risks, perceived or real, in communist Romania, so very few individuals ventured to collect such materials systematically, while only very few state institutions have been involved in such ventures, apart from the ubiquitous secret police, the Securitate. This chapter illustrates how the research on Romania conducted within the framework of the COURAGE project made a virtue out of necessity, overcame these handicaps, and uncovered previously unknown collections which shed new light on the mental horizon of the silent mass of citizens who quietly embraced other ideas and values than those imposed on them by the party state. Of the collections which were discovered, only those which were underpinned by values and ideas compatible with the legacy of the European Enlightenment have been made the subject of this research. The individuals involved in their creation and conservation were never courageous enough to become heroes of the anti-communist and democratic opposition. Most of them have not been canonized as such in historical writings on the recent past, for they were not necessarily instrumental in the regime change of 1989. However, they constitute the critical mass which was crucial in supporting the transition to democracy and Romania's integration into the European Union, I argue, since they understood well before the regime change the difference between dictatorship and democracy.

The poverty of political dissent under the communist regime in Romania represents a handicap in the research on the more widely defined notion of cultural opposition not only because there is little existing research to build upon, but also because any inquiry concerning the pre-1989 past has to deal with the obvious question: why was Romania different? Since the early 1990s, public intellectuals in the country have exonerated themselves of any responsibility for their passivity under communism by arguing that the act of defying the former regime differed in Romania precisely because they were not political, but cultural. More precisely, intellectuals in Romania maintained that their specific way of opposing the former regime was so-called “resistance through culture,” the only possible strategy under a regime which made extensive use of the secret police to silence any political opponents. Resistance through culture represented, according to one leading proponent of this concept, a model of opposition which “hampered the systematic and total destruction of culture, sticking to the idea that only the spirit can ensure the survival of a historically menaced country.”¹ This concept became a prominent element of the post-1989 public discourses, exerted an insidious influence on collective memory and shaped professional reconstructions of the recent past to such an extent that it became the cornerstone of the dominant narrative on Romanian communism.² This explanation was also transnationally promoted, so it made the Securitate famous worldwide for its appalling methods, ranking third among the former communist secret police organizations after the KGB and Stasi.³ The self-mocking response to this tragic vision on resistance through culture added its grain of salt to the debate, but without challenging the centrality of the concept in the canonization of the communist past: “We were good professionals. [...] We were not against institutions in a militant way, but we did our best to remain in their shadow. [...] Later we found out that this was ‘resistance through culture.’ At the time, we did not know. We were simply having a good time.”⁴

Following the counterargument above, the COURAGE research in Romania distanced itself from the existing canon of historical writing on the communist past in order to highlight the novelty of its approach. Accordingly, *resistance through culture, as conceived by intellectuals in Romania, and the cultural opposition, as researched and defined within the framework of this project, do not overlap. Rather, they conflict in the very use of central concepts in the economy of the COURAGE project, such as collection, culture, and opposition.* First, resistance through culture represents above all a discourse on the past which highlights the (post-communist) anti-communist attitude of its proponents. It is not necessarily supported by material or digital evidence, but by the public prestige

1 Liiceanu, *Jurnalul de la Păltiniș*, 13–14.

2 C. Petrescu and D. Petrescu, “The Canon of Remembering Romanian Communism,” 43–70.

3 Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate*.

4 Mihăilescu, “Ăștia eram noi,” 18.

and influence of those who articulated this discourse. Cultural opposition refers exclusively to collections which preserved material or digital evidence of thinking and action which conflicted even in an oblique way with the ideas and values promoted and imposed by the former regime. Second, while resistance through culture refers exclusively to high culture and the thin stratum of public intellectuals, cultural opposition includes a wide range of activities, because it adopts the broader definition of culture that is currently used in cultural studies. Third, resistance through culture was defined after 1989 as an activity not openly against the former regime, yet at best tolerated, if not repressed, which represented a strategy of avoiding any discussion of collaboration with the Securitate, though many such resisters had been engaged in this kind of collaboration before 1989.⁵ Against this static (self-)view, cultural opposition is defined as a dynamic stance, because it acknowledges that individuals living under a dictatorship crossed borders more often than not from repressed to tolerated and even to supported, while people who initially enjoyed support could fall into disgrace at any time.⁶ In short, *the existing concept of resistance through culture in Romania and the new concept of cultural opposition, which this chapter seeks to define in the case of this country, differ in regard to the existence of collections as supporting evidence, the adopted definition of culture as representing a system of shared meanings and everyday practices, and the idea of opposition to the former regime as variable in time.*

On the road to the discovery of collections of cultural opposition in Romania, the following working definition guided the field research: collections of material or digital items which preserve traces of past actions or discourses that illustrate the existence of a critical, alternative, non-conformist, independent thinking in relation to the system of ideas and values imposed by the party state at a given moment (since the latter underwent recurrent changes). These collections must reflect a systematic activity of conservation rather than an occasional one, which was carried out in Romania or in exile for the purpose of creating a transnational link with an activity of cultural opposition in the country. These collections must refer to activities from before 1989, but they could have been created even after 1989 for the purpose of preserving the publicly suppressed but privately preserved memory of the communist period (in particular that of the repressive measures taken in the late 1940s and the 1950s). These collections could deal not only with officially prohibited or marginalized activities, but also with tolerated or even supported activities, as long as these conflicted partly with the official system of meanings. These collections could be a separate assembly of items, preserved for their historical significance as part of the cultural heritage which the members of cultural opposition created, but they could be part of larger collections, created with a different purpose than to preserve valuable traces of non-conformism. The

5 D. Petrescu, "The Resistance That Wasn't," 11–35.

6 C. Petrescu and D. Petrescu, "The Pitești Syndrome," 521–522.

latter are the so-called ad hoc collections, which the COURAGE researchers redefined by selecting only those items which illustrate thinking which differed, consciously or not, from the official vision. This is primarily, yet not exclusively, the case of the ad hoc collections from the former secret police archives, which in Romania represent the largest category of collections of cultural opposition, though they hardly can be said to have been made the subject of adequate study.

The COURAGE research in this country started from the openly confrontational discourses and activities, the direct collisions with the communist authorities, which were already known but essential to the overall picture of cultural opposition in Romania. This category includes political dissent, which found manifestation in two separate waves, first immediately after the communist takeover and then prior to the regime change. In the methodological framework of the project, the former category is reflected in collections which were created after 1989 for the purpose of preserving the memory of the innocent victims of the repression and of those who organized armed resistance in the mountains in the hopes of carrying on guerrilla warfare. Several collections of oral history interviews conserve this significant part of the collective memory, which was of prime importance in the first stage of the transition, when the open discussions on a formerly taboo topic such as the crimes of the communist regime marked the break with the non-democratic past and gave expression to the desire to build a democratic future. Of such collections, the most important are those of the Sighet Memorial,⁷ which preserves not only post-1989 testimonies, but also an impressive number of artefacts in a former place of detention for political prisoners that was turned into a major site of European remembrance.⁸ As for political dissent prior to the regime collapse, the most significant collection is the Memorial of the Revolution in Timișoara. This collection of artefacts related to the popular revolt of 1989, which spread from Timișoara to Bucharest and ultimately led to the regime change, highlights that the communist regimes never ceased to use violence against citizens; in the case of Romania, the Revolution of 1989 resulted in 1,100 deaths and 3,300 casualties.⁹

Prior to the unexpected collapse of communism, open confrontations and direct collisions with the regime represented individual endeavors more than they did collective protests, and they usually were met with harsh repressive measures by the secret police. The best known case of a collective act against Ceaușescu's regime is that of the so-called Goma Movement, which generated a substantial collection of documents in the former secret police

7 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Sighet Memorial - Museum Collection", by Cristina Petrescu and Cristian Valeriu Pătrășconiu, 2018. Accessed: July 2, 2018.

8 Rusan, *Istorie, memorie, memorial*; Idem, *Cronologia și geografia represiunii comuniste din România*.

9 D. Petrescu, *Explaining the Romanian Revolution of 1989*.

archives.¹⁰ As for individual cases of defiance, a few private collections preserved by former dissidents are worth mentioning, most notably by Doina Cornea¹¹ and Éva Gyimesi-Cseke,¹² to refer only to two examples of prominent personalities in the field of culture who also managed to challenge Ceaușescu's regime politically for a longer period. Both constitute rare cases when collections created by members of cultural opposition can be compared with the collections created by the secret police about them, because the latter survived until the belated and contested transfer of files to CNSAS (the Romanian acronym for the National Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives), the post-communist institution entrusted with the preservation, screening, and study of the Securitate documents. Most former political dissidents preserved almost nothing of their activities, so only the CNSAS collections include something about them. At the same time, the secret police must have destroyed the files of many dissidents still active in 1989. Thus, some cases of open confrontation and direct collision with the former dictatorial regime can be reconstructed only from the pre-1989 transnational network of support. This is reflected in the diaspora collections, gathered either by those who worked for the Romanian desks of Western broadcasting agencies, such as Radio Free Europe or Voice of America, or by those who supported publications, organizations, and associations of the exile community. Examples of the first type in Romania include the Michael Shafir Collection¹³ at Cluj County Library, the Mircea Carp Collection at BCU Cluj-Napoca,¹⁴ the Mihnea Berindei Collection at the National Archives Iași,¹⁵ and of the second, the collections held in the custody of the Institute for the Study of the Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Exile.¹⁶

Alongside these already known cases of open confrontation and direct collision with the communist regime, the broader definition of the COURAGE project discovered a wide range of forms of non-conformism among people active in various professions and occupations. These were tolerated and even supported types of opposition which included alternative forms of thinking and acting that only partially conflicted with the official views. Their practi-

10 C. Petrescu, "The Goma Movement."

11 Cornea, *Liberté?*; Idem, *Scrisori deschise și alte texte*; COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Doina Cornea Private Collection", by Cristina Petrescu and Corneliu Pintilescu, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018. (forthcoming)

12 Cseke-Gyimesi, *Gyöngy és homok*; Idem, *Szem a láncban*; COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Éva Cseke-Gyimesi Collection at BCU Cluj-Napoca", by Csongor Jánosi, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

13 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Michael Shafir Collection at BJC Cluj-Napoca", by Cristina Petrescu and Corneliu Pintilescu, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

14 Carp, "*Vocea Americii*" în *România*; COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Mircea Carp Collection at BCU Cluj-Napoca", by Cristina Petrescu and Corneliu Pintilescu, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

15 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Mihnea Berindei Collection at the Romanian National Archives - Iași Branch", by Andrei Cusco, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018. (forthcoming)

16 Manolescu, *Enciclopedia exilului literar românesc*.

tioners were able to survive professionally and even get support by presenting their endeavors as fully in compliance with the value system of the regime in that given moment by downplaying the aspects that might have been inconvenient. Representatives of this category carried out a wide spectrum of cultural oppositional activities, ranging from literary works which bypassed censorship to samizdat and tamizdat publications, from visual arts to independent journalism, and from religious activism to folk culture. They followed different strategies of pursuing a professional career which by-passed the system. The most radical form was to ignore completely the state institutions and live as a freelance intellectual, as reflected in the Adrian Marino Collection¹⁷ of books, manuscripts, and correspondence gathered by this literary critic who survived professionally without any institutional affiliation.¹⁸ This was possible due to the transnational connections which he maintained in order to get support for scholarships and backing for publication abroad and the instrumental help of the secret police, which allowed him to travel outside Romania in exchange of providing information, while others never received an exit visa.¹⁹

Beside this rare case, there were the artistic and creative occupations which enjoyed greater freedom of expression than those which required regular employment in a state institution. In communist Romania, writers, artists, composers, and cinematographers were organized in professional associations which were responsible for organizing the distribution and retribution of their works. For example, the Writers' Union paid royalties for the published books but also administered a special fund from which writers could contract huge loans. Thus, many writers were willing to produce works consistent with the official ideology as formulated by Ceaușescu's famous Theses of July 1971 and even to collaborate with the secret police, while playing to be dissidents. However, many others resisted the temptation to comply and tried their best to maintain their independent thinking and their connections with literary trends abroad. This was easier for people who belonged to the German minority, as they could draw inspiration from contemporary Austrian and German literature, as the CNSAS ad hoc collection related to the Aktionsgruppe Banat²⁰ illustrates. Romanian writers who tried to resist conformism practiced a strategy of writing phrases with double meanings, which apparently were banal, but which could also be read as critical statements about the communist regime and its policies. The epitome of this strategy was Ana Blandiana's poem for children entitled "Arpagic," seemingly about a tomcat

17 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Adrian Marino Collection at BCU Cluj-Napoca", by Corneliu Pintilescu and Cristina Petrescu, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018, doi: 10.24389/3656

18 Marino, *Viața unui om singur*.

19 Andreescu, *Cărturari, opozanți și documente*.

20 Totok, *Constrângerea memoriei*; COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Aktionsgruppe Banat Ad-hoc Collection at CNSAS", by Cristina Petrescu and Corneliu Pintilescu, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

that was praised by everyone, in which astute readers could recognize a skillfully disguised criticism of Ceaușescu's personality cult.²¹ The Dan Petrescu Private Collection²² includes books with hidden meanings which bypassed censorship but were withdrawn from bookshops after their messages were decoded. Authors engaged in this risky adventure of publishing non-conformist books due to existence of a parallel literary canon, which literary critics in exile created and maintained through their programs at Radio Free Europe.²³ Their role in offering an alternative legitimacy to those whom the regime marginalized is illustrated by the Monica Lovinescu-Virgil Ierunca Collection,²⁴ now preserved in the National Archives of Romania.

It was more difficult to create art collections that could be associated with a form of cultural opposition because the official market for such works was regulated by the Artists' Union, which paid the authors whose works had been accepted and then distributed their works to museums. Because of this quota system and the systematic marginalization of avantgarde or experimental works, there are few contemporary art collections in the same institution. The Art Museums in Timișoara²⁵ and Brașov²⁶ include such collections, due to the existence of local non-conformist artists whose works were not directly confrontational with the communist aesthetics. The post-communist Museum of Contemporary Art in Bucharest could only retrospectively reunite many of the works of art which were kept on the periphery under communism.²⁷ Private contemporary art collections were far more difficult to create due to the price barrier, yet the Sorin Costina Collection is worth mentioning because the owner's passionate devotion helped many marginalized artists survive when no museum wanted to include their non-conformist works.²⁸ Other types of visual arts, which were less costly because they were easier to duplicate or make in many copies (such as drawings and caricatures) survived more easily in the collections of their creators. Perhaps the most notorious are the collections preserved by Imre Baász, an illustrator who chose experimentalism to refresh the dogmatic art of the communist period,²⁹ and Mihai Stănescu, a caricaturist who remains famous for his witty drawings which captured the absurdity of Ceaușescu's policies.³⁰ Even less significant is the production of non-conformist films. In fact, only four cinematic narra-

21 Blandiana, *Întîmplări de pe strada mea*.

22 Dan Petrescu and Cangeopol, *Ce-ar mai fi de spus*.

23 Lovinescu, *Unde scurte*; Ierunca, *Românește*; Idem, *Dimpotrivă*.

24 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Lovinescu-Ierunca Collection at Central National Historical Archives (ANIC) Bucharest", by Manuela Marin, and Cristian Valeriu Pătrășconiu, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

25 Kessler, Ștefan Bertalan; Tulcan, *Grupul Sigma*

26 Almási, *The Other Mattis-Teutsch*.

27 Cârneli, *Artele plastice în România*; Preda, *Art and Politics*.

28 Kessler, *Sorin Costina*.

29 Chikán, *Baász*.

30 Stănescu, *Umor 50%*; Idem, "*Acum nu e momentul...*"

tives are known to have been banned in communist Romania, two of them by the same director, and paradoxically, three in the 1980s.³¹ The activity in theatre and film of the most interdicted and simultaneously most internationally acclaimed Romanian director of the time is reflected by the secret police files gathered in the Lucian Pintilie Ad Hoc Collection.³²

Compared to the artistic and creative occupations, professions which required full employment in a state institution had even fewer liberties. Professionals in these fields could only take advantage of the inconsistencies in the official views to pursue their research interests. They sometimes even received supplementary financial support from the local authorities, which had more liberty than the central authorities. Among the collections which reflect this type of bargaining two are preserved by the ASTRA Museum in Sibiu: the Cornel Irimie Collection,³³ and the Ethnographic Research in Dobrogea Ad Hoc Collection.³⁴ Both include documentation about the rural cultural heritage that was saved from the total destruction to which the modernization drive of the communist regime condemned it by presenting remnants of the peasant architecture as landmarks of national identity. Masking their professional interests in the nationalist arguments which the regime promoted, ethnographers were able to bend the system and pursue activities which can be evaluated as forms of cultural opposition against the distorted communist version of modernization.³⁵ In the same category is the collection related to the Black Church Restoration, which is held in the Library and Archive of this parish community in Braşov. This collection tells the complex story of a Gothic monument of tremendous significance to the collective identity of the Saxon community in Transylvania, which was restored to its former glory under communism despite the atheist system of values and the policy of so-called of “systematization of urban and rural settlements.” The latter meant massive demolitions in urban areas, including the razing of Romania’s historical and architectural heritage, and it hit many cities hard, above all Bucharest, where professionals reacted by carrying out an unusual activity of cultural opposition: the relocation of churches to less visible locations. This operation saved several historical monuments from total destruction and required considerable inventiveness on the part of the engineers, who found a way not to disobey orders directly, but rather to moderate their consequences by proposing tolerated solutions.³⁶

31 *Reconstituirea* (1968) and *De ce trag clopotele Mitică* (1981) by Lucian Pintilie; *Faleze de nisip* (1983) by Dan Piţa; *Sezonul pescăruşilor* (1985) by Nicolae Opreţescu.

32 Ripeanu, *Cinematografiştii*.

33 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[Cornel Irimie Collection at ASTRA Museum Sibiu](#)”, by Corneliu Pintilescu and Cristina Petrescu, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018, doi: 10.24389/12937

34 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[Ethnographic Research in Dobrogea Ad-Hoc Collection at ASTRA Museum Sibiu](#)”, by Corneliu Pintilescu, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018, doi: 10.24389/383397

35 Streza and Robu, *Cornel Irimie şi evoluţia Muzeului Tehnicii Populare*.

36 Giurescu, *The Razing of Romania’s Past*.

The demolitions in Bucharest and other cities also triggered the most significant activity of passive clandestine resistance to Ceaușescu's absurd policies. Unlike professionals who tried to bend the rules from the inside of the state institutions, those who pursued this type of cultural opposition opted for a dual strategy, a kind of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde approach. While pursuing their professional careers within tolerated boundaries, they acted in their spare time totally independently and immortalized on photo, film, or in paintings historic monuments that were about to be destroyed. Examples of this kind of resistance include the materials in the Alexandru Barnea Private Collection of Photographs,³⁷ which includes images of vanished urban landscapes and demolition sites, and the Gheorghe Leahu Private Collection, which preserves the owner's watercolors capturing architectural landmarks and ordinary streets of Bucharest before they were completely razed.³⁸ In fact, most professionals in the fields of history or the social sciences adopted the same kind of dual strategy. The most interesting example, due to its post-communist societal impact, is the Zoltán Rostás Private Collection of Oral History,³⁹ which illustrates the transformation of a passion that developed before 1989 in the grey zone of tolerance into a profession after 1989. His interviews, which capture the multicultural dimension of Bucharest, were conducted outside the world of his daily job, and he had little or no hope of ever being able to use it to develop professionally, since the stories he collected contradicted the official homogenizing vision of the party state. Yet this collection, which also preserved the memory of the school of sociology that was destroyed by the communist regime, made a decisive contribution to the institutionalization of oral history in post-1989 Romanian scholarly life.⁴⁰

The collections created by representatives of the Hungarian community living in Romania definitely deserve separate discussion. While the official ideology always spoke of "Romanians, Hungarians, Germans, and other nationalities" as if they lived together in harmony, the quietly institutionalized policies of Ceaușescu's regime endangered the cultural of minority groups, in particular of the Hungarians living in Transylvania. It is often argued that anything created by the members of minority groups should be considered an act of cultural opposition to a communist regime that attempted to homogenize society by erasing cultural difference. However, as stated in the introduction, the COURAGE research in Romania considers only non-conformist discourses and activities that were also consistent with democratic values, and it applies this principle to the majority group of the Romanians and the minori-

37 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Alexandru Barnea Photograph Private Collection", by Cristina Petrescu and Cristian Valeriu Pătrășconiu, 2017. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

38 Leahu, *București – arhitectură și culoare*; Idem, *Bucureștiul dispărut*.

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

40 Rostás, *Monografia ca utopie*; Idem, *O istorie orală a Școlii Sociologice de la București*; Idem, *Chipurile orașului*.

ty groups of the Hungarians and Germans. Accordingly, the most noteworthy collections are those which include the samizdat publications produced by members of the Hungarians in Transylvania, *Ellenpontok* (Counterpoints) and *Kiáltó Szó* (Screaming word). Both collections are preserved by individuals who contributed decisively to their content and dissemination. In Gothenburg, the Tóth Private Collection⁴¹ includes the largest number of items related to Counterpoints and the beginnings of the struggle to enlarge the concept of civil rights from a definition exclusively based on the individual to one that includes collective rights as a fundamental legal instrument in the protection of minority groups.⁴² The latter collection, which is preserved in Cluj-Napoca, represents a subsequent stage in this struggle for the recognition of minority rights as a tool against the discriminatory policies of Ceaușescu's regime.

The ethno-cultural diversity of Romania is also reflected in the diversity of its religious communities, which the communist regime did not openly persecute, with the exception of the suppression of the Greek Catholic community by forceful integration into the Greek Orthodox Church. Church attendance, however, was heavily discouraged, so simple attendance at a Sunday mass and the organization of a baptism or a religious marriage represented non-conformist acts of the everyday life, which defied the atheist regime and had negative consequences for people's professional careers. The collections of cultural opposition corresponding to the Catholic or Calvinist denominations of the Hungarian minority are to be found either in the archives of the secret police or the archives of ecclesiastical institutions, such is the Áron Márton Collection from the Archiepiscopal Archives in Alba Iulia, or in the János Dobri Collection from the Archives of the Calvinist Parish Church of Dâmbul Rotund (Cluj).⁴³ Similarly, the activities of the Lutheran community of the Germans in Romania are preserved in the collections held by the Teutsch Haus in Sibiu, and in the Archives of CNSAS.⁴⁴ The archives of the former secret police are extremely important in any assessment of the resistance of the religious groups which are characteristic of the Romanian majority, including the clandestine activities of the suppressed Greek Catholics and the alternative groups created by the Greek Orthodox denomination,⁴⁵ which had no other alternative repositories to conserve traces of their activities. These collections illustrate that many hierarchs tried to defend religious education against the atheist state, endeavored to maintain rituals and save or conserve Church properties. In comparison, conspicuously absent are protests on the part of the hierarchs of the Romanian Greek Orthodox Church against the systematic destruction of their churches, which included fine examples of late

41 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Ellenpontok–Tóth Private Collection", by Csongor Jánosi, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

42 K. A. Tóth and I. Tóth, *Egy samizdat az életünkben*; K. A. Tóth, *Hol vagy, szabadság?*

43 Buzogány and Jánosi, *A református egyház Romániában a kommunista rendszer első felében*.

44 Pintilescu, "Conceptul de 'naționalisti germani' în practica Securității, 1948–1989."

45 Calciu-Dumitreasa, *Șapte cuvinte către tineri*.

medieval and early modern architecture. However, for many people, religion was an escape into a parallel world that survived on the periphery of the society and became central only at Easter and Christmas, which most individuals celebrated quietly with family members.

Parallel worlds of non-conformism existed for a limited time during holidays and more generally during people's spare time. The Andrei Partoș – Radio Vacanța Costinești Private Collection⁴⁶ exemplifies the work of a seasonal radio station and its associated activity on the Black Sea coast, which represented a crucible of the alternative culture of the younger generation. This radio station, in fact an amplification station that only broadcast via loudspeakers within the bounds of the Costinești resort, had only a limited audience, but this allowed broadcasting without prior censorship, which would have been obligatory routine procedure in a "normal" radio station. Diverse activities related to the theatre, film, music, and sports were held during the summer holidays in Costinești, but the most peculiar were several highly unconventional competitions, including for instance an ironic contest which involved sitting for 48 hours on a post. The contest was a way of ridiculing the useless and faked communist records. In addition, clandestinely procured Western music made young people forget about restrictions in their everyday lives and act as if the communist regime did not exist. Interestingly, this seasonal activity was quietly supported by Ceaușescu's son, who preferred an alternative lifestyle and thus was present for and supported many of the activities in Costinești. Similarly, the mountains represented a space of liberty, where social conventions and political control ceased to exist for a while. The Anonymous Mountaineer Collection of self-made escalade materials and other technical equipment for alpinism demonstrates the creativity of those who wanted to climb the mountains but lacked the necessary items. As Romanian state factories did not produce equipment for leisure alpinism, but only for military purposes, people with a passion for climbing had to make a wide range of items, such as ice axes, crampons, and pitons, by copying Western catalogues and risking their lives with untested materials for the sake of a hobby which allowed them to feel free for a while.⁴⁷ Finally, the Irina Margareta Nistor Private Collection⁴⁸ shows how everyday spare time was transformed into a time of liberty. This collection reminds one of the Western films that were introduced clandestinely into Romania between 1985 and 1989 and which were then translated, dubbed and then distributed on video cassettes (semi)clandestinely. This chain of activities emerged in reaction to the reduction of the official television program to just two hours per day and to news

46 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Andrei Partoș – Radio Vacanța-Costinești Private Collection", by Cristina Petrescu and Cristian Valeriu Pătrășconiu, 2017. Accessed: October 13, 2018, doi: 10.24389/14244

47 Baticu, *Jurnalul unui alpinist*; Cristea, *Biblioteca montaniardului*; Kargel, *Alpinism*.

48 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Irina Margareta Nistor Private Collection", by Cristina Petrescu and Cristian Valeriu Pătrășconiu, 2017. Accessed: October 13, 2018.

about Ceaușescu and the Romanian Communist Party.⁴⁹ It is worth noting that this type of cultural opposition was lucrative, and this dissemination scheme allowed many to enrich themselves. It is also worth mentioning that this activity required the silent support of the secret police, without which such a large-scale endeavor could not have survived for several years, so this collection exemplifies the tacit deals that existed among the people who were once engaged in acts that can be considered forms of cultural opposition and the representatives of the communist regime. Several private collections of posters, LPs, and photographs related to jazz, rock, punk, and other non-conformist music which was performed in student clubs also offer testimony to the ways in which spare time became a temporary moment of liberty, most notably the Mihai Manea⁵⁰ and Nelu Stratone Private Collections.⁵¹

The above cartography of collections which reflect non-conformist thoughts and actions is inevitably incomplete, but it suggests a large variety of activities which can be grouped under the umbrella of cultural opposition and thus offers a sense of the practical meanings of this concept in the Romanian context. Three main conclusions can be drawn from this sketch. First, the collections which were the focus of COURAGE research in Romania are highly polarized in terms of ownership. The largest group of collections was created and preserved by the former communist secret police, the Securitate, and are currently in the custody of CNSAS. The secret police carried out systematic efforts to collect information about and confiscate items from prominent members of groups involved in what the project refers to as cultural opposition. This activity of collecting had a different rationale than merely preserving items for their historic, intellectual, or artistic value, so the largest majority of the CNSAS collections are ad hoc, as defined by the COURAGE researchers. In fact, many non-conformist activities left no traces in any collections, so they can only be documented on the basis of CNSAS ad hoc collections like the ones identified within the framework of the project from the larger archive of the former secret police, and for the purpose of offering a guide for further research on cultural opposition. At the other end of the spectrum, there are the private collections of cultural opposition. These collections are conserved by individuals who have not hitherto been associated with an activity worthy of study, and the collections have been featured for the first time as valuable sources for the study of communism in Romania within the framework of the COURAGE project. Between these two extremes, there are a few collections of cultural opposition operated by libraries, museums, or other archives which received them as donations from private individuals. Worth underlining is

49 D. Petrescu, *Conflicting Perceptions of (Western) Europe*, 218–19.

50 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Mihai Manea Private Poster Collection", by Cristina Petrescu and Cristian Valeriu Pătrășconiu, 2018. Accessed: October 13, 2018.

51 Ionescu, *Club A – 42 de ani: Muzica tinereții tale*; Stratone, *Rock sub seceră și ciocan*; COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Nelu Stratone Private Musical Records Collection", by Cristina Petrescu and Cristian Valeriu Pătrășconiu, 2018. Accessed: October 13, 2018. (forthcoming)

the absolute novelty of the private collections of cultural opposition discovered by the COURAGE project, which were not part of the canon of remembering communism in Romania, so relevant institutions ignored their importance, while their owners are rather reluctant to donate their collections for the same reason. The direct consequence of this situation is that the private collections remain of very limited, primarily local interest, while the CNSAS collections became nationally and internationally relevant, especially after serving as primary source for the Report made in 2006 by the Presidential Commission for the Analysis of the Communist Dictatorship in Romania.⁵² This dichotomic cartography of the collections might be criticized as simplistic, as it obviously duplicates the long-contested view that the communist societies were separated between “them” and “us,” between those in power and those who were powerless. The collections in Romania, however, more or less fit this view because there were no mediating structures between the individual and the secret police, as no networks of dissent and only a few short-lived groups who represented forms of cultural opposition acted against Ceaușescu’s regime, not one of which was still active in 1989.

The polarization between the secret police collections and the private collections is directly connected to the second significant conclusion that can be inferred from the research carried out in this project. The chronological cornerstones of the two main types of collections do not coincide. For the secret police, the main chronological markers are 1956 and 1977. The first obviously refers to the Hungarian Revolution and its echoes in Romania. It was this event in the neighboring country that triggered a wave of terror which hit intellectual circles from all ethno-cultural communities. The Noica-Pillat Trial Ad Hoc Collection at CNSAS is only the most famous such case due to the renown of those involved, but there were several other arbitrarily defined oppositional groups which the secret police created to serve as deterrents.⁵³ The second cornerstone for the secret police was 1977, the year in which an ephemeral movement for human rights emerged in Romania on the model of Charter 77 to grow in two months to the same number of supporters. Illustrated by the Goma Movement Ad Hoc Collection at CNSAS,⁵⁴ the activities of the secret police and the implicit creation of related collections entered a new phase with this unprecedented challenge. Unlike the groups which emerged in the aftermath of 1956, this movement was not a creation of the Securitate, which had to gather complex data rapidly about each individual involved for the purpose of breaking a collective protest for a common cause into a multitude of personal ventures with personal motives.⁵⁵ Contrary to a prevalent

52 CPADCR, *Raport final*.

53 Tănase, *Anatomia mistificării*; Steinhardt, *Jurnalul fericirii*; Pintilescu, “Die Konstruktion politischer Vergehen im Diskurs.”

54 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Goma Movement Ad-hoc Collection at CNSAS”, by Cristina Petrescu, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018. (forthcoming)

55 Goma, *Culoarea curcubeului*.

commonplace, the subsequent collections of the secret police illustrate that the methods used against those who did not comply hardly differed from the Romanian majority to the minority groups, in spite of the fact that the files were archived according to the ethnic origins of those involved. As for the chronological cornerstones of the collections created by the members of cultural opposition, they are related to 1964, the year of in which all political prisoners were released, as the Adrian Marino Collection illustrates. In the case of Romania, 1968 represents a conspicuous absence as a turning point for the opposition, because 1968 as it was experienced by Romanians differed strikingly from 1968 as it was experienced by the other countries of the Eastern Bloc because of Ceaușescu's skillful use of the invasion of Czechoslovakia to capitalize politically and gain unprecedented popular support. However, some private collections related to the preservation of the cultural diversity of youth subcultures, such as the Mihai Manea and Nelu Stratone Collections, emerged around the late 1960s and early 1970s, while the official cultural policies of the regime became increasingly harsh, especially after their recodification in Ceaușescu's Theses of July 1971. The following chronological cornerstone is again not a year, but a period, that of the first half of the 1980s, when a variety of arbitrary measures caused silent but steadily growing societal resistance from among majority and minority communities, although there was hardly any cross-ethnic collaboration. Once Gorbachev came to power in 1985, a definite turn occurred among the members of the cultural opposition, which not only grew in number, but also changed their goals from past-oriented collections meant to preserve the pre-communist values into future-oriented collections meant to make changes for the better, as the Marian Zulean Private Collection⁵⁶ suggests.

This leads to the third conclusion that can be drawn from the research carried out in Romania. Trying to respond to the problems common to all European societies that experienced communist dictatorships and are still in a wavering process of democratic consolidation, the COURAGE research identified some of the silent agents of change who were instrumental in re-Europeanizing Romania. Their previously unknown collections of material or digital items bear witness today to the diverse forms of critical thinking and action which were independent from the system of meanings imposed by the former communist dictatorship. Neither heroes nor mere opportunists, these "common" individuals simply refused to think and act in ways that would have harmonized entirely with the values that the communist regimes sought to impose because they let themselves be influenced by the values of the European Enlightenment from before the regime change of 1989. Thus, these individuals understood before others the fundamental difference between a dictatorship and a democracy. Sometimes without realizing this, after 1989

56 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Marian Zulean Private Collection", by Cristina Petrescu and Cristian Valeriu Pătrășconiu, 2017. Accessed: October 13, 2018.

they turned into the social segment which actively contributed to Romania's transformation into a democracy that remained feeble but was not called into question. At macro-societal level, some of the members of former cultural opposition people were instrumental in triggering public debates on the communist past, and more importantly, they constantly pressed for the application of transitional justice and the opening of the Securitate files, as the Ion Monoran Collection⁵⁷ illustrates. These individuals marked the break with the communist past. At the mezzo-societal level, many of those who refused to adopt the value system of the communist regime were active in redefining professional fields or modelling new institutions by copying Western models and adapting them to the local context, as suggested by the Alexandru Barnea or Zoltán Rostás Collections, along with many other private collections. These individuals definitely marked the post-1989 societal transformation in the direction of democratic consolidation. At the micro-societal level, all the non-conformists of yesterday, who conserved collections illustrating their efforts to think and act as if in a free country while under a ruthless dictatorship, created invaluable sources which will contribute to a more nuanced grasp of the communist past. Their legacy is for members of generations to come, who perhaps will be better able to understand the difference between a democratic and a non-democratic system after having familiarized themselves with the exciting stories uncovered by the COURAGE project.

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57 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Ion Monoran Private Collection", by Cristina Petrescu and Cristian Valeriu Pătrășconiu, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

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Moldova

Cultural opposition in the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic (MSSR) shared a number of common patterns with other cases on the western periphery of the USSR. These commonalities derived from the earlier historical experience of those territories annexed by the Soviet state in 1939–40 and from the specificity of the respective nation-building projects. The degree, relative intensity, and concrete forms of cultural opposition in this region varied widely on a continuum ranging from strong oppositional movements (most notably in Lithuania and Western Ukraine) to rather weak manifestations of dissent (e.g., in Belarus). The prevailing view within the established historiography dealing with this phenomenon in Soviet Moldavia has been that open displays of cultural and political opposition were conspicuously absent in the MSSR, aside from several isolated cases of critical intellectuals who attempted to articulate an anti-regime message, mainly in the late 1960s and early 1970s. It is undeniable that only a small minority of the population was directly involved in these types of activities. However, this seemingly clear-cut picture should be significantly revised and nuanced. In fact, the forms of cultural opposition in the MSSR were more varied and widespread than is commonly recognized. Among the scholarly works focusing on cultural and political dissent and opposition in Soviet Moldavia, one should especially emphasize the monographs, studies, and collections of documents produced in recent years by Igor Cașu,¹ Gheorghe E. Cojocaru,² Sergiu Musteață,³ Petru Negură,⁴ Valeriu Pasat,⁵ Elena Postică,⁶ and Mihai Tașcă.⁷ This growing historiography has benefited from the gradual opening of previously inaccessible archival collections and from an intensive and fruitful communication with their peers abroad.

Several main forms of cultural opposition have been identified in the former MSSR. The trajectory of cultural opposition in Soviet Moldavia suggests that the language of nationalism and national rights was the dominant form of challenging the legitimacy of the regime on the Soviet periphery. This was due to several factors. First, the interwar national discourse provided a pow-

1 Cașu, "Political Repressions in the Moldavian SSR After 1956"; Musteață and Cașu, eds., *Fără termen de prescripție*.

2 Bahnaru and Cojocaru, *Congresul al III-lea al Uniunii Scriitorilor din RSS Moldovenească*.

3 Musteață, *Basarabeanul bruia de KGB. La microfonul Europei Libere*.

4 Negură, *Nici eroi, nici trădători*.

5 Pasat, *Православие в Молдавии: власть, церковь, верующие*.

6 Postică, *Cartea Memoriei*.

7 Tașcă, "Manifestări de rezistență antisovietică și anticomunistă în RSS Moldovenească."

erful alternative language that had the potential to undermine and question the ideological monopoly of the regime. Second, similarly to Western Ukraine or the Baltic states, ethnonational grievances were an effective strategy to address the reality of ethnic discrimination and asymmetrical power relations within Soviet society, which extensively used various politically innocuous forms of ethnicity to further the claims of national equality and harmony embodied in the official slogan of the “friendship of the peoples.” Therefore, any attacks on this basic tenet of Soviet policy were perceived as especially dangerous by the regime. “Local nationalism” became an increasingly frequent topic in the ideological campaigns waged by the party hierarchy from the early 1960s on. Third, the impact of the Khrushchev Thaw was crucial in weakening the party’s monopoly in the cultural sphere and in opening new opportunities for aspiring intellectuals on the local level. The most intensive phase of national-cultural opposition occurred in the second half of the 1960s and during the early 1970s. Aside from the broader context of 1968 and its aftermath, this surge in nationally oriented opposition discourses and practices should be also linked to the consolidation of local cultural institutions that allowed a certain degree of autonomy in the cultural field. Although this relative liberalization proved short-lived and was stifled by a decisive crack-down from above in the early 1970s, it established the basis of a powerful opposition discourse that reemerged during the late perestroika period. A second important form of cultural opposition focused on a more politically assertive agenda emphasizing human rights and political pluralism. Even more than the previously discussed national opposition, this challenge to the regime derived from external stimuli, such as the discursive shift connected to the Helsinki Accords and the prominence of the human rights rhetoric, as well as the alternative models provided by the Prague Spring in 1968 and Poland’s Solidarity in 1980–81. Although the impact of this form of locally articulated opposition was much smaller, several instances documented in the featured collections prove that it was far from absent. A third sphere where examples of broadly defined cultural opposition can be identified is religious dissent. This form of anti-regime practice was linked not so much with the official Orthodox Church (which was subject to several waves of persecution, especially in the late 1950s and early 1960s, during Khrushchev’s anti-religious drive), but mostly with the non-conformist and openly dissident religious communities, such as neo-Protestant congregations (Baptists, Seventh-Day Adventists), Jehovah’s Witnesses (particularly due to their missionary zeal, their radical rejection of the regime, and their connections to the West), and earlier local religious movements, such as the Inochentists.⁸ The Orthodox Church, while in a precarious position, did not provide any significant examples of anti-regime opposition until the perestroika period and entered a

8 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Gheorghe Zgherea Collection at SIS Archive Moldova”, by Andrei Cusco, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

mode of uneasy compromise with the authorities, especially from the late 1960s onwards. In contrast, the non-conformist religious communities were perceived as dangerous “sects” because of their external loyalties (in the case of the neo-Protestant cults and Jehovah’s Witnesses) or wholesale rejection of the Soviet regime in the case of the millenarian Inochentists. A fourth and much more elusive form of cultural opposition was connected to alternative subcultures and everyday forms of “subversive” lifestyles. In the case of the MSSR, this was obvious mainly in two guises: in the late 1950s and early 1960s, with the emergence in urban areas of the *stiliagi* (the closest equivalent of the hippie way of life in the Soviet context, perceived as a protest movement against the establishment), and in the late 1960s, when the jazz and rock subcultures became a mass phenomenon and gave rise to previously unthinkable cultural experiments. The main protagonists of these alternative subcultures were young Moldavian first-generation urban intellectuals. These products of the Soviet version of social mobility did not openly rebel against the regime. They did however challenge the cultural practices imposed from above and ultimately created oppositional political languages, subverting the legitimacy of the Soviet system. To a certain extent, they illustrate Alexei Yurchak’s concept of “being inside-out (*vne*),”⁹ i.e., of articulating an alternative discourse inside the system, but at the same time creating spaces of alternative sociability outside the system. It should be noted that the dynamics of cultural opposition in the MSSR also can be traced through the responses of the regime, which reacted swiftly to any perceived danger. In the hierarchy of subversive activities constructed by the local party officials, ethnonational forms of protest were the most prominent, particularly during the surge of such manifestations in the late 1960s and early 1970s. However, instances of “culturally subversive practices” in spheres such as music or cinema were also closely monitored. Thus, official censorship was imposed on the local film industry and on “non-traditional” forms of musical expression around 1970, when some local cultural productions became unpalatable to the Moldavian party leadership.

It is hardly surprising that the local intellectuals were the most likely initiators and articulators of critical discourses which fall under the category of “cultural opposition.” Any direct continuity with the interwar intellectual tradition was rarely to be found, since the earlier elites were displaced, persecuted, or marginalized by the Soviet authorities. Although a person’s family background could (and sometimes did) provide the initial impetus for engaging in oppositional activities, more often than not the prominent figures associated with cultural opposition were products of the regime’s own version of upward social mobility. The examples of two individuals will help illustrate this point. Alexandru Șoltoianu was a prominent national activist and one of the main leaders of the nationally oriented opposition that emerged in the

9 Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever*, 126–57.

Moldavian SSR in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Together with the members of the Usatiuc–Ghimpu–Graur group, he is often singled out as one of the main ideologues and organizers of anti-Soviet resistance in this period.¹⁰ In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Șoltoianu sought to create a nationalist underground organization, tentatively labeled National Rebirth of Moldavia (*Re-nașterea Națională a Moldovei*, RNM), with the hope of reaching a mass following of 250,000 members. The structure of this organization would have been based on a wide network of student associations, which should have acted as a legal façade for the movement's real aim, i.e., fighting for the MSSR's emancipation from "Russian" domination and its secession from the USSR. Șoltoianu's conversion to nationalism occurred during his studies at the Moscow State Institute for International Relations (MGIMO), in the late 1950s and early 1960s, due to the general context of Khrushchev's Thaw and the climate of openness and free discussion. Somewhat paradoxically, the relatively liberal Moscow intellectual milieu of that era acted as a catalyst for stimulating oppositional ideas and practices.

Another prominent anti-regime dissident is Mihai Moroșanu. Moroșanu's case is different from Șoltoianu's in several respects, embodying another generic type of dissent in the MSSR. Moroșanu, a student during his active phase of protest in the early and mid-1960s, was socially marginalized (due to a physical disability), with the roots of his discontent deriving from his experience as a deportee to Siberia. The main difference, however, is linked to the individual and self-contained nature of his opposition activities. Organized oppositional groups (exemplified by the Usatiuc–Ghimpu–Graur, Alexandru Șoltoianu, or Nicolae Dragoș Collections)¹¹ were the exception rather than the rule in the MSSR. In most cases, discontent toward the regime was expressed through individual acts of defiance, which were both more easily identified and neutralized by the secret police apparatus. Moroșanu's example is one of the most articulate attempts to construct a nationally inspired alternative to the official discourse, not least through the skillful manipulation of Soviet legislation and its loopholes. Moroșanu's relative success in upholding his personal views, despite regime persecution, also highlights the limits of such forms of dissent, which had a rather narrow social impact.

However, alongside these typical instances of (quasi-)intellectual opposition, the Moldavian collections also uncovered a number of cases which could be defined as alternative forms of "opposition from below," at the grassroots

¹⁰ See the chapter on national movements in this handbook.

¹¹ COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Usatiuc-Ghimpu-Graur Collection (National Patriotic Front) at National Archive of Moldova", by Cristina Petrescu and Andrei Cusco, 2018. Accessed: October 02, 2018, doi: 10.24389/4453; COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Alexandru Șoltoianu Collection at National Archive of Moldova", by Andrei Cusco, 2017. Accessed: October 02, 2018, doi: 10.24389/2773; COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Nicolae Dragoș Collection at National Archive Moldova", by Cristina Petrescu and Andrei Cusco, 2017. Accessed: October 02, 2018, doi: 10.24389/29670

level, whose protagonists were persons unlikely to be considered sources of dissent. Figures such as Gheorghe Muruziuc,¹² Zaharia Doncev, or Arsenie Platon fall under this category of anti-regime activists of working-class or peasant background. Although discontent toward the regime was generally triggered in such instances by material circumstances or a generalized feeling of social inequity, the articulation of such protests was not fundamentally different from the sophisticated forms preferred by their more educated counterparts, frequently drawing on similar sources. The artistic or literary milieus, exemplified by the professional associations of writers and filmmakers, while providing the symbolic capital and institutional cohesion necessary for cultural production, were also spaces of profound ambiguity. They oscillated between tendencies toward internal autonomy and creative freedom and the heavy and constraining pressures of the regime, constantly negotiating the extent and limits of their leverage in the cultural sphere. Their role as potential hotbeds of cultural opposition became visible only at certain crucial moments marked by the relative weakening of party control (such as the mid-1950s and mid- to late 1960s).

The dynamic of cultural opposition in the MSSR was linked closely to the evolution of the Soviet regime on the periphery. During the first decade following the restoration of Soviet rule (1944–53), the opposition to the Soviet state was mostly expressed through small-scale armed resistance, following a pattern familiar from other western Soviet republics. This phase of open insurgence was followed by a marked shift in the forms of anti-regime dissent and official repression after Stalin's death. The origins of the cultural opposition in the context of the MSSR date from the mid-1950s. In fact, immediately after 1953, important changes in the cultural sphere were apparent. Prominent members of the republic's intelligentsia successfully advocated the rehabilitation of the classics of Romanian literature and their mass publication. Moreover, the new orthography for the "Moldavian" language, definitively consecrated by the linguistic reform of 1957, restored the Romanian standard in all but name, preserving the Cyrillic script as the only visible difference between the written language in Romania and Soviet Moldavia. This rehabilitation of the Romanian cultural canon and literary heritage, mostly due to the lobbying of a group of prominent writers with impeccable communist credentials, who had been educated in the interwar period and possessed an undeniable prestige in terms of "symbolic capital," prepared the ground for further battles on the "cultural front" and for a radicalization of cultural opposition in the mid-1960s. The significance of the relative liberalization of the regime during the Khrushchev Thaw is fundamental in explaining this shift. The cracks in the apparently monolithic Soviet system became increasingly visible in 1955–56, when the return of former deportees, coupled with Khrushchev's speech at the Twentieth Party Congress and the impact of the Hungar-

12 See the chapter on national movements in this handbook.

ian Revolution, led to a questioning of the party's ideological monopoly and the regime's ability to live up to its aim of total societal control. The repressive apparatus also went through a crisis during the events of 1956, limiting the effectiveness of its surveillance. Although the party's control was reasserted toward the end of 1956, the Thaw had long-lasting consequences in the cultural sphere. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the late 1950s and early 1960s witnessed the first upsurge in anti-regime activities, mostly at the individual level. However, certain more ambitious attempts to oppose the regime, such as those of Nicolae Dragoș and his small group, active between 1962 and 1964, can be identified. Dragoș's project of "democratic socialism" challenged the system from within and was thus perceived as particularly dangerous by the Soviet authorities. The small network around Dragoș used a "creative" reinterpretation of Marxism-Leninism to undermine the ideological and intellectual domination of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), despite their limited stated aim to merely "reform" the system. Intellectually, their views had a striking similarity to the dissident "revisionist Marxist" movements emerging at that time in the Soviet Bloc.

The apex of the cultural opposition in the MSSR was reached during a relatively short period spanning the mid-1960s to early 1970s (roughly between 1965 and 1972). It was during this time that the nationally oriented oppositional discourse, epitomized by the National Patriotic Front and other unrelated individual acts of defiance, was at its height. Also, the literary and artistic environment articulated open and occasionally radical criticism of the regime's policies. The most well-known event in the cultural sphere was the Third Congress of the Moldavian Writers' Union, held in October 1965. To the obvious surprise of the authorities, during this event the writers raised a number of politically sensitive issues, such as the reintroduction of the Latin alphabet for standard "Moldovan," education in Romanian at all levels, and party interference in literary matters.¹³ The reaction of the authorities was hostile and swift. Both at the congress itself and afterwards, the party leadership was alarmed and outraged by what they perceived as "nationalist" opinions articulated by some of the participants. The local party under first secretary Ivan Bodiul started a relentless campaign against all forms of "local nationalism," which was waged with increasing vigor throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s. Another disturbing development for the regime was the proliferation of "unhealthy Western influences" in the musical sphere, represented by the enthusiastic reaction to the *Noroc* musical band, performing in a style derived from an explosive mixture of jazz, rock, and beat elements. This musical experimentation lasted from 1966 until the fall of 1970, when it was abruptly ended by the authorities. Similar "unhealthy" tendencies were apparent in the local film industry, provoking a sharp rebuke from the party leadership in the early 1970s. These cases of dissent in the cultural field coin-

13 Bahnaru and Cojocaru, *Congresul al III-lea al Uniunii Scriitorilor din RSS Moldovenească*.

cided with the activity of the only well-structured oppositional organization in the MSSR in the post-Stalinist period, that of the National Patriotic Front, led by Alexandru Usatiuc and Gheorghe Ghimpu, which coalesced around a radical message of national opposition. This organization was active from 1969 till late 1971 and was directly linked to the post-1968 context. The authorities were quick to perceive the danger represented by this group and accordingly intensified their fight with “local nationalism.” By 1972, the repressive apparatus succeeded in suppressing most open expressions of opposition and dissent in the MSSR.

The period post 1972 and until 1986 is usually seen as a low point of opposition activities in the MSSR, with very few cases of open anti-regime protest. The situation changed dramatically during the perestroika period, especially from 1987 onward. The gradual increase of discontent and public protest was triggered by the fundamental shifts in central policies, heralded by *glasnost*. Similarly to other Soviet republics, the intellectuals were at the forefront of this new wave of oppositional activity, couched mostly in ethnocultural terms, with a strong tendency to advocate for civil liberties and environmental protection measures. The widely used concept of “resistance through culture” —referring to alleged tacit forms of dissidence by the literary intelligentsia—has been retrospectively applied to the entire communist period and is a misleading label for purported anti-regime activities linked to cultural opposition.¹⁴ In fact, just as in the Romanian context, from which it was borrowed by Moldovan historians and intellectuals in the 1990s, this notion was a *post factum* invention¹⁵ meant to justify the passive attitude (and even instances of open collaboration) of the MSSR intellectuals toward the regime. It is thus essentially inapplicable before the later stages of the perestroika. However, the central role of writers and other creative intellectuals during the era of “national awakening” (1988–) was undeniable. In this period, the “language of the nation” rose to prominence and dominated public discourse up to the collapse of the USSR.

Types of Collections in Moldova

The variety of cultural opposition in the MSSR is reflected in the typology of materials covering the Moldovan case. The main types of featured collections fall under the following categories:

1) One can classify collections based on archival files that focus on various individual and collective forms of “anti-Soviet” resistance and opposition. The peculiar feature of these collections, stored in the main Moldovan repositories (the National Archive of the Republic of Moldova, the Archive of

¹⁴ Țurcanu, *Istoria românilor*, 725–26.

¹⁵ Petrescu, “The Resistance that Wasn’t.”

Social-Political Organizations of the Republic of Moldova, and the Archive of the Intelligence and Security Service), is their emphasis on open acts of defiance against the regime. Therefore, most of them resulted from secret police (KGB) investigations carried out after the arrest of the protagonists. Although this kind of evidence is crucial due to the richness of information and the coherence of the narrative structure, its inherent bias should be taken into account, especially when the written materials cannot be corroborated with the direct testimonies of the participants. These types of collections include both articulate forms of opposition coming from intellectual circles and various cases of "opposition from below." The most relevant examples within the former subcategory include the Usatiuc–Ghimpu–Graur, Alexandru Șoltoianu, and Nicolae Dragoș Collections, which discuss the most important "anti-Soviet" groups emerging in the MSSR in the 1960s and early 1970s. In the latter subcategory, I would highlight the cases of Gheorghe Muruziuc,¹⁶ Arsenie Platon,¹⁷ and Zaharia Doncev,¹⁸ which focus on individual displays of anti-regime protest expressed by people from a peasant or working-class environment.

2) One can also identify archival collections focusing on institutions or professional associations (mainly from the Archive of Social-Political Organizations of the Republic of Moldova), which allow for a diachronic perspective on the dynamics and evolution of the relations between these associations and the Soviet state and party apparatus. The emerging picture of opposition, tacit subversion, and compliance is rather complex, emphasizing the shifting strategies of their members and the changes in the balance of power within and outside these institutions from the early 1950s to the late 1980s. The collections focusing on the Moldavian Writers' Union (MWU)¹⁹ and the Moldavian Union of Cinematographers (MUC)²⁰ are especially relevant in this regard. Thus, the MWU Collection materials draw on several Party meetings, writers' congresses, and national conferences which discussed significant issues related to the local cultural heritage, the "language question," and the relations between the literary milieu and the Soviet regime.

3) There are also private collections that belong either directly to protagonists and initiators of anti-regime activities (e.g., Mihai Moroșanu, also see above) or to researchers dealing with the subject of anti-Soviet resistance and

16 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Gheorghe Muruziuc Collection at SIS Archive Moldova](#)", by Cristina Petrescu and Andrei Cusco, 2017. Accessed: October 02, 2018, doi: 10.24389/23399

17 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Arsenie Platon Collection at SIS Archive Moldova](#)", by Andrei Cusco, 2018. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

18 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Zaharia Doncev Collection at SIS Archive Moldova](#)", by Andrei Cusco, 2017. Accessed: October 02, 2018, doi: 10.24389/5772

19 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Moldavian Writers' Union \(MWU\). Fond P-2955 at AOSPR Moldova](#)", by Andrei Cusco, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

20 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Moldavian Union of Cinematographers \(MUC\), Fond P-2773 at AOSPR Moldova](#)", by Andrei Cusco, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

opposition in the MSSR. The two subcategories highlight different perspectives and interpretations of the phenomenon of cultural opposition, but also serve as complementary examples of a more personal attitude. For instance, Moroșanu's collection²¹ reflecting the experience of one of the few authentic dissident figures in the Moldovan context consists of personal files, interviews, photos, and judicial materials, and spans a longer period, from the early 1960s to the early 1990s. By contrast, Petru Negură's²² and Igor Cașu's private collections²³ reflect their authors' scholarly preoccupations and feature both otherwise inaccessible archival documents and oral interviews conducted with prominent figures of the cultural opposition active during the Soviet period. It should be noted that these examples do not entirely compensate for the relative scarcity of meaningful private collections in the Moldovan case. This is due, on the one hand, to the small number of people who had preserved their personal archives and related materials documenting their anti-regime attitudes and, on the other, to the reluctance of many protagonists to talk about their earlier experience.

The rest of the Moldovan collections cover two forms of cultural opposition that are fundamental for understanding the full picture of the anti-regime activities in the MSSR. The first area is touched upon by the collection dealing with the *Noroc* musical band. It focuses on more elusive forms of everyday resistance and alternative lifestyles during the late Soviet period, with a peculiar emphasis on the musical sphere, which was especially difficult to control from the authorities' point of view and provided a meaningful space for forms of self-expression frowned upon or officially disapproved by the regime. The second field of interest concerns religious dissent and opposition to the Soviet system. Such examples could be found mainly within minority non-conformist religious communities (e.g., Jehovah's Witnesses and the Inochentist movement) because the official church entered a phase of de facto collaboration with the authorities after the mid-1960s. Despite the limited societal impact of most manifestations of cultural opposition, the Moldovan collections attest to their diversity (especially during the 1960s and 1970s) and allow the recovery of certain forgotten acts of defiance, frequently initiated "from below."

Most Moldovan collections are owned by public institutions (archives and museums), reflecting the relative scarcity of significant private holdings, as noted above. Although these institutions claim to provide unlimited access to their collections, the specific policy of different public owners varies according to the type of material and their institutional affiliation. For example, the access to the files stored in the Archive of Social-Political Organizations of

21 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Mihai Moroșanu Private Collection](#)", by Andrei Cusco, 2017. Accessed: October 02, 2018, doi: 10.24389/16768.

22 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Petru Negură Private Collection](#)", by Cristina Petrescu and Andrei Cusco, 2017. Accessed: October 02, 2018, doi: 10.24389/3315.

23 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Igor Cașu Private Collection](#)", by Cristina Petrescu and Andrei Cusco, 2017. Accessed: October 02, 2018, doi: 10.24389/2632.

the Republic of Moldova (AOSPRM) is completely free and open, allowing for unrestricted research of the materials concerning the activity of the local party organizations and professional associations. Another positive example in this regard is the permanent exhibition on the communist period hosted by the National Museum of History, which features a representative selection of textual evidence and artifacts pertaining to the Soviet era, including a wide array of samples relating to the phenomenon of cultural opposition. By contrast, due to its institutional specificity, the Archive of the Moldovan Intelligence and Security Service (SIS Archive) has a stricter policy regarding public access that requires a prolonged bureaucratic procedure and is subject to the approval of the agency's director. Although in principle the archival files relating to cultural opposition and KGB surveillance can be consulted by interested researchers, access remains difficult. The SIS Archive holds the most comprehensive and representative sample of archival evidence relevant for the topic of anti-Soviet opposition. Therefore, full public access to this category of files would be essential. Initially, access to these materials became possible only because of the Commission for the Study and Evaluation of the Communist Regime in the Republic of Moldova, which functioned during 2010 and was granted unlimited access to all institutional archives. And yet, despite certain recent efforts, the overall situation has not fundamentally improved. Most public operators, such as archives and museums, are reluctant to provide relevant financial data and other types of information viewed as sensitive. According to Moldovan laws, this type of information is considered classified and can only be disclosed under certain specific circumstances, such as a court decision or official inquiry. These difficulties could be overcome only through private interviews with certain stakeholders. The private collections are especially valuable due to the alternative data (published and oral interviews, visual materials, fragments from the contemporary press, a variety of personal archives) that provide a different perspective from the official point of view prevailing in the archival files.

The size of the collections varies widely, reflecting differences in the provenance and intensity of oppositional activities. The largest examples in the Moldovan case are the Usatiuc–Ghimpu–Graur and the Nicolae Dragoș Collections. The former contains eleven volumes of archival files from the repository of the former KGB (currently preserved in the National Archive of the Republic of Moldova). The main types of documents within the collection consist of trial records (interrogations of the accused and of relevant witnesses), official reports, other categories of judicial files, and documents produced by the members of the organization prior to their arrest (memorandums, reports, letters, correspondence, private notes, etc.). The files also include a number of photos, mostly private ones, of the defendants in various contexts or official photos taken during their arrest. The Dragoș Collection, which includes essentially similar content, consists of seven large volumes reflecting this opposition group's activities. The typical size of an archival-based collec-

tion is several hundred pages, i.e., one or two volumes of investigative material. On the other hand, private collections, if more diverse in their contents, are typically smaller in size. Thus, the Mihai Moroşanu Private Collection features several types of documentary materials (including archival documents, a number of interviews, and newspaper articles from the protagonist's personal archive). Besides these two "extremes," the Moldovan case also includes more eclectic institutional collections of an intermediary size. The geographical distribution of these collections is uneven, reflecting the centralized character of most institutions involved in their preservation, as well as the disproportionate concentration of the open manifestations of cultural opposition in the capital. Aside from Chişinău, another important territorial focus of anti-regime activities centered on the second-largest city of the republic, Bălţi, situated in the northern part of the MSSR (a fact confirmed by the Gheorghe Muruziuc and Arsenie Platon Collections). Although the protagonists of the collections hailed from all over the MSSR (and beyond), they overwhelmingly operated in the capital. The number of users of the collections depends on the open access provided by the responsible institutions or on the willingness of private collectors to share their materials with a wider public. Those in the latter category are generally open to making their collections available to interested audiences. However, the primary beneficiaries of the collections are specialized researchers and academics, due to the absence of a developed memorial infrastructure in the Republic of Moldova. Since there are no official statistics on visitors to these institutions, it is difficult to estimate their scope. It is likely that in the case of private collections, the usual number does not exceed several people a year, while the archival collections are typically consulted by several dozen people per year. This lack of impact has only partially been compensated for by the National Museum of History exhibition, open to a potentially much more diverse audience. However, no systematic efforts at memorializing anti-regime opposition during the Soviet era have been undertaken on the official level after 1991. This reflects the general lack of public interest regarding this subject during the post-independence period.

Despite certain consistent efforts toward the de-communization of the public sphere undertaken by the first Moldovan governments during 1991–93, no coherent policy aimed at recuperating the memory and wider legacy of cultural dissent was pursued. Although some initial legal redress for the victims of Soviet-era "repressions" was undertaken during the early 1990s, when the interest for reclaiming the "suppressed" memory of the communist regime was high on the public agenda, no consequential political action followed. Political stakeholders were either avoiding "sensitive issues" due to their association with the former regime or citing low public interest to justify their reluctance to effectively engage with the communist past. The political stalemate was matched by a clear lack of interest and apathy of the public. For example, demand for open access to the files of the secret police was almost non-existent, aside from the occasional private initiatives and the low-intensi-

ty lobbying promoted by victims' groups (such as the Association of Former Political Deportees) or professional associations (notably, the National Association of Historians). This lack of public interest was matched by the one-sidedness displayed by most of the relevant historiography, which focused disproportionately on more extreme cases of Soviet repression (collectivization, mass deportations, etc.) or active resistance (armed insurgency). Even undeniable milestones in the Moldovan historiography of the communist period (such as the collection *Cartea Memoriei* (The book of memory),²⁴ published in the late 1990s and early 2000s in order to inventory, catalogue, and record the names of the victims of the Soviet regime) mostly dealt with the active phase of armed resistance. The editors of this collection aimed at a thorough coverage of the whole Soviet period (up to the late 1980s). The smaller proportion of the post-Stalinist victims in this catalogue is a consequence of the decrease in the scale of mass violent repressions after 1953 and cannot be interpreted as an editorial failure. However, this fact cannot entirely justify the lack of interest in the post-1953 period displayed by the Moldovan historiography as a whole, at least up to the early 2000s. This situation was complicated even further by the slow process of the opening of the local archives, particularly specialized repositories holding some of the most extensive materials dealing with cultural opposition activities (e.g., the former KGB Archive, transferred in 1992 under the jurisdiction of the reformed Intelligence and Security Service/SIS or the Archive of the Ministry of Internal Affairs). Even the first in-depth studies of the narrowly defined cultural sphere (i.e., the literary and artistic field) and its relations with the regime, including open articulation of criticism and (quasi-)dissident positions, date to the early 2000s.²⁵ Furthermore, only certain cases of the relatively few high-profile dissidents (such as Mihai Moroșanu and the Usatiuc-Ghimpu-Graur group) were extensively covered in the media and thus received public attention. Moroșanu, for example, became a symbolic figure for his uncompromising and constant resistance to the Soviet regime. In the early 1990s, he was very active in the media and was also directly engaged in politics. He became less visible in the public sphere in the late 1990s, but remained closely involved in public initiatives concerned with preserving the memory of Soviet repressive policies. However, these few cases from that period only highlight the relative neglect of cultural opposition and its protagonists by professional historians and political stakeholders alike.

A new and radically different phase in the history of the collections dealing with cultural opposition was inaugurated by the creation of the Commission for the Study and Evaluation of the Totalitarian Communist Regime in the Republic of Moldova. This institution was established by presidential decree in January 2010, following a previous election victory of a coalition op-

²⁴ Postică, *Cartea Memoriei*.

²⁵ E.g., Negură, *Nici eroi, nici trădători*.

posed to the formerly dominant Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova (PCRM). The decree strongly emphasized the need to establish "the truth concerning the totalitarian Communist regime" and to inform the public "objectively and multilaterally" about its essence. The institution was conceived as a "truth commission," but its relationship to the state authorities was loosely defined: the decree stated only that "the ministries and the other central and local administrative authorities will provide the Commission with all necessary assistance." The Commission's mandate was limited to "truth revelation." The new institution had the following goals: "to study the documents and materials concerning the activity of the main institutions involved in the establishment and perpetuation of the Communist totalitarian regime" while assessing its atrocities and human rights abuses; "to inform the public, periodically, on its activity" and results; to draft "a study, a collection of documents, and an analytical report regarding the historical and political-legal evaluation of the Communist totalitarian regime"; to submit "recommendations" to the President of the Republic by 1 June 2010. The Commission was supposed to formulate policy proposals that would eventually lead to political and legal consequences, but was not granted any effective instruments to promote their enforcement. From the outset, this institution was mired in controversy due to its unmistakably political nature and was accused of being merely a tool for the governing coalition meant to discredit its political opponents. However, despite its many shortcomings, this institution succeeded in achieving one major goal: the gradual broadening of access to previously unavailable archival files (including those of the secret police). Its members benefited from some government assistance (e.g., through the special committee on declassifying official documents), and they were granted access to previously restricted departmental archives (e.g., the Archive of the Ministry for Internal Affairs, the Archive of the Prosecutor General's Office, and the former NKVD/KGB Archive, now hosted by the Intelligence and Security Service/SIS). Access to the relevant documentary collections of the specialized historical archives significantly improved. A second dimension of the Commission's activity concerned the organization of public events for the dissemination of its findings. Several symposia and scholarly conferences were organized (with the participation of international experts). One of the major decisions of the Commission concerned the transfer of the most prominent collections relating to cultural opposition from institutional archives (mainly the SIS repository) to the National Archive of the Republic of Moldova (ANRM). The transfer process started in March 2011 and is basically complete at this point. It should have resulted in free public access to these materials. Yet, only the case of the Nicolae Dragoș, Collection is a positive example in this regard. In 2012, the collection files were transferred to the ANRM. The protagonist, Nicolae Dragoș was personally present on this occasion and received a scanned copy of a part of his file. However, regarding other collections, the ANRM has been slow in granting the public full access to these

materials, invoking issues related to insufficient storage capacity and lack of staff to properly catalogue the information. Moreover, some relevant collections have not been transferred up to this point. Another major consequence of the Commission's activity was the revision of the school curriculum and the introduction of classes devoted to opposition and dissent during the communist period. Thus, in 2013, new history textbooks for the twelfth grade were published that included some new documentary evidence uncovered by the Commission. They feature a special topic on *Resistance under Communism*, which refers to the postwar armed resistance, but also to post-1953 "cultural resistance" (specifically, to the cases of Muruziuc, Moroșanu, Usatiuc, Ghimpu, Șoltoianu, and others).²⁶ However, after the brief upsurge of interest in the communist past in 2010 and 2011 (mainly due to reasons of political expediency), this topic again disappeared from public view, despite the efforts of professional historians who attempted to preserve public concern for the Soviet past during the following years. The gradual dwindling of this subject in the public sphere coincided with the curtailment of the freedom of the press after 2014. A relevant example is the closing down of the weekly column dedicated to the "Archives of Communism" (*Arhivele Comunismului*) in the *Adevărul Moldova* newspaper. During the previous five years, this column had brought to light many cases of cultural opposition typical for the Soviet period, featuring articles by several professional historians (mainly Mihai Tașcă and Igor Cașu). One of the main reasons for this situation is the total disinterest of the political stakeholders, who, aside from occasional opportunities to exploit the subject for instrumental purposes, are reluctant to seriously engage with the communist legacy.

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Ukraine

Milestones of Cultural Opposition

Ukraine occupies a special, even unique, place in COURAGE. As the only country in the project that was part of the Soviet sphere of influence from the outset, and because its historical evolution under communism was inextricable from that of Russia's, Ukraine has a longer history of anti-communist opposition than the other countries under scrutiny, and this history has exerted a more significant influence on present-day politics than in the other countries under examination in the project. Some phases of Ukraine's Sovietization went hand in hand with the intensified Russification of the country. Hence, the history of opposition in Ukraine was no less ethnic than ideological in nature, although Ukrainians did not respond to communism in a unified way. Nationalism was a form of opposition that was integral to Ukraine's resistance and embedded in the consciousness of the population more so perhaps than in the cultural and social practices witnessed elsewhere in the Soviet bloc. Manifestations of Ukrainian dissent and resistance emerged in connection to the various phases of a developing communism, starting with the Bolshevik and Stalinist periods and continuing into post-Stalinist times and well into the Brezhnev regime. The ongoing war with Russia in Eastern Ukraine today further amplifies the symbolic value of anti-communist resistance and contributes to the re-evaluation of the legacy of opposition to Soviet (and Russian) rule.

Ukraine's long engagement with the Soviet project meant that the country went through various phases of Sovietization, which resulted in the transformation and diversification of opposition strategies over time. Due to its geopolitical position, the repeated changes of the country's borders and ethnic composition, the geographical distribution of resistance activities remained somewhat uneven in Ukraine and also changed over time. Although Kyiv retained its status as the hub of cultural opposition for the duration of the Soviet project, Lviv and Western Ukraine emerged as important spaces for religious and nationalist types of opposition after World War II, while Kharkiv became a major spot for human rights activism in the 1960s. Odessa, too, was a prominent place for non-conformist art in the 1970s.

As was the case in all societies under Soviet influence, there emerged a plethora of social attitudes among Ukrainians ranging from resistance to non-conformism and accommodation to manifestations of support. In addition, due to the changes in the nature of the Soviet regime, the boundaries and

meaning of opposition were constantly shifting. In contrast to most of the other countries in the project, Ukraine witnessed the unfolding of the most traumatic episodes in the history of communism: it was ravaged by Civil War and the struggle for independence in the 1910s, devastated by the Stalinist collectivization campaign and the ensuing famine in the 1930s, ruined during World War II, and shocked by the Chernobyl catastrophe in the 1980s. These dramatic experiences shaped the trajectory of opposition to Soviet rule and significantly impacted resistance activities in the country.

The first major milestone in the history of cultural opposition in Ukraine was the Civil War, which lasted from 1917 until 1922, engulfing most of the central and eastern territories of the land. Between 1917 and 1920, the Central Rada, Hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky, the Directory of the Ukrainian People's Republic and the Central Powers all attempted to establish their own versions of a sovereign state comprising nine southwestern provinces of the former Russian Empire. Internal strife among Ukrainian leaders led to a victory for the Bolsheviks, who regarded these provinces as a single political unit. This led to Ukraine's integration into the Soviet Union as one of its core republics in 1922.¹ The Bolshevik victory forced alternative visions for the future, including Symon Petliura's nationalism and Nestor Makhno's anarchism, to go underground or disintegrate. Anti-Bolshevik émigrés found themselves scattered in communities across Europe in the major European cities of Prague, Vienna, Paris, Munich, and London, as well as the Americas. They anchored the Ukrainian diaspora during three waves of emigration that followed in the twentieth century—after World Wars I and II and before the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Inspired by revolutionary idealism, there were many Ukrainians—both at home and abroad—who engaged with the ideas of communism. The involvement of the cultural Avantgarde of the 1920s was unprecedented. Many believed in the goals of the movement and contributed to its monumental effort to construct a utopian society and a new civilization. Ukrainian artists, actors, and other intellectuals were at the forefront of the Soviet Avantgarde movement, and their efforts defined the experimental arts of the 1920s.² Representatives of the first generation of radical, innovative modernists, who came from the multicultural, multi-confessional, and multi-ethnic imperial southwest, where Jews, Ukrainians, Poles, Russians, and others intermingled before the revolution, fashioned a cultural synergy that produced a vibrant theatre and art scene and contributed significantly to the formation of the culture of a new, modern civilization.³ There were others who converted to the Soviet project in emigration, for instance the celebrated historian Mykhailo Hrushevsky. As the former head of the Central Rada, Hrushevsky was

1 Liber, *Total Wars and the Making of Modern Ukraine*.

2 Mudrak, *The New Generation and Artistic Modernism in the Ukraine*.

3 Fowler, *Beau Monde on Empire's Edge*.

forced into emigration in 1919. Over time, he became a supporter of the Bolshevik cause mostly because of its professed nationality policies and their potential for Ukraine, and he returned to the Soviet Union in 1924.⁴

With the rise of Stalinism, the regime changed its approach to cultural policy, ushering in Socialist Realism as official doctrine in the mid-1930s. This shift made many intellectuals and artists—most famously, Kazimir Malevich—unwittingly oppositionist. Cultural figures whose inimitable work over two decades captured the universalist ethos of Modernity were suddenly denounced and suppressed and their works banned from public viewing. For example, the Berezhil Theatre, which became one of the most prominent and innovative theatre groups in the 1920s under the directorship of Oleksandr “Les” Kurbas, was thoroughly expunged under Stalinism and its actors were arrested, exiled or shot.⁵ Hrushevsky inadvertently became an oppositionist as well, denouncing Soviet propaganda. He was exiled to Moscow in 1931, where he died a few years later. Other representatives of the Ukrainian cultural, political, and economic elite were also arrested and killed during the Stalinist purges of the late 1930s.

In Ukraine, the total obliteration of a national modernist culture began with the removal of Mykola Skrypnyk as Commissar of Enlightenment in 1933 and the arrival of high-ranking party member Pavel Potyshev, who oversaw the arrest of key members of the literary scene. An entire generation of Ukrainian writers and poets—known as the “executed Renaissance”—mostly based in Kharkiv during the period of Ukrainianization in the mid-1920s, was liquidated. The victims included Mykola Ialovy, poet, dramaturge and best friend of Mykola Khvylovy, and many others who lived in a creative commune in an apartment building called “Slovo” (Word). Khvylovy was a staunch believer in the potential for communism to transform Ukraine, and he played a major role in redirecting Ukrainian Modernist culture away from Moscow and toward Europe. However, his influential pamphlet “Ukraine or Little Russia” had caught the attention of the Soviet authorities, who perceived it a threat to the regime. By 1934, Kharkiv’s “literary fair” was over, as by then Khvylovy and Skrypnyk had both committed suicide and the GPU had arrested communist politician Oleksandr Shumskyi, writer Ostap Vyshnia, playwright Mykola Kulish, actor Iosyp Hirniak, as well as Kurbas, shipping them off to camps in the north.⁶ The painter Mykola Boichuk, one of the founders of the Association of Revolutionary Art of Ukraine (ARMU) who revived the medieval art forms of Byzantine art that characterized the interiors of Ukrainian churches, was arrested in 1936 for “being an agent of the Vatican.” Interrogated and tortured, he was shot on the same day as his two

4 Plokhy, *Unmaking Imperial Russia*.

5 Fowler, *Beau Monde on Empire's Edge*.

6 Ibid., 94, 149–52.

leading students, Ivan Padalka and Vasyl Sedliar.⁷ Sedliar produced the haunting images found in the 1933 edition of Taras Shevchenko's *Kobzar*, a featured item in the COURAGE Registry from the Ukrainian Museum-Archives collection in Cleveland, OH.⁸

The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939 and the subsequent war on Soviet territory eventually resulted in the annexation and Sovietization of Volyn, Galicia, Rivne, parts of Bessarabia, and other territories into a more expansive Soviet Ukraine. The territorial enlargement of Ukraine meant that the Soviet Union was able to absorb into the social fabric some of its fiercest ideological opponents, including Ukrainian nationalists and the Greek Catholic Church, which actively opposed communist influence. This irrevocably altered the internal politics of Soviet Ukraine and resulted in another wave of mass migration of displaced persons during World War II, which included concentration camp survivors, *Ostarbeiter*, and refugees to Europe and North America. These Ukrainian émigrés tended to be more resolutely anti-Soviet (and nationalist) than their predecessors.

As was the case in most of the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc, Stalin's death in 1953 provided a momentary reprieve from the pressure of economic and social transformations that had been taking place at breakneck speeds. The so-called Thaw also created new opportunities, at least temporarily, for a younger generation of cultural figures to acknowledge the crimes of the Stalinist past and imagine positive alternatives for the future. De-Stalinization thus paved the way for the emergence of some of the most-prominent members of Ukraine's cultural opposition in the late 1950s and early 1960s, a dissenting generation known as the Sixtiers. The moniker *shestydesiatnyky* (Sixtiers) denotes a generation of cultural figures that challenged the master narrative of the Socialist Realist aesthetic. The Sixtiers resurrected the idea of a national communism in literature and the visual and performing arts, which spilled over into the spheres of politics and economics. In exploring national motifs, the generation of the Sixtiers touched upon taboo issues regarding the history of the recent past, particularly about responsibility for Stalinist terror and mass repressions. As a case in point, courageous members of this generation set out to identify on the outskirts of Kyiv the mass graves of NKVD victims who had been shot during the purges. As a result of such brazenly unorthodox acts, individuals such as artist Alla Horska together with the poet Vasyl Symonenko and theatre director Les Taniuk were singled out for constant surveillance by the KGB and were repeatedly harassed by the authorities.

Khrushchev's ouster from power in 1964 marked yet another turning point in the history of cultural opposition in Ukraine. Kyivan officials who

⁷ Shkandrij, "Boichuk, Mykhailo."

⁸ COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Ukrainian Museum-Archives of Cleveland", by Orysia Maria Kulick, 2018. Accessed: April 5, 2018.

had supported the cultural renaissance under Khrushchev found themselves in a tenuous and vulnerable position after his removal. Their opponents capitalized on this backlash in cultural policy by openly campaigning against Ukrainian themes and motifs in art, literature, and film. Meanwhile, officials who had advocated for greater political and cultural autonomy for Ukraine in the 1950s were unseated in the mid-1960s and early 1970s by appointees from eastern, party-infiltrated regions such as Dnipropetrovsk and Donetsk, centres considered to be more loyal to communism than Moscow itself.

Strong censorship quickly dampened the zealous pursuits of the Sixtiers. By the early 1970s, many had been tried for “anti-Soviet” activities and sent to the gulag, including journalist and human rights activist Viacheslav Chornovil; historian and radical Valentyn Moroz, who became a symbol of an implacable resistance; textile artist turned political prisoner Stefaniya Shabatura; poet and artist Iryna Stasiv-Kalynets, who was married to lyrical poet turned political prisoner Ihor Kalynets; journalist, translator, and poet Vasyl Stus; essayist, literary historian, and poet, Yevhen Sverstiuk; gulag survivor Nadia Svitlychna, who later became a key member of the Ukrainian Helsinki group; her brother Ivan Svitlychny, a poet; and the symbolist painter Opanas Zalyvachka. Others, such as the Odessa artist Vladimir Strelnikov, were marginalized and could only present their artwork at small-scale exhibitions in private apartments. (Strelnikov eventually emigrated to Germany.) By the time Volodymyr Shcherbitskyi had replaced Petro Shelest as first secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine in 1973, considerable changes had taken place within the Ukrainian bureaucracy and in society more broadly. Although the consequences of recentralization enforced by Moscow were, for the most part, less severe than during the Stalinist 1930s, the early 1970s marked the onset of yet another ideologically conservative period. In Ukraine, this shift was reinforced by the appointment of a new head of the Ukrainian KGB, Vitalii Fedorchuk, who showed little tolerance for the already limited intellectual autonomy enjoyed by the creative intelligentsia during the Thaw.

The crackdown in the mid-1970s ushered in a very grey period for the republic, when most of the cultural opposition was driven underground. Many in the Sixtiers group remained under surveillance, only to be arrested and serve time in hard labor camps. Musical groups that offered a repertoire of widely popular protest lyrics were banned altogether. Artists continued to be persecuted or forced into exile. Human rights activists affiliated with the Helsinki movement chronicled the cycle of repression as smuggled publications and reports on human rights violations made their way abroad through surreptitious channels. Despite testimonials, the resistance was muted, and it remained so for the rest of the Brezhnev era. It was Mikhail Gorbachev’s election as General Secretary in 1984 and his announcement of *Glasnost* and *perestroika* that reenergized dissent throughout the Soviet Union. However, it was the Chernobyl catastrophe and the government’s attempts to cover it up that galvanized Ukrainian opposition and put it out in the open. For many Ukrain-

ians, it marked a definitive break with the policies and principles that guided the Soviet Union at large. The fact that a full eighteen days lapsed between the explosion of the nuclear reactor at the end of April in 1986 and Gorbachev's belated press conference about the incident incensed the public, especially Kyivans, who, unbeknownst to them, were required by the party leadership to participate in the May Day parade on contaminated streets of the capital as if nothing had happened. The incident further deepened the wedge between Moscow and the Kyivan elites and accelerated the erosion of Soviet power in Ukraine.⁹

Types of Cultural Opposition

As the second largest Soviet republic, Ukraine witnessed various forms of passive and covert opposition, even toying with communism as a form of dissent. Armed resistance was particularly strong during the Civil War and during and after World War II, when the Soviet Union annexed Western Ukraine. In the countryside, peasants resorted to the same patterns of resistance as described by James C. Scott that were employed during the period of Stalinist collectivization in the 1930s. These included "foot-dragging, dissimulation, desertion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage and so on."¹⁰ Peasants also attacked local officials and kolkhoz (collective farm) directors, killed livestock rather than turning it over to the authorities, and sometimes mobilized and armed themselves with torches and pitchforks, as weapons were confiscated from the populace ahead of the collectivization drive.

While acts of physical violence featured prominently in the history of opposition in Soviet Ukraine in the first half of the twentieth century, the country also witnessed the emergence of a range of cultural activities that challenged the aspirations of the communist establishment in subtler ways. The Stalinist shift towards cultural dogmatism in the 1930s and the emergence of socialist realism as a cultural doctrine were the main catalysts that purged the cultural landscape, marginalized the forward-looking efforts of the generation of modernists, forcing many into isolation, and prompting them to create a symbolic art of opposition, oftentimes abandoning abstraction for a return to figuration. Actors, painters, and writers who once had shaped the meaning of the revolution were eventually consumed and cast out by it. Not until the de-Stalinization campaign of the late-1950s did a new wave of cultural, and mostly literary, opposition to Soviet rule manifest itself, continuing into the second half of the century. This wave of opposition was dominated by cultural activities rather than physical violence.

⁹ Yaroshinska and Marples, *Chernobyl, the Forbidden*; Petryna, *Life Exposed*; Plokhy, "Chornobyl."

¹⁰ Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*, xvi.

The period known as the Thaw provoked a burgeoning dissident art scene in the major cities of Soviet Ukraine—Kyiv, Lviv, Odessa—and led to the emergence of the most significant cultural movement in the history of opposition in Soviet Ukraine: the previously mentioned *shestydesiatnyky*, or the Sixtiers movement. While the Sixtiers consisted mostly of literary figures, such as writers (Chornovil, Lina Kostenko), poets (Ivan Drach, Stus, Stasiv-Kalynets, Svitlychny, Symonenko, Mykola Vinhranovsky), and literary critics (Ivan Dziuba, Mykhailyna Kotsiubynska, Sverstiuk), there were also artists (Horska, Shabatura, Halyna Sevruck, Zalyvakha) and other intellectuals (the historian Moroz, for example) in the movement who challenged rigid ideological conventions in their work. They also became involved in other forms of dissent, including human rights activism and/or the dissemination of *samizdat* literature in Soviet Ukraine and abroad; many of them joined the Ukrainian Helsinki Group in the late 1970s. Paradoxically, the end of the Thaw gave stimulus to human rights activism and the growth and circulation of underground literature. Ukrainian *samizdat* publications (Ukr. *samvydav*) contained mostly literature—the works of the Sixtiers among others—but they also addressed national themes, reflected on human rights issues, and advocated religious freedom. Many of the *samizdat* publications were smuggled abroad and were disseminated among the Ukrainian diaspora. Osyp Zinkevych, the founder of the Smoloskyp Publishing House, played a crucial role in coordinating these activities.¹¹

The 1960s also had an impact on the development of Ukraine's underground music scene and youth subcultures. Counterculture communities represented the less visible and direct manifestations of cultural opposition in Ukraine. Some of these groups, for example Lviv's hippies, who formed an informal organization called the Republic of the Holy Garden in 1968, managed to carve out their own space outside of Soviet public life and organize various events and rock concerts.¹² Since opting out or disengaging from Soviet society was considered a threat by the authorities, counterculture groups were often kept under surveillance and harassed as intensely as poets, writers, and painters. Similarly, music bands the styles of which were influenced by "Western" trends—rock and roll, beat, hard rock, punk, etc.—were forced underground and barred from performing at state-sanctioned events. The band "Eney" [Aeneas], which was largely inspired by the Beatles, was effectively banned in the 1970s, and their recordings were destroyed.¹³ When Mikhail Gorbachev's *perestroika* in the mid-1980s revitalized the underground music scene, music festivals with subversive subtexts were organized, the most famous of which was the Chervona Ruta Festival held in the western

11 Zinkevych, *Rukh oporu v Ukraini 1960–1990*.

12 Kurkov, "The hippies of Soviet Lviv"; See also: Risch, "Soviet 'Flower Children'"; Risch, *The Ukrainian West*.

13 "Eney," *Rok antolohiya*.

Ukrainian city of Chernivtsi in 1989. The festival featured traditional balladeers and Ukrainian rock artists, which—according to Catherine Wanner—offered an unapologetic celebration of Ukrainianness and bolstered conceptions of Soviet rule as a foreign imposition.¹⁴

National motifs were not only used by musicians. Folkloristic themes, as well as symbols and ideas of Ukrainian nationhood were incorporated into the works of artists, writers and poets—including the Sixtiers—and were even used by some counterculture communities. The suppression of the Greek Catholic Church by the Soviet authorities also added a national layer to the struggle—in Western Ukraine at least—over beliefs between state and church. The Greek Catholic Church was outlawed in 1946, but it became a fierce source of opposition, both abroad, in Rome, where the church leadership relocated, and in Soviet Ukraine, where religious communities continued to practice and organize underground liturgies and other services.¹⁵ There were disparate faith communities, including Baptists and Latter-Day Saints, that continued to gather and cultivate alternatives to the Soviet socialist worldview, as missionaries from the West persisted in evangelizing to the atheistic society.

Apart from the Ukrainians who challenged the regime's ideological pillars by keeping religious traditions alive, there were also those who stood up for secular values of universal relevance. Ukraine was prominent in the human rights movement, which gained traction in the Khrushchev period. After the signing of the Helsinki Accords in 1975, Ukrainians formed their own Helsinki Group (Petro Grigorenko, Leonid Plyushch, Svitlychna, Nina Strokata-Karavanska), which cooperated with their counterparts in Moscow, as well as activists in North America and Europe. Many of these activists were arrested, tried, and forced to serve time in strict regime hard labour camps in Moravia and Perm (Chornovil, Stus, Stasiv-Kalynets, Shabatura, Svitlychna). Some were given less extreme sentences, but were excluded from writers' and artists' unions and the party and were often unable to find work or creative outlets. For instance, literary scholar Kotsiubynska lost her job at the T.H. Shevchenko Institute of Literature in 1966 following her participation in a protest staged at a Kyiv screening of Sergei Paradzhanov's film "Shadow of Forgotten Ancestors," a film that challenged Socialist Realist aesthetics by evoking religious and Ukrainian folkloristic themes in a highly symbolic—rather than realistic—manner. Despite the oppressive measures, human rights activism continued well into the 1980s. In the city of Kharkiv, participants in the movement crystallized into a group under the aegis of Memorial in the

14 Wanner, *Burden of Dreams*.

15 Hurkina, "The Response of Ukrainian Greek Catholics to the Soviet State's Liquidation and Persecution of Their Church: 1945–1989"; For more background see Himka, *Religion and nationality in western Ukraine*; Hosking, *Church, Nation and State in Russia and Ukraine*.

late 1980s and eventually formed the Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group in 1992.¹⁶

The late socialist period also witnessed the emergence of environmental activism—which grew in significance after the Chernobyl catastrophe—as well as the resurgence of political oppositionism. Gorbachev’s reforms paved the way for the formation of alternative political organizations—collectively referred to as “the democratic opposition.” The most significant such organization was Rukh, or the People’s Movement of Ukraine, which was created in 1989 and which had strong ties to the dissident movement through the involvement of Chornovil—a former Sixtier and member of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group—in the party leadership. Independent papers and periodicals also sprouted like mushrooms in the wake of Gorbachev’s reforms, some lasting a short time and some managing to publish for years outside the confines of the eroding Soviet censorship. They pushed for greater plurality and representativeness in the political sphere.

Collections of Cultural Opposition in Ukraine

The lasting historical legacy and the significance of the cultural heritage of opposition in Ukraine are demonstrated by the rich variety of collections that emerged during and after the period of Soviet rule in the country and abroad. The initial tide of gathering reactions to the Soviet project began with the emigration of anti-Bolshevik groups after the October Revolution of 1917. These groups settled abroad and created collections documenting alternative visions for Ukraine, including monarchist, nationalist, or democratic. The Stalinist shift towards cultural dogmatism in the mid-1930s constituted another major turning point in the history of collections in Soviet Ukraine. Prominent Avantgarde artists unwittingly became counterrevolutionaries overnight; their works were confiscated, banned, or destroyed. In some instances, as in the case of the Special Collection at the National Art Museum of Ukraine (NAMU), curators were able secretly to preserve materials that had been slated for destruction.¹⁷ This material, which eventually became the permanent collection of the museum, was originally gathered and documented in 1937. It consists of a now well-known body of premier works of the Ukrainian Avantgarde and monumental art. It is comprised mostly of paintings and drawings that were considered inappropriate and unacceptable by the Stalinist regime and were confiscated by the secret police over a two-year span from museums

16 Memorial, founded in 1989, was one of the first and most significant human rights organizations in the Soviet Union, the original aim of which was to research, document, and commemorate Stalinist oppressions in the country. For a history of the organization see <https://www.memo.ru/en-us/memorial/memorial-history-timeline/> Accessed August 19, 2018.

17 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Special Collection (NAMU)”, by Orysia Maria Kulick, 2017. Accessed: April 5, 2018.

in Kharkiv, Odessa, Kyiv, and Poltava. Many of the artists represented in the collection were either repressed or executed for “formalism” or “bourgeois nationalism.”

World War II and the ensuing counterinsurgency, which the Red Army and the secret police fought in the belt between the Baltic and Black seas, left its mark on the nature of collections about opposition movements. Many materials in the KGB archives were deliberately destroyed in 1940–1980 as a by-product of decrees regulating the process of accepting, cataloguing, and filing of archival materials. Among them were documents of the Fifth Department of the Ukrainian KGB, which was responsible for combating internal enemies, criminals, and dissidents, as well as conducting covert operations and surveillance about Ukraine’s liberation movement. Archivists at the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) have noted that valuable documents relating to the counterinsurgency in Western Ukraine were destroyed after Khrushchev became General Secretary during the Thaw.¹⁸ Many materials migrated from Ukraine to Moscow after his ouster in 1964, as Leonid Brezhnev and his counterparts ordered the recentralization of government institutions, including the archives. At the same time, the post-war migration of Ukrainians to other parts of the world contributed significantly to the multiplication of diaspora organizations and the enlargement of their collections regarding this period, especially in the United Kingdom and North America.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the reopening of the Soviet archives, collections began to return to Ukraine from the diaspora. Dissident journalist Nadia Svitlychna, living in the United States since 1976, sent back her personal archive to Kyiv, and in 2012 it became one of The Sixtiers Museum’s core collections. The Shevchenko Institute of Literature now holds the personal archive of Zina Genyk-Berezovska, a literary scholar born on the outskirts of Prague who was also deeply involved with the Sixtiers movement.¹⁹ People she corresponded with readily smuggled out speeches and other texts; she also physically transported *samizdat* materials from Kyiv to Prague during her many trips back and forth. This collection was moved to Kyiv with the help of the Ukrainian ambassador to the Czech Republic Roman Lubkivsky in stages, beginning in 1993. It plays a singular role in pointing to the transnational networks underpinning the documentation of cultural opposition in Ukraine and offers important insights into the Ukrainian diaspora community in Prague since the interwar period.²⁰

The historical legacy of Soviet rule, including the heritage of cultural opposition, continue to shape Ukrainian political affairs until the present day, as former dissidents entered politics in the early 1990s. Some, like Ivan Drach,

18 *Sluzhba Bezpeky Ukrainy*, 14–15.

19 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Zina Genyk-Berezovska Collection”, by Orysia Maria Kulick, 2018. Accessed: April 5, 2018.

20 Kotsiubynska, “Pam’iatka Ednannia Dvokh Kul’tur,” 82–86.

represented and took on leadership roles in new movements, such as “Rukh.” Others, such as the former Sixtier and human rights activist Chornovil, was campaigning to become a presidential candidate for the opposition in 1999 when he passed away under mysterious circumstances. At the same time, aspects of the Soviet past became targets of memory politics, such as the remembrance of the famine of 1932–33, the Holodomor. They remained highly contested issues in Ukrainian political life and propelled a fact-finding crusade. Viktor Yushchenko’s presidency (2005–10) was marred by his controversial decisions in the sphere of memory politics, which bestowed upon nationalist leaders, such as Stepan Bandera, the designation “heroes of Ukraine.” In 2008, Yushchenko appointed Volodymyr Viatrovykh head of the archives of the SBU. Some scholars suggested that Viatrovykh used his position to “white-wash” the involvement of Ukrainian nationalists in the Holocaust and the mass cleansing of Poles during World War II.²¹ Viatrovykh was replaced as head of the SBU archives in 2010 after Viktor Yanukovich’s election as president of Ukraine. As a result of the upheaval in Ukraine in 2014 (the Euro-maidan Revolution), some archives have become more accessible, even though the paper holdings remained in a chaotic state. Under new leadership, the SBU archives, for example, have allowed more digitized (and therefore well-screened) files into the reading room. In May 2015, the new President Petro Poroshenko signed a law that mandated the transfer of Ukrainian archives pertaining to “Soviet organs of repression,” such as the KGB and its successor, the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), to a government organization called the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, which was created in 2006. To date, the documents have not been transferred.

Types of Collections

The types of collections that testify to cultural opposition to the Soviet communist system vary considerably from country to country where Ukrainian émigré communities continue to thrive. However, most in-country archival evidence of opposition in Ukraine is to be found among materials housed in vast state-run institutions at the national, regional, and local levels. The distribution of archival data among these bodies reflects the institutional and administrative legacy of the Soviet Union, requiring that each government organ maintain its own repository of documents. Such large archives hold files related to the work of Soviet-era institutions (e.g., the State Security Services, the Communist Party of Ukraine, and its regional and local affiliates). The Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine (TsDAHOU) holds internal party documents, periodicals, correspondence, letters of complaint,

21 Cohen, “The Historian Whitewashing Ukraine’s Past,” McBride, Rudling, and Amar, “Ukraine’s struggle with the past is ours too.”

and meeting stenograms. This archive also contains documents related to expulsions from the Communist Party, artists' and writers' unions, and other organizations during periods of cultural repression. The State Archives Department of the Security Service of Ukraine (GDA SBU) has an extensive collection, covering state surveillance of almost all forms of societal protest and resistance. It maintains documentation on the surveillance of cultural organizations, the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights group, and other very specific incidents such as attempts by miners in the Kuzbas to organize a strike inspired by Solidarity in Poland. Other materials refer to specific individuals and include the personal files of people sentenced for anti-Soviet activities, and even those who were released later from Soviet prison camps. Not surprisingly, there is also documentation that tracks publications generated by émigré communities, including coverage in the Western press about the treatment of dissidents. Other materials relate to the surveillance of environmental protests in Kyiv in the 1980s, along with the impact of *glasnost* and *perestroika* on the Academy of Sciences, in addition to many other topics.

Other state-run archives, such as the Central State Archive-Museum of Literature and Arts (TsDAML), which might be described as media-specific, are also useful for gathering information on cultural opposition. This collection includes books, artworks, correspondence, photos, drafts of literary works, reports, and the documents of criminal cases dealing with prominent literary figures and artists. Documents from the post-World War II era include the materials from criminal cases filed against writers and artists for engaging in "anti-Soviet propaganda and agitation," reviews of artistic and literary works, stenograms of interrogations of members of the creative intelligentsia suspected of anti-Soviet dealings, and interviews with witnesses. Similar collections are held by the Taras Shevchenko Institute of Literature at the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, which has its own archive that contains the personal papers of Stus, Kotsiubynska, Genyk-Berezovska, and other important literary figures from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Most large state archives are located in Kyiv, as it was the capital city of Soviet Ukraine from 1934 onward. Every region has its own affiliates of these major archives, reproducing the organizational hierarchy of the Soviet Union. One of these regional affiliates—the State Archive of the Lviv (DALO), holds, for instance, materials on youth counterculture in Lviv (e.g. hippies) in the 1960s and 1980s, official party and Komsomol documents, lyrics, music notes, letters, drawings, memoirs, newspaper clippings, and photos from the years 1956–92. Such state-run institutions are supported largely through budgetary allocations. As a result, many are understaffed and underfunded. The collections are mostly visited by scholars and students doing archival research. There are important smaller collections in Kharkiv, also supported by the state, which are related to the city's brief reign as the capital of Soviet Ukraine from 1922–34. Such archives in Kharkiv capture that ephemeral period and include the Museum of Literature in Kharkiv, which collects and holds mate-

rials relating to the repressions of the 1960s and 1970s. As with larger state institutions, these smaller archives are also used primarily by scholars and students conducting historical research.

Despite the dominance of state-funded institutions, personal collections also play a role in shaping the legacy of opposition in Ukraine. There were several private individuals, who, at personal risk, clandestinely compiled data capturing alternative, oppositionist narratives. One example is the digital archive of Yaroslav Kendzior, a collection now housed in the Centre for Urban History in Lviv. In the 1980s, Kendzior used a large VHS SVHS film camera to document the activities of the burgeoning political opposition in Lviv, particularly during the election campaign in 1989. His materials are described as media activism. They offer unique perspective on events which took place at a time when the state controlled almost entirely what was shown on the airways. Some private collections, including Vakhtang Kipiani's *samizdat* collection in Kyiv, only emerged in recent years, so their use tends to be somewhat limited. There are also personal collections abroad. The private papers of Dr. Semyon Gluzman, which was deposited at the Research Centre for East European Studies (Forschungsstelle OstEuropa) in Bremen in the aftermath of the Euromaidan protests and the outbreak of war in Ukraine, demonstrate important intergenerational dimensions of cultural opposition. Gluzman witnessed and recorded the abuse of psychiatry by the Soviets who incarcerated and punished people who were of sound mind. While he was serving his own sentence in the camps, he met the so-called 25-ers, members of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) during World War II, and prisoners from other national resistance forces, especially from the Baltic States and the western borderlands of the USSR. Remaining incarcerated, these people met the oppositionists of subsequent generations, specifically members of the "sixtiers" movement and human rights activists arrested in the 1960s and 1970s.

Alongside private individuals, non-governmental organizations were also actively engaged in collecting material on cultural opposition in Ukraine. The Kharkiv Human Rights Group, for example, has both a physical archive and a virtual online museum and library documenting the efforts of human rights activists to reform socialism from the 1960s to the 1980s and uphold the rule of law after independence. This organization has been operating formally since the late 1980s as part of Memorial, which has a vast online presence that includes the Archive of the History of Dissent in the USSR (1953–1987), the archive of the Helsinki Watch Group, and issues of *The Chronicle of Current Events* and the *Ukrainian Herald*.

Faith communities which operated underground under communism also created extensive archives. After the Ukrainian Byzantine Catholic Church was abolished in the Soviet Union in 1946, its considerable archive was relocated to Rome. Another major repository of religious opposition is found in the archive and library of the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv. Additionally, the Institute of Church History keeps its archive at the University, a

collection that documents religious opposition in the Ukrainian SSR and includes biographical interviews (video and text) with the clergy, monks, nuns, and laity of the clandestine Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (1946–89). The Baptists, who increased in numbers since the 1970s, maintain several online collections, including mostly digitized religious journals in Russian and Ukrainian. One of the most remarkable collections on religious life under Soviet rule in Ukraine is housed at the Keston Center for Religion Politics and Society at Baylor University in Texas.²² The institution's holdings originated as the personal collection of Reverend Michael Bordeaux, who spent a year in Moscow as an exchange student in the 1950s and was shocked by the extent of religious repressions. It grew exponentially after Bordeaux established his research center focusing on religious dissent in 1969.

After independence in Ukraine, new and more diverse collections emerged, including the ones found at The National Museum-Memorial to the Victims of Occupation "Prison on Lonskogo Street" in Lviv and The Sixtiers Museum in Kyiv. The "Prison on Lonskogo Street" has a small but growing archival collection. Curators have amassed 2,000 items since the museum's opening in 2009. In addition to World War II propaganda from Nazi and Soviet forces, it holds the personal belongings of political prisoners and detainees—letters, personal documents, and *samizdat* publications used to prosecute dissidents, artists, and human rights activists in Lviv and its surrounding environs in the 1960s and 1970s. The latter is an ad hoc collection of about 50 items, which includes embroidery, rosaries made out of breadcrumbs, and other materials created by prisoners serving lengthy sentences in Siberian labor camps under Brezhnev. Situated within the larger context of the museum-memorial's holdings, these materials about Lviv's dissidents are important to a nuanced understanding of the Soviet Union's treatment of its most intransigent opponents.²³

The Sixtiers Museum Collection is located in a small museum in Kyiv in a building belonging to the Ukrainian political party Rukh. Nadia Svitlychna and Mykola Plakhotniuk founded this museum as way of honouring and documenting the struggles of a cohort of Soviet Ukrainian dissidents from the 1960s to the 1980s. Included in the permanent exhibition are paintings, graphics, sculptures, embroidery, and other artworks produced by artists affiliated with the Sixtiers movement. The museum also displays the poems, letters, and literary works of the writers in their midst, as well as their typewriters, handcrafted items made while in the gulag, or clothes worn while living in exile, like Svitlychna's camp uniform. Also figuring prominently are posters for events and exhibitions organized by this group. The guided tour offers a

22 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Keston Center for Religion, Politics, and Society", by Orysia Maria Kulick, 2018. Accessed: Accessed April 5, 2018. (forthcoming)

23 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Prison on Lonskogo Street", by Orysia Maria Kulick, 2018. Accessed: April 5, 2018.

moving, concise rendition of their struggle, and it is aimed at the museum's target audiences, i.e. young students, scholars, and members of the general public.²⁴

The establishment of numerous collections abroad is correlated to the scale of emigration from Ukraine throughout the twentieth century. The most prominent collections of the Ukrainian diaspora are located in the major cities in Europe, Canada, and the United States where Ukrainians settled in multiple waves of emigration after World War I. Such collections are organized mainly as small museum-archives, university libraries, and publishing houses. A case in point is the publisher Smolenskyp, which was founded in Paris and then moved to the US. Smolenskyp created one of the largest archival collections of Ukrainian *samizdat* in the world, smuggled abroad by intrepid activists, literary figures, and émigrés who managed to cross the Iron Curtain in the 1970s. After Ukraine gained independence in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, Smolenskyp transferred its archives to Ukraine, and it continues to collect documents and publish findings on the dissident actions. The resources at Smolenskyp include informal records of about 1,000 titles, including *samizdat* journals, almanacs, photos, and letters, as well as articles, interviews, and texts of Radio Liberty programs (1968–2007).

Diaspora collections developed organically as an extension of the priorities of the local communities which rescued various memorabilia and documents relating to their displaced lives. The size of these collections varied at the outset, but many continue to grow. Ukrainian émigrés created cultural centers, universities, museums, and archives in several countries during the tumultuous and disruptive twentieth century. World War II immigrants, for instance, bought communal real estate that they turned into centers of community life where meetings and even church services were held. Various social groups, youth and women's societies gathered here, establishing small libraries which later became repositories for books and personal archives.

Those who fled the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 gathered in Prague, Munich, London, Paris, Vienna, and other European capitals. Although the Museum of the Ukrainian Independence Movement in Prague (1925–48) was mostly destroyed by the Soviets and some of its contents were distributed among archives in Russia, Ukraine, Slovakia, and other locations, the Ukrainian Free University in Munich, which was originally established by émigrés in Vienna in January 1921, continues to function. This institution aimed to create a collection that documented the struggles of Ukrainians against Soviet and imperial acculturation. After World War II, a wave of Ukrainian émigrés moved to North America and established a range of cultural institutions in Canada and the United States. The Ukrainian Museum-Archives in Cleveland and its counterparts offer additional examples of institutions with a broad

24 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Sixtiers Museum Collection](#)", by Orysia Maria Kulick, 2017. Accessed: April 5, 2018.

range of purposes that collect textiles, folk art, books, stamps, postcards, and other memorabilia documenting the life of a community. In Europe, London remained an important cultural center for the Ukrainian diaspora, and its significance grew with the establishment of the Shevchenko Library and Archive in 1946, which created important collections regarding Ukrainian culture at home and abroad. Financial support for the maintenance and preservation of these collections still comes primarily from generous donations from the community who ascribes value to the establishment of a historical legacy.

As the Ukrainian diaspora was largely anti-Soviet in orientation, especially those displaced by World War II, these archives reflect the many ways in which émigrés resisted communism worldwide. They continue to operate as community centers, but also regularly curate exhibitions about culture and cultural opposition. The Ukrainian Museums in New York and Chicago specialize in this, although the Ukrainian Museum Archives in Cleveland also has a rich collection. The UMA in Cleveland is visited by students learning about immigrant life in the city as well as scholars and researchers interested in the UMA's archive and library. The institution has secured several external grants to expand its operations in Cleveland, including a climate controlled archival building, and it has cooperated successfully with other institutions, including the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, which has funded several phases of digitization of the museum's materials from the DP camps in Germany.²⁵

The Ukrainian collections in the COURAGE project serve an essential purpose in highlighting Ukraine's multifaceted and multigenerational encounter with communism. They open a window onto a century of cultural opposition that not only challenges conventional typologies but also prevalent periodizations of opposition used in studies of Central and Eastern Europe. Such chronologies normally begin with the establishment of communist regimes in the late 1940s, whereas Ukraine's ambivalent and conflictual cultural encounter with communism was seeded by the revolution of 1917. Due to the length and often traumatic nature of Ukraine's engagement with the Soviet project, opposition in the country—political, military, and cultural—often revolved around the national question. Arguably, national themes and concerns were integrated into manifestations of cultural opposition to a much greater extent than in other parts of the Soviet universe. Therefore, the Ukrainian collections within COURAGE encourage scholars to address not only the competing visions of statehood that emerged out of the rubble of the Russian Empire, but also the subtle complexities faced by a polity that was both central to the building of Soviet communism and bore the full force of some of its most ruthless policies.

25 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Ukrainian Museum-Archives of Cleveland", by Orysia Maria Kulick, 2018. Accessed: April 5, 2018.

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Poland

The history of cultural opposition in Poland can be divided into specific periods which essentially overlap with the overall situation in the so-called “Eastern Bloc,” but at the same time, it was also shaped by local political and social contexts. However, it should be underlined that the dominant linear narrative about the oppositional milieu of workers and intelligentsia that crystalized at the time of the Lenin shipyard strike in 1980 does not cover all the trajectories and circles of cultural opposition in Poland. As Grzegorz Ekiert and Jan Kubik defined the main discourse on opposition under state socialism: “the preoccupation with elites, party systems, and the relationship between political and economic changes has resulted in considerable gap in democratization literature.”¹ A similar argument can be made about the gender balance among Polish opposition figures: the milieu was overwhelmingly male-dominated (Lech Wałęsa, Jacek Kuroń, Adam Michnik). In the field of art there was a degree of gender balance—in the domain of neo-avantgarde art, for example—but not so much in the punk movement or performance art.

COURAGE not only strives to describe the best known milieus of dissent, such as the democratic intelligentsia, labour unions, and Catholic groups, but also aims to grasp the more volatile environments of artists, punk rockers, and performance groups. However, even the countercultural milieus and organizations often used symbols, narrative tropes, and aesthetics from the Polish national imaginary, and they saw a distinction between Polish counterculture and the countercultures of Western and other Eastern-European societies.

From the outset, the core of cultural dissent in Poland consisted of writers, journalists, playwrights, poets, and other representatives of the “intelligentsia.” In post-war Poland, as was the case in other Central Eastern states, the principles of socialist realism functioned as official doctrine after being declared in 1949 at the meeting of the Association of Polish Artists in Nieborów. However, in the short period of the “Thaw,” which in Poland took place in October 1956, disillusionment with Stalinist policy could be articulated openly in newly-established magazines (i.e. *Po prostu* [Simply], in other newspapers (*Życie Warszawy* [Warsaw’s life] and *Express Ilustrowany* [The illustrated express]), and at party meetings. De-Stalinization in Poland did not

1 Ekiert and Kubik, *Collective Protest and Democratic Consolidation in Poland*, 9.

bring about cultural or social liberalization, and after several months, dissent milieus had to retreat to underground publications to promote alternative visions of the state and society.

The new leader of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR), Władysław Gomułka, dismantled Stalinism by making several concessions to the population, but without defying Poland's adherence to the Eastern Bloc. What was left from the Polish October was a compromise with the Catholic Church, whose role as the foundation for pluralism and freedom of thought led to the establishment of a vital Catholic dissident milieu. Before 1956, there were only three prominent oppositional groups: the *Klub Krzywego Koła* (Club of the Crooked Circle), *Po Prostu*, and *Pax-Fronda*. These groups existed independently of the party, but their existence was shaky. In 1956, *Tygodnik Powszechny* (The Catholic weekly) and *Znak* (The sign), the other two mainstream Catholic organizations and periodicals, were reactivated. Even when *Po prostu* was shut down in 1957 and Klub Krzywego Koła liquidated in 1962, Catholic milieus were able to assist opposition groups in naissance.²

The next stage in the history of Polish cultural opposition came with the events of March 1968. The events of the "Polish March" started as a protest against the banning of *Dziady* (Forefather's eve -Adam Mickiewicz's play from the era of Romanticism), as well as the call to reform socialism expressed in Jacek Kuroń's and Karol Modzelewski's (two researchers from the University of Warsaw) "Open Letter to the Party," and ended as an anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist witch-hunt in the communist party and in society as such, shamelessly resulting in the mass emigration of Polish Jews from the country. Disillusionment with communism started to grow not only among young people (so called "Commandos," put on trial in 1969), but also among former Marxist theoreticians (Zygmunt Bauman, Leszek Kołakowski) who withdrew from the Party and left Poland. "March 1968" was a crucial event for further developments in the strategies of the Polish opposition. First, Adam Michnik (one of the "Commandos") presented a vision of an alliance between the Left and the Catholic Church. Second, the discontent among members of the Polish intelligentsia reached a point at which the idea of, to use the Czechoslovak term, "socialism with a human face" became impossible to imagine.³ New perspectives on state and society started to appear, in the beginning circulated only among small intelligentsia groups in the big cities.

At the same time, "March 68" was also an important point of reference for counter-movements emerging in the 1970s. In contrast with May 1968 in the West, the Polish March of 1968 was perceived by hippies, punks, and other artists as a rather reactionary, conservative, and nationalist phenomenon. Even though they rejected overtly dominant modes of rebellion and accommodation in Polish society, performance and neo-avantgarde artists did not

2 Osa, *Solidarity and Contention Networks of Polish Opposition*.

3 Berend, *Central and Eastern Europe*.

draw inspiration from the Western culture of discontent. They tried rather to combine "Western" modes of art production with local meanings. The period of "détente" which began after the rise of Gomułka (who was ridiculed and weakened after March 1968 and the strikes in 1970) ended when Gomułka was replaced by Edward Gierek. Gierek's liberalization consisted mainly of a laxer approach to contacts with the "Western world" and resulted in the growth of consumption and proliferation of popular culture in Poland.

After 1967, there was a growing number of hippie groups in Poland. In the official media, they were presented as dangerous outcasts (because of their alleged use of drugs). They rebelled against conformism, but their activities rarely had an open political agenda and the groups themselves did not form stable organizational structures.⁴ Western styles of clothing and Western literary and musical inspirations were intertwined with Polish culture, which resulted in phenomena such as the hippie pilgrimage to Częstochowa (1971).

Subsequent events in the social history of Poland—the so-called "June events" from 1976 in Radom and Ursus—reinforced the discursive and practical division between "society" and "the state." Labor unrest in industrial hubs was for the first time supported by the intellectuals. They formed *Komitet Obrony Robotników* (the Workers' Defense Committee, KOR), the first proponent of a "civic" orientation. With KOR and its surrounding organizations, the notion of "civil society" was introduced to Polish rhetoric on democratic/political opposition. Soon after KOR's support for workers persecuted in Radom, new publications emerged: *Komunikat* (The statement, official statements by KOR members), *Biuletyn Informacyjny* (The information bulletin), *Robotnik* (The Worker - a workers' newsletter), *Głos* (The Voice), and *Krytyka* (The critique) (occasional brochures). KOR organized the first uncensored independent publishing house, *Niezależna Oficyna Wydawnicza NOWa* (The independent publishing), which published literature banned by the censorship office.⁵

In this period, cultural opposition, distinct from the engaged political, civil rights movement, was born. We could situate the naissance of the Polish alternative scene in 1978, when the International Artists' Meeting (IAM), a big international performance, took place. Here, the British band *The Raincoats* performed. This performance is regarded as the first punk concert in Poland. From then on, Polish punk groups emerged in big cities such as Warsaw, Gdansk, and Wrocław. The spread of the culture of dissent, neither nationalistic nor intellectually-based, was eased by the proliferation of magnetic tapes at the end of the 1970s. On the tapes, one could find not only recordings of punk concerts and performances, but also protest-songs from the circle of the democratic opposition. Punk became a mass phenomenon and went further than the milieu of the youth intelligentsia, with forays in the world of the visual arts only in the early 1980s.

4 Tracz, *Hippiesi, kudłacze, chwasty*.

5 Olszsek, *Revolucja powielaczy*.

Another milieu of cultural dissent, however far from simple political engagement, was the circle of Polish neo-avantgarde art, for example in the visual arts (Kwiekulik, which was the artistic duo of Zofia Kulik and Przemysław Kwiek, Zbigniew Libera, and Gruppa from Warsaw) and in the theatre (Jerzy Grzegorzewski and Tadeusz Kantor). Members of these circles tried to navigate between the official and semi-official student galleries and underground circles of dissemination. In the late 1970s and in 1980, new art forms emerged in Art Academies, student clubs, and private galleries: conceptual and performative arts which used new means of expression, but were also filled with politically engaged message. One of the interesting aspects of these compositions was their focus on the life of the artist. The artists were very conscious about their biographies, trajectories, and experiences, and they tried to document artistic life under the socialist system.

At the beginning of the 1980s, in different Polish cities a new wave of cultural opposition movements emerged. Anarchists created the *Ruch Społeczeństwa Alternatywnego* (Movement of Alternative Society) in 1983 in Gdansk. Artists associated with the *Pomarańczowa Alternatywa* (Orange Alternative) prepared happenings, street performances, street art, and graffiti in Wrocław, Łódź, Lublin, and Warsaw. From the outset, the Orange Alternative stood out amongst other groups, and its sign—dwarfs in different poses and situations—soon started to appear on the walls and leaflets. Movements such as the Orange Alternative served as a sphere of activities for those tired with the nationalist and pompous milieu of Solidarity Labor Union performances. In the meantime, rock music represented by groups such as Maanam, Perfect, Lady Pank, and TSA started to emerge as an important part of official radio broadcasts. In their shadow, a scene of alternative music blossomed: punk, new wave, reggae, and ska music by musicians and bands like *Brygada Kryzys*, *Klaus Mithoff*, *Dezserter*, *Izrael*, and *Siekiera*. Those groups functioned in the “third circuit”—outside official modes of communication and the “second circuit” (politically engaged pamphlets and philosophical *feuilletons*). The modalities of dissemination of the second and third circuit were similar: homemade magnetic tapes, printed materials, fanzines, and leaflets. One of most prominent events of Polish rock music was the Jarocin rock festival, the official name of which was *Ogólnopolski Przegląd Muzyki Młodej Generacji w Jarocinie* (All-Polish Review of Music of the Young Generation in Jarocin). The festival offers a good example of the entanglement of counterculture in the popular culture of late socialism. From one point of view, it was an occasion for thousands of fans to listen to live music that was rarely performed; at the same time, it was seen as a “safe outlet” for youngsters to express their rebellion and anger.

After the Lenin Shipyard Strike in 1980, which ended with the signing of the Gdansk Agreement, the hoped-for coalition between “workers” and the “intelligentsia” was finally established. Political and labor activism proliferated. Three underground publications circulated among the shipyard workers:

Robotnik (of KOR), *Robotnik Wybrzeża* (Coastal worker), and *Bratniak*. Moreover, homemade signs, pins, posters, banners and leaflets were widely distributed. They reinforced dissent against the socialist regime among different groups, especially during the Martial Law period, when short-lived liberation was violently suppressed.

August 1980 soon started to serve not only as the beginning of a national political awakening, but also a lieu de memoire and a reservoir of meanings used to construct the division between the "state" and "civil society." The narrative tropes which had been repeated throughout the 1980s and reproduced in the 1990s by post-"Solidarity" elites are still visible in the narratives and representations of present-day cultural institutions, archives, and museums. The anarchist, punk, and alternative movements enumerated above also exert an influence on the modes of modern discontent, as they challenge the black and white vision of "state" and "society."

Polish Collections of Cultural Opposition

As argued above, the history of Polish opposition during the socialist period is dominated by one type of narrative that emphasizes the role of the democratic movement, the Catholic Church, and the intelligentsia. The discussion about the heritage of dissent is rather focused on political engagement, with an emphasis on "Solidarity" activities, including public protests, underground publications and posters, and—due to close relations between the "Solidarity" movement and the Catholic Church—expressions of religious conviction. Thus, it comes as no surprise that the institutions founded to commemorate Polish anti-communist activity are organized around the political actors with the strongest symbolic capital: in extreme cases of historical simplification, the museums are telling the story of resistance through the figures of "Solidarity's" Lech Wałęsa, Andrzej Gwiazda, Anna Walentynowicz, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Adam Michnik, etc.

The strong political focus gives the impression that in terms of speaking about the heritage of dissent, there is little space left for oppositional activity of any other kind. However, this image is not quite accurate. First, there is of course a thin line between "the political" and "the cultural." For example, the activists of the democratic movement used to exchange works of foreign literature, organize illegal lectures, concerts, and art exhibitions, and engage in film and photographic projects. Moreover, cultural activity in Poland remained very rich and diverse, and it included music, theatre, film, the fine arts, and modern artistic forms, like performance and experimental music and photography.

Covering the heritage of Polish cultural opposition means dealing with a very miscellaneous substance. Contemporary collections of cultural dissent differ significantly from one another, not only in terms of their content (the

subjects of time periods covered) but also in terms of their organization, archiving conditions, financial resources, and opportunities for public exposure. Despite much variety, the collections of cultural opposition in Poland can be grouped based on some shared characteristics. They can be divided by the type of ownership (private or public) and the thematic scope (democratic movement, the fine arts, music, film, theatre, lifestyles and subcultures, religion, minorities, etc.).

Types of Ownership. Public and Private Collections

When it comes to the question of ownership, the collections fall into one of two categories: public and private. The distinction usually translates into having sufficient financial resources or not. Collections acquired by the state museums and galleries rarely experience funding problems, which brings the privileges of having exhibition space, opportunities for digitalization, conservation work, and networking. On the opposite end of the spectrum lie the private archives, which have no or little funding and sometimes minimal management by their owners, either because of a lack of available time or a lack of interest in sharing the collections with wider audiences. In the middle, one can find various successful practices: private owners who have been given some financial resources, some access to exhibition spaces, some opportunities for cooperation with state institutions, and networking opportunities with other private owners. This may well ultimately help keep the collections “alive” and preserve the memory of cultural opposition.

Public collections are owned (or operated) by institutions that are funded by the state or local governments. The heritage of cultural opposition can be found in institutions like museums, art galleries, archives, and theatres. One of the biggest public institutions to collect the documents and memorabilia on the modern history of Poland is the Archiwum Akt Nowych (Archive of Modern Files) under the General Direction of the Polish Archives. Archiwum Akt Nowych has bureaus and reading rooms all over Poland, and it makes accessible millions of official documents to the wider public, especially researchers and historians. However, the opposition is not the main subject of interest of Archiwum Akt Nowych, as the archive covers all of modern Polish history. An attentive reader can find a great deal of information about the grassroots movements in socialist Poland and the authorities’ reactions to any kind of opposition in it. Being a relatively big country, Poland represents all kinds of possible ways of dealing with collections in public organizations. From presenting their content in digitalized, modern museums (like the Modern Art Museum in Warsaw, the European Solidarity Centre in Gdansk, and the Silesian Museum in Katowice) to keeping them closed in the boxes of the maintenance room—while occasionally giving access to them for exhibitions or research (like the Archive of the Studio Theatre or the Archive of the National Commission of the “Solidarity” Labor Union). The minimal exposure of some

of the collections is not so much a funding problem as it is the effect of the minimal interest of the authorities—whether state, local or institutional—in presenting them. In consequence, no workforce has been assigned to deal with them and little or no time has been devoted to them. This clearly exemplifies a problem which arises in the case of holding collections in public institutions: whether the objects will be given proper attention depends on whether or not they harmonize with the interests of those in power at the given moment, which in the case of historical narratives often depends on the chosen politics of memory. This kind of use of historical objects in some cases causes reluctance among private owners to pass collections on to state establishments if the owners do not want to see their memorabilia be at the mercy of politicians.

As a vivid example of how the controversial use of the collections may serve the interests of a state institution, one can consider Instytut Pamięci Narodowej (The Institute of National Remembrance), which plays a very important role in preserving the heritage of Poland, but at the same time is a tool in the hands of political leaders and a dangerous instrument in shaping current political convictions.⁶ The Institute of National Remembrance—Commission for the Prosecution of Offences against the Polish Nation (IPN) was created by an act of parliament in 1998 and is a state body authorized to carry out research, educational, archival, investigative, and vetting activities. What distinguishes the Institute of National Remembrance from other Polish institutions dealing with the politics of memory is its possession of the documents of the former communist secret service, its political legitimacy, and its stable funding, which is not grant dependent. The Institute does not have a monopoly on the politics of memory in Poland, but it is a very influential and strategic actor. The main narrative promoted by the Institute of National Remembrance in the first decade of its functioning was rather radical. It was based on a conservative historical politics that aimed at preventing collective amnesia, promoting special values and ideas, and openly criticizing the socialist past as a simplified period of oppression and suffering, concentrating on the Stalinist period. The narrative changed after the appointment of Łukasz Kamiński as the new president of IPN in 2010. Kamiński's politics led to a situation when, in 2015, we could say that the Institute of National Remembrance was a strong, unique hybrid institution situated on the borderland of science, education, law, and politics. Unfortunately, political changes in Poland influenced greatly the shape of IPN. The most recent laws discussed in the Polish parliament indicate that the authorities would like to restore IPN's prosecutorial role and its influence on the current politics of memory.

However, there are plenty of public institutions which focus on preserving and popularizing cultural heritage without politicizing the collections.

⁶ Stola, "Poland's Institute of National Remembrance"; Klich-Kluczevska, "Goodbye Communism."

Interestingly, the institution which manages to do this very well is inseparably intertwined with political narrative. It is the European Solidarity Centre⁷ in Gdansk, the institution devoted to the heritage of the “Solidarity” movement and the democratic opposition. It is funded both by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, the local voivodship, and the city of Gdansk. It runs a modern museum, very popular with both Polish and international tourists, and presents a wide range of objects: memorabilia, personal documents, samizdat publications, art objects, graphics, photographs, and films, all connected to persecutions and the fight for democratic changes. The objects gathered in the European Solidarity Centre were acquired through collaboration with other museums and institutions, and many of them were donated by ordinary citizens of Gdańsk.

Instead of taking a stand in current political issues, the leaders of ESC manage to focus on sharing their knowledge about and vision of history with a wide public in an interesting way: via multimedia exhibitions, lectures, educational projects, film screening, etc. The European Solidarity Centre shows the everyday context of growing dissent movements and the mobilization of Polish society against the injustices of socialism, presenting the diversity of the opposition movements and their strategies.

Public institutions are often limited by the politics of history, but if they are run effectively, they enjoy certain privileges which are not available (or very hard to get) for private collectors. The problems that private stakeholders and non-governmental institutions experience are closely connected to the degree of professionalization in the management of the archives. Some owners are building their professional careers as collectors, and they manage to run their own institutions (organizations, foundations, associations), which are devoted to gathering, digitalizing, and sharing the heritage of cultural opposition. This is the case of Kwiekulik and Waldemar Fydrych. Others occasionally act in favor of displaying gathered objects or getting some funding, whereas the rest have no interest in sharing their collections with the world due to their conscious choice to keep the precious items to themselves or the fact that their activity as collectors is purely a hobby.

Waldemar Fydrych, a leader of the Orange Alternative⁸ (a movement which in the 1980s gathered crowds for performances set to mock the socialist authorities by ridiculing official slogans and symbols, which were sang by people dressed as dwarfs or garbed in some satiric graffiti), offers a revealing example of a very professional attitude towards managing a collection. Fydrych, who was suspicious of public institutions and believed in his own abilities, started the Foundation of the Orange Alternative and later the virtual

7 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “European Solidarity Centre”, by Barbara Tołłoczko-Suchańska, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

8 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Museum of the Orange Alternative”, by Xawery Stanczyk, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

Museum of the Orange Alternative, which managed to get some financial support for organization and digitalization of the collection. Fydrych's will to devote his time and effort to preserving and promoting Orange Alternative's heritage is definitely impressive, but the example he has set does not stand alone. In fact, there are plenty of stakeholders who fully dedicate themselves to maintaining their collections and the memory of cultural phenomena in socialist Poland. For some, managing the archives is like a professional career. Many of them operate on a smaller scale than Fydrych, sometimes getting no funding at all, but they put the same amount of effort into maintaining the collections. As examples of individuals who exemplify these practices, one could mention Piotr "Pietia" Wierzbicki, a promoter of the alternative (especially punk) scene in Warsaw in the 1980s and the operator of a vast collection of original punk-zines⁹, or Zofia Łuczko, a co-founder of Łódź Kaliska and Pitch-in Culture¹⁰ (Kultura Zrzuty, avantgarde, progressive art groups opposing both official culture and the culture produced by the democratic movement) and the initiator of the City of Culture Foundation, which gathers the heritage of the artistic ventures of Pitch-in Culture.

It seems to be true in most cases that the collections with the least exposure are those the stakeholders of which do not pursue a professional career in connection to their collecting activity. This is true of those who do not seek public attention, like Michał Guć, an owner of an impressive collection on "Solidarity's" underground postage stamps. Guć recognizes the importance and cultural worth of his collection, yet he realizes his numismatic passion in his private space and makes no effort to share it with a wider audience. Another symptomatic example is represented by Fr. Wiesław Niewęglowski, a retired priest who in the 1970s organized the first Tygodnie Kultury Chrześcijańskiej (Weeks of Christian Culture) and initiated the Duszpasterstwa Środowisk Twórczych (Artists' Priesthood). Thanks to Fr. Niewęglowski, a space for artistic expression and intellectual debate was created under the aegis of the Polish Catholic Church. He managed to gather a vast array of documentation on the movements' activity, which unfortunately has never been properly organized, digitalized, or presented publicly. It is kept without having been organized in any way in boxes in Fr. Niewęglowski's house. With no resources and no prospects for any staff to deal with the materials it contains, this collection may be easily forgotten. Unfortunately, it is not an isolated case.

9 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Piotr 'Pietia' Wierzbicki Collection", by Xawery Stanczyk, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

10 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Pitch-In Culture Archive", by Xawery Stanczyk and Patrycja Kruczkowska, 2016. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

The Contents of the Collections: Thematic Scope and Forms of Cultural Activities

It is not easy to group the collections by their content, as the scope of subjects is extremely wide and touches on various spheres of life under socialism. Moreover, the issues seem to intertwine, as one theme develops into another (e.g. democratic engagement into art production, music production into zines' publishing, etc.). For the purpose of this chapter, the thematic contents of the Polish collections of cultural opposition will be grouped into the following categories:

Democratic opposition (samizdat, persecutions, internment, visual identification)

The fine arts (painting, performance, graphics, experimental music)

Music, lifestyles, subcultures

Theatre, film, photography

Minorities (ethnic, sexual)

Religion (the Catholic Church)

The subject of the democratic opposition is a very important topic of Polish cultural heritage, and it remains a palpable part of public and scholarly debates.¹¹ The issue is explored by large and modern cultural institutions (like the European Solidarity Centre, KARTA Center¹², the History Meeting House—Dom Spotkań z Historią) and archives (the National Institute of Remembrance, the State Archives, the Archive of the National Commission of the "Solidarity" Labor Union), the collections of which very broadly deal with anti-communist, democratic movements and in most cases include objects connected to persecutions and underground activity. Smaller organizations tend to focus on certain forms of dissent, like the Museum of Free Speech, which is devoted to samizdat publications, or the "Free Europe" Association, which gathers the heritage of Polish broadcasts in this very important radio channel. Smaller foundations and private collectors tend to focus on individual histories. Assembled memorabilia are often closely connected to the personal experiences of the collectors, who themselves were opposition activists or "Solidarity" members.

The very important subject, to which, however, far less attention has been given in Poland than the persecutions themselves, is the visual identity of the democratic opposition, with the "Solidarity" movement as the central topic of artistic expression. Graphics, posters, graffiti (templates), pennants, flags, pins, and badges are found in every collection dealing with the heritage of democratic opposition. Some of them were created by professional artists and some by amateur sympathizers or the activists themselves. They were used to

11 Feliksiak, "Upadek komunizmu i geneza przemian w pamięci zbiorowej."

12 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[KARTA Center Foundation](#)", by Macej Melon, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

show support for the democratic changes and thus were created, reproduced, and circulated illegally. Their content is very diverse, as the collections include representations of democratic leaders and religious manifestations, rather simple in form and exposition, as well as sophisticated expressions of Polish symbols and artistic variations of "Solidarity's" logo. Very interesting examples are represented by the collections of underground postage stamps. Some of them, especially those created in internment, are small masterpieces which comment on the persecutions and show the fighting spirit through symbolic representations of walls, prison bars, and clenched fists. They can be found, for instance, in the private collections of Michał Guć and Stanisław Tołłoczko, but also in big exhibitions in the state Museums.

The second big theme in the collections is connected with the fine arts (painting, sculpture, performance, graphics, artistic photography, experimental music, and mail art). Many artists, unhappy with official art standards and the limitations they imposed, very eagerly turned to the problem of freedom and individualism in their works, following e.g. the idea of an "open form" invented by Oskar Hansen,¹³ a concept followed by the KwieKulik duo and Józef Robakowski, whose collections constitute a very important asset of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw. It must be underlined that many artists did not engage in direct dialogue with the regime, yet, since they stood in the opposition to dull, well-known motifs of socialist art, their compositions brought novelty and fresh energy, which is perfectly visible in the collection of the Exchange Gallery (the most important neo-avantgarde group, established by Robakowski in the 1970s in Łódź). Fine arts objects connected to the cultural opposition are displayed in museums and galleries all over Poland, including big state institutions (which contain the collections of best-known artists, like Zbigniew Libera, Tadeusz Rolke, and Jerzy Ludwiński) and local ones (e.g. El Gallery in Elbląg). Moreover, some are presented only occasionally, in small exhibitions and events, which is true in the case of many private organizations, like Pitch-in Culture and Łódź Kaliska.

An extremely important issue of Polish collections is linked to the youth subcultures and lifestyles, primarily connected to music: punk and rock. Polish punk is a well-represented topic of the collections based on the photographs, original zines, and cassettes. The aforementioned Piotr Wierzbicki is the owner of a vast archive of the "QQRYQ" punk fanzine, which he initiated himself in the mid-1980s. The collection of Anna Dąbrowska-Lyons includes not only music artefacts, but also a wonderful set of her original photographs, which vividly captures the punk environment. The rock collections are mostly connected to the Jarocin Festival, an event attended by members of alternative cultural groups from Poland and other socialist countries. In connection with youth lifestyles, one could also mention the collection of the Orange Alternative, the performances of which offered a new narrative of everyday life

13 Ronduda, *Sztuka polska lat 70. Awangarda*.

based on irony and humor and aimed to ridicule the authorities and expose the absurd living conditions in the last years of the Polish People's Republic.

The collections of visual art, namely film and photography, for the most part are part of large archives—the National Film Archive, the Audiovisual Institute,¹⁴ KARTA Center, the National Digital Archive, the European Solidarity Centre—where they are digitalized and preserved, but they are also willingly shared for festivals, publications, and research. Documentary films, original footage, and photo-journalistic materials cover a vast thematic scope. They portray official events and scenes of everyday life, as well as some strictly oppositional activities. Impressive collections of reportage photography have been gathered by the Association of the Documentalists “The Road”¹⁵ and the Archaeology of Photography Foundation. Some smaller stakeholders focus on certain subjects or geographical areas, for instance the Video Studio Gdansk, which was one of the first independent production houses, covering e.g. the first conventions of the “Solidarity” leaders. Theatrical activity is mostly documented by the theatres which did not cease to work after the systemic transformation, such as the Studio Theatre¹⁶ (with the archive of Jerzy Grzegorzewski's avantgarde plays), the National Theatre, and the experimental Centre for Theatre Practices Gardzienice. The legacy of the most prominent figures of alternative theatre (e.g. Tadeusz Kantor) is gathered by various cultural institutions, mostly in the form of play documentation and photographs.

Minorities and religion seem to be the subjects which have been given the least attention by the stakeholders, which is probably related to Poland's relatively high ethnic and religious homogeneity. Cultural opposition linked to religious movements is entirely covered by the activity of the Polish Catholic Church, expressed through the web of the Clubs of Catholic Intellectuals (Kluby Inteligencji Katolickiej) and the patriotic art practiced in the Artists' Priesthoods. There are very few ethnic minority collections, and they relate only to the nearest countries: Germany, Ukraine, and Belarus. Thanks to the queer activity of Ryszard Kisiel in the 1980s and the efforts of Karol Radziszewski to collect his photographic documentation, sexual minorities are present in the narrative about the culture of dissent.¹⁷ Another source of materials concerning Polish culture of resistance is the archives gathered by members of the Polish diaspora, especially in Great Britain (the post-World War II wave of emigration), the United States (the Hoover Institution), and France (the *Kultu-*

14 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “National Film Archive - Audiovisual Institute Collection”, by Hanna Gospodarczyk, 2018. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

15 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Association of Documentalists ‘The Road’”, by Hanna Gospodarczyk, 2016. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

16 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Artistic Archive of the Studio Theater and Jerzy Grzegorzewski Section”, by Hanna Gospodarczyk, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

17 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Queer Archives Institute”, by Hanna Gospodarczyk, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

ra milieu). These institutions have in their archives a vast array of materials on Solidarity activists and dissidents (writers, creators, journalists) who contacted members of the Polish diaspora in the Western world or lived abroad (Romaszewscy, Joanna Szczęsna, Czesław Miłosz, Gustaw Herling-Grudziński, and Stanisław Barańczak, for instance). The Kluge Centre of the Library of Congress and Columbia University are also in possession of collections of materials from the Polish independent press.

On the basis of the number of exhibitions, lectures, festivals, conferences, and artistic events based on the legacy of dissent, this legacy is an important part of the Polish public sphere, and it is even used as a touristic product. Collections on cultural opposition in socialist Poland create a diverse assemblage, well-represented both by public institutions and private stakeholders. The attitudes of the stakeholders towards state institutions vary. They include eagerness to cooperate, reluctance based on the misuse (or fear of misuse) of the collections, and complete lack of awareness of any potential to interest a public institution in a private archive. While the topic of democratic opposition, especially in connection with the “Solidarity” movement, seems to be the dominant focus, the thematic scope of issues is much more varied and calls for a more meticulous and multi-vocal analysis.

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German Democratic Republic (GDR)

The GDR was a dictatorship which was strongly shaped by Soviet influence and example and which understood itself as a “real” socialist state. The effects of Soviet dominance were immediate during the era of the Soviet Occupation Zone, but they persisted in a covert form until the end of the GDR in the Peaceful Revolution of 1989–90. The structure of the GDR was defined by the rule of the state party, the Socialist Unity Party (SED), the institutions of which were mirrored in a parallel state structure. Apart from the SED, four other parties and several mass organizations participated pro forma in political rule, though without achieving any real influence, a state that was characteristic for the supposed dictatorship of workers and peasants in the GDR. SED policy was also influenced by the existence of a divided (nation) state, i.e. the GDR had the economically more prosperous Federal Republic of Germany as a neighbor, and by forced militarization. Alongside the apparatus of the state party, the most important instrument of power was the State Security Service (the so-called Stasi), with its network of official and unofficial collaborators, in other words, spies. The Stasi methods varied from initial brutal repression to, eventually, “extensive surveillance” and the “infiltration” of groups of perceived opponents. These included groups which represented a form of cultural opposition and counterculture in their many forms.¹

Under the SED dictatorship, oppositional behavior included fundamental political resistance, the reform-oriented opposition, dissidence, and refusal to participate in conventional social life.² Form of cultural opposition and counterculture ranged between opposition and dissidence. In addition to the State Security Service, the mechanism of political repression spanned a broad spectrum of societal fields, from the judiciary to the “People’s Police,” which was committed to safeguarding the dictatorship.

1 As an example of the extremely abundant literature on the topic of the State Security Service, see Gieseke, *Mielke-Konzern*. For an overview of the relevant literature, see Eckert, *SED-Diktatur und Erinnerungsarbeit*. Also available in the form of an online edition: Archiv Bürgerbewegung, *27 Jahre Erinnerungsarbeit im vereinten Deutschland*.

2 Eckert, *Revolution in Potsdam*.

Cultural Policy of the GDR and its Discontents³

The cultural policy of the SED dictatorship served to execute a “socialist cultural revolution” that was intended to encompass all spheres of society with the goal of reshaping it on the path to the establishment of a communist social order.⁴ The SED intended to plan and cultivate a “socialist culture” in close interaction with the development of society as a whole. This comprehensive task was aligned with the stages of the development of a “real” socialist system, and it was always shaped by the strategic goals of the state party. The latter claimed “socialist national culture” for itself, maintaining that it was the legitimate heir to all the democratic and humanist traditions in German history. Despite brief phases of limited artistic freedom, the SED’s cultural policy was always also shaped by repression and censorship.

The first stage in SED cultural policy in the period between 1946 and 1951 was characterized by superficial “denazification” in an attempt to connect with the humanist cultural traditions of the German middle-class, to win over the bourgeois intelligentsia through various benefits, and integrate elements of Soviet and Russian culture. The actual “socialist cultural revolution” commenced in 1951 with the centralization of all art production. At the same time, a campaign was launched against “formalism” in art and literature and for “socialist realism.” The Ministry of Culture, which was founded in January 1954, served to enforce this policy, which also affected prominent artists. However, they were able to defend themselves against it, at least to some extent.

In the mid-1950s, repression intensified against critical anti-Stalinist intellectuals like Ernst Bloch, Walter Janka, Gustav Just, and Wolfgang Harich, who were not spared politically motivated imprisonment. At the two Bitterfeld Conferences of 1959 and 1964, the SED stressed the necessity of raising the “cultural level” of the workers, encouraging artistic creation by the people, and furthering connections to the “scientific-technical revolution.” This flattened artistic aspiration and led to disputes about the critical function of art. At the same time, this implied the creation of a very broad field of cultural institutions in order to bring culture “to the masses.” Mass organizations, such as the *Kulturbund* (Cultural Association), professional organizations of artists, designated state institutions, and the trade unions not only organized a wide variety of cultural events but also provided a space for cultural activities by both professionals and “ordinary” people.

The professional organizations of artists (Writers’ Association of the GDR, est. 1950; Association of Fine Artists of the GDR, est. 1950; Association of Composers and Musicologists of the GDR, est. 1951) were also important

3 The supchapters on culture and dissent were written by Rainer Eckert.

4 Kersten and Kleinschmid, “Kulturpolitik,” 767–75. Also see the last summary to be published in the GDR: Böhme *Kulturpolitik der SED*, 561–65.

instruments of control. They provided official ideological guidance, and they organized access to material support and the publication, staging, or display of an artist's work. Life as an independent artist was officially possible only if one was member of such an organization, and artists who violated ideological norms could be excluded. Another factor which motivated artists to comply with state policies was the importance of commissions for art works by state institutions, mass organizations, and companies.

In the wake of the construction of the Berlin Wall (1961), many artists in the GDR hoped that the political situation inside the country would relax and they would enjoy more cultural freedom. Many believed that now there would be space to criticize "real socialism."⁵ In addition, the "beat wave" hit the GDR. However, the SED described the fans of beat subculture as "bums" and resorted to political repression, going so far as to cut off long hair forcibly in operations conducted by the People's Police. On October 31, 1965, almost 600 young people in the center of Leipzig protested against the banning of popular beat bands. The police used truncheons, dogs, and water cannons to disperse the crowds. The protestors who were arrested were subsequently condemned to several weeks of "labor education" in opencast lignite mines.

The "beat rebellion" was one of the reasons why the SED put an end to all critical cultural tendencies at its eleventh plenary session in December 1965. The state party banned books and films and restricted work opportunities for non-conformist artists. But things did not end there, and the SED persisted on its zigzag course, with party leader Erich Honecker proclaiming at the Eight Party Congress in 1971 that art and literature should not be subject to "taboos" as long as artists did not lose sight of the goal of gradual transition to communism. Based on Marxism-Leninism, the focus would remain on the advancement of national culture and "socialist workers' culture."

Most likely influenced by the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in 1975 and its final accords and by the emergence of "Eurocommunism," the SED tried to continue its "liberal course" and take charge of the entire German "cultural legacy." This ended abruptly with the expulsion of the writer Reiner Kunze from the writers' association and the expatriation of singer and songwriter Wolf Biermann on November 16, 1976 following an authorized concert in Cologne.⁶ Biermann was the son of a Jewish father murdered in Auschwitz; he had pledged his allegiance to communism and the GDR, while sharply criticizing the state. The SED leadership was surprised by the response to his expatriation: a wave of solidarity led first and foremost by young East Germans, and also by prominent artists and writers. The subsequent campaign initiated by the SED to build support for the deci-

5 Lindner, *Steine des Anstoßes*, 156.

6 Literature on this topic alone is extremely comprehensive. See Biermann's recent: *Warte nicht auf bessere Zeiten*. Only a few closely selected publications on this and further topics in relation to counterculture can be mentioned within the framework of this article.

sion appeared helpless, and measures such as the political arrest of young poets and musicians like Jürgen Fuchs, Christian Kunert, and Gerulf Pannach, who were later deported to West Germany, brought the protests to an end that was superficial at most. The SED had lost its political legitimacy, at least in cultural policy, and an increasing number of leading artists left the country or were granted long-term residence visas for the West. Many were to contribute significantly to cultural life in the Federal Republic.⁷

After 1976, the GDR's "official cultural landscape" threatened to dry up, although the eighth Art Exhibition in Dresden in 1977–78 at least allowed a degree of criticism in the fine arts. Nevertheless, it was impossible to reassert the "cultural standing" of the SED leadership. "Counterculture" was coming into its prime, especially the activities of young "alternative artists."

The disputes over "high culture" moved from the "formalism debate" over the course of action against intellectual critics in the SED to the defamation of individual artists. Writers such as Stefan Heym, Erich Loest, Heiner Müller, Rolf Schneider, Klaus Schlesinger, Christa Wolf, and Gerhard Zwerenz came under pressure. Prominent artists like Bernhard Heisig, Werner Tübke, and Wolfgang Mattheuer, whose sculpture "The Stride of a Century" was the most prized exhibit in the GDR's final Art Exhibition in 1987–88, were also drawn into these conflicts. Despite the attacks, these representatives of "high culture" remained privileged and, unlike most of their compatriots, were able to travel to the West and publish or show their work there and were protected by their international reputation. This was a successful and favoured group with its own lifestyle, the bohemian entourage of the "Berliner Ensemble," which spent long nights in East Berlin's "Pressecafé" and the "Möve" artists' club.⁸ It had nothing to do with the subcultural fringe groups and their anti-Stalinist attitude, who were fighting for freedom and to overcome their alienation from conventional GDR society.

Counterculture

The overwhelmingly young representatives of the alternative counterculture, on the other hand, faced a very different situation. As in most authoritarian societies, they had to struggle with the fact that any departure from state-approved art and any independent initiatives in the cultural sphere were perceived by the dictatorship as a threat to the system and were tackled with the use of means of control and repression. The SED and the secret police were unable to grasp the alternative concepts of the counterculture as anything other than "hostile and negative" and controlled by the West, thus assigning them to a spectrum ranging from resistance to opposition. Especially in some of the

⁷ On German-German cultural relations see the contributions in Lindner, *Mauersprünge*.

⁸ Voigt, *Stierblutjahre*.

GDR's big cities, the counterculture consisted of free galleries, writers, *samizdat* publications, independent artists, "subcultural" musicians, and "hitchhikers." The independent art scene developed noticeably from the beginning of the 1970s, while a new generation embarked on other paths in the mid-1980s.

At least 43 private and independent galleries were involved in exploring self-determination, for instance through happenings, concerts, parties, and video performances, without assuming any explicitly (political) oppositional character.⁹ These galleries included, for example, Eigen + Art, which was run by Gerd Harry [Judy] Lybke und Thorsten Schilling in Leipzig from 1983,¹⁰ in East Berlin Jürgen Schweinebraden's EP Galerie,¹¹ the Ateliergalerie run by Hans Scheib, and from 1978 the Literarisches Salon, which was run by Ekkehard [Ekke] Maaß.¹² The same applied to the interactions of music, gestural painting, dance, and pantomime. Subcultural writers also met at various other locations, like in private apartments such as that of Gerd and Ulrike Poppe. This was a loose, solidarity-based community that refused to recognize social norms and cultivated an independent, non-conformist lifestyle. Here, the "scene" based in the East Berlin district of Prenzlauer Berg played a special role.¹³ Among the influential subcultural writers were Thomas Brasch, Adolf Endler, Elke Erb, Siegmund Faust, Wolfgang Hilbig, Gert Neumann, Lutz Rathenow, Andreas Reimann, Rüdiger Rosenthal, and Ulrich Schacht. The State Security Service classified these goings-on as early forms of "underground political activity" that demanded "extensive" monitoring and "infiltration."

Following Biermann's expatriation, self-published magazines, booklets, and art books represented an important means of creating a public space, albeit limited, for a new critical generation.¹⁴ Thus, the independent publishing scene, *samizdat*, initiated by East European dissidents can be divided into more strongly politically and ecologically oriented publications on the one hand and literary and art magazines on the other. In addition, there was an immense array of flyers and one-time publications, as well as texts copied by hand or typewriter. These publications were exchanged at platforms ranging from events in premises connected to the Protestant parishes, where in fact many writings emerged as church literature, to the meetings of various peace, environmental protection, and human rights groups. Here, structures developed that would help overcome the system in the long term. After all, there were independent publishers in the GDR, such as Radix-Verlag (Radix publishing house) and the Umwelt-Bibliothek (Environment library), around 40 *samizdat* art magazines, some 40 political journals like "*Grenzfall*" (Border case), "*radix-Blätter*" (radix pages), "*KONTEXT*" (Context), "*Umweltblätter*"

9 Fiedler, *Kunst im Korridor*.

10 Eckert, *Opposition, Widerstand und Revolution*, 181–86.

11 Schweinebraden, *Die Vergangenheit der Gegenwart*.

12 Böthig, *sprachzeiten: Der literarische Salon von Ekke Maaß*.

13 Endler, *Tarzan am Prenzlauer Berg*.

14 Kowalczyk, *Freiheit und Öffentlichkeit*, 7.

(Environment pages), and “*Arche Nova*” (Ark nova), as well as underground music labels and theatre performances, above all in Dresden, Halle (Saale), Leipzig, and East Berlin. Flyers and covert texts produced in the Federal Republic or West Berlin and smuggled into the GDR had already played a role in the 1950s. In addition, literary “contraband” was imported, especially from Poland and Hungary.¹⁵

Alongside the sphere of the “official” fine arts, numerous painters in the GDR belonged to the “counterculture.”¹⁶ Many of them were persecuted by the dictatorship and frequently left the GDR for the West or had their “ransom” paid by the Federal Republic, for instance Dresden-based A. R. Penk (whose real name was Ralf Winkler), Georg Baselitz, Jürgen Böttcher-Strawalde, Gerhard Richter, and the Leipzig painter Sieghard Pohl. Moreover, East Berlin artist Cornelia Schleime, who attracted attention with artistic forms of expression such as performance, small-format film, and punk music also belonged to this group. In contrast, Gabriele Stötzer held her ground in her home region of Thuringia, despite having to endure intense repression.

An independent jazz scene had already formed in the 1950s.¹⁷ Later, the “Klaus Renft Combo,” which was founded in 1958 and intermittently known as “The Butlers,” was of special significance to the rock scene.¹⁸ Like other independent music groups, the formation was constantly subject to repression, and it was finally dissolved in 1975. In order to enable these kinds of measures against the rock ‘n’ roll scene, the SED justice system introduced the offence of “rowdyism” already in the mid-1950s.

The struggle against “rowdyism” was also directed against street gangs of working-class youth whose subcultural existence in the big urban centres was connected to particular locations, such as the “Clara Zetkin” park in Leipzig or the “Staudenhof” housing block in Potsdam. In a certain sense, beat fans assumed the legacy of these groups, a legacy which was then continued, beginning in the end of the 1970s, by punks and heavy metal followers, as well as skinheads.¹⁹ The members of these groups met mostly in parks, cinemas, around waste containers, at swimming pools or in certain streets. Their bands rehearsed in cellars, garages and private apartments or in rooms belonging to Protestant youth groups in particular. In the 1980s, cross-connections developed between punks, the “long-haired” disciples of beat, squatters, the alternative art scene, and politically oriented groups. Young people began to use public action to urge for political reform. Alongside punk, other music forms and events played an important role, such as the “blues masses” organ-

15 Lokatis and Sonntag, *Heimliche Leser in der DDR*.

16 See the most recent summary: Lindner, *Nähe und Distanz*.

17 On jazz, see: Bratfisch, *Freie Töne*.

18 See Stiftung Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, *Jugend und Musik in Deutschland*.

19 Galenza, Havemeister. *Wir wollen immer artig sein ...* This collection of essays also includes a chapter on skinheads in the GDR.

ized in Protestant churches in East Berlin between 1979 and 1986 by theologians like Rainer Eppelmann for as many as 9,000 participants.²⁰ As of 1983, punk bands were also allowed to perform at these venues. The young people who streamed to the “blues masses” from across the entire GDR were retaliating against ossified life in the dictatorship by creating their own ways of life. They thus achieved considerable political magnetism. For them, the “event” was more important than structure.

In the GDR’s later phase, breakdance began part of the alternative music culture. Western underground pop was the model for all these groups. LPs and cassettes were smuggled into the GDR, also from Poland and Hungary, and they were reproduced. The huge enthusiasm for rock culminated in the celebrated concerts by Udo Lindenberg in 1983 and the concerts held between 1987 and 1988 in East Berlin by world-famous stars such as Bob Dylan und Bruce Springsteen, whose open-air performance drew in 170,000 fans. In contrast, the party youth organisation’s *Free German Youth* (Freie Deutsche Jugend, FDJ) own folk music movement, Singebewegung (Singing movement) and the folk music group Oktoberklub, which had the support of the FDJ, very clearly met with less interest, although there were grey zones between such officially authorized youth music and countercultural currents. As late as 1985, the SED imposed a work ban on the oppositional songwriter Stephan Krawczyk. He was arrested in 1988 and was deported against his will to West Germany. East German rock musicians and singer-songwriters subsequently played a role in the Peaceful Revolution when around 50 of them demanded the democratization of the GDR in the “rocker resolution” of September 18, 1989.

Two of the main authors of the so-called “rocker resolution,” the singers Hans-Eckardt Wenzel and Steffen Mensching, also exemplify ironic strategies in the clash with official culture: the “clowns” Wenzel and Mensching presented a surreal image of the GDR on stage; in similar fashion, mail art artists produced ironic postcards, while the “hitchhikers” longed for spaces of autonomy.²¹ The “hitchhikers,” who also called themselves “Kunden” (customers) or “Bluesers,” had long hair and wore jeans, parkas, sandals, or light climbing shoes. On weekends, they travelled the whole of the GDR, always looking out for concerts by their favourite bands. Popular events included festivals, the Wasungen carnival, the annual onion market in Weimar, and the tree blossom festival in Werder on the Havel. They held wild orgies in inns in remote villages and hamlets; they binged and made love. Any nonsense was permitted if it annoyed the “squares” and promoted excess as a form of self-assertion. Summers were marked by a compulsory hitch-hiking tour to the Bulgarian Black Sea coast. They made especially daring use of their travel visas for Romania to hitchhike as far as the Caucasus or as far as the Soviet-Chinese border.

²⁰ Moldt, *Zwischen Hass und Hoffnung*, 14.

²¹ Rauhut and Kochan, *Bye bye, Lübben City*.

The counterculture scene emerged during the 1980s in the old town centres of cities like Dresden, Jena, Leipzig, and East Berlin, often in connection with informal living arrangements and squatting.²² Apart from the groups mentioned above, the “scene” included “alternative anti-fascists,” radical football fans, goths and skinheads. The “Antifa” groups formed after a skin-head group attacked a concert in East Berlin’s Zion Church on October 17, 1987. Based mainly in Dresden and Potsdam, the “Antifa” warned of the increasing influence of neo-Nazis, yet were eventually brutally persecuted by the state, after it turned out that the official structures would not tolerate alternative antifascist activism. Opposition cafés and inns like the Café Heider in Potsdam, the Fengler and the Café Burger in East Berlin, and the Angereck in Erfurt played a special role for the counterculture.

In the 1980s, there was frequent contact between alternative culture and independent environmental, peace, ecological, women’s rights, and human rights groups, mostly in the setting of Protestant churches. Although many critical young artists left the GDR for the West, others intensified their efforts to generate a “second culture.” They committed themselves to politics and sought limited public attention, for example in the East Berlin youth club, “Die Box” (The box). At the same time, the secret police increased its (by all measures successful) efforts to “infiltrate” the alternative scene. To this end, it deployed a whole army of spies. Though permeated by informers, alternative culture remained active at its core, and though its response to the State Security Service was marked by a degree of fear, it also answered with disdain. The fact that spies Sascha Anderson and Rainer Schedlinski were shaping the “scene” in East Berlin’s Prenzlauer Berg did nothing to change this. Another crucial factor for East German counterculture was that support for subcultural activities from the Federal Republic and West Berlin remained relatively marginal. Contacts with the West, and especially with the media, were highly controversial among the groups themselves, though they did provide some protection, especially in East Berlin.

The Assessment of GDR History and Sources for its Study after 1989 in the Collections of the COURAGE Project

Over the course of its existence, the German communist dictatorship was shaped not only by force and oppression, but also by resistance, opposition, and dissidence.²³ After the Peaceful Revolution and reunification, interest in artistic creation as part of this resistance, opposition, and dissidence initially focused on “high culture,” i.e. the “wars of the Diadochi” between intellectuals within the state party, and only then on counterculture. Some of the activ-

²² Ahrends, *Damals im Café Heider*.

²³ For a general overview, see Veen, *Lexikon Opposition und Widerstand*.

ists at the forefront of alternative culture in the SED dictatorship today no longer play any role or have settled on the periphery of society. Others have been able to assert themselves on the art scene in reunified Germany. Sporadically, bitter discussions have broken out about the significance of “official culture” and of the “counterculture” in reunified Germany, and likewise about the position of East German artists. The debate about the evaluation of art in the GDR escalated in connection with major exhibitions of fine arts in the GDR held in Berlin, Dresden, Potsdam, and Weimar. It is to be hoped that East German art will be recognized in the future as an essential part of German national culture and Western culture.

Furthermore, apart from initiatives aiming at reconciliation and memorialization of victims of the communist regime, the preservation of the built environment of communism and its monuments received a great deal of attention. Research on different post-socialist countries, including the former GDR, has highlighted the contentious nature of debates about the material heritage of state socialism, with wildly diverging approaches, ranging from calls to abandon it to attempts to preserve or re-appropriate it.²⁴ Yet there is no consensus on the question of how to deal with the legacy of the socialist regimes, nor, indeed, on the question of what precisely falls into the ambiguous category of “socialist heritage.”²⁵ One important question concerns the preservation of the legacy of subversion, dissent, and opposition, which very often is less visible than, for example, the architectural heritage of state socialism.

The collections described in the COURAGE Registry aim to capture a diverse and complex perspective on the legacy of various forms of cultural opposition and dissidence in the GDR and thus to cover a gap when addressing the material legacy from socialism. The collections described are a selection which provides a general understanding of this complex phenomenon, and not an exhaustive or comprehensive undertaking. Neither are they representative in a quantitative way. Cultural opposition in the GDR was broad and diverse, and a wide array of efforts have been made to collect and document it.²⁶ Thus, only a selection of this rich and varied heritage could be described by COURAGE. For this reason, our approach was typological: we wanted to present examples which highlight the great variety of actors and institutions involved in the process of collecting and preserving the legacy of cultural opposition. At the same time, we wanted to describe collections that document different forms, media, and genres of opposition. This also allowed us to address different social, political, and cultural contexts from which such

24 See Leach, *Architecture and Revolution*; Klaic, *Communist cultural production*; Jason, *Preservation and National Belonging*; Tomaszewski, *Zwischen Ideologie, Politik und Kunst*; Gamboni, *Die Zerstörung kommunistischer Denkmäler*.

25 Demeter, “Regime Change and Cultural Heritage Protection.”

26 Rainer Eckert’s bibliography of sources on opposition, resistance, and political oppression in the GDR includes more than 8,000 titles. See: <https://www.archiv-buergerbewegung.de/datenbank-bibliografie>. Accessed September 27, 2018.

collections emerged and in which they existed and acquired shifting meanings and functions over time. The collections highlight the dynamics of cultural life under the communist regime, its shifting borders, and the often blurred lines between official and non-official engagement, refusal, co-option, and opposition. Ultimately, the selection of the collections for the GDR was motivated by the main objectives of the COURAGE project, namely, to document the diversity and wealth of cultural opposition in state socialist countries and to present their significance following the events of 1989.

These collections are part of a very broad field of activities devoted to the history of the GDR. Arguably, the history of no other socialist country has received as much attention by researchers and policy-makers as the GDR. This fact, of course, is conditioned by the specific fate of the GDR, which disappeared as an independent country in October 1990. Reunification spurred intensive, contentious, and ongoing debates on how the past of the GDR should be integrated into German history. One popular narrative focuses on the peaceful revolution of 1989, calling it the only successful democratic revolution of Germany. Within this narrative, opposition to the rule of the SED became an important aspect of the history of eventual self-liberation. On the other hand, this made the history of opposition liable to politicization. Against attempts to simplify the history of the GDR, specialized institutions and research centres such as the Centre for Contemporary History Research in Potsdam (*Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung*, ZZF) have produced ground-breaking research on its social and cultural history, including questions of dissent, opposition, and counterculture.²⁷

The importance of the GDR as a topic of public debate is also illustrated by the existence of specialized institutions dedicated to the study of its history and the preservation of the documents concerning this history, including documents pertaining to former opposition. The Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Records, established in late 1990, became a model for the safekeeping and securing of the archival holdings of the former secret police for other post-socialist countries.²⁸ It guarantees citizens access to their state security (Stasi) files, supports research, organizes broad public education programs, and oversees the operations of a museum. Another federal institution, the Federal Foundation for the Reappraisal of the SED Dictatorship (*Bundestiftung zur Aufarbeitung der SED-Diktatur*), is assigned by law to support research and education about the GDR. It has its own archive, which also documents opposition (some of the collections are described by COURAGE), has published widely on the GDR, produces materials for educational purposes, organizes exhibitions and various events, and supports projects undertaken by partners. As a consequence of Germany's federal structure, the individual

27 For more on the ZZF, see its website: <http://zzf-potsdam.de/en>. Accessed September 27, 2018.

28 See the website of the commissioner: https://www.bstu.bund.de/EN/PublicEducation/_node.html. Accessed September 27, 2018.

states also support similar activities and institutions. State governments provide financial support for a wide array of non-governmental initiatives. At the same time, there are many private organizations dealing with the history of the GDR and documenting its past. Some of these activities are not supported by the state or even do not seek its support because they are critical of state-driven efforts to reevaluate the history of the GDR.

Given the complex and varied institutional landscape involved in dealing with the GDR past, COURAGE's aim was to cover collections organized by different types of institutions, from federal to local, as well as private initiatives. For this reason, collections differ significantly in terms of size, financing, availability of space and (trained) personnel, and capacity for dissemination and networking.

The collections described in the GDR part of the COURAGE Registry highlight the significance of the material legacy held by various state and private institutions involved in preservation, conservation, research, communication, and political education as part of efforts to foster a more nuanced understanding of the recent past. These initiatives either emerged in the context of the transformation processes after 1989 or were undertaken before the regime fell, while their significance has changed following the end of the SED dictatorship. The non-conformist artist Reinhardt Zabka, who provoked the GDR's cultural bureaucrats, for example, established the Lügenmuseum (Museum of Lies) in the small town of Radebeul.²⁹ It documents the persistence of a non-conformist stance which remains provocative under the democratic system in place today and also faces bureaucratic difficulties.

Consequently, COURAGE documents a broad array of initiatives, ranging from initiatives with the full support of the federal parliament and government to private initiatives, which do not enjoy the recognition of the state. In the following, the collections, their institutional owners, and their main characteristics will be briefly presented.³⁰

An important source of documenting cultural opposition has been provided by the major archives that originate from the (former) state institutions which controlled and organized the cultural scene and kept its actors under observation. This includes, for example, secret police materials which today are held in the archive of the Federal Commissioner for the Records of the State Secret Service of the former GDR.³¹ These materials contain important documents regarding the history of political repression in the GDR and also a vast array of files documenting resistance and opposition to the dictatorship, including dissent and counterculture, from the point of view of the main in-

29 See its website at <http://www.luegenmuseum.de/wb/>. Accessed September 27, 2018.

30 See the array of data in Mählert, *Vademekum DDR-Forschung*.

31 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Stasi records", by Uwe Sonnenberg, 2018. Accessed: September 27, 2018.

stitution of surveillance and repression.³² Key sources for the study of cultural policy in the GDR and of the SED are found among the materials held in the Federal Archive's GDR department in Berlin. It contains the records of the dictatorship's central state authorities. In connection with culture in the GDR, the collections of the Academy of Arts in Berlin are of particular importance. They contain the legacies of numerous artists and cultural activists, among them major figures of cultural opposition in the GDR. It also contains a unique collection of documents from theatres in the GDR.³³ These documents offer examples of the practices of censorship and the strategies adopted by writers and directors who sought to stage dramas that were, in some way, critical of the regime. For example, they crafted productions of classic works for the theatre in ways that offered implicit (or not so implicit) critical associations with life in the GDR. This collection highlights the persistence of critical stances and the longing for artistic autonomy in the theatre, which was a hugely popular art form in the GDR.

The archives, which emerged from the civic movements have also played an important role in the preservation of documents related to counterculture and dissent. In contrast to the archives originating from former state institutions, these archives focus in particular on documents related to individuals and non-official groups. Hence, they present an important counter-narrative to "official" documents, because they were not directly produced by the peculiar epistemology of a repressive state. One of the most extensive civic-movement collections is the Archive of the GDR Opposition, established and operated by the Robert Havemann Association.³⁴ Furthermore, collections which promote an understanding of the alternative scenes in the GDR have been included in the Archive of the GDR Opposition, for instance the records on the Independent Women's Federation and GrauZone (Grey zone), the documentation center of the non-state women's movement in the GDR. The Robert Havemann Association made a contribution to the Campus of Democracy,³⁵ a project initiated by Roland Jahn, the Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Records. The Campus is developed on the grounds of the headquarters of the former Ministry of State Security.

Further collections described by COURAGE demonstrate the ongoing processes involved in the institutionalization of projects originating from the former opposition in the GDR with the aim of preserving its memory and

32 Information on the archival holdings of this federal institution is provided here: https://www.bstu.bund.de/EN/Archives/InventoryInformation/_node.html. Accessed September 27, 2018.

33 Archive Performing Arts Collection: COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Theatre in the 'Wende' Collection", by Laura Demeter, 2018. Accessed: September 27, 2018. (forthcoming)

34 Archive of the Opposition to the GDR: COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Archive of the GDR-Opposition at the Robert Havemann Society", by Uwe Sonnenberg, 2018. Accessed: September 27, 2018.

35 https://www.bstu.bund.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/jahn_campus.pdf?__blob=publicationFile Accessed: September 27, 2018.

legacy. In the 1990s, these kinds of initiatives created regional clusters, encouraged in part by the rebirth of states with their own governments on the territory of the former GDR after re-unification. Since education and research are for the most part matters of state government, the administrative structure of Germany provided an important framework for the organization of the archives (both state-run and private). Some of the most important regional non-state collections were organized by the Archive of the Civic Movement Leipzig, which focuses on the history of the human rights, peace, and environmental movements in Leipzig.³⁶ This Archive, like other initiatives originating from civic movements, traces its foundation back to the last years of SED rule. The Jena-based Matthias Domaschk Archive for Contemporary History plays a similar role in the preservation of the memory of dissent and opposition in Thüringen.³⁷ The Environmental Library of Großhennersdorf has developed into an important center of knowledge about oppositional movements in Western Saxony.³⁸ Other collections with a regional or local focus, such as the Archive of the Peace and Human Rights Initiative in Leipzig, the Martin Luther King Centre of Nonviolence and Civil Courage Germany – Archive of the Civil Rights Movement of South West Saxony in Werdau and the “ARGUS” environmental group in Potsdam will hopefully be described in the COURAGE Registry in the future.

On the federal level, the institution with the strongest focus on documenting specifically the legacy of opposition in the GDR is the Federal Foundation for the Study of the SED Dictatorship in Berlin.³⁹ Its holdings are constantly growing, for example through the addition of new collections, such as the Archive for Suppressed Literature in the GDR. In addition to this collection, the artistic collection of Roger Loewig and the ongoing project of acquiring the digital photographic collection of Harald Hauswald are described in the COURAGE Registry. In contrast to many of the non-governmental initiatives, this federal institution promotes and is actively financially supporting professional archival preservation with broad educational and dissemination purposes. It also supports, on a project basis, other initiatives or institutions which deal the GDR from a public-history point of view.

In general, the diversity of institutions dealing, in one way or another, with the history of the GDR and its legacy after 1989 is overwhelming. In addition to the abovementioned institutions, which deal exclusively or mainly with GDR history, there are also relevant collections at a variety of other museums, librar-

36 “Civic Movement Archive”: COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Document Collection of the Civic Movement Archive in Leipzig”, by Uwe Sonnenberg, 2018. Accessed: September 27, 2018.

37 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Thuringian Archive for Contemporary History ‘Matthias Domaschk’”, by Uwe Sonnenberg, 2018. Accessed: September 27, 2018.

38 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Archive Citizens Movement of Environmental Library Grosshennersdorf”, by Uwe Sonnenberg, 2018. Accessed: September 27, 2018. (forthcoming)

39 See the registry entry at: COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Federal Foundation for the Reappraisal of the SED Dictatorship”, by Uwe Sonnenberg, 2017. Accessed: September 27, 2018.

ies, and academic institutions. A good example is the collection on Erich Loest, maintained by the Cultural and Environmental Foundation of the Leipzig Area (Kultur- und Umweltstiftung Leipziger Land), and the legacy library of one of the GDR's foremost writers, Heiner Müller, hosted by the Institute for German Literature at the Humboldt University in Berlin.⁴⁰ The aforementioned Academy of Fine Arts in Berlin also belongs in this category; it preserves, for example, documents from the GDR's independent literature and art scene, such as the archive of Jan Faktor and Gino Hahneman, an artist belonging to the LGBT community. Also, museums, such as the German Historical Museum in Berlin, contain artefacts pertaining to cultural resistance in Eastern Germany. In the COURAGE Registry, such collections are often described as ad-hoc collections, because they are not organized as separate collections at these institutions. Only through the act of description were documents in these institutions relating to important events and personalities of cultural opposition brought into a systematic relationship with one another. An example of this is the collection of photographs capturing daily life in the GDR by the photographer Jürgen Nagel, which is part of the photography collection of the German Historical Museum in Berlin.

Thematically, on the one hand, the collections highlight oppositional activities by well-known dissidents and critically minded writers, such as the activities documented by the Archives of Suppressed Literature collection. These collections reveal the persistence of efforts to generate alternative categories of public life, as well as the persistence of state efforts to suppress them. They also make clear that, as is the case in many other countries, the lines between official or tacit acceptance by the authorities and suppression were often blurred. One person could have very different experiences with the state. Many intellectuals skillfully negotiated the official constraints and managed to produce public displays of their critiques of the regime (the theatre documentation of the Academy of Arts is an excellent example of this). The importance of grey zones is also evident in materials on youth cultures. This theme comes up in several collections, it and shows how important the younger generation was both to the state and as a basis for counterculture. Breakdance is a case in point, and it is described as a phenomenon of counterculture in COURAGE: it was not illegal, and break-dancers were not persecuted, but at the same time, it transgressed the official borders of "culture" and, thus, created alternative worlds of meaning. Environmental issues are another example of a field of activism in which the boundaries between official and non-official, accepted and oppositional behavior were very blurred. It comes up in several collections.

The preserved material legacy of the cultural opposition is extremely varied. It encompasses publications, unpublished documents, paintings and photography, video and audio documentation, installations, prints, posters,

40 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Erich Loest Archive", Jacqueline Nießer, 2018. Accessed: September 27, 2018. (forthcoming); COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Heiner Müller Archive / Transitroom", by Uwe Sonnenberg, 2017. Accessed: September 27, 2018.

samizdat, personal items, and personal diaries. This variety of materials also indicates the complexity and diversity of forms of subversion, alternative artistic forms of creation, and expressions and rituals of opposition. These materials widen our understanding of cultural opposition and of how opposition can be articulated and manifested. They also show how media, ideas, and genres moved between different countries, thus illustrating the transnational and international nature of cultural opposition. The film archive Ex.Oriente.Lux contains many examples of transnational transposition of media and techniques of articulating oppositional attitudes and stances.⁴¹

One of the aims of the COURAGE Registry is to draw attention to actors and phenomenon that to some extent have been eclipsed by iconic personalities and events. It wants to shed equal light on the many grey-zone areas and on lesser known but still important figures. This aim is exemplified by the collection of the painter Roger Loewig, an artist who relocated to West Berlin in 1972 and who continued to be outside of the mainstream in West Germany and only slowly received more recognition after 1989.⁴² The collections described by COURAGE, understood as a selection of a wider and diverse phenomenon to be further explored, powerfully demonstrate the richness of cultural life in the GDR, which went far beyond the predominance of the paradigm of Socialist Realism.

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PART III

THEMES

JÉRÔME BAZIN – SÁNDOR HORNYIK
– TIHOMIR MILOVAC – XAWERY STAŃCZYK

Narratives and Places of Cultural Opposition in the Visual Arts

Introduction:

Acquisition Policies and the Politics of Neo-Avantgarde Art

Framing the Yugoslav, Polish, and German case studies on the complex relationship between official cultural policies and the forces of cultural opposition, I attempt to outline the aesthetical and political conditions of collecting and interpreting modernist and neo-Avantgarde visual art in the former Eastern Bloc.¹ From a global perspective, it is tempting to declare that communist parties came to power and Sovietized the cultural institutions and discourses with a Stalinist program in the “liberated” (but also occupied) region of the Eastern Bloc after World War II. According to the Zhdanov doctrine, the “democratic,” socialist countries led by the Soviet Union opposed the “anti-democratic” and “imperialist” forces of the West in the field of culture. All art deviating from the Soviet principles of socialist realism were accused of undermining the communist power and the “peaceful” building of socialism. Accordingly, abstract, expressionist, and surrealist art were harshly criticized and persecuted as the accoutrements of capitalist, *l’art pour l’art*, bourgeois aesthetic politics, so these tendencies formed the basis of the (visual) cultural opposition that resisted the officially supported socialist realism. The rhetoric and politics of the communist Cultural Revolution, however, changed after Stalin’s death, when it became more or less de-Stalinized and modernized.

In the field of the visual arts, aesthetic and stylistic modernization took place in almost every country of the Eastern Bloc, though the intensity and various notions of modernity were differed slightly. In Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Romania, aesthetic modernization was based on the recuperation of Cubism and Constructivism, while in the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, and the GDR abstract art was harshly criticized until the 1980s due to its strong aesthetic ties to Western art and ideology. In the Soviet Union and the GDR, modernization meant the elaboration of a “contemporary style” based

1 I used the notion of neo-Avantgarde parallel with Maja Fowkes and Piotr Piotrowski, who adapted the Western criticism (Hal Foster, Benjamin H. Buchloh) of Peter Bürger’s distinction between aesthetic (autonomous) Modernism and socially engaged Avantgarde. See Piotrowski, *In the Shadow of Yalta*, and Fowkes, *The Green Bloc*.

on the reinterpretation and re-evaluation of Expressionism and critical Realism. In the second half of the 1950s, theoreticians and cultural politicians aimed to create a new, revolutionary, international socialist realism synthesizing the different styles of Mexican Muralism, Italian neo-Realism, German *Neue Sachlichkeit*, and Russian Expressionism. Before Stalin's death and during the Thaw, only one country had a different cultural climate on the communist side of Europe. Due to the Tito-Stalin split, Yugoslav cultural politics supported the leftist Avantgarde as soon as the early 1950s (EXAT 51), and thus, in this context, Avantgarde art constituted a particular "non-aligned" socialist art.²

In the 1960s, a sort of autonomous Modernism became the officially accepted and supported socialist art in Yugoslavia (as early as the 1950s), Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Romania (only in the second half of the 1960s). Accordingly, in these countries the Ministry of Culture and the state museums could acquire Modernist works of art which formerly (in the late 1940s and the early 1950s) were considered forms of cultural opposition. Despite the "normalizing" cultural tendencies of the Brezhnev era, Modernist art remained supported even in Czechoslovakia and Hungary in the 1970s, and this changed the meaning of cultural opposition. In the second half of the 1960s, new neo-Avantgarde artistic tendencies (Fluxus, Happening, and Conceptual art) emerged in Eastern Europe. These tendencies involved social and political engagement, which led to a critique of Modernism's aesthetic autonomy. Due to its activism and political orientation, the neo-Avantgarde posed a threat to the authoritarian regimes, so the forces of normalization turned against it. In the early 1970s, private exhibitions and galleries were officially sanctioned and banned in Czechoslovakia, and the cultural administration in Hungary closed exhibitions. In 1970, one of the pioneers of Slovak conceptual art, Rudolf Sikora, could still organize a neo-Avantgarde group exhibition in his own studio, but he did not get permission for a second one a year later. Because of the strict state control exerted by the state over art, a so-called second public sphere formed around neo-Avantgarde art's leading figures, who themselves became its "institutions."

The Hungarian Fluxus-oriented artist, György Galántai organized several neo-Avantgarde exhibitions in his (rented) studio (Chapel Studio of Balatonboglár) in a small town far from Budapest and strict cultural surveillance between 1971 and 1973. At the same time, neo-Avantgarde artists in Czechoslovakia and in Poland also preferred the less controlled countryside for their artistic work. In the spirit of Fluxus and conceptual art, these artists carefully documented their artistic activity. The exhibition documentations of Galántai

2 The political notion of "non-aligned" is used here in a metaphorical sense. See Videkanić, "Non-Aligned Modernism."

became the basis of his Artpool Art Archive (established in 1979)³, which contains a lot of artwork (conceptual, mail art, and Fluxus pieces) by other artists as well. In a similar fashion, the Hungarian art historian László Beke's Archive⁴ is also based on his international network and his curatorial work. In 1971, he organized the first Hungarian conceptual art exhibition, and later he became the curator of the significant Hungarian alternative art center, the Young Artists' Studio (Fiatal Művészek Klubja) in Budapest. Beke was also contacted by the Polish organizers of NET, the conceptual artist Jarosław Kozłowski, and the art critic Andrzej Kostołowski, who sent their NET manifesto to more than 300 neo-Avantgarde artists and art critics in the West and in the East encouraging them to get in touch and undertake joint artistic ventures. In 1972, Kozłowski opened the Galeria Akumulatory 2 (Batteries 2 Gallery), which was connected to the University of Poznań as a semi-official exhibition place and which provided space for NET-based joint ventures.

The Thaw culture generally facilitated the deepening of East-West cultural relations, but Fluxus and Action art were opposed by the orthodox communist cultural policy and the "reformist" representatives of Socialist Modernism as well. In Hungary, Fluxus events were banned, and the secret service observed the artists and the participants. Despite the hostile official climate, Fluxus and Mail Art became a strong link between Ostkunst and Westkunst. The American "pope" of Fluxus, Lithuanian born George Maciunas, encouraged the Eastern European development of his artistic ideas and appointed Milan Knížák to serve as director of Fluxus East in 1966, in the year of the first Fluxfest in Prague, the first Fluxus concert in Vilnius (organized by Vytautas Landsbergis), and the first Happening in Hungary (*The Lunch – in memoriam Batu Khan*, conducted by Gábor Altorjay and Tamás Szentjóby). Alongside Fluxus and Avantgarde music, experimental film-making was also a significant terrain for neo-Avantgarde art practice in Poland (one might think of the Film Form Workshop or Warsztat Formy Filmowej) and Hungary (the Balázs Béla Stúdió)⁵ in the 1970s. In 1978, one of the founders of Warsztat Formy Filmowej, the film-maker and visual artist Józef Robakowski, also founded a neo-Avantgarde art gallery. His Galeria Wymiany (Exchange Gallery)⁶ in his own apartment focused on multimedia and intermedia experiments and drew on the artistic exchange of ideas and artworks, which eventually led to the emergence of one of the largest art archives in the region. Robakowski's activity also demonstrates

3 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Artpool Art Collection](#)", by Balázs Beöthy and Júlia Klaniczay, 2018. Accessed: October 07, 2018, doi: 10.24389/5123

4 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Archive of László Beke](#)", by Balázs Beöthy, 2018. Accessed: October 07, 2018.

5 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Béla Balázs Studio Research Archive](#)", by Balázs Beöthy, 2017. Accessed: October 07, 2018, doi: 10.24389/2099

6 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Exchange Gallery](#)", by Xawery Stanczyk, 2017. Accessed: October 07, 2018.

that the neo-Avantgarde of the 1970s did not really find its place even in the more liberal (more liberal than the Czechoslovak or the Hungarian) Polish art scene. Moreover, the leading figures of the Polish neo-Avantgarde (for instance Zofia Kulik, Przemysław Kwiek, and Paweł Freisler in Warsaw, Jerzy Ludwiński, Natalia LL, and Andrzej Lachowicz in Wrocław, and Robakowski in Łódź) defined their artistic positions in opposition to the “soft” Avantgarde and the autonomous Modernism of official art and institutions.

In Warsaw, Freisler criticized the *l’art pour l’art* program of the famous Galeria Foksal,⁷ while Kulik and Kwiek produced non-official art in their own apartment on the subject of their family life as a criticism of socialism as it existed and Realism. Their artist duo KwieKulik also documented meticulously their activity and actions, and this praxis became the foundation of the KwieKulik Archive⁸ (now in the Warsaw Museum of Modern Art, Museum Sztuki Nowoczesnej). Similarly, Hungarian, Czech, and Slovak artists were also making art (actions and exhibitions) in private or semi-official places (university clubs, academic research institutes, communist youth clubs). In the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Romania, and the GDR, it was practically impossible to pursue neo-Avantgarde art publicly, though a few private galleries existed in the GDR, but the artworks in these galleries consisted for the most part of Modernist art. Jürgen Schweinebraden alone established a specifically neo-Avantgarde EP (Einzig Private) Galerie in Berlin in his flat in 1974, but the Stasi constantly kept him under observation and sabotaged his work until he chose to immigrate to the FRG in 1980. Another intriguing undertaking was the Galerie Kühl in Dresden, which was led by Johannes Kühl, who exhibited and sold Modernist (mainly Expressionist) paintings and legitimated his activity through his collaboration with the Stasi. In the GDR or in the similarly strictly controlled Romania (where censorship and persecution by the secret police were matters of course), the neo-Avantgarde art as cultural opposition only existed in the private sphere in the 1970 and 1980s, and the materials of this form of cultural opposition were archived by networking artists like Robert Rehfeldt, Birger Jesch, and Joachim Stange, or Geta Brătescu and Ion Grigorescu, who focused on their own artistic activities.

In the culturally far more liberal Yugoslavia, even official art institutions such as the Student Cultural Centre (Studentski Kulturni Centar) in Belgrade provided space for neo-Avantgarde initiatives. Its Croatian version, the Galerija Studentskog Centar, even enjoyed the support of Božo Bek, the director of the Zagreb City Gallery of Contemporary Art (today’s Muzej Suvremene Umjetnosti, MSU), who was a significant socialist cadre with an excellent re-

7 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Foksal Gallery”, by Piotr Szenajch, 2018. Accessed: October 07, 2018. (forthcoming)

8 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “KwieKulik Archive”, by Piotr Szenajch, 2018. Accessed: October 07, 2018. (forthcoming)

lationship to the party. In Zagreb, Goran Trbuljak and Braco Dimitrijević, who were representatives of the New Art Practice (Nova Umjetnička Praksa), even managed to extend their praxis to an everyday public space: they held exhibitions in the lobby of a building in the city centre (Galerija Haustor). The conceptual and socially engaged art of New Art Practice, however, did not really fit into the socialist cultural policy, which tended to prefer initiatives like the Modernist (neo-constructivism, op and kinetic art) exhibition series *Nove Tendencije* (New Tendencies) in the MSU, which were thoroughly documented by a professional photographer, Tošo Dabac. In 1980, the Tošo Dabac Studio⁹ opened as a private gallery where Petar Dabac organized exhibitions. In Ljubljana, the IRWIN group as the art section of the Neue Slowenische Kunst movement, already reflected on the history of Avantgarde and neo-Avantgarde art in the 1980s. In 2001, IRWIN inaugurated the first comparative Eastern European online art archive (East Art Map). At the same time, Zdenka Badovinac, the director of the museum of modern art in Ljubljana (Moderna Galerija), founded the ArtEast2000+ Collection focusing on the contemporary and neo-Avantgarde art of the Eastern European region. In 2004, the Erste Stiftung established another important project, the online Kontakt Collection for the systematic archiving of Central, Eastern, and South Eastern European neo-Avantgarde art.

These Central and Eastern European public art archives and collections prompted significant Western European and North American museums to change their acquisitions policies. In 2009, MoMA founded its C-MAP (Contemporary and Modern Art Perspectives) project, representing a new global perspective which includes a separate Central and Eastern European research group. In 2010, the *Promises of the Past* exhibition indicated a new Eastern European horizon in the collecting activity of Centre Pompidou as well. In 2012, the Tate Modern created its new Russian and Eastern European Acquisition Committee (REEAC) with influential collectors as its members who had also changed the focus of their private art collections in the second half of the 2000s to give more space to artists who represented neo-Avantgarde cultural opposition. One of the largest Eastern European “art archives,” the Zagreb-based Marinko Sudac Collection, also widened its circle of interest to cover the whole region from the Baltic States to the Balkans. Among the state financed museums of the region, the Slovak National Gallery (Slovenská Národná Galéria) in Bratislava and the Ludwig Museum Budapest also began to enrich their basically Modernist collections with neo-Avantgarde artworks. The newly (in 2005) established Muzeum Sztuki Nowoczesnej in Warsaw based its identity in particular on the purchase of neo-Avantgarde artists’ archives and the documentation of cultural opposition. Beginning in the second half of the first decade of the new millennium, the Museum of Modern Art in Łódź

9 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “EXAT 51 and New Tendencies at the Tošo Dabac Archive”, by Lidija Bencetić, 2017. Accessed: October 07, 2018.

(Muzeum Sztuki) and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Wrocław (Muzeum Współczesne Wrocław, MWW) also put considerable emphasis on archiving the local neo-Avantgarde. Tranzit.org, which is one of the most outstanding examples of regional cooperative endeavors in the field of art (it has initiatives in Austria, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, and the Czech Republic) and is funded by the Erste Stiftung, is also pursuing research on neo-Avantgarde art and counterculture. The Hungarian tranzit.hu even launched an online database focusing on experimental and alternative exhibitions (*Parallel Chronologies: An Archive of East European Exhibitions*) in 2009.

Nevertheless, the mapping of cultural opposition is not the product of the 2000s neo-Avantgarde art-market boom. It started in the 1970s, and it stemmed from the neo-Avantgarde artists' practice, which was engaged in self-historicization and networking. Later, these processes became an important factor in the re-canonization and re-evaluation of the art of Eastern Europe, which at first appeared in national exhibitions in the countries of the former Eastern Bloc after the regime changes of 1989. The "new democracies" usually tried to prove that they had a cultural past (including Surrealism, Informel, Tachisme, post-painterly abstraction, Pop Art etc.) compatible with the West. Nevertheless, the new Avantgarde canon of the 1990s was formed parallel with the strengthened Western interest in Eastern European art. This interest, however, had a particular power relation which could be described by the notion of the "Western gaze." This "Western gaze" refers to the implied primacy of Western perspectives (phraseology and canon), which is always seeking and finding exotic versions of its own aesthetic values and artistic trends on the peripheries. The scholarly criticism of this "Western gaze," parallel with the Central and Eastern European reception of post-colonial theory, led to the issue of the deconstruction of the cold war Ostkunst—Westkunst dichotomy. The most important field of this deconstruction or revision was the large international exhibitions dealing with the art of the region in a comparative fashion. One of the first significant regional exhibitions, *Aspekte/Positionen* (MUMOK, Wien), was curated by Lóránd Hegyi, a Hungarian art historian who attempted to cast the former Eastern Bloc as a region which represented the specific modernist and neo-Avantgarde art of Austria, Hungary, Poland, the former Yugoslavia, and the former Czechoslovakia. At the same time, the Berlin-based Serbian art historian Bojana Pejić (with David Elliott, the director of Moderna Museet) organized another insightful comparative exhibition, the *After the Wall* in Stockholm. Pejić and another author of the exhibition catalogue, Piotr Piotrowski, who described the region as a "grey zone" between the East and the West, argued that the former East should liberate itself from the colonizing power of the Western gaze. A similar critique motivated the founder of the *Former West* research project (2008–16), Maria Hlavajova, director of BAK (basis voor actuele kunst) in Utrecht, who extended Igor Zabel's revisionist cultural perspective to imagine a post-totalitarian Europe in the age of the post-communist condition.

Similar intentions motivated Piotr Piotrowski to elaborate the program of Horizontal Art History, which sought to deconstruct the power/knowledge structure of the geopolitical centrum-periphery to accomplish a more sophisticated interpretation of Central and Eastern European art. Opposing the traditional, universal, vertical history of art, Piotrowski's theory focuses on the particular local histories of culture and the phenomena of adaptation and cultural translation aiming to falsify the older Modernist paradigm which describes the art of the Eastern Bloc as a mere replica or pastiche of the globalized Western canon. This new revisionist paradigm includes other theoretical perspectives as well to redefine the countercultural praxis of the neo-Avantgarde; Klara Kemp-Welch adapts György Konrád's notion of anti-politics to interpret neo-Avantgarde art as reticent cultural dissidence, and Claire Bishop uses the perspective of contemporary participatory art to reinterpret the oppositional stance of the neo-Avantgarde as a social praxis with both anti-communist and anti-capitalist intentions. As either a social praxis or a form of passive resistance, the neo-Avantgarde created its underground art with the intention of founding an alternative non-official canon based on networking and archive building which began to prosper in the 1980s parallel with the strengthening of political opposition in the region.

Contemporary Art between Institutionalism and Opposition: the Collections of the Museum of Contemporary Art Zagreb

Culture as a Mirror of International Politics

The collection of post-war neo-Avantgarde art and conceptual and post-conceptual art of the 1970s and 1980s on the territory of the former Yugoslavia¹⁰ should be seen from the perspective of the specific political position that Yugoslavia had in relation to other Eastern European countries under Communist regimes and in relation to the West, not to mention from the perspective of the role of culture and art that was often utopian enough to allow the disruption of the original communist dogmas according to which the state policy sought to structure public life. Differences in state politics in other European communist countries and Yugoslavia were visible in social conditions and state politics from 1948. After the split with Stalin, the Yugoslav party leadership took another autonomous step, namely the introduction of "workers' self-management," an unknown form of production process management in the communist world. Beginning in the mid-1950s, the Yugoslav leadership opted for political and military neutrality, which was primarily reflected in its

10 The focus of the text, however, is on the situation in Croatia and Slovenia as former Yugoslav republics, although examples from Serbia will also be mentioned.

active participation in the Non-Aligned Movement. Josip Broz Tito, the president of Yugoslavia, highlighted the special position and role of Yugoslavia as a buffer zone in the Cold War between two differentiated, opposed political positions, the Communists led by the Soviet Union and the US-led liberal democracies.

This “oppositional” attitude could also be called “resistance” against the great forces, and it can also be recognized in the sphere of public life in general, where culture had a special place. There was a turn away from Socialist Realism, of which only traces remained by the early 1950s. This offered new opportunities, and cultural institutions turned to Western patterns. It is interesting that in these years the authorities established public institutions and organized cultural events that were generally in cultural opposition, seeking new models of action. The City Gallery of Contemporary Art (today’s Muzej Suvremene Umjetnosti, MSU) was established in Zagreb in 1954. From the outset, its mission was to establish a program policy based on the criteria and experiences of the pre-war historical Avantgarde, on opposition to ideologized culture and art (including post-war Socialist Realism), and on intensive internationalization and the opening up of space for the neo-Avantgarde experiment, which was a direct path to the idea of changing social realities. The Western experience and the specific geopolitical position of Yugoslavia were both used in this endeavor.

Abstract and Subversive Art in the Collections of MSU

An important role in the breakthrough of abstract art in Yugoslavia and its positioning on the international art scene was played by members of the Exat 51 group,¹¹ whose artistic work linked post-war Yugoslavia with the Western world. By presenting the extraordinary architecture and design of the Yugoslav pavilions at trade fairs in Europe and the United States and introducing geometric abstraction as a legitimate neo-Avantgarde visual vocabulary, whether in design, painting, or architecture, Exat 51 influenced a number of important events related to the exhibition and purchasing policy of Zagreb’s City Gallery of Contemporary Art and other existing museums and galleries, as well as those that would later be established. At the time, they changed their exhibition and collecting policy and shifted the focus from traditional Modernism to historical Avantgarde and neo-Avantgarde. Based on these premises, other museum institutions of contemporary art and international art events, such as the *Nove Tendencije*¹² (New Tendencies) in Zagreb (since

11 Here we emphasize the visual artists Ivan Picelj, Aleksandar Srnec, Vlado Kristl, and the architect Vjenceslav Richter. Other members of the group were architects Božidar Rašica, Bernardo Bernardi, Zvonimir Radić, Zdravko Bregovac, and Vladimir Zarahović.

12 *New Tendencies*, the international movement of new forms of art communication, which brought together artists of Op-Art, neo-Constructivism, Kinetics, Lumino Kinetics, and pro-

1961) and the *International Biennial of Graphic Arts* in Ljubljana (1955), were founded in the 1950s and 1960s.

In Belgrade and Skopje, museums of contemporary art were established in the 1960s, which in a certain way followed the established trend. In the early 1950s, the Gallery of Fine Arts (later the Modern Gallery, today the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art) in Rijeka changed its exhibition and collecting policy with a new focus on neo-Avantgarde, although the strong influence of the tradition of Modernism had been dominant for many years. However, in 1954, the exhibition *Salon '54* was held in Rijeka, at which the paintings of Ivan Picelj and Aleksandar Srnec, the artists of the Exat 51 neo-Avantgarde group, were exhibited for the first time. The aforementioned institutions, especially today's Museum of Contemporary Art, followed current events on the art scene. They organized exhibitions to collect contemporary art, which is how the Museum got post-war neo-Avantgarde and conceptual art works of the 1970s, and works by European artists were also collected in the same period.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the works of Ivan Picelj, Aleksandar Srnec, Vjenceslav Richter, and Vlado Kristl became part of the Museum collection. Kristl became a dissident artist, his experimental film *General* was banned by the censorship commission because of allusions to President Tito, which is why Kristl decided to stay permanently abroad. In these years, works by Julije Knifer, Josip Vaništa, Ivan Kožarić and Marijan Jevšovar, members of the Gorgona group, became part of the collection. The Gorgona protoconceptual group was established in Zagreb by Josip Vaništa and several artists and curators close to European and American phenomena, such as the groups Zero and Fluxus 1959. Over the course of the next few years, the groups' work was closely related to the activities of the City Gallery of Contemporary Art. The members of the group were Josip Vaništa, Julija Knifer, Ivan Kožarić, Đuro Seder, Marijan Jevšovar, Miljenko Horvat, and critics and curators Matko Matković, Dimitrije Bašičević Mangelos, and Radoslav Putar. The members of Gorgona expressed their disagreements with the social realities of the time by avoiding them and retreating into the intimate space of a small community, thus opposing the trend of social collectivism. Because of this, their works are pervaded by spirituality and absurdity, quite the opposite of the rational geometric abstraction that was nurtured by Exat 51 members.

In the 1970s, the Museum purchased works by members of the Nova Umjetnička Praksa (New Art Practice) who were young artists who emerged in the period between the late 1960s and the mid-1970s in the larger cities of former Yugoslavia (Zagreb, Split, Ljubljana, Belgrade, Novi Sad, and Subotica). They shared an interest in media experimentation, primarily in recent television and video media, photography, but also in action and performance.

to-Cybernetics on five occasions, held at the Zagreb Gallery of Contemporary Art from 1961 to 1978.

They were interested in general civilizational issues concerning human rights and new topics, such as feminism and ecology. The phenomenon of media reality and the language of art were questioned. Nowadays, the Museum has a large and significant collection of these works of art and documentation purchased when the works themselves had only recently been made, and this makes the collection distinctive. The works of the Croatian protagonists Mladen Stilinović, Sanja Iveković, Gorki Žuvela, Vlado Martek, Dalibor Martinis, Josip Stošić, and others and Serbian artists Raša Todosijević and the members of the KOD Group, Bogdanka Poznanović, and others and of the Slovenian OHO group appeared in the collection in the 1970s and 1980s. A little later, works by members of the IRWIN group were also made part of the collection. The collection also received works by artists from Eastern Bloc countries, such as Dalibor Chatrný, Petr Štembera, Jerzy Treliński, Milan Knížák, and others, who then established contacts with our curators and artists.

Until the second half of the 1980s, regardless of the fact that artists were bluntly critical of social realities, the political system, and cultural policies and although they warned against restrictions on social liberties, for instance limitations on public and personal freedoms and the general lack of democracy, cultural institutions could still establish a public presence and they could also purchase the works of subversive artists. The public did not doubt the justifiability of these kinds of critical voices and it supported them, thus allowing art criticism to be institutionalized, so a space for artistic work and public reactions to it emerged. The art of the 1970s and 1980s in Yugoslavia emerged as a rejection of the major currents of canonized modernism, and artists adopted a radically critical attitude towards society and its undemocratic political arrangement, lifestyle, and dominant values in the visual arts, the so-called “fine art.”¹³ As Marijan Susovski argues, the purpose of this non-conformism was to develop art as “*an integral part of the criticism of the social praxis, in other words, a revolutionary mechanism for the introduction of qualitative changes to the social praxis.*”¹⁴

We are talking, of course, about limited conditions and boundaries that art and artists never crossed or crossed only very rarely. However, spaces of artistic freedom also suffered constraints in the West, especially in the 1970s and 1980s, but mainly due to economic pressures and generational and ideological disagreements. Artistic reactions were largely tolerated, but a radical and socially dangerous response emerged in the form of political terrorism, which seriously destabilized the public space in the West. States responded by suppressing various forms of resistance and opposition, thereby affecting the broader area of civil society and spaces of creative freedom. In the political West, radical art practices of the time recognized problems and pointed to

13 One thinks of Abstract Expressionism, Lyrical Abstraction, Surrealism and Figuration, and some forms of geometric art.

14 Susovski, *The New Art Practice in Yugoslavia 1966–1978*, 3.

specific social anomalies. The radical art practices in the West developed a discursive language that resembled the language of the Yugoslav conceptual and postconceptual art scene in the 1970s, the so-called Nova Umjetnička Praksa. The point of overlap is the understanding of art as a form of institutional and social criticism of political or cultural practices and thus as a promoter of change. At the time, the MSU collected works by Western artists such as Hans Haacke, Joseph Beuys, Denis Adams, Alain Fleischer, Antoni Muntadas, Ugo La Pietra, Julião Sarmento, and others who had been critical, thematizing the system's unfairness toward the individual. The Croatian artist Marijan Molnar joined this artistic trend, and in 1981 he appeared on the cover of the newspaper *Studentski list* dressed as a terrorist. This subversive performance is documented in the Museum's ad hoc collection *Za demokratizaciju umjetnosti* (For the Democratization of Art).¹⁵

The similarities between these two systems find expression in public action and communication: the space of action is free until the political system feels threatened. For example, the arrest of the artist Tomislav Gotovac while he was performing the subversive *Zagreb, I Love You!* (when he walked completely naked in the centre of Zagreb in 1981)¹⁶ and the fine he received for this shows that the system did not distinguish between art and political ideology. Nevertheless, Gotovac was sentenced primarily for moral reasons, i.e. because he endangered public order and peace, not for "denying the system," which was the usual formulation for the activities of the regime's opponents.

Private Collections that Testify to the Culture of Disagreement

The anarchist movements of these years offered spaces for informal activities for those who were not visible but also worked on changing political opinions. In Yugoslavia in the 1970s, the members of these kinds of groups were members of the younger student population gathered around faculties of social sciences, artistic formal groups (Group of six artists¹⁷ in Zagreb), and the informal ones established by individuals like Vladimir Dodig Trokut or Zoran Senta, who were close to artist groups and became collectors. Trokut formed an extraordinary collection called *Antimuzej* (Antimuseum)¹⁸ based on a non-selective approach to the collection of ethnographic materials, art sub-

15 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "For the Democratization of Art Collection at the Museum of Contemporary Art Zagreb", by Lidija Bencetić, 2017. Accessed: October 07, 2018.

16 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Homage to Josip Broz Tito Collection at the Museum of Contemporary Art Zagreb", by Lidija Bencetić, 2018. Accessed: October 07, 2018.

17 Here, in the sense of a preference for and affiliation with an anarchist worldview, the brothers Mladen and Sven Stilinović, Vlado Martek and Željko Jerman should be emphasized, while Fedor Vučemilović and Boris Demur, also members of the group, belonged to the politically moderate circle of artists.

18 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "No Art Collection", by Lidija Bencetić, 2017. Accessed: October 07, 2018.

jects, and cultural anthropology. As a publisher himself, on the other hand, Senta collected a unique library of anarchist rarities and artist's books. On the subject of collections it is interesting that the artists and protagonists of the Nova Umjetnička Praksa established the practice of exchanging works, so some artists have very valuable and significant collections, for example, Vlado Martek in Zagreb and Roman Uranek in Ljubljana. The Institute of Tomislav Gotovac systematizes the rich legacy of these artists and also owns a significant number of works by other artists which were collected by Gotovac.

However, the real boom in the collection of neo-Avantgarde, conceptual, and postconceptual art occurred after the political and social changes in the 1990s, when private collectors showed up and institutional interest in this kind of art began to grow. The EastArt2000+ Collection of the Modern Gallery in Ljubljana and the Marinko Sudac Collection in Zagreb, which were created in the past fifteen years, collect works of neo-Avantgarde, conceptual, and postconceptual art from the entire former East Bloc. Together with MSU, they constitute the most important collections of works by Eastern European artists. The EastArt2000+ Collection was created in 2000 within the Modern Gallery in Ljubljana, which today has about 11,000 works. The collection of Vladimir Macura in Novi Banovci near Novi Sad is also worth mentioning. In 2016, the Macura Museum opened here with a large collection of Yugoslav neo-Avantgarde art, which was collected from the 1980s. Their interest in Avantgarde, neo-Avantgarde, and conceptual art was built on existing theoretical and museum practices, but each of these collections, and especially the Marinko Sudac Collection, has turned out to be a remarkable contribution to the affirmation of this period in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and the former Yugoslav republics of Slovenia, Serbia, and Croatia.

From Neo-Avantgarde to the Underground: Non-conformist Art in Poland

The climax of the activities of the underground art scene in Poland occurred in the middle of the 1980s in what has come to be referred to in the popular discourse as a consequence of communist repression. Actually, the artists who took the side of the "Solidarity" union proclaimed a boycott of the official structures after the introduction of martial law in 1981. Many of the underground galleries and art initiatives were a reaction to the decomposition of the map of the cultural institutions caused by martial law. However, the independent movement of "radical" and "progressive" artists, with its autonomous communicational network, private galleries, and niche events, had arisen in the 1970s, when the political situation was very different. It seems paradoxical if one takes into consideration the relative liberalization and welfare during the majority of the period of rule under first secretary Edward Gierek.

To understand the dynamics of the process that led artists to pursue their work informally in unofficial settings it is necessary to reconsider the relationship between artists and state politics as well as relations among artists themselves. After the Thaw in Poland in 1956, Socialist Realism was no longer the normative poetics in fine arts, and the state authorities overall withdrew from the direct control of the art scene. Moreover, after the decline of Stalinism, socialist cultural policy showed strong interest in Modernism, which previously had been denounced. In the visual arts, the triumphant return of apolitical Modernism occurred following the relatively short boom in Informalism as a manifestation of artistic freedom in the second half of the 1950s practiced e.g. by Tadeusz Kantor. Because of public appreciation for and promotion of modernist aesthetics, in the 1960s the Polish People's Republic acquired the image of a country of outstanding painters, sculptors, directors, and actors. In the 1960s, some pre-war Avantgarde artists, e.g. Henryk Berlewi, had brilliant careers, combining the visual attractiveness of their work with the status of pioneers and explorers. Berlewi, who since the late 1920s had lived in Paris, served in the official press as an example of the connections between Polish and Western modern art, but there were other artists in Poland who linked the pre-war and post-war Avantgarde tendencies. Henryk Stażewski was one of the most important figures among them. However, as Piotr Piotrowski put it in his book *Znaczenia modernizmu*, the esteemed pieces of the art of the time were much closer to Modernism than they were to Avantgarde, according to the distinction between the two drawn by Peter Bürger in his *Theory of the Avant-Garde*.

To examine the blurred division between Avantgarde and Modernism in post-war art in Poland, Piotrowski examined the attitudes of artists and critics associated with Warsaw's Foksal Gallery (which was established in 1966), including Wiesław Borowski, Henryk Stażewski, Tadeusz Kantor, and Andrzej Turowski. They were familiar with neo-constructivism but preferred to focus on a language of art (color, composition, and planes) than on the commitment to socio-political issues which characterized the Constructivists. The autonomy of art protected and conceptualized by the Foksal members was constructed against state control, so it was not just an escape into "pure" art. The attempt to save art from politics, however, resulted in aesthetic essentialism and concentration on the ontology of art or the existence of the author. The EL Gallery established in Elbląg in 1962 and especially the *1st Biennale of Spatial Forms* organized there by Gerard Kwiatkowski and Marian Bogusz in 1965 adopted a more Avantgarde approach. This event, in which 40 artists participated (including Zbigniew Dłubak, Zbigniew Gostomski, Kajetan Sosnowski, and Henryk Stażewski), was the first significant cooperative endeavor among artists inspired by Constructivism and industrial workers from the Zamech metal company. The artists wanted to collaborate with workers and contribute to improvements in the state of public spaces. The newly created geometric forms were placed on the streets of Elbląg, where they attracted the interest

of the citizenry. The message about collaboration between progressive artists and industrial workers was crucial if the artists were to have a better chance of gaining the approval of the authorities. Nonetheless, workers simply produced in a factory what artists requested, so the cooperation was unilateral. Thus, the ideological framework of Constructivism was set as an “umbrella” covering unrestricted formal research efforts rather than actually adopting the point of view of the so-called art workers.

For the next several years, EL Gallery became an exceptional art laboratory for artists who were searching for a connection with the public and who saw themselves as having a role in reshaping the social realities. The fifth and last edition of the Biennale known as Kinolaboratorium (Cinematlaboratory) in 1973 was a great presentation of works by young artists which contested patterns of perception and relationships between artists and society, with essential shows by the Workshop of Film Form, which was founded in 1970 in Łódź. In spite of the success of the event, Kwiatkowski, the head of EL Gallery, migrated to Germany in 1974 and the institution lost its Avantgarde reputation. Nonetheless, it had already encouraged young artists to pursue art engaged in social issues alongside formal experiments. At the moment, the EL Gallery manages a collection of works from these events and takes on many other initiatives, from sound art workshops to the reprints of the famous “Art Worker’s Notebook” (“Notatnik Robotnika Sztuki”), with the aim of continuing Kwiatkowski’s interdisciplinary, multimedia, and innovative legacy. However, Kwiatkowski’s attitude toward work and labor has not yet been thoroughly examined or problematized. Unlike the neo-Avantgarde artists from Warsaw, Łódź, and Wrocław, who used industrial metaphors to discuss art, Kwiatkowski in fact worked physically shoulder to shoulder with Elbląg’s workers and had not been recognized as a professional artist.

Events such as Elbląg’s Biennale, Symposium Puławy ‘66, Symposium Wrocław ‘70, International Meetings of Artists, Scientists and Art Theorists in Osieki, and many similar occasions were essential presentations of conceptual art and thought in Poland. But the “scientific” approach, which focused on questions of technology and formal problems of art, turned out to be boring and repetitive for young artists, e.g. members of the Film Form Workshop. They sought to challenge the vision of art represented by the great conceptual artists: harmless to the state apparatus and alienated from social life. Of course, Conceptualism had a critical impact as well; Włodzimierz Borowski and other Polish Conceptualists aimed to deconstruct the aesthetic ideologies and the modern mythologies of art and the figure of the artist as genius and creator. In his renowned essay “Art in the Postartistic Times” (“Sztuka w epoce postartystycznej”), the theoretician and critic Jerzy Ludwiński even announced that in the future art would become equal to reality, close to science and technology while far from traditional objects and exhibitions. Although works by Ludwiński, Borowski, and Kantor were milestones, they were still focused on the language and autonomy of art, e.g. the question of representa-

tion. In the 1970s, some conceptual artists and theoreticians reached the positions of the consecrated Avantgarde in the field of cultural production (in terms used by Pierre Bourdieu in his *Rules of Art*). They were endorsed by curators and journalists and their galleries (such as Foksal in Warsaw, Mona Liza in Wrocław, odNOWA in Poznań, and Krzysztofory in Kraków) were relatively free of government control.

In contrast, artists like Paweł Freisler, Marek Konieczny, Henryk Gajewski, Natalia Lach-Lachowicz, Zofia Kulik, Przemysław, Paweł Kwiek, Józef Robakowski, and his friends grouped in the Workshop of Film Form wanted to be engaged in social and political matters, observe social habits, and reform the petrified social and institutional structures. At the same time, they were interested in the new media and fascinated by the social, scientific, and artistic potentials of technological progress, but in more pragmatic way than their older colleagues who represented Conceptualism. They were “deserters of Conceptualism,” as Konieczny called himself, positive nihilists, to use the phrase coined by Andrzej Partum (older than but artistically close to the neo-Avantgarde circles), or the “phony” Avantgarde, which is how Wiesław Borowski spitefully described them. Their dissent was more against the art schools, museums, regional galleries, and other institutions of culture, with their tinsel ceremonies, intellectual meaninglessness, and coteries, than it was against the official socialist ideology or authority. As Łukasz Ronduda claimed in *Polish Art of the '70s*, the neo-Avantgarde’s attitudes toward the state regime were more reformist and pragmatic than openly rebellious. In the beginning of the 1970s, Zofia Kulik, Przemysław Kwiek, and Zygmunt Piotrowski were strongly convinced Marxists, and they created a Polish version of soc-art (“new socrealism,” as Piotrowski called it) and persuaded the ruling Party to give them opportunities to develop their audio-visual shows on a mass scale (their attempts were unsuccessful, though, due to criticism of Avantgarde forms of their propaganda art). Konieczny envisioned enriching of the drab and colorless world of everyday life with the usage of artistic imaginary. The purpose of the provocations and intrigues set out by Freisler was to mock the Foksal Gallery milieu by taking the ideas of conceptualism to an absurd extreme and openly questioning the position of an artist in socialist society. The bravery of the feminist art by Lach-Lachowicz (although contemporary feminist critiques call into question the adequacy of this label in the case of Natalia L-L works, she herself is commonly seen as a pioneer of feminism in visual art in Poland) is beyond doubt, but compositions like her *Consumption Art* from 1972 were a powerful attack on the masculine domination (or phallogocentrism, to use the term coined by Jacques Derrida), commodification, and mass consumption, i.e. an attack on the dominant conservative culture, not the Party’s principles. Even political performances conducted in the Repassage gallery by Elżbieta and Emil Cieślár were closer, due to their metaphorical form, to philosophical reflection on the history of the nation than to the straight critique of the state socialism regime.

On the basis of these generational and ideological shifts, the independent art movement was formed in the 1970s. Participants in the movement had realized that there was no space for their activities in the official art institutions, so they had gradually dropped out of galleries and artists' associations and established their own sites in private flats, attics, and student clubs. The Bureau of Poetry, Remont, Repassage, Sigma, Dziekanka, and Mospan in Warsaw, the Exchange Gallery, A4 Gallery, the Address Gallery, and the Na Piętrze Gallery in Łódź, the Newest Art Gallery and the PERMAFO Gallery in Wrocław, and Akumulatory 2 and Wielka 19 in Poznań are only a few examples of them from the four main cities where the neo-Avantgarde emerged in the 1970s. The function of the new sites located in private properties or properties managed by student associations and in a few cases sites without regular addresses was from the beginning to document the meetings, performances, happenings, film shows, and exhibitions, archiving this documentation and reusing it in subsequent undertakings. The pressure to gather could be plainly seen in the Exchange Gallery activities ran by Józef Robakowski, originally together with Małgorzata Potocka. Robakowski, a member of groups Zero-61, Krag, and Workshop of Film Form, knew better than anyone else that new art needed to invent its traditions. He had begun gathering his private collection in the 1960s, when he found out that there were opportunities to buy relatively cheap works by pre-war formist painters at flea markets, as well as some curiosities and ethnographic artefacts. He also documented the work of his groups and colleagues. Finally, he participated in the informal network of an exchange of works of art among artists. The habit of exchange art items as gifts became the underlying idea of the Exchange Gallery, which was established in 1978.

The Exchange Gallery was a site for exhibitions, discussions, video art projections, film shows, and lectures. These events were documented, as were many others outside the gallery. From many colleagues, Robakowski received video cassettes, tapes, leaflets, art books, mail art pieces, and photographs. This led to the emergence of an impressive archive. At the same time, in his own artworks and theoretical texts Robakowski claimed that the progressive neo-Avantgarde represented by him was the legitimate heir to the heritage of the pre-war great Avantgarde of Władysław Strzemiński, Katarzyna Kobro, Karol Hiller, Stefan Themerson, Jalu Kurek, and the Jewish group Jung Idysz. Robakowski referred to their works in his own art and autobiographical compositions. Other neo-Avantgarde artists made similar efforts to display their politically and aesthetically progressive attitudes, which ran contrary to the "academic" and traditional art that was prized by public institutions and influential people in the Polish art world.

After the boycott of the public sites under martial law had been announced by the artists associated with the "Solidarity" union, the "patriotic," conservative wing of the art scene found new opportunities to hold exhibitions in the museums and galleries owned by the Catholic Church. That was

true in the case e.g. of the painters from the Krakow group Wprost, like Leszek Sobocki and Zbysław Grzywacz, who created figurative pictures combining the Polish art traditions of Sarmatism and Romanticism with Surrealist imagination and nationalistic, conservative messages. For most of the “progressive” artists, this was not acceptable. In the very critical moment they found their allies in punk and new wave bands and among the subsequent generation of rebellious poets, performers, and photographers. In Łódź, they created the Chip-in Culture (Kultura Zrzuty), which was an informal network of provocative, radical artists, theoreticians, and critics. In Wrocław, the group Luxus, which combined claims by Joseph Beuys with a neo-Dadaist sense of humor and the poetics of neo-Expressionism and Pop Art, had strong bonds with the underground music scene and shared a joyful, anarchistic, and “carnavalesque” attitude with the Orange Alternative movement. In Warsaw, Zofia Kulik and Przemysław Kwiek, known as KwieKulik, continued to pursue uncompromising, critical investigations of the social norms of behavior and frames of perception in their private flat. As Piotr Krajewski wrote in *The Hidden Decade*, it was extremely important that the artistic underground was engrossed in the new media and genres, such as video art, performance, happening, and mail art. Video shows and performances rarely required professional art spaces, and the mail art circuit sustained the transnational community of underground artists beyond the official scene.

The commercialization of art in Poland during the time of the capitalist transition brought to an end the opportunities for the underground. The hardships of the early 1990s pushed artists to produce art that would be attractive to Western collectors (there was no market for art in Poland) or to take jobs outside the art scene. The relatively independent spaces of underground culture now had commercial value, and without support from city hall, in most cases they were replaced by businesses. The commodification of art resulted in the decline of the Modernist myth of bohemia, which was still cultivated in the art underground of the 1980s. Nonetheless, the legacy of the radical, progressive art, from the Avantgarde of the 1960s to the neo-Dadaism and neo-expressionism of the 1980s, was a crucial foundation for art institutions and critical discourses. Some collections are still in the private possession of their creators and collectors; this is true in the case of Robakowski’s Exchange Gallery collection, the Museum of the Orange Alternative¹⁹ organized by Waldemar Fydrych, historic leader of the movement, and the private collection owned by Barbara and Andrzej Bonarski, influential promoters of Polish young art in the 1980s. For the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, the archives of artists associated with the Foksal Gallery, the neo-Avantgarde from the 1970s, and the neo-Expressionists became the foundation for the image and identity of the Museum. The Wrocław Contemporary Museum chose

19 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Museum of the Orange Alternative”, by Xawery Stanczyk, 2017. Accessed: October 07, 2018.

a similar approach to the construction of its image: the institution holds the entire archive of Ludwiński, as well as many items created by the Luxus collective and other underground artists. Also, Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź is well known for gathering the Avantgarde art (both pre-war and post-war), with a special focus on local neo-Avantgarde and progressive movements represented by Robakowski, the Workshop of Film Form, and Chip-in Culture. The legacy of the radical Avantgarde and underground art is used as objectified cultural capital by both institutional and personal actors, who collect, present, classify, and dispose of it, depending on their own goals within a constellation of positions and position-takings, as Bourdieu would say.

Passion, Profit and Informing in the GDR: Portrait of a Successful Collector of Formalist Art in a Socialist Country

The last case in this chapter involves a gallery owner and collector who can be called a successful deviant, someone who found the appropriate way of being deviant in a socialist society and of wedding cultural opposition to lucrative collaboration with the socialist authorities. We will examine his trajectory principally thanks to the Stasi files (*Staatssicherheit*). He was indeed an informer for the secret police, and his nickname for the Stasi was “Kunath.”

When we want to write the history of a collector on the basis of secret police files, we are confronted with a historiographical imbalance. On the one hand, we have a lot of works about the state police forces and their connections to broader society in the socialist states; we also have reflective works about the use of these files by scholars. This situation largely stems from the facts that, due to the different lustration laws which have been passed since 1990, secret police files are seen as particularly meaningful and are considered as a politically sensitive issue. They are supposed to reveal who was and who was not guilty of collaboration. This situation is also shaped by the fact that these archives are wonderful materials for historians, who find in them an array of information (not only about repression). On the other hand, we have very few works about collecting practices under socialist regimes.²⁰ This suggests that collecting was marginal at the time, and the socialist framework prevented it. State socialism would have signed the collector’s death sentence. This idea is questionable, because it ignores two facts. There were original forms of buying art and therefore also possibly new forms of collecting. Previous habits of collecting survived from the capitalist time to the socialist one, as the curious case of Kunath demonstrates.

20 One exception from the GDR is Kaiser, “Treibjagd im Kulturschutzgebiet.”

A Complex Profile: Artist, Merchant, Manager, Collector

Kunath lived in the East German town of Dresden, and he was active from the beginning of the period of socialism in East Germany to the end. Thus, he experienced the different phases of its artistic life: the specific climate during the period of Soviet occupation from 1945 to 1949, when interest in modern art was re-established after the Nazi period, the Stalinist period after 1949, during which there were anti-formalistic campaigns, the Stalinized destalinization of the late 1950s and 1960s, and the precarious liberalization under Honecker.

Kunath was not an art collector first and foremost. He was initially an artist, and as such he belonged to the artists' union. He was also at the head of the private gallery created by his father. Finally, he worked for one of the "co-operatives for selling" (*Verkaufsgenossenschaften*), which were created after the uprising of June 17, 1953 in East Germany. The authorities wanted to thank the artists for having remained silent during the revolts, so they offered them opportunities to manage cooperatives, where works of art could be sold and bought. They were autonomous institutions,²¹ and they were supposed to be ruled by artists, but in reality the difference between artists and merchants could be blurry. Some artists, like Kunath, created few works of art and preferred serving as merchants and managers.

A Deviant Career

Despite his membership in the artists' union and his involvement in the cooperative, Kunath could have been a target for socialist repression. Many factors could have prompted the authorities to define him as an enemy of the socialist state. He came from a bourgeois milieu, his father having been a rich art dealer in Dresden. According to his biography, which was written by Stasi officers,²² he was "very active in the Hitler Youth" during the Third Reich and had been a member of the liberal party (LDPD) since the Soviet occupation (but he did not participate in the June 17 uprising, and he did not protest during the events in Poland and Hungary in 1956). Moreover, he had contacts with the West German art world, and he created, collected, bought, and sold formalist paintings.

21 The cooperatives benefited from the support of the Ministry of Culture, but they were free to organize as they liked. The Minister of Culture stepped in sometimes, for instance by reproaching them for having very high prices and not making works affordable for everyone, but this was just a symbolic remonstrance. Bundesarchiv (BArch) DR1 n°8075, Ministerium für Kultur an Verkaufsgenossenschaft Dresden (October 15, 1958).

22 The following information comes from the documents that the Stasi officers collected in 1963. Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen DDR (BstU), Dresden Archivierter IM Vorgang 6316/90, Vorschlag zur Werbung eines GI (March 23, 1963).

More importantly, he participated in the main Dresdner salon, led by Ursula Baring. Baring was a collector who created her collection under the Third Reich by preserving the legacy of Ernst Barlach and by buying so-called degenerate art from a store in Güstrow. After the war, her salon was an important site for the bourgeois Dresdner milieu of the 1950s. There, guests could not only discuss modern Western art (Pollock, Soulages, Hartung, Bazaine, the group Cobra, and the first documenta in Kassel),²³ they could also buy works of art which were on display in her apartment. For instance, Wilhelm Müller, an artist who was not a member of the artists' union and who worked with informal abstraction and afterwards with concrete art, exhibited and sold pieces of art in Baring's salon.²⁴ The salon was watched by the Stasi officers, who forced Ursula Baring to stop holding her salons in 1963.²⁵

Thus, Kunath was a regular participant in Baring's salon. On Sundays, he himself held a similar but smaller and more irregular salon, "with discussions about decadent art," according to a report submitted by another Stasi informer.²⁶ His fondness for "impressionism, expressionism and abstraction" was apparently common knowledge, and his own rare creations proved it. Descriptions of him by the Stasi officers and by informers show how irritating his mannerisms could be to them. "He looks like an artist from the West. He has very short hair and a thin beard. Also a turtleneck sweater. He makes a good impression. He seems to be calm and sure and to believe everything he says."²⁷ An informer writes about him: "he conducts his business in a very bourgeois way and that is very much appreciated in the cooperative [...]. He is very good in business; he is obsequious and knows all the technics of management."²⁸ Files from the secret police are full of such remarks about behaviors and habitus, based on social resentment and observation. Officers and informers not only gave information, they also objectified what they saw, and it is no wonder that historians today use these archives more and more frequently to write the history of attitudes and perceptions in the socialist contexts.

Uneven Collaboration

But the Stasi did not launch a "repressive action" against him, as it did against Ursula Baring. Instead, the officers approached him and encouraged him to become an informer. "With him, we have the possibility to keep under surveillance a large number of people and to reach people in whom we

23 *Zur Geschichte der Sammlung Ursula Baring*, Kupferstichkabinett Dresden, 1997.

24 Sächsisches Landes- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden (SLUB), Nachlass Wilhelm Müller, Mscr.Dresd.App.2810.

25 BStU, Dresden XII 95/62, Operativ Vorgang « Aussteller » (1963).

26 BStU, Dresden Archivierter IM Vorgang 6316/90, Abschrift von gez. "Sarink" (November 24, 1962).

27 Ibid., 1.Kontaktgespräch (February 07, 1963)

28 Ibid., Abschrift von gez. Wendeborn (May 24, 1963)

have a special interest."²⁹ He accepted, saying he would cooperate "if it's really certain that no one will ever hear about this collaboration."³⁰ He became an IM in 1963.

The reports from his discussions with Stasi officers reveal a great deal about the circulation of Formalist art (which was then more and more tolerated, at least for its Impressionistic and Expressionist tendencies) and the activities of merchants and collectors. They make clear that official trade fairs (especially the *Frühjahrmesse* and *Herbstmesse* in Leipzig) were opportunities for merchants to buy and sell works of art. For instance, Kunath noted that one sculpture fetched 275 East German marks in Dresden and sold 530 marks in Leipzig a few weeks later. Such practices were illegal, because they represented undeclared income and ran contrary to the socialist condemnation of speculation, but the cooperative of Dresden did the same thing in a legal frame.

The officers were unsatisfied and often had the impression that they were being fooled. Kunath was reluctant to give compromising information. About one merchant whom the officers wanted to watch, Kunath said that "he played no negative role," which was obviously a way of protecting the man in question and which reminds us that collaborators with the secret police not only denounced but also protected people. The merchants that Kunath informed on were his competitors, and he used collaboration with the Stasi to eliminate them. Stasi officers were not duped: "when he came to speak about X, suddenly he gave a lot of details, because he sees in X a rival."³¹ More generally, the officers were annoyed by the way he controlled information: "during every discussion about these questions [political matters], he never says openly what he has in mind. In the last conversations with him, we observed that he always beats about the bush to give the right political impression."³²

Profit

After several years, the Stasi agents considered collaboration with Kunath useless and met less and less frequently with him. He remained an IM, but in the late 1970s the officers regretted that "his disposition to unofficial work is limited."³³ Collaboration was a constant negotiation and power struggle, in favor of the informant in this case. Nevertheless, in the 1970s and 1980s, in the context of a growing demand for art and a relative proliferation of galleries (ruled by city councils, regional authorities, or local artists' unions), Kunath still led a successful business. We have very few sources on his private gallery,

29 BstU, Dresden Archivierter IM Vorgang 6316/90, Vorschlag zur Werbung eines GI (March 23, 1963).

30 Ibid., 1. Kontaktgespräch (February 07, 1963)

31 Ibid., Zweite Aussprache (February 25, 1963)

32 Ibid., Vorschlag zur Werbung eines GI (March 23, 1963).

33 Ibid., Jahresbeurteilung (October 18, 1979)

but we have some sources on the Dresdner cooperative,³⁴ and in 1975, its revenue was considerable: 1,286,023 Ostmarks. One key to his success was the way in which he played with the borders between the authorized and unauthorized worlds. According to the rules of the cooperative in 1975, the board included a woman who was a party member and whose explicit mission was to maintain a good relationship between the cooperative and the party.³⁵

The case of Kunath is interesting in many ways. First, it reminds us how complex social profiles and trajectories could be in socialist contexts: the same person could have several professional activities and be involved in different worlds belonging to the official and the unofficial spheres. Second, the image of a socialist society paralyzed by mutual espionage and fear is misleading. Mutual surveillance was a reality, but it did not produce paralysis. Kunath was successful in connecting his surveillance work with his other activities. Surveillance and repression were elements of his business strategies. Third, there is no reason to think that modern art was incompatible with dictatorship. We know several examples when socialist powers used modern art for their own purposes (in Yugoslavia after 1948, in Poland after 1956, in Romania in the first year of the Ceausescu regime from 1965 to 1971, before the “July Thesis”); and this case shows that, in certain circumstances, an individual could manage to promote modern art continuously from the rise of the dictatorship to its fall.

Should we consider Kunath an exceptional case? Obviously, yes: few collectors were as successful as he was, and few led different institutions like he did. But the different files about him show that he shared a lot with the world of collectors. And let us note that a case like that of Jürgen Schweinebraden and his EP Galerie (which is generally preferred by scholars because it gives a pure version of cultural opposition concluded by immigration) was in many ways exceptional. Most of the collectors of formalist art (whose names we come across in the Stasi archives or in the archives of the cooperatives) were certainly somewhere between these two types, and we have certainly a lot to discover about these occasional collectors and buyers.

The case of Kunath also teaches us that we should be cautious when we try to connect considerations about collecting and considerations about cultural opposition. Collecting as such did not imply cultural opposition. It had a lot of different meanings, and it was part of other social logics, not just the project of protest against the social order.

Finally, it puts at the center of the analysis the issue of passion. Despite their irritation, the officers acknowledged Kunath’s true “inner passion” for art: “he does his job as painter and as collector with passion.”³⁶ This collector

34 Archiv der Akademie der Künste, Berlin (AAdK), Verband Bildender Künstler Zentralvorstand n°5306, Genossenschaft bildender Künstler «Kunst der Zeit» Dresden Rechenschaftsbericht über das Geschäftsjahr 1975 (November 12, 1976).

35 Ibid.

36 BstU, Dresden Archivierter IM Vorgang 6316/90, Vorschlag zur Werbung eines GI (23.03.1963).

made his passion for formalist and decadent art compatible with the dictatorship. The case invites us to reconsider the passion for art, which is essential in the history of collecting, in its relationship with profit and repressiveness.

Conclusion

In the period of the Stalinist Cultural Revolution, Modernist (mainly Abstract and Surrealist) art was considered a form of cultural opposition in most of the countries (except Yugoslavia) of the Eastern Bloc. After 1953, during de-Stalinization, the ideology of socialist Modernism recuperated a significant part of Modernist art, but any political or social critique of the system was strictly forbidden. Beginning in the 1960s, neo-Avantgarde art (Fluxus, Happening, Conceptual art, Action art) criticizing the autonomous ideology of Modernism became the core of cultural opposition in the visual arts. These neo-Avantgarde artistic efforts were organically interwoven with a renewal of modern music, theatre, and film. The alternative, neo-Avantgarde art scene was also associated with youth subcultures (Hippie, Punk, New Wave), and in some culturally liberal countries, it became an integral although strictly controlled (secret services, agents) part of the public sphere. In the Soviet Union, the GDR, Bulgaria, and Romania strict political control actually hindered the evolution of a significant "second" alternative, non-official art life. Official state museums could collect works which were examples of this type of culture only in Yugoslavia and Poland. In the other countries of the Eastern Bloc, expressions of cultural opposition were only archived by private collectors, mostly artists and art historians. After the regime changes in 1989, there was a surge in the processes of canonization of cultural opposition, which is clearly visible in the acquisition policies of the regional and global art institutions and private collections in the twenty-first century.

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MIKOŁAJ KUNICKI – NEVENA DAKOVIĆ
– DOMINIC LEPLA

Cultural Opposition and Filmmaking in Communist East Central Europe: Lessons from Poland and the Former Yugoslavia

Focusing on the cases of the Polish People's Republic (Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa, PRL) and the former Yugoslavia, this chapter examines leading representatives of two different cinematic movements in East Central Europe, the Yugoslav Black Wave and the Cinema of Moral Anxiety in Poland, which expressed opposition to the party state or contested specific ideological constraints imposed on the cinema by communist authorities. The films discussed in the chapter include documentaries and feature movies, works that either deliberately attacked communist authoritarianism or stopped short of questioning socialism, but fell victim to censorship due to their critical portrayals of society and politics.

The chapter also analyses the relationship between the party state and filmmakers. Although state-owned and centrally controlled, socialist cinema was not a mere extension of party ideology, propaganda, and official historiography. Following the collapse of Stalinism and the brief reign of Socialist Realism, the treatment of filmmakers by the party stemmed from the regimes' policies toward the artistic intelligentsia and oscillated between rigid dictates, mutual accommodations, and negotiated autonomies. De-Stalinization and various "thaws" and "normalizations" led to shifts in attitudes on both sides, but did not set unitary trends. On the one hand, the Polish October of 1956 and liberalization in Czechoslovakia that culminated in the Prague Spring contributed to the phenomena of the Polish School and the Czechoslovak New Wave, two flagships of auteur cinema which firmly established Polish and Czechoslovak filmmakers on the cinematic map of the world.¹ On the other, the immediate period after the construction of the Berlin Wall saw an outburst of artistic creativity among East German filmmakers which was crushed by the notorious eleventh plenary session of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party in Germany in December 1965.²

Titoist Yugoslavia, which parted with the Soviet Union in 1948, followed a different trajectory. The country's opening to the West in the 1950s and 1960s

1 On the Polish School see Coates, *The Red and the White*. On the Czechoslovak New Wave see Hames, *The Czechoslovak New Wave*.

2 On the collective ban of twelve feature films and its impact on culture in the GDR see Kötzing and Schenk, *Verbotene Utopie*.

benefited its film industry, which participated in numerous co-productions with West European filmmakers and quickly became a substantial source of hard currency. Yet Tito's relatively liberal regime applied comparatively harsh censorship on its cinema, which was expected to promote the patriotic and legitimizing myth of "Brotherhood and Unity," the primary source of Yugoslav (i.e. pan-ethnic) socialist identity. By the mid-1960s, a group of young *auteurs*, commonly referred to as members of the Black Wave, began adopting more critical stances towards Titoism. They broke with propagandist and mainstream depictions of World War II and focused their lens on outcasts and eccentrics. Using a mixture of avant-garde cinematography, radical aesthetics, and dark humor, they exposed cracks in the façade of Titoism, attacked the cult of personality, and offered left-wing critiques of the party state.³ The Yugoslav government's crackdown on the Black Wave intensified in the late 1960s and culminated in the early 1970s with the purge and emigration of several filmmakers.

Finally, the chapter pays close attention to contemporary scholarship, and it reflects on new findings and methodological approaches. Recent scholarship on the institutional history of national film industries in the Soviet bloc and former Yugoslavia also highlights the role of economic factors and market mechanisms. Inasmuch as political shifts and economic and global aesthetic trends determined the fate of film under communism, so did the gradual erosion of institutional censorship and its replacement by what Miklós Haraszti has defined as "the velvet prison," in which the state displayed a substantial permissiveness and even co-opted dissent.⁴ In this respect, the contributors to this chapter, Nevena Daković and Dominic Leppla, discard the mythical figure of a primitive film censor.

The first case study deals with a cinema of former Yugoslavia and focuses on Yugoslav director Lazar Stojanović (1944–2017), associated with the Black Wave and mostly known for his film *Plastični Isus* (Plastic Jesus, 1971), which earned him a three-year prison sentence. The movie was banned until 1990. Experimental and iconoclastic, it simultaneously targeted the Titoist myth of "Brotherhood and Unity" and the cult of Marshal Josip Broz Tito from countercultural, left-wing positions characteristic of the late 1960s and early 1970s. In this respect, Stojanović's first feature can be coupled with Dušan Makavejev's *W.R. – Misterije organizma* (W.R.: Mysteries of the organism, 1971), which bore a similar message and was expressive of a similar aesthetics. Makavejev's film also reflected the state offensive against Yugoslav *auteurs*, and it was banned shortly after its release. Less known than his older

3 The very term Black Wave was coined by party journalists who attacked young filmmakers for their pessimistic outlook for socialist Yugoslavia. The leading figures of the Yugoslav Black Wave included Dušan Makavejev, Aleksandar "Saša" Petrović, Želimir Želnik, and Živojin Pavlović. See Goulding, *Liberated Cinema*, and Levi, *Disintegration in Frames*.

4 Haraszti, *The Velvet Prison*.

contemporary, Stojanović was a dissident, anti-communist activist and opponent of the ethnocentric nationalism that swept Yugoslavia in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The COURAGE Registry contains an exhaustive description of Stojanović's personal collection, which consists of audio-visual materials, newspaper articles, scripts, the director's prison file, and the 2016 restored version of *Plastic Jesus*. Stojanović gave two long interviews to COURAGE researchers in 2016, months before his death in 2017.⁵

In her contribution to this chapter, Nevena Daković eloquently analyses the radical aesthetics and socio-political message of Stojanović's masterpiece and provides the historical contextualization necessary for an understanding of the plot of the movie and the circumstances of the director's persecution and its impact on Yugoslav cinema. She argues that the history of Yugoslav cinema can be divided into "the two periods before and after *Plastic Jesus* (Daković)." She sees the affair as the culmination of the party state's offensive against the Black Wave, which sealed the end of this artistic formation. Stojanović's arrest was accompanied by the marginalization and emigration of Yugoslavia's leading filmmakers and it was part of a broader wave of repression against the Serbian liberal intelligentsia and 1968 rebels.

Dominic Leppla's essay focuses on Polish documentary and feature film director Krzysztof Kieślowski (1941–1996), one of the most influential figures of European cinema. Though he was not as overtly political as Stojanović, Kieślowski fought numerous battles with film censorship, and he exposed authoritarian aspects of the Polish People's Republic and made self-censorship the central motive of his beloved masterpiece *Amator* (Camera buff, 1979), a tale of a non-professional documentary filmmaker. Associated with the Cinema of Moral Anxiety, which biting criticized a society in crisis and corruption in Gierek's Poland, Kieślowski was also a moralist.⁶ The 1984 assessment of Kieślowski by the Department of Culture of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers Party provided a mixture of condemnation and respect. The party cultural apparatchiks saw the director as the ring leader of oppositional documentary filmmakers and a representative of a different worldview, but they also praised his talent and the fact that he confronted the party line openly and accepted arguments of the other side.⁷ In 1983, when the Polish government purged the leadership of the Association of Polish Filmmakers, removing several opposition figures (for instance Andrzej Wajda), Kieślowski was spared and remained in the governing body of the association.

5 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Lazar Stojanović Collection", by Sanja Radović, 2018. Accessed April 15, 2018.

6 Other leading members of the Cinema of Moral Anxiety included Agnieszka Holland, Krzysztof Zanussi, Janusz Kijowski, Feliks Falk, and veteran filmmaker Andrzej Wajda. See Dabert, *Kino moralnego niepokoju*.

7 Archiwum Akt Nowych, KC PZPR, Wydział Kultury, LVI-1712, fol.20.

In his insightful contribution to the chapter, Leppla reminds us of a fact that often escapes the attention of historians and film scholars working on the cinema and culture of the Polish People's Republic, namely that documentaries and shorts were often more thoroughly censored and banned than feature films. A quick look at lists of films banned under Martial Law confirms this observation.⁸ This is not paradoxical, since the production of feature films demanded considerably more funding than documentaries and shorts. Depending on political circumstances, a banned film could always be shelved for later release, which could lead to substantial revenues. Cheaply produced documentaries aimed to catch the spirit of socio-political momentum and the mores of society and institutions. At the same time, the state-owned TV served as a producer and distributor of these films.

Kieślowski's gradual transition from documentary filmmaking to feature films partly stemmed from his pitched battles with the censors who blocked his documentaries. Furthermore, as Leppla shows, Kieślowski's style evolved from the realistic and para-documentary takes that dominated his early feature films to movies that contained metaphysical and universal themes. This move paved the way to the final stage of Kieślowski's career, which begins with the TV series *Dekalog*, which was less political than his earlier oeuvre, but not devoid of episodes reminiscent of earlier, socially engaged themes.⁹ The change facilitated his delayed international recognition in the late 1980s and 1990s.

To conclude, the chapter signals the necessity for a more nuanced approach to film censorship and filmmakers' reactions to the policing of cinema by the party states in East Central Europe. Left-wing critic and innovator Stojanović suffered a much harsher fate in seemingly liberal Titoist Yugoslavia than anti-authoritarian Kieślowski in Gierek's and then Jaruzelski's Poland. In this respect, the Yugoslav government showed stronger determination to crush dissenting views, whereas the Polish authorities proved more flexible and opportunistic, often permitting the development of potentially subversive forms of expression, as the Polish documentaries of the 1970s or the Cinema of Moral Anxiety show. But both outright repression and facilitation of safety vents had negative and, at best, mixed results. While Stojanović's film career derailed before it really began, Kieślowski had to wait for late international recognition until the endgame of the communist system.

8 AAN, Naczelny Zarząd Kinematografii, Departament Programowy, fol. 5/74, Zestawienia filmów niedopuszczonych do rozpowszechniania na mocy dekretu o stanie wojennym, 1981–1987.

9 *Dekalog* did contain political and social references to the situation in Poland in the late 1980s. One of its episodes was expanded into a full-length feature, *Krótki film o zabijaniu* (A short movie about killing, 1988). The movie reflected Kieślowski's opposition to death penalty and significantly influenced the nationwide debate about capital punishment, which was suspended in 1988 and abolished in 1998.

Courage and Punishment: Plastic Jesus (1971)

The new reading of the story of the film *Plastični Isus* (Plastic Jesus, 1971) and its story of great courage, after almost half a century, raises many questions and dilemmas. The “case of the film” became the defining moment of the life of its director, Lazar Stojanović, a dissident, remarkable figure of political opposition, ferocious social critic, and rebel. It is also the paradigmatic case of censorship and political oppression of the era. Therefore, it is difficult to offer new interpretative perspectives while meticulously keeping the two dimensions, cinematic and socio-political, separate. However, it is possible to compare the reception of the film in different times and social contexts. The first context is the period of 1968–1973, when the film was made and recognized as a controversial, provocative example of a strong “anarchic, anarcho-liberal and anti-communist” discourse. The second is the contemporary era, when it meets with different expectations and diverse critical readings. In his book about the Yugoslav Black Wave, which was conceived as an attempt to write the history of ex-Yugoslavia through a parallel history of its cinema, Bogdan Tirnanić rejects any call for an aesthetic re-evaluation of the film.¹⁰ Furthermore, he stresses that Plastic Jesus should not be read as a work of art *per se* but only as the document of the time.¹¹ The term “document of time,” in my assessment, has two meanings: the film is a document of time due to interpolated archival and documentary footage; yet, due to the reactions of society, party officials, and the state apparatus it provoked, it became testimony to the brutality of the regime and the intensity of the repression of the freedom of expression and the suppressive measured suffered by artists, especially filmmakers, in Yugoslavia in the 1970s, under the firm rule of Josip Broz Tito.

Research on the ways in which the film survived the challenges brought by the passage of time is conceptualized along the two axes of art history and political history. First, I will reassert the place of the film in the history of world film through its contextual placement within European cinematic Modernism and the Yugoslav Black Wave. Second, I will analyse the political and social turbulence it caused, i.e. its traces and influences, which testify to the revolutionary spirit of 1968 and the downside of democratic Titoism or Yugoslav socialism.

10 The title of the chapter about Lazar Stojanović and his film paraphrases Rebecca West's famous travelogue *Black Lamb, Grey Falcon* (1941), alluding to perennial Serbian myths and rituals (the ritual sacrifice of the black lamb and the mythomoteur of Kosovo). According to the latter, the Prophet Elijah turns into the grey falcon and flies over from the holy city of Jerusalem to Kosovo Polje on the eve of the 1389 battle to ask Emperor Lazar whether he would choose an earthly or heavenly kingdom (Daković, “Documentaries from Post-Yugoslavia,” 18). Playing with words, Tirnanić labels Stojanović a black sheep; stigmatized and ostracised; and as the one who showed exceptional courage by choosing moral triumph at the price of a prison sentence, the banning of his film, and his nearly derailed career as a filmmaker.

11 Tirnanić, *Crni talas*, 144–45.

Plastic Jesus as film-text

Made as a thesis work at the Academy of Theatre, Cinema, Radio, and Television (in 1974 renamed the Faculty of Dramatic Arts), *Plastic Jesus* is an unsurprising yet curious mixture that marks a radical break from and goes against mainstream Yugoslav cinema. In terms of production, it is a modest school work, but it demonstrated the auteur's courage, revolutionary ideas, fiction-fiction structure and style, which marked the peak of the cinema of resistance and social criticism of the time. These two facets, production and textual, make the narrative of critical ideas coming from the left-wing spectrum of political opposition unconventional. Set in Belgrade at the time of the student protests of 1968, the movie follows the strayed and promiscuous filmmaker (Tomislav Gotovac), his romantic involvements and sexual affairs, and his obsessive and compulsive collecting of various films. The mixture of films shot by the protagonist and archival footage allows *Plastic Jesus* to "be viewed as the very attempt to make this film that Gotovac has in his head, as well as the result."¹²

The interlacing of fiction and reality follows the best tradition of the Black Wave. The characters have the same names as the actors (Tom, Vukica); the events or facts of real life, for instance the wedding of Ljubiša Ristić (the actor in the film) or Gotovac as a Croat in Belgrade, are cleverly used in the narrative.¹³ The additional irony stems from the fact that Ljubiša Ristić plays a seedy character who hypocritically manages to keep up middle class appearances and lead a comfortable life, very much as in real life his family name and father, a high-ranking general in the Yugoslav Army, kept him above all suspicion and most of the persecutions. The destiny of honest, naïve, and socially marginalised Gotovac who suffers an array of tribulations and eventually is killed, on the other hand, confirms and mimics Ristić's actual personal position as an unprotected "other" and alternative filmmaker, performance, conceptual artist, and social contestator from Zagreb living and studying in Belgrade.¹⁴ The transgressive fiction-fiction interplay points to a system of allusions and citations which further probes the political and ideological foundations of the society.

The element "responsible both for the high quality of the film and for the ill fate of Lazar" is the specific style of Serbian cutting.¹⁵ In his eponymous book, Mihajlo P. Ilić explains Serbian cutting as a phase of editing that establishes associative, symbolic meanings; it supplies the context by (inter)cutting shots from various sources. As a departure from mainstream narrative norms,

¹² DeCuir, *Yugoslav Black Wave*, 243.

¹³ The family names of the characters, Đilas and Pribićević, are also the real names of the controversial politicians and dissidents.

¹⁴ Tirnanić, *Crni talas*, 146.

¹⁵ Ilić, *Serbian Cutting*, 270.

the specific editing style, which creates a critical assault on politics, history, and society, is comparable to Russian Formalist notions of *ostranenie* (defamiliarization, making strange) and *zatrudnenie* (making difficult) and their effects in language and literature. In a broader sense, it refers to all manipulations of various film material, while the intercut, hybrid material functions on all levels of the "technology of representation and (...) narrative structure."¹⁶ The diversely-acquired shots evolve into a distorted and expanded film story, highlighting original meanings. The film becomes a bizarre and effective supra-narrative which smoothly accommodates all sorts of interactions between text and context, signs and messages which produce social and institutional significance and difference.¹⁷ Likewise, the associative montage as practised by Stojanović makes his style similar to "one of Makavejev and, to a certain degree of Žilnik." The film text reveals the strong influence of "the amateurism of the GEFF, the work of Fluxus, and, especially, the films of Stan Brakhage, Kenneth Anger, Bruce Conner, and other names of the American film avantgarde of the 1960s."¹⁸

The courageous invocation of the taboos of the era, from the political to the sexual, is, at a more specific level, underpinned by Eisenstein's montage of attraction and Dziga Vertov's constructivism. On one side is the simple, daring choice of historically provocative or even censored archive material. Stojanović uses Nazi films and movies on Hitler and concentration camps,¹⁹ *Hrvatski Slikopis*, the newsreels of the Ustashe quisling state, and documentaries about the Chetniks. On the other are the daring cuts which relate the elements of historical and political binarisms, producing unconventional, critical meanings that break all social rules and violate censorial guidelines. The shots of the Partisans (with voice-over in English) are followed by the images of the Nazi blitzkrieg and the cheering crowds in the cities²⁰ (with inserted pseudo-documentary shots of Gotovac and his friends and shots from the films directed by Gotovac). The images of the Nazi edifices are interpolated in the camera takes of the motorcycle drive through Belgrade, and the intercut cityscapes comparatively imply the uncanny resemblance between the totalitarian regimes, Nazism and Communism.

One of the two scenes that made the film "censored without censorship" in fact combines the archival shots of the Chetniks and home footage of one of the actors. "Stojanović cuts to archival home footage of the wedding party of Ljubiša Ristić (...) and Višnja Poštic. Both of whose fathers happened to be

16 Rodowick, *The Virtual Life of Film*, 5.

17 Daković, "Invisible and Visible Theory," 77.

18 Tirnanić, *Crni talas*, 145.

19 Tomislav Gotovac shooting the corpses of the concentration camp prisoners resembles Ralph Feinnes shooting, from the balcony, the prisoners building the barracks of the concentration camp in the film *Schindler's List* (Spielberg, 1993).

20 The same warm welcome given to the Nazis in Zagreb and Maribor can be seen in Emir Kusturica's *Underground* (1995).

army generals and who were there on attendance at the party along with other government officials (...)," writes DeCuir. "As a result of the associative montage the idea was produced that these officials could be equated with Chetniks—or even worse *were* Chetniks."²¹ Many years later, Stojanović recalled that after he had been given back the copy of the film, he realised that the scene had been removed in a very professional way. The discovery gave him hope that one day the censored shots, replaced by the caption "this scene went missing while the film was kept by the State," would be found carefully preserved in some film box. The missing shots were restored only in 2016, when the brand-new copy was made for the special screenings in MOMA.

The second problematic and "subversive" scene begins as Tom and his girlfriend are standing at the window watching the student protests, and it continues with documentary shots of Josip Broz Tito preparing and delivering his famous speech that ended the demonstrations.²² In sharp contrast to the habitual image of the vital, immortal leader and the lifetime president of Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Tito is depicted as a confused old man (he was 76 years old at the time), unsure and hesitant about what to do.

The distinctive features of Stojanović's work, such as the divorce of sound from image (which critically deconstructs the original footage) and the dissolution of classical narrative, are trademarks of both the Yugoslav Black Wave and European cinematic Modernism, the latter defined in the exhaustive work by András Bálint Kovács. Kovács's analysis includes the films of Dušan Makavejev, which are found in the same intersection with Black Wave. Thus, the oeuvre of Lazar Stojanović, which follows the same style as Makavejev and meets the criteria set by Kovács, is the prime example of cinematic (and political) Modernism.²³ Furthermore, as a mean of direct political action, it proleptically fits with the principles of counter cinema. The elements, including narrative intransitivity, estrangement, foregrounding, multiple diegesis, aperture, unpleasure, and reality achieved by renouncing and deconstructing fiction as the artifice, deception, and illusion (these are the elements listed by Peter Wollen in "Godard and Counter Cinema" after his "close reading" of the film *Le vent d'est* (Wind from the East; Group Dziga Vertov, 1970), are already visibly present in the film *Plastic Jesus*. The poster of the analysed God-

21 DeCuir, *Yugoslav Black Wave*, 248.

22 In his speech, Tito declared that the students were right; that the protests in Belgrade were an autonomous thing and not simply an echo of the demonstrations in other European cities. He blamed the party leadership and praised the Yugoslav youth, which he characterized as politically conscious, awake, and responsible. Tito's ambiguous and manipulative speech was (mis)understood as a promise to fulfil the students' demands. The protests ended on the same evening, i.e. June 9, 1968. See Miller, *The Nonconformists*, 158–59.

23 For Bálint Kovács, the notion of political Modernism derives from Peter Wollen's concept of avant-garde as politically radical narrative cinema. "In art history, all distinctions (if any) between modernism and avant-garde emphasize that the latter is an extreme, radical form of the former." See Kovács, *Screening Modernism*, 30.

ard-Gorin masterpiece, which hangs on the wall of the apartment in Stojanović's film, represents elegant homage by the Yugoslav filmmaker to his colleagues.²⁴ The innovative narrative form and reinvented film language subvert and resignify the classical and traditional meanings and make the film text produce different and opposite ones. Revolutionary political ideas are recognized as an amalgamation of "critical attitude, anarchism, theories of the far left, and the ideology of the flower children and the sexual revolution" imbued with the 1968 energy and will for change.²⁵

Punishment without Crime

The intricate and intense reactions of the government, state, and party turned into major retaliations against the Black Wave, 1968 protesters, and political opposition.²⁶ Instead of being granted permission for theatrical release, *Plastic Jesus* was met with a long list of mandatory edits and changes. These demands aimed to blunt the edge of the political criticism of the socialist state and Tito. In 1973, the film was finally banned and officially "put in the bunker," but not before being used as evidence in the trial of Stojanović and in the indictment against him for the working for the enemy and producing anti-state propaganda.

Since the film was also Stojanović's graduation work, the affair shattered the Faculty of Dramatic Arts. The whole production, from the approved scenario to the rough cut,²⁷ and the students and professors involved in its production were carefully investigated. The process ended with the demise of Saša Petrović, who was accused of political and pedagogical negligence, while Živojin Pavlović was relegated to an administrative position, more as an author who belonged to the Black Wave than as a professor related to the case. The case of *Plastic Jesus* became a threatening example of the power of state repression against "liberated cinema" (Goulding). The authors of the Black Wave, Petrović, Makavejev, and Žilnik, left the country. They continued to work abroad and received prizes at the leading world festivals. Yugoslav cinema returned to the approved routine.

24 Godar's and Gorin's group *Dziga Vertov* used the theories of *kino oko* and *kino pesnica*.

25 Tirnanić, *Crni talas*, 145. Modernism defines the reinvented language through the thesis of *Nouvelle Roman* adapted for cinema. We do not need the films about revolution, but we have to make films in a revolutionary way. In linguistic terms, as Jean-Luc Comolli and Jean Narboni argued in their famous editorial "Cinema/Ideology/Criticism" in *Cahiers du cinéma*, the most important films make the revolution not only on the level of the signified but more importantly on the level of signifiers.

26 The core of the political opposition and criticsers were Serbian liberals: Marko Nikezić, Latinka Perović, Mirko Tepavac, Koča Popović, and leaders of Croatian Maspok: Savka Dabčević-Kučar, Miko Tripalo, Pero Pirker, and Dražen Budiša.

27 According to the official report, Stojanović showed the rough cut of the film to professors and committees of the FDA (Tirnanić, *Crni talas*, 147).

The look back at *Plastic Jesus* highlights film's threefold (aesthetical, political, and ethical) aspects and resonance in the present context. The film does not seem as ground-breaking today as it did in 1971, but it has acquired different and broader significance. The documentary and archival materials it used have lost their revelatory and political edge. In Serbia, the history of the Chetniks was glorified in the primetime TV series *Ravna Gora* (Bajić, 2013–2014). During the nationalist turmoil of the 1990s, Ante Pavelić and the NDH (Nezavisna država Hrvatska) became officially accepted and widely glorified as important agents in the pre-history of the Republic of Croatia. Examining the film tape, which contains the takes from Hrvatski *Slikopis*, Tomislav Gotovac prophetically comments that it is very interesting and will someday be worth a lot. Marta Popivoda provides sensational footage of the students' protest in her film *Jugoslavija ili kako je ideologija pokretala naše kolektivno telo* (Yugoslavia – How ideology moved our collective body, 2013). The tribute to Makavejev, Žilnik, and, implicitly, to Stojanović is found in the associative editing of fiction-fiction in the films of Emir Kusturica (*Underground*), Goran Marković (*Tito i ja/ Tito and I*, 1992), and Srđan Karanović (*Za sada bez dobrog naslova*, 1988). The self-reflexivity suggested by film-within-the film is further developed in the meta cinematic constructions of Slobodan Šijan (*Maratonci trče počasni krug/ The Marathon family*, 1982) and Milutin Petrović (*Zemlja istine, ljubavi i slobode/ Land of truth, love and freedom*, 2000). *Plastic Jesus* is the text of "polemical cinema," which deals with politics and cinema as essential topics of political Modernism.²⁸ Its textual work concerns the tightly interwoven domains of cultural opposition, political activism, and social engagement; it also aptly captures the historical and social ambience in all its complexity. It is a watershed in the history of Yugoslav cinema, dividing it into the periods before and after *Plastic Jesus*. The opening credits of the version released in 1990 declared that *Plastic Jesus* was filmed in 1971, arrested in 1972, convicted in 1973, and set free in 1990. This statement describes in a nutshell the story of the film, the life of Lazar Stojanović, and the history of the Black wave, and it ironically overlaps with the history of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Taking to heart Lenin's thesis that film is the most important art, Yugoslav authorities kept the film industry under firm and tight control. The ideologically impeccable and politically correct films, like dominant partisan films or red westerns, were powerful and efficient tools of propaganda, including the popularization of the founding principles of socialist Yugoslavia²⁹ and the glorification of the official Communist party-approved history. Yet the mirac-

28 DeCuir, *Yugoslav Black Wave*, 2011.

29 Partisan films narrated the official version of World War II and the socialist revolution, which according to this narrative forged brotherhood and unity among different nations and ethnicities of the country.

ulous year of 1967,³⁰ the emergence of the Black Wave, and the case of *Plastic Jesus* confirmed that Yugoslav cinema liberated itself from the tight grip of the party and state authorities. Furthermore, the attacks on and criticism of Yugoslav socialism coming from the left intellectual and art circles coincided with the liberal's demands for the special status of the republics of Serbia and Croatia. Faced with opposition coming from different ideological stands, Tito and his acolytes reacted by taking radical measures. The political purges set the pattern for repressive measures against filmmakers and artists.

At the same time, in spite the brutal measures, as noted by Žilnik, the censored films enjoyed unprecedented success in the world; the critical acclaim with which they met was hardly ever repeated afterwards. The frantic international reception underlined the impotence and strengthened the rage of the Yugoslav authorities at the fact that a critical image of Titoism had been shown to the world; that the cinema pointed to the first cracks and problems, which could not have been amended or solved, of Yugoslavia's political and ideological system. The last traces of the period of censorship disappeared with the release of *Plastic Jesus* in 1990; in the same year, the country began to break up, bringing to a head the escalation of nationalism and discontent that had disrupted two decades earlier.

Film Censorship and Political Struggle in Polish People's Republic in the Cinema of Krzysztof Kieślowski

Despite Polish cinema's relative creative freedom compared with other post-war Soviet-type societies before 1989, which was enabled in part by its somewhat unique, decentralized system of *zespoły filmowe*, or filmmaking units,³¹ the list of censored or banned films in the Polish People's Republic (Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa, PRL) is long. Many works that were shelved by the censor in the 1970s eventually saw the light of day in the heady if short-lived revolutionary atmosphere that reigned for eighteen months following the signing of the Gdańsk Agreements in August 1980 and the formation of Solidarity. After the clampdown of Martial Law just prior to Christmas in 1981, the most infamous case of a banned film is perhaps *Przestłuchanie* (Interrogation, 1982) by Ryszard Bugajski. A unrelentingly dark prison-cell drama about the horrors of Stalinism in the early 1950s featuring a stunning performance by the great Polish star Krystyna Janda, *Interrogation* would become one of

30 1967 saw the production of outstanding films such as *Skupljači perja* (I even met happy Gypsies, Petrović), *Kad budem mrtav i beo* (When I am dead and gone, Pavlović), *Ljubavni slučaj ili tragedija službenice PTTa* (Love story, or the case of the missing switchboard operator, Makavejev), and *Jutro* (The morning, Đorđević).

31 See Dorota Ostrowska's piece on the origins and development of film units in Poland, "An Alternative Model of Film Production," and the recent bilingual collection, Adamczak, Małatyński, and Marecki, *Restart zespołów filmowych*.

the most popular Polish films of the 1980s, distributed underground on illegal video cassettes.³² There were also many interesting, often repeated censorship battles involving Poland's "accursed émigré auteurs," as they were recently dubbed.³³ They were transnational film directors, whose "new wave" stylings came barbed with a (censored) political edge, like Roman Polański (*Nóż w wodzie*/ Knife in the water, 1962) and Jerzy Skolimowski (*Ręce do góry*/ Hands up!, 1967–1981), or *enfants terribles* like Andrzej Żuławski (*Diabeł*/ Devil, 1972) and Walerian Borowczyk (*Dzieje grzechu*/ The story of sin, 1975),³⁴ whose often scatological or erotic content met with as much if not more censorship in the West. But I wish to approach the problem of censored films under Polish state socialism by considering the preeminent figure of Polish cinema in the 1970s, the insider who was always part outsider, even among the opposition. Krzysztof Kieślowski was the leading light of a post-1968 generation of film artists who cut their teeth on observational documentary before moving on to features, teaching the older generation—including Andrzej Wajda himself—how to make films about contemporary events in Poland, about how to articulate its reality.

1.

Many film directors in Poland from the 1950s through the 1970s began in documentary—a form of cinema nearly on par with fiction filmmaking in terms of popularity³⁵ (the censor was well aware of this). Building on a rich tradition of Polish documentary emerging during the period of De-Stalinization and reform after 1956 and lasting into the 1960s, especially the mature work of their mentor Kazimierz Karabasz, Krzysztof Kieślowski's generation infused documentary that had straddled the observational and poetic modes³⁶ with newly politicized, Fred Wiseman-like portraits of beleaguered institutions and the individuals struggling within them in films like *Office*, *Hospital*, *Factory*, etc. A few of these filmmakers, led by Kieślowski and Tomasz Żygadło along with older, renegade Party member Bohdan Kosiński, drew up a manifesto as "The Kraków Group" in 1971, in which they characterized their future work as revelatory "film-protest." With their camera the scalpel and human behavior the object, they would "find (the) disease and bring it to light. We

32 Haltof, *Polish National Cinema*, 165.

33 Goddard, "The Impossible Polish New Wave and its Accursed Émigré Auteurs."

34 In a bit of "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" circumvention of the censors, Borowczyk apparently gained approval for this film from the Minister of Culture by telling them, "I've just come out of a meeting with the bishop, and the Church opposes the making of this film." Coates, *The Red and The White*, 88.

35 Many anecdotes testify to the documentary's privileged status, for example how undesirable docs were released solely in hard-to-access, small-town cinemas, only for film fans to arrive in busloads in droves from bigger cities to catch a glimpse.

36 To frame it in film scholar Bill Nichols's terms. See Nichols, *Introduction to Documentary*, 104–58.

treat situations like this as models, using them to reveal the nature and repeatability of a phenomenon and to question the inert structures that distort the meaning and substance of social affairs." Quoting Marxist playwright/theorist Bertolt Brecht ("reality must be looked at not stared at"), The Kraków Group would capture an individual's "gabbing" close-up and penetrate the social thought that lie behind it. They would uncover the mechanisms of a reality felt by but hidden from the Polish people.³⁷

It is not difficult to see how this program placed them on a collision course with government censors. *Robotnicy '71: Nic o nas bez nas* (Workers '71: Nothing about us without us, 1972), co-directed with Zygadło and others, was made following the December and January strikes and protests of 1970–71 along the Baltic Coast, their bloody repression by the state, and the subsequent concessions to Polish workers all over the country. It was, Kieślowski said, "my most political film because it gives no humanistic point of view,"³⁸ instead taking the "collective hero" as subject.³⁹ The filmmakers intended to allow the workers, a ruling class perhaps in name only, to speak for themselves and feel their power. "We travelled all over Poland and tried to film those heated times before they disappeared."⁴⁰ They captured workers' testimony and their negotiations with foremen and bosses, organized into a 24-hour "day in the life" under chapters with titles like "hands," "heads," and "the division of labor." Political winds shifted quickly against the work, and the film was lost to the knives of the censors, who edited it and re-titled it *Gospodarze* (Hosts, 1971) and slated it for Polish television. Kieślowski, meanwhile, much to his bemusement, found himself accused of smuggling contraband to Radio Free Europe when several sound rolls for the film were lost from the production.⁴¹ This failure helped in some measure gradually to convince its makers that to be successful in the future they needed to construct something less transparent to the Party censorship, be it fiction or non-fiction. However, the production was successful in its testament to artistic solidarity with the working class, in a way presaging the formation, in 1976, of the Workers' Defence Committee (*Komitet Obrony Robotników*, KOR), the beginning of true worker-intellectual solidarity. It would also provide the model for a later, celebrated, collectively-directed documentary record of the August events of *Solidarność* as they unfolded—*Robotnicy '80* (Workers '80, 1981), a film now held in the European Centre for Solidarity in Gdansk.

37 "Documentary Filmmakers Make Their Case (Poland, 1971) Bohdan Kosiński, Krzysztof Kieślowski, and Tomasz Zygadło," in *Film Manifestos and Global Cinema Cultures*, 464–68.

38 Kieślowski, *Kieślowski on Kieślowski*, 55.

39 Haltorf, *The Cinema of Krzysztof Kieślowski*, 10.

40 Kieślowski, *Kieślowski on Kieślowski*, 55.

41 *Ibid.*, 57.

2.

The experiences of the Kraków Group and those of their like-minded colleagues⁴² seemed to lead inexorably towards feature films, i.e. to the production of allegorical, Gogol-like cinematic microcosms rooted in reality, a movement usually known as the Cinema of Moral Anxiety. Its leading lights were not necessarily steeped in the documentary aesthetic/ethos, but it is clear they drew inspiration from it, and from Kieślowski himself. They included Agnieszka Holland, the director of *Aktorzy prowincjonalni* (Provincial actors, 1979), Kieślowski's friend and frequent co-scenarist, and older colleagues like the philosophically-minded Krzysztof Zanussi (*Barwy Ochronne/Camouflage*, 1977) and even Polish School lion Andrzej Wajda himself (*Bez znieczulenia/Without anesthesia*, 1979), the ultimate cinematic survivor. Kieślowski's second feature of 1976, *Spokój* (The calm, 1976), an early example of this movement, spoke less allegorically and more directly—albeit with typical Kieślowskian ambivalence and subtlety—to the problems facing Polish society. It swiftly met with the censor's wrath and was immediately suppressed. Kieślowski's stated objective in *The Calm* was to show how under the current social reality a humble individual—here played by consummate Cinema of Moral Anxiety actor Jerzy Stuhr, who also contributed dialogue—could not achieve even the modest goal of a little “peace and quiet” (*spokój*) in his life. But as it depicted its protagonist caught up in a workers' strike, something expressly forbidden (and indeed the reason for which the film was banned), upon its eventual release in 1980 it was experienced by many critics and viewers as a militant film about *Solidarność*.⁴³ However, despite its notoriety as a banned film, *The calm's* neorealist poetics⁴⁴ sat oddly next to—and have perhaps aged better than—triumphalist records of the time like Andrzej Wajda's Palme D'or-winning *Człowiek z żelaza* (Man of iron, 1981).

Kieślowski would become more autobiographical with one of his best-loved and most moving achievements in *Amator* (Camera buff, 1979). Once again utilizing the magnetic Jerzy Stuhr as the lead, the film is a tale of self-censorship within the Polish People's Republic, as a young father, Filip, discovers the power of cinema to reshape the world around him as well as the complications this entails. Its most memorable images include budding documentarist Filip destroying his reel of footage that had exposed government corruption yet provoked the sacking of his kindly colleague. They also include shots

42 See avantgarde directors—themselves no stranger to the censors' scissors—such as the brilliant Wojciech Wiszniewski and Grzegorz Królikiewicz.

43 One contemporaneous critic, Mirosław Winiarczyk, entitled his review, “The Calm, or a film about Solidarity” (Winiarczyk, “*Spokój czyli o Solidarności*,” 11; Haltof, *The Cinema of Krzysztof Kieślowski*, 157).

44 In this, it had more in common with old-guard Polish School filmmaker Kazimierz Kutz's gentle observations in *Paciorki jednego różańca*, on the state's impact on the everyday lives of ordinary people.

of Filip finally turning the camera on himself and seeking the political through the literally personal in a kind of answer to the bureaucratic demand posed at the conclusion of Kieślowski's very first documentary, the Kafkaesque *Urząd* (Office, 1966): "What have you done throughout your lifetime?"

3.

The Polish August of 1980 saw the measured Krzysztof Kieślowski swept up, not unlike his diffident, ingenuous protagonists, if not quite in revolutionary fervor, then at least enough to answer the call of this great loosening of censorship towards art and scholarship known among Poles as the "Carnival of Solidarity." He responded⁴⁵ with a film that has long been called something of a turning point in his oeuvre—towards a consideration of destiny, metaphysics, and mortality—but following its recent restoration of censored cuts and re-release, it looks more like his masterpiece. *Przypadek* (Blind chance, 1981) consists of an intricate tri-partite flashback structure following our initial encounter with the protagonist, screaming, onboard a plane. We are then witness to three different planes of reality, or versions of the life of a consistently open, good-natured young man, Witek (rising star Bogusław Linda, appearing the same year in Holland's riveting *Kobieta samotna* (A woman alone, 1981), following his furious attempt to chase down and board a train to Warsaw. In the first, Witek, finding a sympathetic, rueful mentor aboard the train, becomes a Communist Party activist; in the second, having wound up in trouble for crashing into a railway guard, he becomes a Catholic oppositionist in the underground; in the third, Witek is an apolitical doctor who starts a family and keeps his head down, until that life—like the first two—becomes itself untenable. The film's vivid, rhyming detail and documentarist eye for the times—including the striking, originally censored inclusion of a performance by popular anti-regime folk balladeer Jacek Kaczmarski—emphasizes throughout the artificiality of the barriers—personal, political—that separate us, even as it reaches for something beyond the surface choices and paths we take in our lives.

Unfortunately for Kieślowski (and Linda, who nowadays is largely known in Poland as an action film hero), their timing was as off as Witek's attempt to catch his train. The need to reshoot a number of sequences for quality control⁴⁶ resulted in delays that saw *Blind Chance* miss its window of opportunity. On December 13, 1981, General Wojciech Jaruzelski ordered the military to declare a "state of war" in Poland, bringing oppositional filmmak-

⁴⁵ He also made an interesting if odd film banned and unreleased until after its maker's death, *Krótki dzień pracy*, based on the worker insurrection in Radom in 1976 as observed by his close friend, journalist Hanna Krall.

⁴⁶ This improved the film immeasurably, according to Holland. See her video interview in the Criterion Blu-Ray.

ing and other cultural life to a grinding halt. Immediately, several films, Kieślowski's among them, faced an outright ban. When finally released in 1987, it nevertheless remained censored for content; in some cases, this meant the loss of entire sequences (for example, Witek's vicious beating at the hands of *milicja*, the PRL police), and at other moments shot to shot. Since its restoration in 2012 and subsequent release by the Criterion Collection, it is possible not only to watch the film as intended, but to view the censored parts alongside what was allowed to pass, in a supplement to the Blu-ray presentation. In this context, it is interesting to consider the conclusions drawn on the subject by cinema scholar Paul Coates, who, writing in English, made extensive use of the collections of the Filmoteka Narodowa-Institut Audiowizualny (National Film Archive-Audiovisual Institute) and New Documents Archive in Warsaw. Musing over "the myth of the obtuse censor" with respect to cinema in the PRL (and elsewhere), Coates refutes our tendency to imagine the censor as someone either utterly lacking in competence or as consumed by the jealousy of a failed artist. In reality, the censor could be quite intelligent, as meeting transcripts make clear, though with ultimate motivations nevertheless hard to discern because of the multiple levels at which censorship operated—within the Script and Film Assessment Commissions, within the highest reaches of the Politburo, and within the artists and their collaborators themselves.⁴⁷ It is also worth mentioning, in further illumination of the film censor's role in the popular imagination, Wojciech Marczewski's successful, post-1989 *Ucieczka z kina 'Wolność'* (Escape from the "Liberty" Cinema, 1990) about a beleaguered government censor forced to improvise when a film's character comes to life before the eyes of its audience and begins to think—and act—for itself.

Watching the cleverly reassembled edits in the restored version of *Blind Chance*, in which censored materials appears in color only to fade into black and white when we find ourselves in the realm of the 1987 version, one is struck by the extent to which the censors understood the power of visual storytelling to connect with viewers and inflame their presumed discontent. Of course, there are a few juicy bits of dialogue censored within a scene that we can easily imagine raising the censor's hackles ("Join the Party and life will be easier." Witek: "What they do is despicable. I'm not interested"). But more often than not, what was cut was wordless visual information. We see the reaction shots of Witek during scenes of his quicksilver reality as an opposition activist, but, in the censored version, there are no eyeline matches of these experiences or scenes, namely the joyful, non-alienating labor of operating an underground printing press; the apartment, ransacked by the secret police, of his pious landlady—a character inspired by Solidarity hero Anna Walentynowicz; the ironic, affective singing of the communist anthem "The Internationale" when Witek is with his lover (whose pubic hair, incidentally, went uncensored—the same would not have been true in a Hollywood-type setting). Ta-

⁴⁷ See Coates, *The Red and the White*, 75–78.

deusz Sobolewski is right to consider the mission of the censors here to erase traces of the revolutionary enthusiasm of 1980.⁴⁸

4.

Kieślowski's final two projects in Poland, which he undertook in the bleak 1980s, found him newly paired with two collaborators essential to the rest of his career—gifted composer Zbigniew Preisner and lawyer-turned-screenwriter Krzysztof Piesiewicz. Following the imposition of Martial Law, Kieślowski sought to insert his camera, quite literally, into the ongoing legal battles taking place throughout the country, but, frustrated both by lack of access and the camera's inevitable inability to become a "fly-on-the-wall" (as it always influences the events one seeks to capture objectively),⁴⁹ he turned, as he had so often done, to fiction. Piesiewicz, who had himself defended oppositionists and successfully prosecuted the murderers of activist priest Jerzy Popiełuszko, was engaged to write the scenario. In *Bez końca* (No end, 1984), sometimes seen as a dry run for the haunting late masterpiece *Trois couleurs: Bleu* (Blue, 1994), they captured, for better or worse, the utter despair of this grim period. The most important character in the film appears only sparingly—the ghost of an opposition attorney, played by Man of Iron star Jerzy Radziwiłowicz as "[...] a man whose conscience is clear, yet who couldn't do anything in Poland in 1984," as the director put it.⁵⁰ While the film was vilified both by oppositionists for its alleged quietism and by the Party, which withheld it for a year and then distributed it erratically,⁵¹ Kieślowski claimed he'd never before received so many letters and phone calls or had so many personal conversations about one of his films, nor he had he ever received such thanks for testifying to the mood of the time.⁵²

Despite this, its reception seemed to signal that his days of making films in Poland were numbered—as was, so it happened, the PRL itself. With *Dekalog* (1988), Piesiewicz and Kieślowski turned to the world of television co-production, opening the door to Western European financing, yet choosing a topic that would seem to resonate with a nation of Catholics: ten short films—two

48 Interview with Tadeusz Sobolewski in the booklet for the Blind Chance Criterion Blu-Ray.

49 His presence in the courtrooms, however, was positive, in the sense that Party judges who sought to pass harsh sentences were terrified of the camera's power to record. For the extraordinary account of Kieślowski's tortuous role in these affairs see Kieślowski, *Kieślowski on Kieślowski*, 125–30.

50 Ibid., 134.

51 "If a newspaper wrote that *No End* was being shown somewhere, then when you turned up at the cinema you could be sure that *No End* wasn't on. Some other film was showing. And when it was written that some other film was being shown, then it would be that *No End* was on. You couldn't find my film." Ibid., 136.

52 Ibid., 136–37.

longer films grew out of it⁵³—loosely based on the Ten Commandments, each of them set within a single housing estate block in Warsaw. Despite the surface specificity, this world was constructed as timeless, made with an eye for distribution abroad, its director confessed, with subtle character overlaps and correspondences and characters who didn't seem to work or suffer materially—their pain was ethical, existential. The result was universally acclaimed, but did *Dekalog's* proximity to 1989, to the censor's lack of teeth, serve, paradoxically, to limit its content? Reflecting on the state of Polish cinema and its past one year before his early death in 1996, the old documentarist had this to say: "We're allowed to say everything now, but people have stopped caring about what we're allowed to say. Censorship bound authors to the same extent that it did the public...We were together, us and the public, in the aversion we had for a system we didn't accept. Today, this basic reason for being together doesn't exist. We're lacking an enemy."⁵⁴

What is to be done, short of conjuring false images? Perhaps, even at a time when social bonds seem to be at a low ebb, when traditional ties have been loosened or severed, new forms of solidarity—beyond borders—can be forged. Cinema, the original mass art that knew no borders, may yet play some undiscovered role.

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53 Based on *Dekalog* episodes 5 and 6, *A Short Film About Killing* and *A Short Film About Love*—the former a Jury Prize winner at Cannes in 1988—were Kiesłowski's first real tastes of international recognition, while the whole series itself went on to great acclaim in critical and cinephile circles.

54 Kiesłowski, *Kieślowski on Kieślowski*, 152.

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Music and Cultural Opposition

Introduction

Music has always been both an aesthetic and a political phenomenon, but its political character seems especially pronounced during the period of Socialism in Europe and in the Cold War more generally. Although it was politicized and used for political purposes on both sides of the Iron Curtain, music was more obviously controlled, censored, and even forbidden in totalitarian states. This overt control did much to lend certain kinds of music the status of oppositional culture, for citizens' involvement with that which was banned or monitored by the authorities could constitute, in itself, a form of dissent.

Any introduction to music during the socialist period in Eastern Europe must foreground the difficulty of summarizing the topic. This difficulty stems from three broad factors: the diversity of music in the period; the diversity of approaches to studying the music of the period; and, finally, the lack of uniformity among different regions, including differences among the various political regimes' relations to culture, and changes over time even within individual countries. This introduction considers these factors in more detail and then outlines the main genres of music in the period. The two case studies that follow—on classical music in Poland and on jazz and alternative culture in Czechoslovakia—illustrate the diversity noted in this introduction and dispel some common myths about the period.¹

Existing research on this period has favored specific genres and styles: classical music and jazz have been studied extensively in relation to Cold War cultural policies, and rock music and other alternative forms of youth music have been examined from sociological or ethnological perspectives that place them within distinct subcultures.² Indeed, it is these very genres—classical music, jazz, and related alternative cultures—that constitute the case studies that follow in this chapter. But many other kinds of music were important avenues of dissent in socialist countries and are essential to the construction of a more detailed picture of music in the period. In addition to classical mu-

1 There were, of course, classical music and jazz in all socialist countries, but the case studies' focus on these genres in these countries is justifiable: in Poland, it was classical music that helped the country become a unique link between East and West in the Cold War; in Czechoslovakia, again uniquely, jazz became an umbrella term for opposition across multiple arts.

2 A recent annotated bibliography on this topic that includes both sides of the Iron Curtain can be found in Oxford Bibliographies: see Schmelz, "Cold War Music."

sic, jazz, rock, and other alternative musics, then, one must also consider pop and modern folk music, music used in churches and religious communities, and traditional music and folklore. All of these genres are outlined below.

If the diversity of genres is one obstacle that hinders a comprehensive understanding of music in the period, the diversity of approaches to the study of music further complicates the topic. To understand the ways in which music may have functioned as cultural dissent, one must obviously examine the social context of each musical genre in question: this includes the study of music's relation to official and non-official institutional structures, its use and status among different social groups, its presence in journalistic discourse of the time, and its characterization in official documents and archival collections. But music can also be examined within its own music-historical context: one can study the technical features of the works and repertory that acquired importance in the period, as well as the traditions and practices of which these were a part. One need not study one context to the exclusion of the other, of course; it is not a question of "either/or." Rather, a combination of approaches extending beyond the binary suggested here can yield the greatest insights. For one must acknowledge that the study of music during Socialism involves realms that seemingly had little to do with music: for example, music could be found across multiple departments within a regime's cultural apparatus, including radio, television, film, education, sport, as well as, of course, in music departments. And what was banned in one department may have been tolerated in another. The fact that music was not (and is not) a discrete entity but rather a network of practices—not to mention that it is essentially intangible—necessitates such consideration of the multiple contexts in which it operated.

The outline of musical genres below is neither comprehensive nor detailed: the diversity of practices within individual genres, the geographical size of Eastern Europe, and the length of the socialist period all frustrate any concise summary. These genre descriptions serve only as a general overview; divergent examples can always be found. For this reason, the two case studies that follow are especially insightful. They provide specific examples of individual musical practices in particular locations at particular times. Only such specificity can fashion a nuanced picture of music and cultural dissent in socialist countries, for it is not infrequently true that individual case studies challenge the myths and clichés of music under communist regimes. The first case study, on classical music in Poland, provides one example: although many composers were excluded from concert life because of their personal styles, political concern for the threat of classical music diminished after 1956; shortly after, Poland became known for hosting one of the leading festivals of avant-garde music in the world, the Warsaw Autumn Festival of Contemporary Music, and several Polish avant-garde composers achieved international fame. Modernist and avant-garde compositional techniques were also prac-

ticed in other countries under communist rule, and socialist realism was hardly the only approach to newly composed music.³

Classical music: In classical music, opposition to communism and socialist realism often overlapped with opposition to national traditions or conservative styles, so that one must be careful to determine precisely what the object of opposition was. In such cases, opposition could also resemble a generational conflict of young composers against old—both for artistic freedom and for aesthetic prestige. Aesthetics was closely linked to politics in this period, despite any claims of classical music's supposed aesthetic autonomy and notwithstanding the fact that links between the two were sometimes ignored or purposefully obscured.⁴ Indeed, whereas socialist realism in the East knew itself to be political, the ideal of aesthetic autonomy that was dominant among postwar modernist composers in the West believed itself apolitical. But it was not, of course: modernist art was also a part of the battle of political ideologies in the Cold War like its counterpart socialist realism.⁵ One must therefore ask to what extent composers in socialist countries, when they adopted techniques and styles from the West, adopted or recognized also the ideological implications of those techniques and styles. Finally, it must be noted that much classical music was widely perceived as official culture due to government support of classical concert repertoire, opera, ballet, and (the generally more conservative) living native composers. Thus, opposition to classical music itself was a form cultural dissent in the period.

Jazz music: Jazz music originated in the United States, but it also played an essential role in American cultural diplomacy after World War II.⁶ One must therefore compare what jazz meant to musicians and listeners in socialist countries with the social context of jazz in its native land and its image and role in US cultural diplomacy. Generally speaking, the official attitude toward

3 Research by Laura Silverberg on the German Democratic Republic (GDR, or East Germany), for example, shows that support for modernist compositional techniques came from socialists and party members; see Silverberg, "Between Dissonance and Dissidence." Peter Schmelz has done extensive research on modernist practices among composers in the USSR; see Schmelz, *Such Freedom*.

4 On the other hand, one collection underscores the fact that some composers believed that none of the competing aesthetics of the period were given preferential treatment by the authorities; see COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Srdan Hofman's Music Collection", by Zeljka Oparnica, 2017. Accessed: October 09, 2018.

5 The political implications of modernist compositional practices is an area of research that has received a lot of attention in recent musicological literature. A useful overview of recent work can be found in Schmelz, "Cold War Music."

6 Book-length studies of the use of jazz in cultural diplomacy include: von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows up the World*, and Davenport, *Jazz Diplomacy*. For a study looking specifically at Dave Brubeck's 1958 tour of the USSR see Crist, "Jazz as Democracy?" For a recent book on jazz in Europe more generally see: Wasserberger, *Jazz in Europe*.

jazz in socialist countries changed over time—from prohibition to acceptance—and this allowed the emergence of jazz subcultures located in “quasi-official” clubs.⁷ But jazz also inspired independent and alternative cultural activities such as the Prague-based Jazz Section [Jazzová sekce] association, which is examined in detail in the second case study below. As the author of that study notes, the Prague-based Jazz Section “was the most active platform for free and independent culture during the period of ‘normalization’ in Czechoslovakia,” and his study provides insight into the relation between musical practices, socialist authorities, and citizens’ cultural dissent at the time.

Pop and modern folk music: The pop music industry was active in all socialist countries, but it was carefully controlled by government authorities.⁸ Influential styles and groups from the West, such as “rock and roll” and The Beatles, were initially underground and had illegal status. The influence of The Beatles, in particular, is hard to overstate: according to one observer, “they destroyed communism. More than Gorbachev, by the way, they changed the Soviet Union.”⁹ But The Beatles and other groups were later incorporated, mostly in diluted forms, into the socialist mainstream. Critical views on life under socialist regimes were expressed through song texts and musical styles in a variety of alternative pop music genres. The critical folk music inspired by Bob Dylan and Vladimir Vysotsky, for example, played a significant role in socialist countries. The songs of iconic figures such as Czech émigré Karel Kryl, though not published or broadcast in local media, reached a wide audience through illicit tape recordings and broadcasts on Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty.

Rock and other alternative music: A robust spirit of protest, one that mixed both political opposition and generational conflict, can be found in rock, heavy metal, punk, and other genres of alternative youth music. These genres were often forbidden, were generally not promoted, or were only occasionally tolerated in a restricted form in the East. Such music served as a vehicle for many forms of dissent among younger people; for this reason, it is also discussed in the chapter on “Youth Subcultures” in this handbook. But it is very much a part of the story of *music* as oppositional culture during socialism. Punk, in particular, is a genre that was seen as being especially subversive and is represented in several collections.¹⁰

7 A notable exception to this can be seen in Romania, where the official rejection of jazz lasted until the 1980s; see COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[Cornel Chiriac and Fans of Alternative Music Ad-hoc Collection at CNSAS](#)”, by Manuela Marin and Cristina Petrescu, 2018. Accessed: October 09, 2018.

8 For a general overview see Ryback, *Rock Around the Bloc*.

9 See Heßler, “Das Politische,” 207.

10 See, for example, the COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[Polish Punk Collection by Anna Dąbrowska-Lyons](#)”, by Xawery Stanczyk, 2017. Accessed: August 17, 2018.; and the COURAGE Registry,

Music in church and religious communities: Churches and religious communities were centers of cultural opposition *sui generis*, and the practice of liturgical music was subject to monitoring and persecution, especially for those of the lay community involved in it. Contemporary Christian music, which boomed after the Second Vatican Council, is the most important paraliturgical genre of the period. The composition, performance, and reception of this music in (not only Catholic) religious communities was a part of their alternative culture. Archive collections document the smuggling from abroad of songbooks and other materials not approved by the authorities, and their dissemination throughout the communities.¹¹

Traditional music and folklore: These were present in most socialist countries, but they generally did not offer space for opposition because they were made, following the Soviet model, as an instrument of official cultural policy and representation. Indeed, traditional music and folklore provide an example of the concrete effects of Socialism on musical genres: the arrangements of folklore material for symphony orchestras is one example of the appropriation and institutionalization of folk material by the ruling authorities. On the other hand, there are examples of the mixture of folklore with Western music, as in the *Noroc* Vocal-Instrumental Ensemble in Moldovian SSR, which was seen by authorities as “subversive” and therefore dissolved.¹² Additionally, the traditional music and folklore of ethnic minorities could acquire the status of oppositional culture: in the Baltic lands of the USSR and among the Hungarians in Romania and Slovakia, for example, cultural activities including music and folklore were inseparably linked with political opposition and national resistance.¹³

Classical Music in Poland

Following the Second World War, and in particular as a result of the material losses associated with German Occupation, the destruction of the Warsaw Uprising, and the human migration that resulted from redrawn borders and forced displacement, classical music in Poland needed to be rebuilt and reorganized. As the capital’s avenues and monuments were reconstructed brick-

s.v. “[Black Hole Underground Club](#). Nagy, Gyula Private Collection”, by István Pál Ádám, 2018. Accessed: August 17, 2018. (forthcoming).

11 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[Brethren of Unity Baptists](#)”, by Yvetta Kajanová, 2018. Accessed August 17, 2018. (forthcoming).

12 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[Noroc Collection at AOSPR Moldova](#)”, by Andrei Cusco, and Cristina Petrescu, 2018. Accessed August 17, 2018. (forthcoming).

13 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[Folk Dance House Archives](#)”, by Gabriella Vámos and Katalin Juhász, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018. (forthcoming).

by-brick, the major institutions of the interwar were reconstituted. Already in 1945 the Music Department of the Polish Radio was reestablished, with classical pianist Władysław Szpilman at the helm of the Light Music Division. The Polish Music Publishers (*Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne*, PWM) were founded by musicologist Tadeusz Ochlewski in Cracow, confirming the importance of Poland's two large cities for the dissemination and promotion of classical and popular music through state-funded channels. Across the country, orchestras were reformed, newly established, and reimagined. The new Cracow Philharmonic Orchestra bridged music historical chasms by performing wartime compositions by Grażyna Bacewicz and Roman Palester at a new music festival in 1945. The National Philharmonic—despite the destruction of its hall, the reconstruction of which was only completed in 1955—began performing again in Warsaw, but the radio's preeminent ensemble, the Great Symphony Orchestra of the Polish Radio, was relocated to Katowice, where it remains into the twenty-first century.¹⁴

Classical music's most powerful institution of the Cold War, the Polish Composers' Union (*Związek Kompozytorów Polskich*, ZKP) was founded as part of the efforts to organize the new state: it received pride of place in the capital's rebuilt Old Town, next to other artists' unions and within walking distance of the Ministry of Culture and Art.¹⁵ Since its founding ZKP has functioned simultaneously as: a mediating site between the state and its members; a library and information portal, combined with its own extensive archives to form the Polish Music Information Center in 2001; and a driving force for the contemporary music scene, which I will describe in detail below. During the Stalinist years, the major power brokers of the classical music scene were musicologists and music critics who had built their careers and musical tastes through robust debates around modernism and musical progress in the 1920s and 1930s. Across the pages of the news media, on the waves of the radio, at meetings behind closed doors, and through conferences that included the composers and performers whose activities were under scrutiny, they interfaced with party ideology and wrestled to formulate a vision for the stakes of classical music that would keep it prominent in Polish culture.¹⁶ The classical music world of the People's Republic of Poland as they imagined it was to respond to the historical and contemporary importance of Frederic Chopin for Polish national identity as well as the nebulous framework of socialist realism.

This period of shifting institutional politics and rapid development would eventually be best remembered for the many intrusions on compositional and artistic freedom made through censorship, the real material scarcity (of paper, instruments, food, technology, housing, and employment), and

¹⁴ Thomas, *Polish Music*.

¹⁵ Tompkins, *Composing the Party Line*.

¹⁶ Vest, "Educating Audiences."

the unpredictable scrutiny applied to travel requests. Many composers and musicians were excluded from concert life for their musical styles, but also for their personal and professional networks or as a result of the draconian whimsy of those in control. Some composers, such as Roman Palester, chose to remain abroad and live in exile rather than suffer the roadblocks put in place by boards of officials and colleagues working for the state. Others, like Andrzej Panufnik, fled communism for ideological reasons, despite their relative celebrity and success.¹⁷ They were struck from ZKP's member list, but also criticized by some of those opposing communism for betraying their nation. On the other side of the Iron Curtain, both Panufnik and Palester worked at radio stations (the BBC and Radio Free Europe, respectively) that interrogated the realities of state socialism. Palester's regular radio essays on musical life in Poland and among émigré communities over the next two decades, available in the Polish-language section's physical archives, discussed cultural politics and aesthetic questions as much as they did individual events.

Classical music was most politically vulnerable during Stalinism. There would not be another wave of displacement with such an impact on the classical music community until the anti-Semitic campaigns of 1968 and the imposition of martial law in 1981, though consistently some chose to live and work abroad for personal and financial reasons without articulating political opposition. In fact, during the 1970s and 1980s when nearly the whole gamut of artists—sculptors, filmmakers, playwrights, actors, novelists, poets, documentary journalists, etc.—was formulating the cultural agenda of the opposition to state socialism, the musicians who spoke out would focus their contributions on Stalinism in order to warn younger generations that music, too, was vulnerable to the state apparatus.¹⁸ At the Congress of Polish Culture sponsored and celebrated by the independent trade union known as Solidarity on the eve of the declaration of martial law in 1981, the preeminent composer Witold Lutosławski recalled his explorations of modernist compositional techniques in private and between the lines of the incidental music, popular songs, and folk-music inspired compositions he created for the radio's airwaves and ensembles in the immediate postwar years through the Thaw, the relaxation of cultural regulations following Stalin's death through 1956. He implied, but did not state explicitly, that classical music—indeed musical life more broadly—had enjoyed an exceptional position across the arts in communist Poland and across the Warsaw Pact more generally after this early clamp-down came to an end. Indeed, Poland's contemporary music scene enjoyed visible state support and promotion that put Warsaw on the map as an important meeting site between Soviet-bloc composers and their colleagues in Yu-

17 Tompkins, "Composing for and with the Party"; Wejs-Milewska, "Roman Palester's 'The Marysas Conflict'."

18 Bohlman, "Lutosławski's Political Refrains."

goslavia, Latin America, western Europe, and North America—and to some extent East Asia and India.

At the Warsaw Autumn Festival of Contemporary Music, which was founded in 1956 and held annually from 1958 except during martial law, new works across avant-garde agendas were performed, scores were exchanged and deposited, friendships and artistic collaborations were formed over long wine receptions, and the Polish intelligentsia filled the city's concert halls, cheering and booing musical experimentation and new music technologies.¹⁹ Likewise, composers and performers were given passports to travel and participated in international exchanges, working always in transnational networks. Classical orchestras, opera companies, soloists and chamber ensembles enjoyed less mobility than composers as they were routed more often along cultural diplomacy exchange routes to the east. But they, too, received support and were put in the spotlight, for example at one crown jewel of the competition circuit, the International Frederic Chopin Piano Competition, which attracted the world's top pianists while celebrating the importance of Poland's most celebrated musical figure. Occasionally, foreign musicians would boycott these concerts and festivals in response to geopolitical flashpoints.

In other words, after 1956, in debates within the Party's Central Committee, ZKP, and among artists outside of official forums, a political concern for classical music's political threat fell away as did the dreams of socialist realism. Music's presumed lack of semantic meaning shaped a logic that would generally keep scores and concert programs off the Censorship Bureau's desks throughout the remaining 34 years of the People's Republic.²⁰ Before the 1980s, musicians lost employment for refusing to trumpet the Party line only on a few occasions. Instead, it was music critics and radio personalities like Stefan Kisielewski, Piotr Wierzbicki, and Zygmunt Mycielski, who, as members of the Union of Polish Writers, underwent the most scrutiny and censorship, the details of which are held in their now-published personal diaries. Many critics would end up representing the interests of the music community in the late 1970s and 1980s as a result of this consistent manipulation of their words in print. Others were vulnerable for reasons independent of their work: the anti-Semitic campaign in 1968 resulted in several musicologists losing their university posts. Their students would continue to learn at seminars held out of their homes, developing a scholarly community that would be echoed on a much larger scale by the networks of the Flying University, a covert series of seminars in Poland's university towns that explicitly had an anti-government agenda from 1977 until 1981.

The composers Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, Witold Lutosławski, and Krzysztof Penderecki in particular achieved international acclaim as a result

¹⁹ Jakelski, *Making New Music*.

²⁰ Bohlman, "'Where I Cannot Roam.'"

of the support for music. The archives of the Polish Radio and the National Audiovisual Institute, including its online portal ("Ninateka") contain invaluable interviews, work commentary, and historical recordings of this trio and their composer colleagues. The ZKP was also able to maintain its own archive outside the control of both the Ministry of Culture and Art and the Communist Party: the recordings, scores, and books it holds are a witness to the international exchange it facilitated and a nearly complete record of new music making in the People's Republic; these holdings also track important debates about contemporary life that include strong critiques of state socialism, for example in the transcripts of the union's general meetings. Regrettably the archives of Polish Radio's Experimental Studio (1957–85), a hotbed for electronic and electroacoustic composition in the Eastern Bloc, were diffused into private hands in the early twenty-first century. However, a network of artists and musicians, primarily through the B&H Label, have begun remastering and releasing these audio materials to make them accessible. Across these sounding archives, national symbols (patriotic songs as well as stories derived from nineteenth-century nationalist texts) and the importance of the Roman Catholic faith are audible, revealing that despite their relative artistic freedom and repeated proclamation that music and politics are chalk and cheese, some artists turned to their craft to write counter to the history celebrated in official narratives and to cultivate musical languages steeped in personal faith in a secularized everyday. As musical subcultures like the blues, sung poetry, and cabaret offered musicians the opportunity to shape community out of shared oppositional politics, the Early Music scene in particular—in part because of its historicist bent—became associated with countercultural attitudes that rejected socialist modernity in the 1960s and early 1970s.

The mobilization of the opposition to state socialism through the final 12 years of the Cold War, with the 1977 formation of the Workers' Defence Committee (KOR), the 1978 election of Pope John Paul II, and, finally, the successful legalization of the Solidarity Independent Trade Union, also called musicians to action, though few were in vocal leadership positions.²¹ Many took part in events as personal favours to friends or as private citizens. The music critic Tadeusz Kaczyński formed the Traugutt Philharmonia, a mixed student and professional ensemble that explicitly aligned itself with the opposition, performing historical reviews in unofficial spaces, such as churches and private homes. The special collections of the University of Warsaw Library contain a record of his organizing; these are housed in the Music Department as well as in the Ephemera Department, the latter of which has materials related to student life in the capital. State-supported ensembles formed their own subdivisions of the Solidarity Union: most often these took action by organizing informal concerts to collect aid for political prisoners. Their surveillance

21 Bohlman, "Solidarity."

files are held among those of the Security Service (SB) at the Institute of National Memory (IPN), but also in these institutions' own historical records.

Through the decade's euphoric highs and violent lows, composers indicated their allegiances with commemorative dedications and by signing open letters to be published in official press and in second circulation (*drugi obieg*).²² The Warsaw-based Committee on Independent Culture published the journal *Independent Culture* (Kultura Niezależna), the unofficial periodical that paid the most heed to musical performances and labor issues. Given the relative stylistic freedom they experienced, classical musicians found means beyond the score to articulate dissent. Performers took to the stage in Solidarity – the Baltic Opera, for example, performed a concert at the Lenin Shipyards during the occupational strikes in the 1980s that led to Solidarity, but they also stood down in acts of solidarity. When martial law was declared in 1981, screen and stage actors spearheaded a boycott of state media and stages: soprano Stefania Woytowicz and violinist Wanda Wilkomirska explicitly took part. Many others—like Witold Lutosławski, who also was an active conductor—simply did not perform. Even though they did not officially articulate this refusal as a boycott, it was embraced as such in oppositional circles. Lutosławski, for example, was a member of the Culture Council of the new government immediately (and admittedly briefly) upon its formation by Tadeusz Mazowiecki.

The most powerful evidence of the importance of classical music for the opposition is not in the biographies of its authors and musicians, but in its consistent presence across the sound archives at the European Solidarity Centre, Radio Free Europe, and the KARTA organization, suggesting the importance of classical music and musicians at large-scale events organized by the opposition. Art music repertory flanked Radio Solidarity broadcasts, was integrated into documentary reportages released on Second Circulation cassette labels, and accompanied the theater productions recorded on portable personal recorders. Many personal testimonies of protest culture and diaries by members of the opposition reveal individuals listening to it to pass the time and inspire them. Together these practices portray an oppositional field in which classical music, as a core value within Central European notions of culture, gave political work a broader context and human ethics.

The Prague Jazz Section, 1971–1987

During its existence from 1971 to 1987, the Jazz Section, a voluntary, independent and open amateur organization within the Association of the Musicians of the Czech Socialist Republic, was the most active platform for free

²² Bylander, "Responses to Adversity."

and independent culture in the period of normalization in Czechoslovakia.²³ For the public, the Jazz Section became a representative of non-conformist behavior, and a symbol of resistance against the repressions of the government apparatus of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and its Central Committee. As an organizing and contact center, the Jazz Section remained standing on a legal basis as long as it could and played a decisive role in disseminating alternative culture to the public.²⁴

Although public administration bodies tightened their control over official cultural events after 1968, the Jazz Section was born and obtained a legal status thanks to a short-term relaxation and the slow formation of rules at the turn of the 1960s and 1970s. Officers came and went at the posts in the Ministry of Interior Affairs of the Czech Socialist Republic, and their competence covered the registration of voluntary cultural organizations in a period of massive organizational change in a gradually “normalizing” society. That is one reason why, two years after the submission of a proposal by jazz enthusiasts led by Karel Šrám, they managed to legally register the jazz association in 1971. But it was not constituted in the autonomous form that was intended: The Ministry of Interior Affairs affiliated the new organization to the already existing Musicians’ Association of the Czech Socialist Republic.

Another significant reason for the approval of the jazz organization was the status of jazz music in Czechoslovakia: compared to rock and the emerging beat music (with their rebellious and non-conformist attitude), the more cultivated jazz drew on its dance and entertainment function from the 1930s and, at the turn of the 1960s and 1970s, a so-called third trend—a synthesis of jazz and classical music—started to form (its prominent exponents were Czech composers Pavel Blatný and Alexej Friedl). The free-jazz avantgarde attracted only a small circle of enthusiasts, while the emergence of the jazz-rock revolution with its much larger influence on young audiences from the mid-1970s relaxed conventions and led to the formation of open platforms only later.

In the years 1974 to 1982, the Jazz Section organized eleven annual festivals, the Prague Jazz Days, of which nine took place officially and the last two were prohibited by the Cultural Inspector of the National Committee of Prague (in the case of the 11th Prague Jazz Days, they managed to illegally organize at least so-called “non-public rehearsals” of the foreign participants for a part of the audience). The event included not only professional jazz ensembles but also experimental and avant-garde bands, often formed by amateurs or musicians who did not hold the official permits issued by the Cultur-

23 All publications of the Jazz Section can be found in the collections of the Libri prohibiti in Prague, including the COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Czech Samizdat Collection at Libri Prohibiti”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

24 For more about alternative culture during the period of “normalization” see: Alan, *Alternative Culture*. For more about Jazz Section beginnings in Bugge, see: Motyčka, “Normalization.”

al Committee. The festival became an open platform for diverse musical genres and forms: from traditional and modern jazz up to jazz rock, alternative rock, experimental music, punk rock, and happenings. From the 2nd year of the Prague Jazz Days (1975) onwards, the festival incorporated not only traditional (*ragtime and boogie-woogie*) and modern (*bebop and free jazz*) program blocks, but also a *Jazz Rock Workshop* led by Karel Šrp despite the critical attitude of the older generation of traditional jazzmen in the Jazz Section Committee.²⁵ The official jazz scene did not take part in the preparations of the later Prague Jazz Days because the orientation of the event had moved beyond the scope of their interests. Despite the isolation of the Czechoslovak musical scene, the *Jazz Rock Workshop* managed to react to trends in Europe and reflect them since, with respect to Party ideology, instrumental jazz rock did not appear as problematic to cultural inspectors as the songs of rock bands with their more or less subversive lyrics. This was one of the reasons why a number of jazz rock bands were formed in the mid-1970s, with uniform means of expression and uniform electric sound.

The Prague Jazz Days also presented artistic novelties that were impermissible at other public forums and blurred the boundaries between the professional and the amateur scene, such as the happenings arranged by multi-instrumentalist Jiří Stivín (*First, Spring, Second, Third*, with children riding kick scooters on the stage, or *Biophysical Organ*, with activists blowing into bottles tuned by water, etc.). A lot of the experiments within the festival were based on parody in contrast to the serious performances by jazz rock musicians who, enjoying the status of professional artists, looked down on amateurs. Stivín, a professional regularly collaborating with the management of the Jazz Section, criticized the direction of the festival for its close connection to alternative culture. The number of groups whose expression was an alternative to the uniformity of jazz rock grew yearly. These included Stehlík, formed by guitarist Pavel Richter, and Kilhets, formed by drummer Petr Křečan (the groups' names imply their relatedness: Kilhets is the reverse of Stehlík). While the music of Stehlík was characterized by the timbre and formal articulation of art rock, the principle of spontaneous improvisation applied by the more radical Kilhets came close to the aesthetics of free jazz.²⁶ The structured and unstructured noise fields in the Kilhets productions at the Prague Jazz Days stunned the audience with a ferocity of emotions, and the band members were further unrestrained due to their performance in masks

25 Recordings from the Prague Jazz Days (March 1975) were released on the LP *Jazzrocková Dílna* (Jazzrock Workshop), Panton 1976 and some studio recordings of groups connected with the Jazz Section and the festival on LP *Jazzrocková Dílna 2* (Jazz Q, Impuls, Energit), Panton 1977. Karel Šrp was an employee of the Panton record label and music publishing house. More about musical style development on Prague Jazz Days in Motyčka, "The Jazz-Section."

26 Kilhets live recordings are available on a five-CD box set released as a 30th anniversary edition by Black Point 2008; booklet with photographs and study by Czech composer of contemporary classical and experimental music Petr Kofroň.

(much like the American band the Residents). "One of the basic attributes of the communist regime was the suppression of free thinking [...]—an absolute absence of a mechanism for how to deal with non-conformity and how to institutionalize innovations," recalls Mikoláš Chadima, one of the actors in Kil-hets. "In this sense, the regime was timidly, even ludicrously, conservative. Everything new was suspicious, as if it was hiding an unknown, oblique, unpredictable and, essentially, inimical threat."²⁷ This just-emerging alternative culture, with its emphasis on the spontaneous activities of amateurs and semiprofessionals, was viewed negatively by the government officials working at the district cultural centers. They had to approve all the elements of the cultural productions, from posters, dramaturgy, compering, up to the precise list of compositions and the lyrics of the songs, which the organizers had to submit on behalf of the institute to the cultural committee for opinion. Therefore, a lot of musicians switched to instrumental jazz rock from the mid-1970s onwards to avoid the complications connected with the approval of the lyrics.

A breakthrough work performed at the Prague Jazz Days was the rock operetta called *Milá čtyř viselců* (The Sweetheart of Four Hanged Men) in 1977 by the band Extempore and the improvisational theatre company Paskvil; this performance pointed to a shift in the Jazz Section from jazz rock toward an open artistic platform clearly influenced by Frank Zappa. A naturalistic story of the life of soldiers during the Thirty Years' War was accompanied by rhythmically and expressively multilayered musical planes, with a parody of the realities of "normalization" in Czechoslovakia. The promotional materials presented the performance as a jazz rock opera, though the members of Extempore distanced themselves from this genre because they regarded the form of Czech jazz rock as a spiritless pose of musical craftsmen who had no opinion of their own. Extempore, with its leader Jaroslav Jeroným Neduha (after 1979 its leader became Mikoláš Chadima), presented itself at the festival in subsequent years too. But at the turn of the 1970s and 1980s, it became one of the so-called "banned bands" and the organizers tried to keep their performances secret until the very last moment.²⁸

The uniqueness of the organizing and publishing activities of the Jazz Section laid in the fact that they provided a platform for various novel artistic directions (experimental, psychedelic, minimal, conceptual, world, ethno), for overlaps between music and visual arts, and for the dramatic nature of their musical productions. These things were suppressed by communist cultural doctrines and relegated to the position of the unpermitted, or even officially prohibited, underground. There was a distinctive tension between the underground represented by radicals who made no effort to perform publicly with the permission of the authorities (The Plastic People of the Universe, DG 307,

27 Mikoláš Chadima in an interview with Peter Motyčka (July 2008), in Motyčka, "The Jazz-Section."

28 More about banned alternative groups in Chadima, *Alternativa*.

Aktual, Umělá hmota, etc.) and the alternative scene (Extempore, Švehlík, Kilhets, Žabí hlen, etc.) at the events organized by the Jazz Section. In spite of their shared interests and common enemy, communication between these two worlds was poor. The underground, which was a strictly closed community, even scowled at the Jazz Section and, because the latter tried to legalize their events, regarded it as a kind of collaborator; however, the Jazz Section was also a part of the concerts of musicians who did not have official permission to perform, and it published its own material “semilegally” (justifying such with the claim that it was exclusively for the internal needs of its members—even if it was often printed in thousands of copies).²⁹ In their repeated efforts to ban the activities of the Jazz Section, the authorities pointed out the diversity of their activities unconnected with jazz and music. In this sense, the Jazz Section represented a set of various cultures which had no place in “normalization,” and one of its most significant achievements lay in its contribution to maintaining continuity with global developments: with the jazz rock revolution and the alternative conceptual dramatic programs of the mid-1970s, with punk rock in the early 1980s, and with new wave or minimal music in the mid-1980s.

In 1972, the Jazz Section began its extensive publishing activities by publishing the *Jazz* bulletin for its members. This bulletin documents the Jazz Section’s role as an important mediator of modern artistic movements: while its first issues were dedicated exclusively to jazz, and local jazz artists appeared on their covers, from number 15 (December 1975) onward, the portraits of jazzmen were replaced by non-figurative and abstract sketches by Joska Skalník, a graphic artist closely connected to the Jazz Section. In its last issues, the contents also included articles on the profiles and music of Frank Zappa, the Velvet Underground, the Grateful Dead, Captain Beefheart, the Residents, David Bowie, Devo, Kraftwerk, Phil Manzanera, This Heat, the Woodstock Festival, and the dramatic experiments of Robert S. Wilson. In addition, studies appeared on futurism, minimalism, and Andy Warhol, and a regular column, “Rock Poetry,” brought translations of the lyrics of Tom Waits, the Sex Pistols, and Pink Floyd. The last double-issue, *Jazz* 27/28, was to be printed in July 1980 but appeared only in 1982 due to repressions, and contained the graphic score of *Composition 1960#9* by minimalist composer La Monte Young.

From January 1980, not only books on music but also books on philosophy, modern art and theater, as well as publications on antifascist subjects appeared as part of the *Jazzpetit* series. Another series, *Situace* [Situation] dealt with contemporaneous Czechoslovak visual arts and authors who did not have a chance to present themselves officially. In this way, the Jazz Section brought artistic developments to the generation of the 1970s and 1980s that they would have otherwise discovered, given the realities of the era, only dec-

²⁹ For example, the number of copies of Bohumil Hrabal’s officially banned novel *I served the King of England* in the Jazz Section edition *Jazzpetit* was about 5000.

ades later. These included not only the above-mentioned jazz rock, performance art, happenings, minimal and conceptual art, but also dramatic experiments (the illegal performance of the Living Theatre in October 1980), musical theatre (public listening to Philip Glass and Robert Wilson's opera *Einstein on the Beach* as part of the 9th Prague Jazz Days in 1979), film (a screening of *Easy Rider* directed by Dennis Hopper as part of the 5th Prague Jazz Days in 1977). Some of the jazz musicians raised objections that, despite its intense publishing activities (and the very title of the *Jazzpetit* series), the Jazz Section had not published a single book on jazz. The only exception was a reprint of the first Czech-language book on jazz: *Jazz* by composer Emil František Burian, originally released 1928 in Prague, and the short essay, *Kronika jazzu* (The chronicle of jazz), which figured among the selected works of French writer and jazz publicist Boris Vian (*Boris Vian*, supplement to the *Jazz* bulletin for the internal needs of its members published in 1981). Entries on selected jazz musicians and groups, mainly at the crossroads between jazz and rock (Miles Davis, Weather Report, Terje Rypdal), figured in the three-volume *Rock 2000* (1982–1984) dictionary compiled by publicist Josef Vlček. In fact, there were several books dealing with jazz published by official state publishing houses from the mid-1960s onwards, mainly written by local authors.

Chairman Karel Srp emphasized several times that, in its beginnings, the Jazz Section was a “completely orthodox jazz organization.” It was transformed into the nucleus of Czech alternative culture, creating a free platform for arts and ideas, only in the late 1970s. In January 1978, the Jazz Section became a member of the International Jazz Federation of the International Music Council of UNESCO, and its representatives made use of this international acceptance at the time of the first repressions at the turn of the 1970s and 1980s. It was thanks to its connectedness to international structures in the subsequent period (on July 20, 1984, the Ministry of Interior suspended the activities of the Association of the Musicians of the Czech Socialist Republic and, through that, also the Jazz Section; the organizing and publishing activities of this period were classified in subsequent legal proceedings as illegal business activities) that the Jazz Section managed to organize several petitions in support of its persecuted members and cultural events at international forums, and foreign observers and journalists participated in its legal proceedings (including even the representatives of Amnesty International, for the first time in Eastern Europe). However, by that time, the Jazz Section had become an important platform of freedom in “normalized” Czechoslovakia and, with the help of the legal options available at the time, it managed to prevent persecution by government bodies quite successfully. It also managed to resist external pressure until the open legal proceeding against its leaders in 1986–1988.³⁰

30 For more about persecutions and trial with Jazz Section members see: Tomek, “Akce Jazz.” See also the books of Jazz Section members: Srp, *Výjimečné stavy*, and Kouřil, *Jazzová sekce*. There was also an exhibition: Ritter, *Ein schmaler Grat*.

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TAMÁS SCHEIBNER – KATHLEEN CIOFFI

Archiving the Literature and Theater of Dissent: Beyond the Canon

The most famous cultural figures of the dissident movements during the socialist era were, arguably, writers. This is not much of a surprise if one considers the traditional role literature has played in the history of Eastern European nation states and the significance Communist regimes attributed to literature. At the core of the mythologies of anti-communist dissent most often lay a triumvirate: the Polish journalist Adam Michnik, the Czech playwright Václav Havel, and the Hungarian writer György Konrád. They represented a larger group of Eastern European intellectuals who were active in various fields, contributed to several genres, and in the late 1970s, in parallel to their acceptance of the role of the “dissident,”¹ created a discourse of human rights in an alternative public sphere. To the pantheon of these authors, emigré writers like Czesław Miłosz, Milan Kundera, Josef Škvorecký, and Josef Škvorecký are often added, along with Herta Müller and Danilo Kiš, authors not from one of the countries of the Visegrad Four.

Recent scholarship in the field, however, shows that there is a need to revisit this somewhat schematic story and exclusivist canon, but in a way that does not make us lose sight of these prominent figures.² In accordance with the ambitions of the Handbook, this chapter highlights the history of collections representing literary dissent in a broad sense that includes nonconformist theater. The primary focus of the chapter is on practices of the memorialization and (self)documentation of literary dissent and on the process through which these kinds of collections gained recognition by state-financed institutions as part of a cultural heritage to be preserved. In several cases, these processes started well before the regime change, creating a significant gray zone. The introductory overview, which concentrates on poets and writers, will be followed by a case study written by Kathleen Cioffi on a significant collection of materials related to Polish underground theater.

Collections of dissident or non-conformist literature can be clustered roughly into three general categories as far as their founding dates are concerned. In the regular intervals of political thaw under communism, archiving policies also became somewhat more liberal, and it was easier to acquire papers

1 On the invention of “the dissident” see Bolton, *Worlds of Dissent*.

2 See e.g. Kind-Kovács and Labov, “Samizdat and Tamizdat: Entangled Phenomena?”

by authors who had a difficult relationship with the regime. This is not, however, an absolute rule that applies to each of the countries in question to the same degree: from personal ties across the political scenery to guild solidarities or a simple insistence on value-free professionalism, there was a series of factors which motivated archivists to overrule political directives. The social web in many cases created a resistant milieu with no easily identifiable center, and thus it remained difficult to discern and deal with for the state apparatus. A second cluster consists of collections that were made public in the 2000s and 2010s. These collections were founded at a time when most East European states were becoming relatively stable democracies, though their memory politics varied in their emphasis: the states that joined the European Union reclaimed greater recognition as part of a common European history, while post-Soviet states (i.e. states which had become Soviet republics after the end of World War II) put particular emphasis on their cultural independence from Russia. Formerly oppressed patriotic and nationalist sentiments have been driving forces throughout the region up to the present day, but the effects of the recent radicalization of politics cannot be accurately measured yet. Archive holdings established in exile should also be mentioned here. Since these collections are dealt with in a separate chapter in this Handbook, I will limit myself to mentioning the fact that these collections were often transferred to the home country, typically beginning around 2005, when collectors passed away or were too old to continue to tend to the collections, or because of a lack of funding, it was no longer possible to maintain the collections in the country where they had been created. Finally, the archives and collections that usually come to mind in the first place in this context are the ones that were founded shortly after the regime change, during the so-called transitional period. At this time, more resources were devoted to the creation of new archival institutions and to the reorganization of existing archival settings to address the post-socialist heritage.³

Certain types of literatures clearly enjoyed being in the spotlight in Eastern Europe after the regime changes. Among the “archetypes of dissent,” to use a term coined by one commentator, prison and camp literature stands out.⁴ The works themselves are telling, and the kinds of stories they tell are often well-documented in museums and archives throughout the region, from the Baltics to the Balkans. It is not hard to see why. These works involve cases in which politics most dramatically interfered with poetry. The tragedy of the individual is always compelling and easy to relate to: this makes single tragic stories effective vehicles of memory politics and likely to meet with the interest of a wide audience. Authors of literature directly or indirectly reflecting on camp or prison

3 For brief overviews see e.g. Apor, “Museum Policies in Hungary”; Kuutma and Kroon, “Museum Policy in Transition from Post-Soviet Conditions to Reconfigurations in the European Union.”

4 Gruenwald, “Response: Camp Literature: Archetype for Dissent.” See the entire debate: Gruenwald, “Yugoslav Camp Literature: Rediscovering the Ghost of a Nation’s Past-Present-Future”; Oja, “Toward a Definition of Camp Literature”; Hayden, “Using a Microscope to Scan the Horizon.”

experiences could be presented as unambiguous cases in which, at least at first glance, readers do not need to deal with the kinds of complicated questions that arise in cases of authors who integrated into socialist society. Particular attention was given, it seems, to poets who did not survive persecution, including authors who made what have come to be regarded as major contributions to literature and authors who did not. The celebrated Ukrainian poet Vasyl Stus, who gained the title of Hero of Ukraine in 2005, was known up until the late-1980s only among a limited circle of dissenters who read works by him which had been smuggled out of prison camps in samizdat and tamizdat publications. When he died in 1985, he was widely mourned as a martyr of the communist dictatorship in underground and émigré circles.⁵ His reburial in November 1989 in Kyiv marked a significant step towards the political transition, and a rapid canonization process elevated him to the Ukrainian literary pantheon. The Stus family played an active role in furthering this quick and well-deserved acknowledgement: they donated Stus' papers to the T. H. Shevchenko Institute of Literature to give the public better access to a part of his legacy that had been saved, the trials of his life notwithstanding.⁶ The acquisition was initiated at the same time by the philologist Mykhailyna Kotsiubynska, who had belonged to dissident circles during Soviet times and had mentored the poet, and Vasyl Stus' son Dmytro, who also authored a biography on his father.⁷ However, the acquisition only took place after Ukraine had become independent in 1991. Since then, Stus' legacy has been a battleground between the various political groups in a country deeply divided by ethnic, religious, and cultural tensions, a country which now is in the throes of war.

Vasyl Stus provided an example of a poet whose celebration as a martyr opened the gates for his canonization, which could be seen as a retrospective "compensation" for his not being recognized in his time. In contrast to Stus' high status after the fall of the Soviet Union and the emergence of an independent Ukraine, the significance of the poets of the Füveskert ("Grassy garden") in Hungarian literature is less established.⁸ This group of literati was named after a little park in front of the prison chapel. Attila Gérecz, the best known member in the group, was imprisoned in 1950 and released by revolutionaries during the 1956 uprising, only to die a couple of days later in the fighting.⁹ As he had begun to write poetry only two years before he died (while in prison), he did not have time to prove his innovative potential, and even though Gérecz's talent is acknowledged, the poems that survived have not persuaded so far the majority of literary critics of their unique qualities as far as poetic features are concerned. Tibor Tollas, another member of this group, became a leading figure in

5 Pavlyshyn, "Martyrology and Literary Scholarship."

6 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Vasyl Stus Collection](#)", by Orysia Kulick, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

7 Stus, *Vasyl Stus*.

8 Ray and Tollas, *From the Hungarian Revolution*.

9 Hajnal, *A Gérecz-hagyaték*.

Hungarian émigré circles, while others either remained silent for the rest of their lives or started to publish both in exile and, after their rehabilitation, in journals in Hungary. Géza Béri was the only member of the group who was not allowed to publish his book of poetry.¹⁰ Some of his poems contain references to his experiences in prison and so, one could argue, allegorically to the wider world of state socialism. In the absence of direct evidence, however, one can only hypothesize that this might have played a role in the decisions by publishing houses, before the change of regimes, not to publish his works. This group is interesting, however, not so much because of the careers of its members under communism, but rather because of its fate after 1989. The poet-entrepreneur Kamil Kárpáti and his publishing house devoted great energy to making this circle of imprisoned poets famous (and with considerable success), starting with Gérecz, whom he dubbed the “poet of the revolution” and the “martyr poet.”¹¹ The profile of his publishing house was shaped by the Füveskert poets, and in 1992 Kárpáti even established a Gérecz Prize awarded to the best young poet by a committee chaired by Kárpáti each year. This private initiative was taken up in 2002 by the Ministry of Culture, and the Gérecz Prize was turned into a state award. Gérecz achieved cult status, as demonstrated, for instance, by a number of homepages devoted to his poetry, including an online collection of materials related to his life and work, including scanned images of letters and manuscripts, secret police files, and documents of his trial.¹²

Most of the Füveskert poets became noted authors whose works were published eventually, either in Hungary or in émigré periodicals. There is, however, a more hidden part of the European literary heritage: works that, for whatever reason, were never published. A fascinating research project initiated by Ines Geipel and Joachim Walther in 2000 and funded by the Federal Foundation for the Reappraisal of the SED Dictatorship in Germany created an archive of “suppressed literature in the GDR.”¹³ The archive collects and makes available all kinds of manuscripts that remained unpublished, including dramas, prose, and poetry. Followed by a series of public appeals, citizens (mostly writers themselves or their descendants) started to donate relevant materials to the growing archive. Thus, Geipel and Walther, taking advantage of the snowball effect, reached more and more silenced writers and acquired over 70,000 pages of manuscripts.¹⁴ One of the authors was the young Edeltraud Eckert, who was sen-

10 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Géza Béri Papers”, by Tamás Scheibner and Tünde T. Tóth, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

11 Kárpáti, ed., *Gérecz Attila, a költő; Kárpáti, Fehér könyv*. See also Komoróczy, *A szellemi nevelés fórumai*.

12 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “The Gérecz Heritage Digital Archive”, by Tamás Scheibner and Tünde T. Tóth, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

13 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Archives of Suppressed Literature in the GDR”, by Uwe Sonnenberg, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

14 Buchholz, “Von der Ohnmacht unterdrückter Autorinnen und Autoren und der retrospektiven Macht der Archive,” 170–71, 182.

tenced to 25 years in prison in 1950 and was allowed to keep a notebook as a reward in 1953 for her high productivity in forced labor. She wrote 101 poems in the manner of Rainer Maria Rilke until she perished two years later.¹⁵ The objective of the archive is to contribute to the “moral rehabilitation” of authors like her and to provide a better understanding of the entire literary field, which is often identified with socialist realism, but which was much more diverse if one takes underground literature into account.

The initiatives discussed above were successful in large part because of a public mindset which sought a kind of retroactive justice. The actual poetic quality of the texts in these kinds of processes can sometimes play a significant role, but in the final account, in most of the cases in post-1989 Eastern Europe, it has been of secondary importance. Canonization has been driven, rather, by a call for a sort of moral settling of accounts. Whatever the motivations (whether scholarly or private, colored by personal ambitions, business strategies, or a political drive to revisit a troubled past), memorialization is founded on an acknowledgement of an author’s efforts to maintain his or her integrity, moral courage, and personal autonomy in a radically hostile human and material environment.

The most significant archives on cultural opposition and non-conformism in the literary scene are arguably the ones that were started as private initiatives by dissenters themselves, grew into recognized institutions after the regime change, and became state-supported repositories while usually maintaining their NGO status. In this context, Libri Prohibiti, founded by samizdat publisher and signatory to Charter ‘77 Jiří Gruntorád in Prague in 1990, should be mentioned perhaps first and foremost.¹⁶ The archive houses a vast array of collections consisting of tens of thousands of samizdat and tamizdat materials, manuscripts, books, and sound and audiovisual recordings of underground events. Given the prominence of literary figures in Czech and Slovak internal dissidence and exile (of whom Eva Kantůrková, Ivan Klíma, Hana Ponická, Zdeněk Urbánek, Ludvík Vaculík, Jan Vladislav, and then president Václav Havel were founding members of the Society for Libri Prohibiti), the materials relevant to literature and theater are extensive. This calls attention to one of the main distinctive features of Czech samizdat production in comparison with other countries where significant samizdat cultures developed: the large proportion of works of belle lettres among the samizdat publications.¹⁷ The core of the collection was gathered by Gruntorád and his fellow dissidents beginning in the late 1970s. Thanks to their coordinated efforts, they were able to preserve the bulk of the materials despite regular po-

15 Geipel, *Zensiert, verschwiegen, vergessen*, 48–66.

16 See the various collections related to COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Society of Libri Prohibiti”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

17 See Skilling, *Samizdat and an Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe*; Skilling and Wilson, *Civic Freedom in Central Europe*; Goetz-Stankiewicz, *Good-Bye, Samizdat*; Kind-Kovács, *Written Here, Published There*; Machovec, *Views from the Inside*.

lice raids and the imprisonment of some members of the group. The archive is therefore seen by many as a grass-roots collective achievement the value of which is demonstrated by the impressive number of small-scale donations by private citizens even three decades after its establishment. This is a significant difference between this archive and the state archives in the region that are often seen as less secure places for donations of private papers: given the many times that materials in archives were either destroyed in the twentieth century or limitations were put on their accessibility to the public, people became understandably less suspicious of repositories with greater independence from the state. Indeed, the founding principles of Libri Prohibiti include a commitment to institutional independence, which is seen as fundamental if “the citizen’s right of access to information without any hindrance” is truly to be protected as “one of the pillars of democracy.”¹⁸ This is a value shared by other private archives, such as the KARTA Center in Warsaw and the Vera and Donald Blinken Open Society Archives in Budapest, which also have similarly important collections of samizdat, though they are somewhat less relevant to the field of literary history, since the profile of Polish and Hungarian literary samizdat culture is somewhat different.

Institutional independence, however, is not easy to maintain, and most NGOs are still dependent on state subsidiaries. The Artpool Art Research Center, which was made accessible in a downtown Budapest apartment in 1992 and which holds a unique collection in interart genres like visual poetry and sound poetry, lost its municipal and state support in 2014. It was made a separate unit of a large national institution, the Museum of Fine Arts, because this was the only way to ensure its survival.¹⁹ Up to the present day, artist and former samizdat publisher György Galántai’s founding principle of the “active archive,”²⁰ which interconnects archivism and artistic creation with social activism, has not been challenged. This should not, however, tempt us to ignore the fact that the emergence of populist politics all over Europe and “illiberal democracies”²¹ in Eastern Europe poses a considerable threat to both private and public collections that support critical thinking.²²

The majority of archives mentioned so far were established or institutionalized right after the regime change or in the early 1990s. The frequent men-

18 Libri Prohibiti’s *Annual Report 2017*. Accessed October 11, 2018. http://www.libpro.cz/docs/3019-lp-vyrocní-zpráva-2017-en-v01-web_1526402236.pdf

19 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Artpool Art Research Center”, by Balázs Beöthy, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

20 Galántai and Klaniczay, *Artpool*.

21 The classic interpretations of the term remain: Zakaria, “The Rise of Illiberal Democracy”; Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom*. For a critical view on the term, consult Müller, *What Is Populism?*

22 Cultural policies in such states tend to concentrate financial sources to a few selected institutions or personages based on political loyalty, and aspire to take control of primary sources by limiting access to them—instead of launching wide-scale digitization programs. For analyses of Eastern European cases, see Kubik, “Illiberal Challenge to Liberal Democracy”; Kristóf, “Cultural Policy in an Illiberal State”; Wilkin, “The Rise of ‘Illiberal’ Democracy.”

tion of symbolic dates like 1989 or 1992, however, should not obscure the fact that the practice of archiving non-conformist literature has a longer history, and not simply in the sense that private collections had been formed decades earlier. While Libri Prohibiti and Artpool in their origins were indeed closely connected to active opposition to the regime, other collections were preserved within state archives centrally funded and closely supervised by the communist authorities. Arguably, in countries like Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia, several state repositories existed in which the regime changes did not usher in any profound difference in archiving practices. Rather, the political changes brought about changes in public access to the existing collections. One compelling case is that of the eminent Slovak writer Dominik Tatarka, who underwent a transformation from a devoted communist to an outstanding figure of the opposition and a visual symbol of the Prague 1968 revolution thanks to the now famous dramatic photo in which he faces a tank while opening his shirt.²³ Tatarka was banned from publishing in Czechoslovakia from 1969 until 1989, but this did not prevent Marie Krulichová at the Museum of Czech Literature (PNP) from acquiring his correspondence and manuscripts in 1979 and 1981.²⁴ Tatarka could not sell his papers to the Museum directly, but Krulichová and the dissident historian Ján Mlynárik, who was mediating in the deal, managed to find a solution: they used an antiquarian bookseller on Karlova Street, who first purchased the materials from Tatarka, and then the Museum bought them from the bookshop. Krulichová was not only courageous as a state employee who dared collect samizdat authors, she was shrewd as someone who was able to formulate things in a way that appeared acceptable to higher fora.²⁵ On this occasion, she and Mlynárik took advantage of a law in effect at the time: booksellers had to offer literary archival materials for purchase to the Museum. This is how Tatarka, stricken by bad financial conditions, was able to make some money.

One might regard Tatarka's story as atypical, given his former high stance as a communist writer *and* the fact that he was a Slovak favored by Prague intellectual circles. In the very different case of the Czech Catholic poet Jan Zahradníček, however, similar patterns prevailed.²⁶ Zahradníček was imprisoned in 1951 and granted amnesty in 1960, but only so that he would be able to die at his home. A fellow Catholic prison guard and printer Václav Sisel, who was working in the Pankrác Prison print shop at the time, hid and saved his secret manuscripts, which found their way to the Museum during the Prague Spring in 1968. An edition of *Čtyři léta* (Four years) was published the following year, but apart from that, until 1989 Zahradníček's poems were

23 Mlynárik, "Tatarka: Silenced in Slovakia"; Pichler, "Dominik Tatarka."

24 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Dominik Tatarka Collection at the Museum of Czech Literature](#)", by Michaela Kůželová, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

25 Sládek, "Svědectví o několika letech života Marie Krulichové."

26 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Jan Zahradníček Collection at the Museum of Czech Literature](#)", by Michaela Kůželová, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

published only in exile or in samizdat. Nonetheless, the PNP continued to buy his manuscripts, as they had even in the 1950s, when he was in prison. In 1991, Krulichová remembered the many titles that were not included in the yearly reports on acquisitions in order to avoid confrontation with representatives of cultural politics.

With these practices, employees of the PNP effectively supported underground authors or their families. In such cases, however, the people involved were not necessarily or exclusively driven by any kind of oppositional attitude. The Petőfi Literary Museum in Budapest (the Hungarian equivalent of PNP), for instance, started to collect samizdat with the tacit consent of director Ferenc Botka, who was a committed member of the party.²⁷ At the same time, he was committed as an archivist, and he believed that (almost) everything that was published in Hungarian should be preserved—a view that was shared by many employees without regard their political stance. Botka and his colleagues probably believed what Krulichová later put as follows: “This ‘treasure of paper,’ which we have inherited from previous generations, obliges us: we had and have the urge to continue their work and to contribute to the mapping of Czech literature in its entirety.”²⁸ At the same time, this did not mean that Botka was initiating clandestine practices like regular purchase of materials from György Gadó, a member of the democratic opposition and a distributor of samizdat. The arrival of Csaba Nagy to the Department of Manuscripts in 1983 made a real difference in this regard. Nagy himself was a fervent reader of samizdat, and he became a leading expert in Hungarian literature in exile. The personal input of museum professionals and archivists was decisive in such cases.

Alongside archivists and private individuals, two other groups played crucial roles in documenting non-conformist literature: representatives of state apparatuses, such as censorship offices, and social contacts, agents, and officers of the political police. The secret services were very active throughout the region, but in the GDR, Romania, and the member states of the Soviet Union they played even larger roles, not only by exerting control over the societies under their guard via surveillance and state coercion, but also by preserving documents and artifacts of the non-conformist cultural heritage. This was a necessary consequence of the sheer amount of materials they collected and stored. Lithuanian existentialist poet and writer Bronius Krivickas,²⁹ who was killed at a young age by the Soviet security services in 1952,³⁰ is a case in point.³¹ Krivickas was active in the literary scene in the late 1930s and

27 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Samizdat Collection at the Petőfi Literary Museum”, by Tamás Scheibner, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

28 Krulichová, “Přirůstky, o nichž se mlčelo,” 119.

29 Mykolaitytė, “Būtiokėjø apmąstymø metmenys broniaus krivicko prozoje.”

30 Gaškaitė-Žemaitienė, “The Partisan War in Lithuania from 1944 to 1953,” 35.

31 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Bronius Krivickas Collection”, by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

1940s, but he did not have the time to fully blossom as a poet, and by the time the regime fell, he had been long forgotten. He was discovered by the fellow poet and literary critic Virginijus Gasiliūnas in the late 1980s. Part of Krivickas' oeuvre was kept by a woman living in Biržai, where Krivickas had been teaching in a local high school before joining the anti-Soviet partisans in 1945. The other part of his work, however, ended up in the MGB/KGB archives and would have been lost forever had the Party not launched a campaign to discredit the Lithuanian partisan movement. To fabricate evidence of the alleged brutality of the partisans, all related materials were collected from the KGB, including the manuscripts of Krivickas' works, although they were of no use from the perspective of the aims of the project. The materials had been kept in the Communist Party Archives, and they were transferred to the Archives of the Lithuanian Institute of History when the Soviet Union ceased to exist. Today, Krivickas is a canonical poet in Lithuania, who has made his way into the school curriculum. Again, Krivickas's case is not unique. Manuscripts of other persecuted authors had a similar trajectory. It is also suspected that KGB officers took many files home when they retired, as in the case of the photo album documenting the student Romas Kalanta's self-immolation protest in 1972.³²

Certainly, former employees of the secret services were hardly the only people to have played crucial roles in preserving documents of cultural opposition. The primary sources, naturally, were or are the authors themselves and their families. Some did not invest considerable efforts in preserving manuscripts or correspondence, but in many instances an author systematically preserved not only his own papers, but also those of some of his or her acquaintances. Romania, for instance, offers a series of particularly telling examples in this respect, precisely because of the extremely harsh conditions created by the local Communist regime. Under Ceaușescu, any kind of dissident activity was strictly and often brutally punished, so cultural opposition was hardly an option.³³ Even the notion of cultural dissent is difficult to define in this context, and this affects memorialization and the types of collections that were created in the country. Among the relevant collections that survived and were made public, many were assembled by individuals, and collections created by minority figures tend to prevail, partly due to the fact that several archives created by the German and Hungarian minorities enjoy financial support from two states. Church archives also became very significant once they were given forms of compensation for their losses under communism and regained possession of some of the buildings they had owned. The writer and Lutheran priest Eginald Schlattner, for instance, donated his papers to the

32 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Romas Kalanta Collection", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

33 See Petrescu, "Eastern Europe, Central Europe or Europe?," 238; Petrescu, "The Resistance That Wasn't."

Friedrich Teutsch Centre for Dialogue and Culture of the Evangelical Church A.C. in Romania, which became the primary repository of Saxon private papers after the Church regained the Teutsch House in 2000.³⁴ Here and elsewhere, collections like this one started to pour into regional archives, usually after 2000. A modest increase in people's trust in state repositories and the fact the people who owned the collections were aging contributed to this trend, although it greatly varied from country to country. However, many collectors remain suspicious of state institutions in Eastern Europe, even though practice suggests that donating one's private archive to a public one could greatly contribute to one's (re)canonization, as Schlattner's example demonstrates.

The period beginning in the early-1990s is frequently seen as a permanent archival revolution in Eastern Europe which only began to slow in recent years, as restrictions have been put on access to collections and archives in several states, complicated by the situation in the Ukraine, where the undermining of the Russo-Soviet legacy led to greater access to the KGB archives.³⁵ No research environment is more hostile than the one in Moldova, where access to archives documenting the period is very restricted. Under these circumstances, private individuals driven by a sense of solidarity with fellow professionals are trying to deal with the situation by sharing their documents with one another. Literary scholar Petru Negură and historian Igor Cașu were both members of a commission set up in 2010 for the study and evaluation of the local communist regime. Thus, for a short time, they had access to a plethora of archival materials, including KGB files on literary figures from the Archive of the Intelligence and Security Service of the Republic of Moldova (ASISRM), which otherwise is not open to the public. By making these papers accessible to colleagues in their private archives, they perform a great service to the academic community. They also offer an example today of how individuals can resist regimes that aim radically to restrict access to information.³⁶

Despite the difficulties and prevalent distrust, the past fifteen years has born witness to an influx of materials of dissident literature to public archives, materials donated by private individuals, groups of various kinds (visual artists, students, musicians, etc.), and institutions. The creation of the collection of the Belgrade International Theatre Festival is an exemplary case. BITEF, which is still organized every year, was founded in 1967 in accordance with Tito's "non-alignment policy": it was an eminent propaganda event of the regime to show how open-minded Yugoslav culture policy was. It was indeed a very significant event for avant-garde performing arts in Europe, where

34 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Eginald Schlattner Collection at Teutsch Haus Sibiu](#)", by Cristina Petrescu and Corneliu Pintilescu, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

35 E.g. Jones, "Unearthing Soviet Secrets in Ukraine's Archives."

36 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Petru Negură Private Collection](#)", by Andrei Cusco and Cristina Petrescu, 2018; COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Igor Cașu Private Collection](#)", by Andrei Cusco and Cristina Petrescu, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

theater companies from East and West could meet.³⁷ A conservative turn in the early-1970s resulted in increased surveillance by the secret services, but BITEF still managed to preserve its relatively liberal character and successfully resisted excessive Soviet attempts to influence its programs. The bulk of the materials was transferred to the Historical Archives of Belgrade in 2004 by Jovan Ćirilov, the director at the time, who was motivated by the desire to find a safe place for the collection, where it would not be destroyed and would remain accessible to anyone interested.³⁸

The BITEF collection reminds us that it is wise to maintain a certain flexibility when cultural opposition or the literature of dissent is discussed, as neither of these two things can be given a precise definition applicable to all times and geographical locations. It is always the given context and research questions that are decisive regarding such issues, and one needs to assume that there will be a large “gray zone,” given the complicated matrix of political, institutional, and personal relationships. Even within one oeuvre, certain works could harmonize with the given state’s cultural policy, while others were changed, sometimes slightly, sometimes drastically, by the censors, and some were never published. The Lithuanian poet Antanas Miškinis made his peace with the regime³⁹ when he returned from Siberia in the late 1950s. He was allowed to publish some of his writings, but not the works he had written during his time in Siberia, which were only published after 1989.⁴⁰ In the GDR, Brigitte Reimann, who favored some kind of socialist humanism, criticized the regime for not meeting its own standards: she was published, but in censored versions.⁴¹ It is important to note that the official cultivation of her memory was started by the Neubrandenburg Literary Center, which was established in the 1970s as the first institution of its kind in East Germany. It was charged with the task of promoting regional literary legacies.⁴² Literary centers like the one in Neubrandenburg, with an interest in cultivating regional authors, often had a role in preserving the heritage of a writer, even if s/he was not a flagship author, but rather belonged to the gray zone.

Processes of archiving, memorialization, and canonization do not always overlap, but it is still worth mentioning some changes on the *moyenne durée* which further explains the recent interest in dissident literature and, in par-

37 See Dasgupta, “BITEF.”

38 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “BITEF Collection”, by Jacqueline Nießer, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

39 See Rubavičius, “A Soviet Experience of Our Own,” 92–93.

40 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Antanas Miškinis Collection”, by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

41 On Reimann’s complicated “double life,” see especially Bircken and Hampel, *Als habe ich zwei Leben*; Braun, “Bücher Waren Ihr Alltag, Schreiben War Ihr Leben”; Hampel, *Wer Schrieb Franziska Linkerhand?*

42 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Brigitte Reimann Archive”, by Uwe Sonnenberg, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

ticular, political poetry.⁴³ In the 1990s, when optimism about the future of liberalism was at its height, political poetry abounding in references to the specific contexts of State Socialism began to seem largely inadequate.⁴⁴ After a relatively short period, during which a market for previously banned and samizdat works emerged, literary cultures in the new democracies did not place great emphasis on the political, at least not in the sense as they had in the 1980s underground. No doubt, literary groups competing for dominance clashed over resources and institutions, and they publicly contrasted their political visions and the diverse traditions on which they intended to rely. Aesopian language, however, no longer had a thrilling effect on the reader, and over-sophisticated systems of political references did not engage a slowly shrinking audience. While in some countries an attempt was made to reclaim the romantic status of the poet as a spokesperson for the people pointing at social issues, literary criticism tended to give preference to highly elaborated self-referential poetic languages inspired by the neo-avant-garde and playful representations of transitional identities. In an epoch defined by the umbrella-term “postmodern,”⁴⁵ not all formerly celebrated nonconformist “political poets” were forgotten or displaced, but works were favored that demonstrated an obvious potential for addressing issues of universal or transhistorical experiences. This trend is tangible in the reception of eminent poets such as Zbigniew Herbert and György Petri. As Coetzee argued right after the regime change, the canonical position of Herbert was best ensured by the “political” poems that could be read as a reflection on the eternal conflict between the individual and the tyrant or on the mechanisms of power,⁴⁶ while pieces with less detached references to the political reality of Polish Communism were expected to lose their privileged canonical position. The devaluation of Petri’s congenial book of political poems, published originally in samizdat as *Örökkét-fő* (Eternal Monday), was perhaps even more spectacular in the 1990s. In today’s Eastern Europe, however, such more direct political poems seem to regain their vitality as parables and allegories of contemporary situations.

In recent years, another factor has given extra fuel to the aforementioned boom of establishing and opening up collections of dissident culture: techni-

43 Gömöri, “Édes hazám”; Bárány, “My Sweat Homeland.”

44 In Poland, the status of the writers was shaken by a series of other factors too, largely because of their tense relationship with worker leaders of Solidarność. See Tighe, “Polish Writers and the Transition from Socialist ‘unreality’ to Capitalist ‘Reality.’” Tighe saw a complicated battlefield including conflicts between generations, while Bolecki presented a more gradual flow of an “unfolding democracy.” See Bolecki, “The Totalitarian Urge vs. Literature.”

45 See Calinescu, “Romanian Literature”; Iovine, “Bulgarian Literature after the Revolution”; Stoicheva, “Post-1989 Bulgarian Literary Theory and Criticism”; Kirss, “Circumnavigation and Transplantation”; Silenieks, “Decolonization and Renewal of Latvian Letters”; Kvietkauskas, *Transitions of Lithuanian Postmodernism*. For a particularly interesting case study that connects dissident antipolitics and the post-socialist literary canonization, see Horváth, “The Cultural (Un)Turn in Hungarian Literary Scholarship in the 1990s.”

46 Coetzee, “Zbigniew Herbert and the Figure of the Censor.”

cal advances that allow the digitization of manuscripts without much effort. This has allowed open access to the papers of Danilo Kiš for the public at the Archives of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, where visitors can consult the digitized versions,⁴⁷ and it has enabled the creation of online archives such as the one documenting the International Festival of New Theater Eurokaz created by Croatian theater professional Gordana Vuk⁴⁸ and Zofia Łuczko's digital repository of the heterogeneous Polish artist group of the 1980s Pitch-in Culture.⁴⁹ The future of the cultural heritage of dissent in Eastern Europe perhaps lies in the hands of those individuals who find ways to get their collections digitized and shared. The ethos of amateurism (not to be confused with dilettantism), which was very important for individuals fighting a regime of cynical technocrats under late socialism, might gain new relevance today. If private initiatives find an established institutional partner which provides technology and assistance in the process, the result will be as significant and spectacular as the online archive introduced by the following case study on the Alternative Theater Archive.

Case Study: Archiwum Teatru Alternatywnego

The alternative theater movement in Poland was, throughout its thirty-five-year history (1954–89), intimately connected with politics. From the movement's inception in the mid-1950s Thaw, participants judged their efforts not only by the standards of art but also by whether they were succeeding in becoming the "life breath of the epoch," in the words of a member of the *Studencki Teatr Satyryków* (Student Satirists' Theater).⁵⁰ The movement's ability to fulfill this role waxed and waned with political trends in the country. As the Thaw gave way to what was called in Poland the *mała stabilizacja* (small stabilization) of the 1960s, censorship got stricter, and the theaters' ability to undertake politically engaged performance was curbed. However, the events of 1968—including government repression of student-led protests, an anti-Semitic propaganda campaign, and the invasion of Czechoslovakia—eventually resulted in a theater movement which was even more closely connected to the political climate in the country. Starting in around 1970, the movement began to define itself as a site of resistance to the regime and a space of freedom and truth.

47 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Danilo Kiš Collection](#)", by Sanja Radović, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

48 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Gordana Vnuk Collection](#)", by Lidija Bencetić, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

49 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Pitch-in Culture Archive](#)", by Patrycja Kruczkowska and Xavery Stanczyk, 2018. Accessed: October 11, 2018.

50 Jarecki, "Warszawski STS," 422.

The Archiwum Teatru Alternatywnego (Alternative Theater Archive) collects material that relates to the 1970s and 1980s stage of the alternative theater movement. During this period, these theaters, most of which were originally funded by student organizations and called “student theaters,” lost their university sponsorship and were placed under the auspices of various professional state entities. They began call themselves “alternative theaters,” and they reached their heyday, both artistically and as a form of protest. The theaters also started to attract scholarly attention, particularly from sociologists such as Jeffrey Goldfarb, whose book about Polish student theaters in the 1970s was called *The Persistence of Freedom*, and Aldona Jawłowska, who argued in her book *Więcej niż teatr* (More than theater) that the movement amounted to a countercultural and oppositional lifestyle.⁵¹ The theaters themselves varied in their levels of political engagement. Members of some of the theaters identified their primary purpose as fighting against the regime rather than devising performances. Some of them were individually involved in oppositional work with the Komitet Obrony Robotników (Workers’ Defense Committee, KOR) and, later, with Solidarity. But others were more interested in making art and saw theater as a way to escape politics rather than engage in it.

The ATA was started in early 2009 through the initiative of Zbigniew Gluza—a journalist, editor, publisher, and the president of the KARTA Center Foundation—together with Dorota Buchwald, currently the director of the Instytut Teatralny im. Zbigniewa Raszewskiego (Zbigniew Raszewski Theater Institute) but at that time the manager of the Theater Documentation Department of the Theater Institute, a department which had originally been maintained by the Actors’ Union. Gluza was an opposition activist in the 1980s and had been a participant in the alternative theater movement when he was a student in the 1970s. During the Martial Law period (December 1981–July 1983), among other works he wrote and edited for underground publications (including the underground newspaper *Karta*), he published a book about one of the alternative theaters, Teatr Ósmego Dnia (Theater of the eighth day). This book, entitled *Ósmy Dzień* (Eighth day), was published in the so-called second circulation (i.e., the Polish underground press) in 1982.

In 2009, Gluza wrote a letter to his former alternative theater compatriots asking for them to contribute to the archive. The letter, which remains posted on ATA’s website, reads in part, “It has been twenty years since the transformation, after which many of you left the stage. But this, perhaps paradoxically, does not weaken, but rather reinforces the meaning of the proposed venture. It is not only about the theater, but about the energy of alternative life, which in the PRL [Polish Peoples’ Republic] was unique on the stage. Your, sometimes brilliant, works of art were not only an artistic creation, but also a construction of reality in which an independent social life could manifest it-

51 Goldfarb, *The Persistence of Freedom*; Jawłowska, *Więcej niż teatr*.

self." Gluza may have initially intended for the Alternative Theater Archive to be another of several archival collections that the KARTA Center Foundation curates or co-curates. However, in the end the ATA instead became a separate part of the Raszewski Theater Institute's Archives. Nevertheless, Gluza contributed items from his own personal archive to the ATA, including a copy of his book *Ósmy Dzień*.

From its beginning to the present, the curator of the collection has been Agnieszka Kubaś, in 2009 still a graduate student studying with Lech Śliwonik, a professor and scholar at the Aleksander Zelwerowicz National Academy of Dramatic Arts in Warsaw who specializes in alternative theater.⁵² Kubaś has undertaken the structuring of the archives and the selection of the twelve theaters featured in the collection. The archive contains materials related to those theaters as well as articles and books that concern the theater movement in general. She has also overseen the partial digitization of the materials and has made them available to the public. There are plans to digitize more fully the material contained in the archives in the future, but currently, full access to the ATA is only possible in person at the Documentation Department and Reading Room of the Theater Institute. Moreover, not all items are catalogued on the website, especially a great many of the press clippings the archive owns. To look at certain items in the collection, a researcher must get permission from the Directorate and/or the person who deposited the item due to privacy issues.

The core of the collection consists of materials that had already been acquired by the Documentation Department of the Raszewski Theater Institute or, before that, by the Documentation Department of the Actors' Union. These materials have been supplemented by gifts from the editorial department of the monthly theater publication *Dialog*; the Polish branch of the International Theater Institute (ITI); private individuals who are former and current members of alternative theaters; theater historians and scholars; and people who were active in student clubs, galleries, and the student press during the period in question. Donations have consisted of items such as the statutes of the theaters; letters to and from official government agencies; scripts or portions of scripts submitted to censors; programs, booklets, flyers, postcards, tickets, illustrated cards, and catalogues of student theater festivals printed by the theaters themselves; press clippings and interviews from newspapers and magazines; some original typescripts of reviews; photographs; posters; and audiovisual recordings. In 2011, the ATA began to conduct an oral history project as part of which key members of the alternative theater movement were interviewed; the tapes from this project are also available.

Some of the theaters have a lot of material on deposit at the archive and others have a much smaller number of items. In some cases, the theaters themselves only existed for a few years, and therefore there is not as much to col-

⁵² I am grateful to Agnieszka Kubaś for answering emailed questions and providing me with additional information about the ATA that is not on the website.

lect as in the cases of others. For example, Teatr Pleonazmus, an extremely influential student theater company in the early 1970s, only existed for four years. Nevertheless, either because their performances were less overtly political or because they had their own unique performance style (different from other student theaters at the time), there was a great deal written about them during their short existence and immediately after. The page of the ATA website devoted to Pleonazmus's bibliography contains twenty-one items, including one full book devoted to them. The collection—much of which was donated by Maria Baster-Grzaślewicz, one of the Pleonazmus actresses—also contains photographs of three of their six productions (including photographs of a rare outdoor performance of their play *Szłość samojedna* [Comings and goings, 1972]), programs, informational booklets, a recording of an interview with actor Wojciech Szulczyński, and other varia.

However, in other cases when the theaters existed for a much longer period of time, there appear to be lacunae in the collection. For example, in the part of the archive devoted to Teatr Kalambur (Pun Theater)—a group which was influential both as a student theater itself and as an organizer of theater festivals—there are only five entries on the bibliography page (four books and one article). There also do not appear to be any pictures or posters relating to their most famous and acclaimed production, *W rytmie słońca* (In the Rhythm of the Sun, 1970), although at least one of the books does include a couple of photographs of this production as well as a fragment of the script. On the other hand, there are interesting documents in the collection relating to Kalambur's hosting of international theater festivals in the 1970s and 1980s and the group's change in status from "student theater" to "professional theater."

The archive contains many more items relating to Teatr Ósmego Dnia, probably the theater in this movement that is the most well-known outside of Poland. The Ósemki (Eighths), as they are affectionately known in Poland, decided in 1968 "to make a theatre relevant to people living here and now, a theatre that would deal with everyday problems, with the simple facts of political and social reality."⁵³ Because of this decision, in the 1970s and 1980s they were subjected to continual surveillance and harassment by the security services, and for a time, their performances were banned from official venues. Four members of the theater company who joined in the early 1970s are still actively involved in the theater today, and the company has donated many items to the archive. The archive contains official correspondence between members of Teatr Ósmego Dnia and the Ministry of Culture, along with other official documents, as well as programs, photographs, posters, films, and informational booklets. In addition, there is a bibliography of publications which contains five complete books and ten articles. Among the items in the collection is the aforementioned book by

53 Cioffi and Ceynowa, "An Interview with Director Lech Raczak," 82.

Zbigniew Gluza published in the underground, as well as another one he wrote about the theater, *Ósmego Dnia*, published by the KARTA Center Foundation in 1994.

One of the most complete collections is the one donated by the late Wojciech Krukowski (1944–2014), artistic director of Akademia Ruchu (Academy of Movement) theater, and his widow, Jolanta Krukowska, an actress with the theater. Akademia Ruchu was founded by Krukowski in 1972, and the company's activity ranged from outdoor street actions and workshops and improvisational "interventions in reality" conducted with audience members to indoor productions of movement-based yet decidedly un-dance-like performance art pieces. Because Akademia Ruchu often collaborated with common people, introducing them to the arts as a way of expressing their frustrations with the regime, they were regarded as rather dangerous, particularly when they worked with workers and workers' children. Many of their activities, for example, were banned during the Martial Law period. Their indoor performance art productions, however, were somewhat more difficult to censor, as they were based on movement and imagery, not text. The materials they donated to the ATA consist of photographs and audiovisual recordings of both Akademia Ruchu's street actions and their indoor performances; the company's own texts and notes (transcriptions of the rehearsal process) of Wojciech Krukowski; materials collected by the Security Service on Akademia Ruchu and Wojciech Krukowski; short publications issued under the AR Publishers imprint (e.g. Piotr Rypson, *Mail Art, czyli sztuka poczty* [Mail Art, or the art of the post], 1985; Józef Robakowski, *PST! czyli Sygnia nowej sztuki* [PST! or sygnia of new art], 1989); and materials on the activities of several community organizations associated with Akademia Ruchu—the Akademia Ruchu Theater Center, the Association of Friends of Akademia Ruchu, Cinema/Theater/Rainbow, and the Cora Cultural Center. In addition, the Akademia Ruchu collection also contains some books and articles by and about the theater.

In conclusion, the ATA is an excellent resource for researchers working on alternative theater in Poland, and it will become increasingly useful as further items are donated, more oral history recordings are made, and the cataloguing becomes more complete and digitized. Currently, the collection is valuable both for those interested in avantgarde theater as an aesthetic phenomenon and for those interested in the intersection of theater and politics. If the archive succeeds in getting all or most of the collection digitized and online, it will be invaluable both for Polish scholars and scholars around the world.

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The Protean Nature of Communist Censorship: The Testimony of Collections

Functions of Censorship under Socialism

Various forms of censorship exist in all authoritarian and totalitarian regimes as a vital element of their power mechanisms. The communist governments of former Eastern Bloc countries (Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the GDR, Hungary, Poland and Romania) and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY)—all created and maintained various instruments for restricting press freedom and freedom of expression in general. The constitutions of all these countries declared the freedoms of speech and the press. However, as the Constitution of the Soviet Union (and all of its “Republics”) clearly stated these freedoms could only be used for the consolidation and advancement of the socialist order.¹ The notorious Article 133, section 1 of the Criminal Law of the SFRY (*Službeni list SFRJ*, no. 40/77) made it crystal clear that any criticism that encourages dissatisfaction with the regime would be punished with “a term of imprisonment of one to ten years.”² In the Soviet Union, deportation from two to five years could also be added.

The mechanism of control was basically similar in each of these countries. The Communist Party, hand in hand with security services, acted as the brain of the system. The orders and directions for the control of the media came from the Central Committee, and all the components of the censorship machine were subordinated to the Party, directly or indirectly. In Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Hungary and East Germany control and supervision were exerted indirectly through various ministries, committees and councils. The details of the system, the instruments of executing censorship and the limits of press freedom varied considerably. What was forbidden and what was permitted also varied by time and country. However, questioning the legitimacy of the socialist order and the leading role of the Communist Party in society, as well as publishing anything that could be interpreted as criticism of the Soviet Union was forbidden throughout the Eastern Bloc.

1 Lauk, “Practice of Soviet Censorship,” 30.

2 Jovičević, “Censorship and ingenious dramatic strategies,” 248.

Research on Censorship in Central and Eastern European Countries

Critical research on the ruling political and social order was impossible for the scholars working under communist regimes. They had no access to any information the authorities had not already filtered, and certainly not to numerous secret documents of the Party, the security services or the censorship offices. Censorship was a taboo topic for both researchers and public, unless examined exclusively from the historical perspective. Therefore, only scholars from the West could publish research on communist censorship and media supervision. For example, Dennison Rusinow's book (1977) *The Yugoslav Experiment, 1948–1974* offers a broad historical analysis of the political setting and supervision of Yugoslavian media. Gertrude Joch Robinson's book (1977) *Tito's Maverick Media* gives a somewhat optimistic picture of the framework of Yugoslavian media in the 1960s and 1970s. Referring to Yugoslavia's comparatively broad press freedom, she concludes: "[...] professionalized mass communicators increasingly became the spokesmen for a variety of groups, often introducing conflicting points of view into Yugoslavia's political communication stream."³ Yet she admits that pluralism of opinion was "more evident in the cultural and economic than the political realms."⁴ The archive documents (including the collections of COURAGE) however, reveal a rather tightly controlled cultural sphere throughout the period of communist rule in Yugoslavia. Also, the Press Law of 1973 and the new Constitution of 1974 provided a more restrictive interpretation of press freedom than the previous ones, and they left no doubt that the press had to support the Party line unconditionally.⁵

The problem for Western scholars was the scarcity of sources. Few authentic documents on communist censorship found their way to the West. Original documents were sometimes smuggled to the West by émigrés. A prominent case was the defection of a Polish censor Tomasz Strzyżewski to Sweden in 1977. Strzyżewski took with him classified documents of the state censorship office and a hand written volume of records and recommendations for Polish censors. The original was a book of 700 pages in a black frame. Annex of London, a Polish émigré publisher, immediately published the first edition in two volumes in 1977 (in Polish). Polish television (TVP) presented a documentary about Strzyżewski, called *Great Escape of a Censor* (Wielka ucieczka censorsa) in 1999. Jane Leftwich Curry, a U.S. scholar, did extensive research on the mass media control in Poland, and more broadly, Central and Eastern Europe in the early 1980s.⁶ She also translated and edited the notorious *Black Book of Polish Censorship* (1984). A detailed study on the media envi-

3 Robinson, *Tito's Maverick Media*, 224.

4 Ibid., 226.

5 Lendvai, *The Bureaucracy of Truth*, 51.

6 Curry, *The Media and Intra-Elite Communication in Poland*; Curry, *Media Control in Eastern Europe*; Curry, *The Black Book*.

ronment in the Soviet Bloc countries and Yugoslavia is presented in Paul Lendvai's book *The Bureaucracy of Truth* (1981). He uses numerous Soviet and Western newspapers as additional sources, alongside documents and other published material. A rare view of life, corruption, decadence, dissidence, and repression in Communist Bulgaria is presented in Georgi Markov's book *The Truth that Killed* (1984).

Researchers of communist censorship also used interviews with émigrés as sources. When visiting socialist countries, they interviewed prominent literary figures, journalists and even dissidents, as Dennis Deletant describes in his *Ceaușescu and the Securitate* (1995). However, interviews were possible only with the victims of censorship and not with its architects and executors. A valuable contribution to the study of Polish journalism is Jane Curry's book *Poland's Journalists* (1990), which draws on over two hundred interviews with Polish journalists and media specialists, as well as archive research and a variety of published sources.

For the scholars in the former socialist countries, censorship became a research field only after 1989–90, when their countries restored independence and abolished censorship. Restoration of the true history of the liberated nations, and revealing the crimes of the communist authorities became important elements of the democratization of political and cultural spheres. Access was provided to the forbidden books and periodicals in special storages, and archives opened their files to researchers. On several occasions, officials of the Communist Party and censorship apparatus, security services and other repressive institutions succeeded in destroying secret documents before they left office.⁷

Access to archives enables more detailed research and brings to light new facts, corroborating reliability of the analyses. For example, a detailed analysis of the Romanian censorship system and its activities in controlling the publishing of literature is given in Liliana Corobca's book *Controlul c r ii. Cenzura literaturii  n regimul comunist din Rom nia* (Book Control. Censorship of Literature in the Communist Regime in Romania) (2014). The first large study on censorship in Serbia was  elimir Ke etovi 's book *Cenzura u Srbiji* (Censorship in Serbia) published in 1998. A comprehensive picture of censorship and resistance in Czechoslovakia is Jan  ulik's contribution to *Censorship. A World Encyclopedia* (2001). Another encyclopedic publication dealing with censorship of Czech literature and the press is *V obecn m z jmu. Liter rn  cenzura v modern   esk  kultu e. 1749–2014*. (In the general interest. Literary censorship in modern Czech culture. 1749–2014).⁸ Examples of the history and practices of censorship in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Serbia, Hungary, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Slovakia have been collected in the volume 3 of *History of Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe* (2004). As the COURAGE project's

⁷ Lauk, "Practice of Soviet Censorship."

⁸ W gerbauer, P  a,  amal, and Jan  ek, *V obecn m z jmu*.

collections show, there is still a lot to discover in the archives. They offer valuable material for history, literature, film, theatre and media researchers for revealing the truth about how the Communist Parties and their myrmidons stifled the freedom of speech and the press in Central and Eastern Europe.

Mechanisms, Instruments and Practices of Control over Public Information and Cultural Production

Censorship has many faces. History knows two main types of censorship: pre-publication and post-publication censorship, which are both preventive and restrictive. Censorship is also repressive: it can destroy literature, films, pieces of art, and persecute people who create and/or distribute what is forbidden by the authorities.⁹ All these aspects were simultaneously present in the countries under communist regimes in one form or another.

A common feature of the power mechanism that bolstered the authority of the ruling communist elite was a tight symbiosis of the Communist Party and the state, the state and society, politics, economics and culture. As a result, these realms lost their distinctive features as autonomous and distinguishable spheres.¹⁰ The fact that the Party embodied the state and owned all the media was a prerequisite for asserting its control over all the spheres of society. Private ownership of the media was forbidden, except for a few small publications of churches and other organizations, in some countries of the region. Integration of the media with the other instruments of power enabled the political elite to manipulate information and buttress the communist ideology.

Censorship was stricter inside the borders of the Soviet Union than elsewhere in the other countries of the Soviet Bloc. The period of the harshest repressions against culture and the cultural intelligentsia in Central and Eastern Europe lasted from immediately after the communist seizure of power until after Stalin's death, when the Soviet leadership changed its course.

Destroying books was one of the means the Communist Parties used to destroy the collective historical and cultural memories of oppressed nations. In Serbia, extensive purges of libraries and bookshops took place. The communist government of Romania announced lists of forbidden volumes and writers between 1944 and 1948.¹¹ Iljko Karaman's archive in the COURAGE collection gives evidence of extensive book purges in Croatia in 1945–1946. The barbaric battle against books continued throughout the post-WWII decade in all the countries under Soviet control, and until 1966 in the Baltic countries.¹²

⁹ Lauk, "Practice of Soviet Censorship," 28.

¹⁰ Hardt and Kaufman, *East-Central European Economies in Transition*.

¹¹ Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate*, 24.

¹² Lauk, "Practice of Soviet Censorship."

Formal pre-publication censorship was instituted in Yugoslavia in 1946 and lasted throughout the initial years of communist rule.¹³ In Czechoslovakia, the Communist Party had its own censorship office from 1948 to 1953. In 1953, the government secretly created its Office for the Supervision of the Press.¹⁴ Institutionalized censorship mechanisms in Poland, Romania and Czechoslovakia had similar structures and working methods as the Soviet Glavlit (the chief censorship administration). At the top of the hierarchy, stood the Central Committee of the Communist Party with its Department of Agitation and Propaganda, which had different names in different times and countries. The “agitprop” department directed and oversaw the publishing process, and provided detailed instructions concerning what should be covered and how, whose names could not appear in public etc. In cooperation with the security services, the departments also compiled lists of publicly forbidden data. Appointments to the leading and managerial positions in the media, and publishing and printing industries were made in the Central Committee, or in other cases, with the acceptance of a Party bureaucrat.

The execution of the control of all publications, films, radio and TV broadcasts, exhibitions etc., was the task of a censorship body, which never was named “censorship.” In Romania the censorship office was called General Directorate of Press and Prints. In Poland the Central Office for Press, Publication and Entertainment Control was established in 1946, and renamed the Central Office for the Control of Publications and Performances in 1981. In Czechoslovakia, the Press Law of 1966 gave censorship a formal legal status. The Central Office for the Supervision of the Press was renamed the Central Publication Office, which became a civilian institution subordinated to a government minister,¹⁵ and it functioned until 1989.¹⁶ Within the system, a manuscript had to pass through several filters, each of which could stop the process. Since each step of the publishing process was thoroughly documented, a valuable collection of evidence of the suppression of literary culture in Czechoslovakia is now available for researchers. In addition to the official censorship, mass media was also supervised in other ways, such as “instructional conferences,” which were regular information sessions for leading journalists and editors held by Communist Party functionaries.¹⁷ Editorial offices often received instructions and reprimands by telephone from the top officials of the system. After a short break during the “Prague Spring” in 1968, censorship in Czechoslovakia continued during “normalization,” and an additional censorship office was created specifically for Slovak literature and mass me-

13 Curry, *Media control in Eastern Europe*, 17.

14 Čulík “Czech Republic,” 626.

15 Ibid., 627.

16 For more details see section on literary censorship in this chapter.

17 See Lendvai, *The Bureaucracy of Truth*, 46–52.

dia. Another purge of books from libraries was carried out in 1972–73, and all “anti-state and ideologically unsound publications” were removed.¹⁸

Overt censorship creates self-censorship among writers and journalists and they begin deliberately avoiding sensitive issues. As the lists of forbidden information were secret and available only for censors and officials with special authorization, it was not always clear what was allowed and what was forbidden. Journalists and literary people learned, where the limits were set, by experience. Many of them deliberately tested these limits, sometimes successfully, sometimes not.¹⁹ Under the strictest censorship systems, resistance took the form of underground publishing—*samizdat*, which was especially widespread in Poland, but also in Czechoslovakia, and in several nations within the Soviet Union. Also, émigré publishing (*tamizdat*) was an option.²⁰

Yugoslavia had the mildest regime, which was the “most daring internally and the most truly independent externally of all communist governments.”²¹ While in Poland, Gierek enlarged the ‘agitprop’ department of the Central Committee up to 60 “instructors,”²² Tito dismantled its counterpart in Yugoslavia in 1972. The state-owned mass media were run by workers’ councils and management boards as autonomous enterprises²³ and a part of the “self-government” system. The directives and guidelines of the Party were given explicitly through various press committees and agencies to journalists, editors and publishers, or implicitly through general Party statements.²⁴ The lack of overt censorship in combination with “self-governing” principles created an atmosphere of a certain collective consensus to follow the “correct” ideological path. This made editors and publishers personally responsible for the decisions concerning what could or could not be published, and developed self-censorship that worked as efficiently as any formal censorship. As long as the media supported the party line, critical voices were tolerated, which gave an impression of relatively free media. However, as soon as the criticism appeared subversive, action was taken to suppress the voices, as the collections of Public Prosecutor Iljko Karaman, film director Lazar Stojanović, novelist Ivan Aralica and historian Aleksandar Stipčević vividly demonstrate.

Indirect, dispersed and personalized censorship did not have common standards, but relied mostly on self-censoring practices. In Yugoslavia, the frequent changes of the political climate in combination with contradictory instructions from the Party authorities sometimes led to oddities. It could happen that “a publication banned in one republic could be published in an-

18 Čulík, “Czech Republic,” 628.

19 Lauk and Kreegipuu, “Was It All Pure Propaganda?”

20 Bolecki, “Getting around Polish Censorship,” 135.

21 Lendvai, *The Bureaucracy of Truth*, 51.

22 Curry, *Media Control in Eastern Europe*, 11.

23 *Ibid.*, 24.

24 *Ibid.*, 3.

other; a banned production could be transferred to one of the other republics and could even win a prize at a festival there."²⁵

Under indirect censorship, press freedom is comparatively broader than under institutionalized censorship. As Yugoslavia's Communist Party was not monolithic and therefore did not have an overwhelming grip on society, the media policy was not very consistent and uniform. This allowed various conflicting opinions to reach the public, and to present different political, economic and cultural views. Violent repressions against the cultural elite were uncommon, but "many pacifist activists, intellectuals, and artists were ignored, isolated, or stigmatized as traitors."²⁶

Journalists and authors learned to use various ways of expressing their critical opinions. They skillfully applied "Aesopian language," subtexts and intertextuality, and used historical displacements of events to create parallels with the present.²⁷ Where relatively less strict control allowed a "silent" opposition discourse to develop in the official media and in literature, the need for underground publishing was not as urgent as in strictly controlled environments.

Control over public information was a vital condition for maintaining and strengthening the power of the ruling Communist Parties in the Soviet Union and other communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe. Inside the borders of the Soviet Union, censorship was the most advanced, calling to mind Orwell's Ministry of Truth. Several satellite countries established similar institutionalized systems, while others practiced indirect censorship. The case studies in this chapter represent both types of censorship. Common to any kind of censorship is the striving to keep all public information under control to avoid dissent and unrest. Simultaneously, the task of censorship was to guarantee the "correct" ideological line, the Communist Party's, in the mass media. The concrete practices and strictness of censorship changed over time and in different countries, but the basic nature and aims remained the same everywhere.

The Books that didn't Make It. Two Collections on the History of Literary Censorship. The Dispersed Censorship System

In Soviet-style dictatorships, there were several places and times in which space opened up for censorship interventions with a diverse array of motivations affecting the publication of literary works. These interventions at times affected the authors themselves or the texts, or they restricted the circulation

²⁵ Jovičević, "Censorship and Ingenious Dramatic Strategies," 240.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 248.

²⁷ For more see: Kelertas, "Strategies against Censorship in Soviet Lithuania"; Lauk and Kreegi-puu, "Was it all pure propaganda?"

of a book that had already been published (e.g. library censorship). Censorship intervention had varying effects on a work, from spelling alterations or the change of a single word or verse to the deletion of several poems from a collection, the basic transformation of a work's entire structure, or its complete prohibition. Given the high number of places for potential intervention, we speak of the existence of a dispersed censorship system in Czechoslovakia between 1949 and 1989.²⁸ A basic feature of this dispersed censorship system was its multilevel nature and the constant interconnection of its planning, management, and control processes, while several primary censorship nodes that made up the backbone of this supervision over literature can be distinguished. The entire system comprised approval at party, governmental, and local state enterprise levels, while the Czechoslovak Communist Party Central Committee remained the supreme ideological authority. The Ministry of Culture was in charge of the management and planning of publishing activity, while the third mainstay of supervision over books was the approval procedure at individual publishing houses.²⁹ Moreover, between 1953 and 1968 there was a specialist preliminary censorship office, the so-called Central Press Supervision Authority (which bore the name Central Publication Authority from 1967 to 1968).

The Collection of Censorship Reports in the Central Press Supervision Authority Fonds

The preliminary censorship office was not an essential part of the literary censorship system. The idea that this authority was optional is proven by the fact that it only functioned in Czechoslovakia between 1953 and 1968, whereas under normalization (in the 1970s and 1980s), there was no preliminary censorship office. The contradictory nature of preliminary censorship activities has been pointed out by literary historian Josef Čermák, who as editor-in-chief at a publishing house specializing in bringing out literature in translation. Čermák believed that the situation in which a censorship office existed was "paradoxically more beneficial to a publishing house than if it [the censorship office] were abolished and 'self-censorship' took over. While the Central Press Supervision Authority was in existence [...] and putting its stamp on the definitive versions of corrected texts, the publisher was off the hook as the responsibility lay with the authority [i.e. the censor – PŠ]. But when self-censorship started to be imposed, things got worse. The responsibility was now on the authors and subsequently on the publishers, so the apprehension started to be more diffuse."³⁰

28 Šámal, "V zájmu pracujícího lidu," 1102–104.

29 Bock, "'Unser ganzes System'," 31–207.

30 Čermák, "Být šéfredaktorem tak velkého nakladatelství nebyla sinekura," 36.

The dispensability of the preliminary censorship office is also demonstrated by the fact that in all only about eighty books were actually prohibited at its instigation. As Czechoslovak publishers were bringing out some 4,000 new titles every year at that time, the primary tools of censorship were clearly to be found elsewhere within the network of literary communication.

When the Central Press Supervision Authority came under the Ministry of Interior after the abolition of censorship in June 1968, this material was administered first by the Central State Archive, to which it was transferred on July 9, 1969.³¹ However, the extensive Central Press Supervision Authority fonds were transferred in 1970 to the Czechoslovak Federal Interior Ministry, and they were organized and systematized very quickly (as early as 1970–71), as the Ministry of Interior staff wished to utilize censored material from the 1960s in order to gather information on the activities of intellectuals during the Prague Spring. The Central Press Supervision Authority fonds subsequently made up part of what was known as the Ministry of Interior Study Institute, where particularly important information and material on State Security activities was being gathered.³² The original Central Press Supervision Authority fonds inventory from 1971 is currently available online.³³ When Act No. 181/2007 was passed on to the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes and the Security Services Archive and these institutes were subsequently established, the entire Central Press Supervision Authority fonds became a part of the Security Services Archive.

Once some of the archives containing material that originated at the Ministry of Interior had been opened up to the specialist public, the first history books were written to describe the emergence and operation of the censorship authority and in particular its influence on the press and film industry.³⁴ In recent years, more analytical works have been written examining the role of the Central Press Supervision Authority within the context of the overall literary supervision system and showing that the censorship authority was playing the role of inspector (the Polish communication theoretician Andrzej Urbański pithily characterized censorship as “the inspection of inspection”)³⁵ to ensure that the written and unwritten rules were being correctly upheld and that the individual elements in the censorship system were playing their roles appropriately.

The Central Press Supervision Authority fonds contain comprehensive documentation on the ways in which censorship staff examined the press and the ways publishers dealt with them with regards to newly published books.

31 Security Services Archive, Akta fondu 318 – Hlavní správa tiskového dohledu.

32 Frolík, “Osud fondů Studijního ústavu MV,” 4–17.

33 “Prozatímní inventář k archivnímu fondu 318. Hlavní správa tiskového dohledu.” Accessed October 28, 2017. <https://www.abscr.cz/data/pdf/abs/inventar-318.pdf>.

34 Tomášek and Kaplan, *O cenzuře v Československu*; Tomášek, *Pozor cenzurováno!*; Bárta, “Nelze zveřejnit v tisku, rozhlasu a televizi,” 6–58.

35 See Urbański, “Cenzura – kontrola kontroly,” 200–16.

Acts of censorship often entailed extensive transcriptions of “defective” literary works, which the censors usually commented on in detail, explaining why they considered the passage in question or the work as a whole unacceptable. These reports are of great value to literary historians, as they include unknown information on the ways in which authors and editors negotiated with the censors. They also shed light on the origins of works and provide information on the alterations that were imposed and the existence of text variants, and they even cover prominent authors’ previously unknown works.³⁶

Collection of Readers’ Reports in the Československý spisovatel Fonds

While the state’s publication monopoly was in place, the primary tools for the supervision of literature moved inside the publishing houses. Under normalization, when the preliminary censorship authority no longer existed, this element of literary supervision can be studied on the basis of sources documenting the reading procedures.

Between 1949 and 1989, a system known as publishing coordination was in operation, whereby every publishing house was meant to specialize in a certain area of book output (e.g. publishing textbooks, healthcare literature, literature in translation, literature for children, and the like). Original Czech fiction was meant to be published (albeit not exclusively) by the *Československý spisovatel* publishers, whose director commented on the publishing plans of other publishers, and if interested he could claim original Czech fiction titles for his own publishing house (this situation arose, for example, in the case of the memoirs of the subsequent Nobel Prize-winner Jaroslav Seifert, the publication of which was delayed by several years due to its transfer from one publisher to another).

The author of a literary work who decided to publish e.g. a novel was supposed to approach the publisher that specialized in bringing out fiction. Once the manuscript was accepted, the first round of the internal approval procedure took place, in which the work could be rejected. An important element in the dispersed censorship system was the bureaucratization of the approval procedure. In other words, the decision to publish a book was never left to a single person, but was repeated at several levels within the publishing house, each verdict being set down in writing and archived. Supervision could then be retroactive, and the “culprit” could be called to account.

If the editor was of the opinion that the manuscript on offer did not meet the criteria of 1) social need; 2) ideological and political correctness; 3) professional and literary merit; and 4) the publishers’ specialization, he could reject it at the very first reading (and this particularly happened in the case of neophyte authors). If a title made it through this first filter or the report was not entirely clear, the publishing editor nominated two external readers, who

³⁶ See Mináč, *Zakázané prózy*.

were as a rule literary critics, publishing editors, or writers and who had to produce a written report. Only if the positive opinions predominated was a proposal put forward to publish the book, or conditions (e.g. required alterations) were set out for the text to be published. A proposal to publish a book still had to be approved by the editor-in-chief and the publishing director, i.e. by vetted individuals whose appointment was subject to the approval of the highest party bodies.

These documents on the reading procedures, which document the objections to manuscripts and their possible rejection, make up another exceptionally important resource on the history of literary censorship. One of the most complete collections of readers' reports can be found in the *Československý spisovatel* (ČS) publisher's fonds housed in the Literary Archive in the Museum of Czech Literature.

One of the most prominent post-war Czech publishing houses, the *Československý spisovatel* was established in the spring of 1949 through the merger of several private companies and cooperatives, and it operated until as late as 1997.³⁷ From its establishment until 1970 it was subordinate to the Union of Czechoslovak Writers, a professional organization that brought together Czech and Slovak writers and which had a relatively strong economic base thanks to its income. When the Union of Czechoslovak Writers was closed down at the turn of the 1970s because it had been one of the intellectual centers of the Prague Spring, it was subordinated to the Czech Literary Fund. After the fall of the Communist regime, ČS only managed with difficulty to cope with the market economy and soon got into financial difficulties, which resulted in its liquidation in 1997.

The extensive *Československý spisovatel* collection currently finds itself under state ownership. On February 2, 1993, Zdeněk Pochop, the ČS publishing director at the time, entered into an agreement with the director of the Museum of Czech Literature for her to take over the archive, on the basis of which the entire corporate archive at the publisher's was transferred into the ownership of the Museum of Czech Literature, a memory institute answerable to the Czech Ministry of Culture.

The collection is made up of corporate documentation (contracts with authors, artists, printers, and the like), as well as a large number of published and unpublished manuscripts (totaling 76 boxes), a clippings archive, and an extensive library with a total of 17,312 published books. The most valuable material with regard to literary history and the history of censorship is the 230 boxes containing readers' reports on published and unpublished books. These can be utilized to reconstruct negotiations between authors, editors, and publishing managers, and they frequently provide the only evidence of literary works that were never published. As a whole, this exceptionally large fonds

37 Příbáň, "Československý spisovatel," 69–70.

has not yet been inventoried, though the part that includes the readers' reports is arranged alphabetically and available to specialists.

An analysis of this collection of readers' reports indicates that literary censorship under normalization can be characterized as the suppression of literary procedures and motifs typical of 1960s literature (literary experimentation, motifs of alienation, absurdity, emptiness, and decay). The records also indicate that various depictions of human sexuality were often met with disapproval or outright rejection by the readers. Not all erotic motifs were suppressed, for the most part just extreme descriptions, references to unusual sexual practices, and homosexual or lesbian relationships between the characters. Vulgarisms were also very often rejected.

For the sake of clarity, the importance of these reading procedures can be established on the basis of the example of Bohumil Hrabal, one of the most prominent Czech writers in the latter half of the twentieth century. Several works have been written in recent years on the reading procedures used in the case of Hrabal's books,³⁸ and selected material has been digitized and even presented at exhibitions.³⁹ Some researchers believe that Hrabal's willingness to be accommodating towards these readers played a substantial role in making his works exceptionally popular at the price of some concessions.⁴⁰

Collections of censorship and readers' reports provide a picture of two different types of censorship. Both involve several previously unused resources, and it is only by utilizing them that it is possible to reconstruct the ways in which literature was crafted under a Soviet-style Communist dictatorship.

The Invisible Hand of Yugoslav Censorship. A Tale of Four Collections

Pluralism of Censorship Practices in Yugoslavia

The COURAGE Registry contains several collections, which testify to the complexity of the mechanisms and secret paths of Yugoslav censorship.⁴¹ The Yugoslav constitutions (1946, 1963, 1974) do not recognize censorship as an institutional instrument of cultural policy, that is, there was never a separate state body that systematically supervised different fields of cultural produc-

38 Kotyk, Kotyková, and Pavlíček, *Hlučná samota*.

39 Exhibition "Kdo jsem. Bohumil Hrabal: spisovatel – Čech – Středoevropan," curator Tomáš Pavlíček, Museum of Czech Literature (PNP) (April 2. 2014–August 31. 2014).

40 Češka, "K variantnosti Hlučné samoty," 696–730.

41 I use Sylvia Klötzer's and Siegfried Lokatis' definition of the term "censorship" in their case study of GDR: "A way of describing the pervasive system of information control that encompassed archives, films, newspapers, ministries, and Z[entral]K[omitee] offices as well as cabaret and literature." Klötzer and Lokatis, "Criticism and Censorship," 241.

tion (art, literature, music, media, the press), except for the film arts.⁴² However, this does not suggest that the Yugoslav party state renounced its authority and control over the cultural spheres. Despite the official policy statements, censorship was implemented indirectly, especially after the dismantling of the Soviet-type Agitation and Propaganda Commission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in 1952 (AGITPROP, founded in 1945), when the censoring competences were distributed among different agencies, such as ideological commissions appointed by the central committees of the communist parties,⁴³ artistic and editorial councils, and the public prosecutor's office.⁴⁴

Taking into account this dispersal of competences, most researchers agree that the main characteristic of Yugoslav cultural policy was in fact a sort of "non-policy,"⁴⁵ which left a lot of space for different interpretations when it comes to practical application. This lack of system was also a kind of system because concessions could be made or things prevented, depending on the given situation.⁴⁶ Prohibitions were not sought from a single side or from some central instance (such as the central committee), but rather the main starting point for censorship was the so-called "social atmosphere," which was created through the "collective transmission of affects,"⁴⁷ which would bring about the tacit consensus that active participants (cultural institutions, publishing houses, TV and radio editors, artists and authors) themselves implement censorship.⁴⁸ This procedure gave birth to the so-called "self-managed" censorship, which made editors and even workers in printing houses responsible for censorship decisions. Since it was personalized, it was much more efficient than institutionalized and bureaucratic censorship because loyalty had to be proved if one sought to keep one's position.⁴⁹ Beyond doubt,

42 The films were subject to preventive censorship, that is, the supervision of screenplays and suspensive censorship, after the film was made, for which commissions for the review of films on the republic and federal level were in charge. A special, very subtle sort of censoring was the so-called practice of "putting in the vault" (*bunkeriranje*), whereby films were just prevented from public release without official prohibition.

43 In Yugoslavia, eight separate regional branches of the communist party existed in each republic and autonomous province. On the federal level, there was the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (from 1952 the League of Communists of Yugoslavia).

44 Vučetić, *Monopol*, 41. However, the reading of Croatian and other émigré publications was strictly and formally prohibited, and their possession was regarded as a criminal offence against the state order. Such publications, when confiscated, were stored in the so-called D-lockers (meaning the Director's lockers) in libraries. In the COURAGE Registry, such materials are presented in the Foreign Croatia Collection in the National and University Library in Zagreb and in the Secret Holdings (D-fond) in the National and University Library in Ljubljana.

45 Hofman, "Tko se boji šunda," 288.

46 Latinka Perović, interview by Radina Vučetić, June 19, 2010. Quoted in Vučetić, "Između avangarde," 698.

47 Brennan, *Transmission*, 1 et seq.

48 Hofman, "Tko se boji šunda," 288.

49 Golubović, "O samoupravnoj cenzuri," 24. See also Stipčević, "Tiskari."

self-censorship was regarded as the most efficient but also the most elusive mechanism of censorship, embodied in Czesław Miłosz's "Ketman," which existed in Yugoslav society as well.

This pluralism of censorship practices might be a reflection of the pluralistic aspect of Yugoslav state ideology itself, which was fostered after 1950, that is, after Tito's split with Stalin, when Tito was searching for an alternative to state socialism. According to the self-management theory, the state and its organs gave way to self-administration, and the competences of the League of Communists converted from "controlling" into "guiding,"⁵⁰ i.e. providing only recommendations without direct interference in the administrative processes (at least in principle).⁵¹ Indeed, the period between 1963 and 1971 was characterized by the existence of various and nationally often different visions of the one and only socialist ideological spectrum, which could not be questioned as such.⁵²

Due to the manifold manifestations of censorship practices, it is not easy to construct any kind of accurate typology. However, there have been justified attempts to classify it in the institutional or formal sense as political, that is, party-like, judicial, and self-managed censorship, and the informal practices, which included "threats and blackmailing, invitations to talks in the committees, media campaigns, abolishment of state funding, firing from one's job."⁵³ In order to make Yugoslav censorship less elusive and more palpable and appropriate for study and research, it is essential to observe separate cases of collected material in their social and political context. Material culture preserved in the scattered public and private collections can thus demonstrate the complexities and pluralism of Yugoslav censorship practices.

Deputy Public Prosecutor Iljko Karaman as the Collector of Censored Material

Iljko Karaman (1922–2010) was a state official who collected documents and publications from the archive of the Zagreb District Public Prosecutor's Office in his home. In 1992, he decided to deposit these documents and publications at the Croatian State Archives at disposal of the public. This collection, officially called the Iljko Karaman Collection of Court Records on Censorship, is the only Croatian collection explicitly related to the issue of censorship. Karaman was Deputy Public Prosecutor, working in the Press Department, and his collecting motivations are all the more interesting, since he was a member of the establishment, in charge of preparing trials/cases against alleged perpetrators of criminal offences in the cultural field (the Public Prosecutor's office had

50 Ionescu and de Madariaga, *Opposition*, 148–49.

51 For the work of Ideological Commission see Šarić, "To be or not to be in culture."

52 This is called "pluralist socialism." Mišina, *Shake, Rattle and Roll*, 23.

53 Kešetović, *Cenzura u Srbiji*, 55.

to keep records and supervise all publishing activities on the local and republic levels).⁵⁴ Karaman used his status to gain possession of classified documents and blacklisted publications. In a way, he collected evidence on the real nature of the communist government, but unfortunately he did not explain what motivated him to create this collection or what purpose he intended it to serve. Further investigation into Karaman's social and cultural profile leads to his intimate friendship with the lawyer Lav Znidarčič (1918–2001), who knew and wrote a book about the martyred Cardinal Aloysius Stepinac (1898–1960). Thus, Karaman was connected to the conservative Catholic circle, which was ideologically opposed to the communist order.

The collection contains material related to state censorship practices in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the Independent State of Croatia, and socialist Croatia until the 1980s. It includes judiciary documents, confiscated books, leaflets, and newspapers. Among these materials, the most interesting are the lists of banned books and magazines and "books that need to be urgently prohibited and their further circulation prevented" in the immediate post-war period (1945–46), which offer evidence of extensive purges of libraries and bookshops after the fall of the Independent State of Croatia and the communist seizure of power. This was a necessary step in breaking with the detested past and creating a new socialist cultural framework for the future Yugoslav state. The second interesting bundle contains publications printed in Zagreb in 1970 and 1971, which document the events of the Croatian Spring, including the poster for the students' general strike at the University of Zagreb or the Croatian University. The collection's content is important for research on the mechanisms of suspensive censorship, as it shows how the Yugoslav regime dealt with cultural opposition embodied in writers, journalists, public intellectuals, students, and other opposition actors.⁵⁵

The Raided Collection of a Banned Film Director Lazar Stojanović

The Lazar Stojanović Collection testifies to the cultural and political profile of the Serbian film director Lazar Stojanović (1944–2017), who was imprisoned as a cultural dissident for three years on charges of subversion in his "Black Wave" film *Plastic Jesus* (1971). The collection material is related to his artistic and activist work. Stojanović began collecting items such as books and magazines in the early 1960s, when he became politically active, and he supplemented them with press clippings about himself, confiscated student magazines (*Student*, *Vidici*), various posters and screenplays, etc. The private collec-

⁵⁴ Mihaljević, *Komunizam*, 470–71.

⁵⁵ COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Ilijo Karaman Collection of Court Records on Censorship](#)", by Teodora Shek Brnardić, 2017. Accessed: October 01, 2018.

tion was searched three times by the police, and many items were confiscated, which is why it is incomplete.⁵⁶

The notorious dissenter, who although being a member of the Party, felt self-confident enough to criticize the communist regime and President Josip Broz Tito himself in the form of a satire, by comparing, in *Plastic Jesus*, the communist government's handling of the contemporary 1968 social and political turmoil with the Nazi, Chetnik, and Ustashe regimes, thus commenting on individual freedom of expression. Especially valuable featured items are Stojanović's scanned prison records (1972–75), which comprised the verdicts, complaints, personal notes, and a psychological report. It is a gold mine for the lists of "criminal offences" of which the author of *Plastic Jesus* was considered guilty. Although produced by the state-owned company as a thesis film at the Belgrade Academy of Dramatic Arts and already prepared for cinema and festival screenings, the release of *Plastic Jesus* was prevented by censors/film reviewers, and the film was put in the vault (*bunkeriran*), that is, banned until 1990, although it was never officially prohibited by the court.

Censorship Through Public Opinion: the Ivan Aralica Collection

The private collection of press clippings compiled and organized by the Croatian novelist Ivan Aralica (1930–) documents the public polemics which took place in the Yugoslav press in 1985 and 1987 and which developed around two "cases." First, the members of the Association of National Liberation War Veterans (SUBNOR) in Croatia wanted to contest the granting of the literary award "Ivan Goran Kovačić" to Ivan Aralica for his novel *The souls of Slaves* because the writer had been politically active in the nationally-oriented Croatian Spring (1971). Second, the veterans wanted to prevent the film director Krsto Papić (1933–2013) from making the movie *My Uncle's Legacy* (1988), the screenplay for which was based on Aralica's novel *A Framework for Hatred*, due to the alleged negative representation of the post-war Communist Party of Croatia.

Both cases show that, through the media, veterans wanted to create a "social atmosphere" in the public sphere and put pressure on the jury of the news agency *Vjesnik* and the members of the film council of the production company *Jadran film* to withdraw their decisions and unofficially implement censorship. In this way, veterans as members of the socio-political organization gave incentive to censorship, that is, prohibition, and acted as "spokesmen of the Party" without the Party itself.⁵⁷ In their pursuit, they used the powerful weapon of public opinion, on which they exerted an extensive influence that is documented by the collection. The well-organized writer, who

56 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Lazar Stojanović Collection](#)", by Jacqueline Nießer, 2018. Accessed: October 01, 2018.

57 Vučetić, *Monopol*, 58–59.

wrote historical novels with a “key”⁵⁸ and thus escaped direct censorship, collected the press clippings with news about himself on purpose in order to save them as historical sources for a future biography.

Being Censored and Studying Censorship – Aleksandar Stipčević’s Personal Papers

The period after the dissolution of socialist Yugoslavia saw the rise of censorship studies in the former republics, which was prompted by the fall of the communist regime. The social historian of books Aleksandar Stipčević (1930–2015) was among very few Croatian scholars who approached the topic of censorship from the scientific side. He wrote several books about it, both theoretical-historical as well as biographical, in which he wrote about his own experiences of censorship during the Yugoslav socialist period (e.g. *On the perfect Censor, Censorship in Libraries, A story about Biographical Lexicon*). His personal papers, handed over by his widow to the Croatian State Archives in 2015 and containing 66 archival boxes, reflects this interest because material in 17 boxes is devoted to the topic of the “general history of censorship.” As a librarian, Stipčević was especially interested in different forms of censorship, and as a hobby he cut clippings from different kinds of journals and press materials, both national and international. Eventually, this passion of collecting information enabled him to write several books on the topic of censorship.

Stipčević was interested in censorship as a means of repression because he experienced its violence on several occasions. In 1944, when partisan troops liberated Zadar, they purged libraries of “fascist” books, which were burnt simply because they had been written in Italian. In 1955, libraries had to be purged of books by the party dissident Milovan Đilas (1911–95). At that time, Stipčević served in the Yugoslav National Army, and he was ordered to remove Đilas’ books (if he was the author) from the military library and to cut his pictures out of books by other authors. Finally, he experienced the power of censorship when he became editor-in-chief of the second volume of the Croatian Biographical Lexicon in 1983. The previous first volume was withdrawn from bookshops at the request of some Party members and SUBNOR veterans because of alleged nationalism and non-Marxist approach. This is why a great deal of material in his folders is dedicated to the topic of “purges” in libraries, which he metaphorically calls “the castration of books.”

As previously noted, censorship as a means of cultural policy was not official in the Yugoslav state in the administrative sense, except for in the case of films, but the examples of collections and their owners show the complexities of censoring practices and experiences. Iljko Karaman was a member of

58 This means that main characters were modelled on real figures in Croatian political life in the 1990s. The reader needed to know who they were (or to have a “key”) in order to understand the novel.

the establishment who collected evidence against it. Aleksandar Stipčević, although a member of the academia, never agreed to be a member of the communist party, unlike Ivan Aralica and Lazar Stojanović, who thought that party membership might help them in their careers and socio-political engagement. They were trying out how far dissent might go in order to bring about social change, but these endeavors were soon stopped by the invisible hand of Yugoslav censorship, which was relentlessly targeting and revealing members of the cultural opposition.

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PÉTER APOR – SAULIUS GRYBKAUSKAS
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Surveillance and Memory: Repositories of Cultural Opposition

Some of the most important research into the cultural opposition of former socialist countries takes place in archives of the former secret services. There are two main reasons why knowledge of the East-Central European cultural sphere is so closely tied to the investigative work of secret agents. First, the authorities in these states deliberately oppressed certain forms of culture in the countries they ruled. Therefore, they were deeply interested in identifying and monitoring potential subversive groups and individuals, which resulted in a gargantuan amount of material on cultural forms and expressions that the party-states considered hostile to their regimes. Second, in their quest to discover these hostile groups and individuals, the secret services actively produced categories and interpretations of what oppositional culture might mean. This legacy of the former secret services, carried over by their vast archives, continues to shape contemporary understandings of cultural opposition even today.

Since the collapse of the party-states in Eastern Europe, secret service archives have swelled to crucial, almost mythical positions as the alleged “repositories of truth,” which finally are able to reveal the true history of the socialist dictatorships. The categories of dissent culture and opposition recorded by the secret police appear as the genuinely core forms of cultural resistance. Accordingly, the preference towards a specific focus in the various national police reports resulted in different histories of cultural opposition in different national contexts. But what the various secret services share is a one-sided limited perspective on their subjects, selecting a few, forgetting others—and thus they are far from being the balanced holdings of knowledge on socialist societies.

The categories used by the secret police for classifying non-conformist cultural activities shed light not only on the different types of activities, but on the perception and viewpoint of the authorities. Researchers always should try to overcome that very special perspective of the secret police which is demonstrated in the files.¹ This will be pertinently illustrated by two brief case studies in this chapter. In Lithuania, cultural opposition was largely un-

¹ Because of the one-sided perspective of the secret police files, there exist archives of former dissidents which offer another perspective (e.g., Robert-Havemann-Gesellschaft in Berlin,

derstood as national resistance, as a movement of intellectuals to protect the autonomy of national cultural heritage against an aggressive Sovietization and often Russification. In Hungary, by contrast, cultural opposition was mostly associated with the activities of independent intellectuals, artists, and students who struggled for more open space for creative cultural expression, including forms of national heritage, but embracing also broadly international forms of contemporary art, literature, and civic ethos.

This chapter seeks to probe the ways in which post-socialist cultures produce knowledge about the “cultural opposition” of the communist past. It examines the functions, social representation, and history of those national institutions, secret police archives, and institutes of national memory that played key roles in the production and promotion of the idea of cultural opposition (such as the BStU in Germany, the Institute of National Remembrance—Instytut Pamięci Narodowej in Poland, or the secret police archives in other East-Central European countries). The chapter also provides a study of how these archives produce social categories (and categories of cultural opposition) and how they create a classification for dissent with which to make sense of the communist past.

Archives of Surveillance and the Heritage of Cultural Opposition

Although the idea of establishing official state-supported processes to address the legacies of a dictatorial past was common to many so-called “third wave” democratizations, in East-Central Europe this took a very particular form: institutions such as the BStU in Germany, the Institute of National Remembrance in Poland, the Nation’s Memory Institute in Slovakia, the Historical Office in Hungary, or the CNSAS in Romania were founded only in order to safeguard the documents of the state security services, or in some cases also to publicize the crimes of the past or pursue lustration. These institutions that made claims about their capacity to reveal the truth about the past based on its custody of vast amounts of material produced by the communist regime’s security forces were the product of a set of specific historical circumstances. Furthermore, the nation-specific context visible in the making of these institutions was conducive to breeding national varieties of the meaning of cultural opposition.

The decision-makers in most East European countries referred to the German BStU as the model on which the institutions in their countries were to be based. What was not reproduceable was a particular concept of cultural opposition emerging out of the East German context, particularly the role of the dissident tradition in the creation of the archives itself as well as the ways

COURAGE Registry, s.v. [“Archive of the GDR-Opposition at the Robert Havemann Society”](#), by Uwe Sonnenberg, 2018. Accessed: October 05, 2018.)

in which the Stasi surveilled the opposition. Moreover, the fact that the processing of the secret police files occurred in a unifying Germany, led by West German intellectuals and politicians of strong anti-communist persuasion, had a crucial impact. Undoubtedly, the process of making the documents of the secret service organs of the East German socialist dictatorship accessible for research occurred much earlier than similar measures taken in the other post-socialist countries. The BStU, the institute responsible for preserving the files of the Stasi and making them accessible to the public, was opened in 1992 and occupies a position that differs from that of archives of East-Central European nations in many respects. The opening of the files at the BStU was hailed both by the German media and many from the German political elite as a success story and a significant step towards an effective confrontation with the dictatorial past (notable exceptions to this view were Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Wolfgang Schäuble, then the minister of interior). At the same time, the success of the institution concealed the fact that the circumstances of its creation and the image it presented of GDR history was closely tied to the East German dissident tradition and a West German view of the GDR. From many perspectives, the archive monopolized the construction of the image of the agent and, through this, the "true nature" of the socialist dictatorship. The influence of the dissident tradition and post-socialist public opinion resulted primarily in the disclosure of examples of unofficial collaboration by informers who provided information about their social networks but were not registered as official members of the secret services, for instance, representatives of the Church or those who had infiltrated dissident circles. This populist pressure worked to obscure far more general and widespread forms of collaboration with the party and other official organs of state. It was only after some ten years had passed that such initial simplifications could be set aside, placing the secret service files into the mainstream currents of social history writing. Another important aspect of the BStU was that it had no legal competence to investigate the crimes of the former East German political regime.

The sheer survival of the records of the State Security Service makes the Stasi Archives a unique institution. To be sure, the collection contains records that were already archived during the existence of the GDR. And yet most of the records, probably 90 percent of the entirety of files, were preserved by the "civil committees" of the civil rights movement of 1989/90 at numerous disparate locations. These civil committees were groups of individuals who illegally occupied offices of the State Security Service and seized documents found inside. Thanks to their efforts in December 1989, the removal and subsequent destruction of Stasi documentation was prevented. The civil committees played a major role in the dismantling of the Ministry of State Security, influenced the debate concerning the fate of its documents, and pushed for the creation of a Special Commissioner for the evaluation of Stasi Records following German unification as well as the passing of the Law on Stasi Records by the German Parliament on November 14, 1991.

The records of the BStU provide glimpses into the perceived opposition in all of its manifestations: from alternative lifestyles and artistic expression anathema to the proscribed societal norms of the state, to religious and social movements and their activities throughout the existence of the GDR. They demonstrate clearly how the opposition was frequently misunderstood and its actions misinterpreted. It is perhaps ironic that the secret police, owing to their activities, preserved for posterity the history of the cultural opposition that they strove to undermine or wipe out. The level of detail in their documentation is unparalleled, often because it included records of phone conversations from bugged telephone calls. Cultural gems such as rehearsals or recitations of unpublished poems from artists, who even years after the system change could not recall a specific work, are invaluable albeit uncommon highlights of the collection.²

It should be pointed out that BStU is, like the Historical Archive of the Hungarian State Security, first and foremost an archive with only a small research department and limited competences in contrast to the Polish IPN, the Czech ÚPN, or the Romanian CNSAS. In the case of post-socialist Hungary, the archiving process is interesting in part because for a long time—at least in comparison with the Polish, Czech, and Slovak cases—the question of the secret service documents seemed to remain independent of any direct political machinations. The Hungarian Historical Office and its successor, the Historical Archives of the Hungarian State Security (Állambiztonsági Szolgálatok Történeti Levéltára—ÁBTL), strove first and foremost to provide open access to information and support for historical research. Until the formation of the Committee of National Remembrance (NEB) in 2013, there was no institution in Hungary specialized in connecting secret service documents with the practice of dispensing justice retroactively. This was not the sequence of events in regard to the creation of the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) in Poland in 1998, and which was seen as an example to be followed, first in the Czech Republic, and later in Slovakia. From the very beginning, the IPN was closely tied to questions of political legitimacy and the identification of perpetrators, not to mention the idea of national martyrdom. However, many hundreds of young historians working at the institute over the years have advanced the scholarly and professional reputation of the IPN and moved it towards more nuanced studies of recent history that yield measured interpretations. Like the Polish institution, the original mission of the Slovak Nation's Memory Institute, which opened in 2003, and the Czech Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes, which has been in operation since 2007, was not only the preservation of documents of the secret services, but also a kind of investigative role. Today, while the Czech institute is closely tied to a right-wing

2 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Stasi records", by Uwe Sonnenberg, 2018. Accessed: October 05, 2018.

anti-communist subculture,³ the Slovak institute enjoys more significant esteem among historians.

In spite of the violent collapse of Romanian socialism, there was a significant continuity between the leading elite under Ceausescu and the governing elite of the 1990s, a context which provided a delayed but eventually stronger demand for a confrontation with the recent past of the communist secret service—certainly to a greater extent than in the Visegrád countries, where the secret services had not played quite as prominent a role. After a decade of a political and social strategy of forgetting,⁴ the creation of the Consiliul Național pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității (CNSAS) in 1999 constituted a radical step. Although the CNSAS had an investigative function from the outset, the slow transfer of the documents of the former state secret services at first encumbered the work of the institution. The establishment of the Presidential Commission for the Analysis of Communist Dictatorship in 2006 constituted a genuine shift. With a mission from the outset to examine the crimes of the communist system, the Commission interpreted collaboration in the context of discrediting post-communist socialists.⁵ Although the CNSAS has begun to function increasingly as a specialized archive, identifying and revealing criminals of the past remains a palpable element of its politics of history.

The CNSAS archives contain material primarily on the activities of those intellectuals who began to oppose the regime in the 1980s. They often illustrate how the Securitate crucially isolated intellectuals critical of the regime and created islands of dissent. Nonetheless, these archives also show the multifaceted attempts of dissidents to establish a secondary public space through alternative forms of mostly private communication like personal correspondence or interviews. Doina Cornea, for instance, managed to send messages to the conference organized by Solidarity in 1988 in Cracow, to which she had been invited by Lech Wałęsa, but not allowed to attend by her government. Her text, written on cigarette paper and hidden in the head of a handcrafted doll, was smuggled out of Romania by the Belgian journalist Josy Dubié, whom she met first by chance in Cluj. He not only assumed the trouble of carrying the message across the border, but later also managed to double-cross the police in order to interview Cornea again for his highly critical documentary of Ceaușescu's communism, entitled *Red Disaster*.

In Bulgaria, one of the central questions of the communist regime's transition to democracy—what should be done with the archives of communist state security—remained unanswered. In contrast to the countries of East-Central Europe, the initial impulse to come to terms with the communist period was insufficient to bring about the opening of archives. Though this question disappeared from the political agenda in the 1990s, the quest to open the ar-

3 On Czech political history see Kopeček, "Von der Geschichtspolitik zur Erinnerung."

4 Cioflâncă, "Politics of Oblivion."

5 Cristea and Radu-Bucurenci, "Raising the Cross."

chives did not disappear completely, as it was supported by non-governmental organizations, historians, and journalists. Eventually, public pressure, reinforced by the demands of the EU in the accession negotiations, led to the adoption of a new law in 2006 on the use of archival materials, pertaining also to the files of the interior ministry. In 2007, the “Commission for the disclosure of documents and announcing affiliation of Bulgarian citizens with the State Security and the intelligence services of the Bulgarian National Army”⁶ was established.

A centralized archival collection on the Bulgarian intelligentsia and its surveillance by the State Security was created in 2007. The Commission created (and curated) a selection of documents and published a 2015 book that details the observation and persecution of the Bulgarian intelligentsia. The State Security was one of the main instruments of the communist regime to maintain control over the intellectuals, who were always suspected of being potential critics of the government. Similarly to the other collections, the Bulgarian archives also demonstrate how vital State Security was in generating categories, types, and thus histories of cultural opposition in their country. A greater part of the documents in the collection are reports or summaries of assessments that reveal the main tasks and measures of the State Security: the timely exposure and suppression of so-called “hostile elements”; prevention of activities by dissidents and other groups and individuals critical of socialism; the “protection of socialist society”; the fight against the ideological influence of the West; the struggle against so-called “negative phenomena”; and the prevention of the spread of “alien” ideas by intellectuals and scientists who had been abroad.⁷

KGB Counter-Ideological Surveillance and Cultural Opposition in Baltic Republics

The Soviet state security service (KGB) was one of main actors of the Soviet system directed to identify, recognize, follow, and destroy deviations from Soviet ideological line. The documents of the KGB are relevant to the theme of cultural opposition for two reasons. First of all, they reveal the notions and terms of what was understood by the regime as cultural opposition. Second, the KGB collections are the main “repositories” of evidence on the activities of the cultural opposition. Many members of non-Soviet informal networks could prove the existence of their past opposition and support their oral histories by referring to KGB reports that are now available to the public. This brief case study of the Baltics will analyze and compare the background of the

6 Official acronym: CRDOPBGDSRSBNA.

7 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “State Security and the Bulgarian Intelligentsia”, by Anelia, Kasabova, Dr., 2017. Accessed: October 05, 2018.

following collections: various documents of Lithuanian KGB departments;⁸ the Second Directorate of the Soviet Lithuanian KGB;⁹ the KGB Documents Online Collection;¹⁰ and the Romas Kalanta Collection.¹¹

Soviet KGB documents left in the Baltic States are among the most important sources for studying the Soviet regime and its repressive operations. Whereas in Russia and in other former Soviet republics KGB material is still kept secret and out of bounds for researchers, historians from many countries are making wide use of documents found in the Baltic States, especially the Soviet Lithuanian KGB collection, many copies of which are also kept in foreign archives.¹²

The cultural opposition concept offers an effective approach that allows us not only to understand the situation in which the intelligentsia found itself in the Soviet Baltic republics, but also contributes, in terms of modern international law, to justifying the reinstatement of statehood in the Baltic States. Unlike the majority of the East-Central European countries discussed in the Courage project, countries that were part of the socialist camp but nevertheless maintained their statehood, the Baltic countries were occupied and annexed in 1940–41, and were incorporated into the USSR from 1944–90. This factor explains why Baltic dissent cultures focused on national sovereignty and were nationalist in language. There was a broad social resentment (especially among the intelligentsia) in these countries with the regime, perceived by many to be illegitimate and imposed from above, which led to a search for various means of independent political expression and cultural self-expression.¹³

Nonetheless, the shaping of cultural opposition in Lithuania was also one of the legacies of the Soviet secret police. Established in 1954 and continuing with the activities of the former NKVD and MGB, the KGB devoted a lot of attention to campaigns against nationalism, especially the forms of nationalism expressed in higher education and secondary schools. According to the KGB of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic (LSSR), in the period 1961–65 alone there were 795 acts of nationalism, 17 anti-Soviet groups were uncovered, as well as 41 groups whose members admitted being ideologically harmful, 105 cases of distribution of anti-Soviet leaflets, 74 assaults of Soviet

8 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Various documents of Lithuanian KGB departments", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2017. Accessed: October 05, 2018.

9 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Second Directorate of the Soviet Lithuanian KGB", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: October 05, 2018. (forthcoming)

10 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "KGB Documents Online Collection", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: October 05, 2018.

11 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Romas Kalanta collection", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: October 05, 2018. (forthcoming)

12 See the inventory of the *Lietuvos TSR Valstybės Saugumo Komitetas* (Lithuanian KGB) selected records. Accessed: October 05, 2018. http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt2n39r888/entire_text/

13 See Žalimas, *Lietuvos Respublikos nepriklausomybės atkūrimo 1990 m. kovo 11 d.*

and collective farm activists, and 215 threats of assault. The scale of anti-Soviet and non-Soviet acts did not subside later on either. In 1978, the KGB of the LSSR carried out “preventive treatment” (so called “prophylactica”) on 227 individuals, of whom 112 were accused of making anti-Soviet declarations, 83 had written and distributed letters or leaflets against the Soviet government, 14 had maintained undesirable connections with foreigners, and 16 had engaged in undesirable activities regarding another Soviet state. Almost half (109) of all these individuals persecuted by the KGB were young people under the age of 25. In 1979, the majority of people arrested based on KGB material were also accused of anti-Soviet propaganda and agitation. Of the four people arrested, two were held for anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda. The Courage Collection of the Second Directorate of the Soviet Lithuanian KGB also gives an excellent illustration of just what operational measures were used against the intelligentsia and young people. As an outcome of their implementation, the lecturers Irena Kostkevičiūtė, Meilutė Lukšienė, and Vanda Zaborskaitė of Vilnius University’s Department of the Lithuanian Language and Literature were dismissed from their positions (see the Meilutė Lukšienė Collection¹⁴ and the Vanda Zaborskaitė Collection)¹⁵. Thus, in light of these collections, the activities of the cultural opposition can be recalled not only in personal narratives, but also tied to specific KGB documents.

Aside from the persecution of Meilė Lukšienė and Vanda Zaborskaitė, the KGB material also offers an in-depth reflection on the surveillance of Antanas Miškinis (see Antanas Miškinis collection)¹⁶ and especially the Soviet security persecution of the Catholic Church and Catholics (see Catholic Press in Soviet Lithuania.)¹⁷ The KGB surveilled, persecuted, arrested, and repressed active priests and members of the faithful community, and also documented the “criminal” activities of the “nationalists.” With its close-knit network of religious and secular organizations, the Catholic Church offered an autonomous social communication system outside of the regime, making the Church a powerful opponent of the regime. The KGB operational research files reveal that anti-Soviet group identity and the concentration of activists was greatest in activities associated with the Catholic underground.¹⁸

The surviving KGB documents are vital not only for revealing how cultural figures opposed the regime or society disapproved of Soviet policies, but also for research of the Soviet system itself through examining the potential

14 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Meilutė Lukšienė collection”, by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: October 05, 2018. (forthcoming)

15 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Vanda Zaborskaitė Collection”, by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: October 05, 2018. (forthcoming)

16 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Antanas Miškinis Collection”, by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: October 05, 2018.

17 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Catholic Press in Soviet Lithuania”, by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: October 05, 2018. (forthcoming)

18 Grybkauskas, “Antisovietiniai protestai”; Streikus, *Sovietų valdžios*, 8.

and limit of the regime's control over society. It is very important to understand what measures were employed to prevent anti-Soviet and non-Soviet activities. The ways in which security personnel grouped activities they attributed to anti-Soviet and nationalist events, as well as how the persecution of individuals responsible for or suspected of organizing and realizing these events was executed, demonstrate not only the scale of anti-Soviet expression but also indicates the Soviet regime's understanding and assessment of these events. The Second Directorate of the Soviet Lithuanian KGB was responsible for fighting the anti-Soviet armed resistance from the very inception of the KGB in 1954. It carried out ideological counter-surveillance aimed mostly at the anti-Soviet activities of cultural workers and young people. The KGB was restructured in 1960. The main function of the Second Directorate became operational work among the intelligentsia and youth. The Directorate's activities continued until the spring of 1967 when a new counter-ideological surveillance branch was formed. KGB documents about the "fight" against nationalism and anti-Soviet activities shows that the prevention of anti-Soviet deviations was assigned to the Second Directorate of the Soviet Lithuanian KGB and the Fifth Department of the KGB founded in 1967, which later, in 1979, grew into a separate directorate with its own three departments.

The fact that Lithuania was a "nationalist" republic was a thesis repeated in KGB textbooks. It was a testimony to the recognition of the exclusive nature of the republic's situation in a union-wide context. Nevertheless, local KGB officers did not have any special flexible structures suited to the local situations. In the fight against "nationalism," they were forced to operate based on lines of activity that existed across the entire Soviet Union, the most commonly used being the so-called 2nd Direction, which aimed to protect the Soviet state from spying and the leak of state secrets. There was also the 5th Direction, its direct aim being specifically ideological counter-surveillance. Even though these lines sometimes crossed, there were certain assigned areas: the Second Directorate of the Soviet Lithuanian KGB that was responsible for the 2nd Direction "covered" industrial enterprises and scientific research organizations, while the 5th Direction dealt with the intelligentsia: education organizations, higher education institutions, and creative associations. This kind of allocation appears to suggest that in an ideological sense, anti-Soviet expressions could only occur among the intelligentsia and within the science and education systems, but not in the industrial sector. A different type of logic applied here: anti-Soviet or nationalist expressions were not understood as, or at least were not treated as events in themselves, or as separate cases in the Chekist sense, but as the placing of the secrecy of an enterprise's or organization's activities under threat. In order to prevent expressions of nationalism and anti-Soviet moods in industrial institutions, security personnel had to operate in an indirect way, using the secret objectives system and seek to expand the number of controlled enterprises as much as possible. They had to prove to Moscow why a civil manufacturing plant which had few or no orders from

the USSR Ministry of Defense had to be categorized as one of the regime's enterprises. Understandably, this kind of system only inflated the costs involved in maintaining the KGB's activities, reduced its effectiveness, and simply allowed the system to become overinflated.

The fact that the KGB's activities are important to historical memory is also evident in the institutionalization of the protection and storage of KGB archival material today. A certain degree of development and dynamics is noticeable, along with the changing attitudes of state government and institutions towards sources left by the KGB. In this sense, the most important is the Lithuanian Special Archives (LSA), founded for the purpose of administrating KGB documents, which was combined with the former Lithuanian Public Organizations Archive that kept the collections of the Soviet Lithuanian party apparatus. The efforts of the Lithuanian Special Archives to collect KGB related material are accompanied by the publicizing activities of the Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania (GRRCL). It is interesting that these two institutions met over the history of the KGB, despite each having their own different backgrounds. The LSA, as an organization under the jurisdiction of the state's archive system, affected state and professional attitudes towards the logic and structure of archives. The establishment of the GRRCL did not eventuate so much as a result of the government's political will, but rather civil initiatives, from the people's desire to register the crimes of communism of the later Soviet period, thereby contributing to the disclosure of pages in history that were once hidden. Even though this initiative eventually received government support and came under its jurisdiction with the founding of the GRRCL in 1997, even today their fields of activity do overlap. The mentioned three Courage collections demonstrate this overlap very well. Various documents of Lithuanian KGB departments and the Second Directorate of the Soviet Lithuanian KGB are kept at the LSA, though the archive itself does not engage in spreading, publicizing, or presenting their contents to the public. This is the domain of the GRRCL, conducted via its internet sites www.kgbveikla.lt and www.kgbdocuments.eu, which make up the Courage project's KGB Documents Online Collection.

Archiving Cultural Opposition in the Archives of the Hungarian State Security

Although the archives of the former secret services in Hungary never was a manifest political and criminal institution like its Polish, Czech, Slovak or Romanian counterparts, its origin was firmly linked with the idea of lustration, thus, underscoring a difference between collaboration and opposition. The Hungarian debate has centered on the question of access to the files and is shaped by the stance that the full transparency of the records will disclose collaborators and prevent further political wrongdoing and abuse of informa-

tion. Such concerns led to the establishment of the Historical Office in 1997 and subsequently to the foundation of the Historical Archives of the State Security in 2003. None of these institutions intended to openly shape the politics of memory or had the duty to perform criminal investigations. On the contrary, the Hungarian institution was quickly integrated into the academic network of the country and used intensively as a valuable asset of professional research. An important outcome of this status was that debates on dissent culture were soon embedded into the study of broader cultural and social factors. The social and cultural history focus is, in many ways, also linked to the legacy of archiving cultural opposition in the state security offices. The secret police in Hungary centered on culture in many ways. Surveillance targeted religion, art, youth subcultures, and creative intellectuals throughout the four decades of socialist statehood in the country.

Three different collections that stand at the intersection of Hungarian counterculture and the communist political police—a theater studio, a fine art group, and a university club in Budapest—represent types of cultural dissent activities as well as their archiving. The reports on the Orfeo group reveal how the state security officials and agents depicted an alternative theater company in Hungary. Accordingly, the political police created an image of “hostile” artists and conceived of them as dangerous for “the existing social order.”¹⁹ The second case focuses on the representation of a banned 1986 exhibition in the state security files, which had the title “A harcoló város” (The Fighting City). The exhibition was organized by the amateur artist group Inconnu for the 30th anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956.²⁰ The third case study sheds light on how some debates of university students could be represented as oppositional by the secret police, namely, the files on the alternative student organization “Közgáz” club.²¹

The Orfeo group was established in 1969 and it united a puppet theater, a theater studio, a music band, a fine arts and a photography circle. The members criticized the communist system by following the idea of the student movement of 1968 and the new left-winger ideological trends. Orfeo was attacked by the party leadership as an uncontrollable, hostile group that opposed the legitimate societal norms.²² It was seen not only as a community that spread an oppositional, hostile Western ideology, but they were accused of taking part in an immoral lifestyle because of their commune. Orfeo became an “issue”: attacking articles in the press, surveillance, police investiga-

19 Numerous studies have been made about the activity of Orfeo, among these: Ring, “A színjátszás harmadik útja és a hatalom,” 233–57; Szarvas, “Orfeo’s Maoist Utopia. The Emergence of the Cultural Critique of Existing Socialism.”

20 The story of Inconnu was researched by Sümegi: “Inconnu: A harcoló város,” 169–211.

21 Historical studies have not yet been written about the operation of the club, so the importance of oral history interviews is essential.

22 Sándor L., “Megváltoztatni a világot.”

tion, and interrogation all followed. Finally, in the mid-1970s the group dissolved and broke up.

The Inconnu art group originally came from Szolnok, but from the early 1980s it operated in Budapest. The group became famous for their alternative, oppositional artistic and political actions. Their performances with obvious and direct political meaning were unveiled from the mid-1980s parallel to the acts of the democratic opposition.²³ In 1986 Inconnu announced an international fine art tender to organize an exhibition on the 30th anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. The idea of 1956 played a central role in Inconnu's mindset, in their artistic expression, and in their attitude to the Kádár regime.²⁴ The group was not unknown in 1986 to the secret police; the members were already observed intensely before.

The student movements of 1968 in Paris, the new left-winger trends, and the alternative genres/forms in the art world had an effect on the students at universities too. Lively political discussions unfolded at the Club of the Karl Marx University of Economic Sciences (Marx Károly Közgazdaságtudományi Egyetem/MKKE). The organizers were young active and former undergraduates who wanted to create an opportunity for free expression of different views in the age of soft dictatorship in the 1970s and 1980s. Furthermore, they experimented in creating an independent organization, as an alternative to the "KISZ" Hungarian Young Communist League.

Although Orfeo and Inconnu were similar art groups, information on them was created and preserved in different ways. The name "Orfeo" emerged in numerous work files sent by the agents to the Office Division III of the Ministry of the Interior. "Emese Kárpáti" cover-name agent wrote the largest number of reports (150 pages) about Orfeo between 1971 and 1975. She got in contact with the group as a cultural organizer. Her duty was to infiltrate the group and visit their performances and their commune in Pilisborosjenő (a village near to Budapest) as often as possible. On these occasions, she got the opportunity to watch the actors and artists profoundly. According to her work method, she visited the same programs again and again because she had to make accounts most of all about the discussions and debates following the performances.²⁵

The material on Inconnu was generated mostly by one spectacular event, their 1986 initiative for an international exhibition commemorating the 1956 revolution. The foreign pieces sent to Inconnu for the exhibition were mostly copies, reproductions, and mailed in art works. Because these items were sent by the postal service, they had to undergo the censoring of the political police. The biggest number of items arrived from Ágnes Háy. The artist lived in Lon-

23 Sümegi, "Inconnu: A harcoló város," 170.

24 Csizmadia, "Interjú Bokros Péterrel," 369.

25 ÁBTL-3.1.2 M-38310/1 Reports of "Kárpáti Emese."

don and copied drawings from her drawing booklet.²⁶ The political police continuously delayed the preparatory work, but the exhibited items were finally transferred from Tibor Philipp's flat some hours before the opening ceremony on 30 January 1987. According to the police report, the exhibition was "counter-revolutionary": 43 items—photos, graphics, paintings, other artifacts—and illegal press issues (a further 39 items) were confiscated and later destroyed.²⁷

Although the original catalog included data on the artists and their work, the artifacts themselves—as a collection which was curated as an exhibition conception—only remained "thanks" to the photo documentation of the secret police. According to a report, these photos had already been taken at the beginning of January by "Frederich" cover-name agent who gave further the copies to his case officer. Thereby, the secret police itself created—in the frame of their destruction—the group of sources that today is the single visual trace which totally represents the exhibition.²⁸

In Tibor Philipp's case, the records of the police were put on the wall in the place of the exhibited artworks creating a "very visual absurd." As an art historian, György Sümegi wrote in his study that "The Fighting City" was simultaneously a political act and a brave artistic action. This exhibition is undoubtedly unique due to several more aspects. First of all, in 1986 this was the only international exhibition on the topic of 1956 in Hungary. Obviously, numerous artifacts were created to commemorate the revolution, but none of the artists or groups undertook to organize a public presentation from these materials. Secondly, we cannot find any other examples that ban and at the same time demolish a full exhibition either. According to Sümegi, the officers did not consider the collection of artworks a real exhibition because of the unusual installation format—the pictures sent in were on paper matboard instead of in frames. So perhaps they made this irreversible decision more easily. We can read about this fact in the police documentation, but indeed, the appearance of the artworks was not the real problem; the goal was to threaten the oppositional groups and the artists.²⁹

The secret police records on the Karl Marx University student club shows how the authorities produced "cultural opposition" out of students' self-organization. The club life at MKKE was informed on by agents with cover-name "Lantos" and "Csikós" between 1973–85.³⁰ By following the secret police's directions, they focused on two processes: how discussed issues turned from university topics to political questions and what kind of ideological thoughts stood behind this; how serious the organizational work inside the university

26 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Háy, Ágnes", by Zoltán Pál, 2017. Accessed: October 05, 2018.

27 Sümegi, "Egy kiállítás utolsó felvonása," 175.

28 ÁBTL 4.1.-A-2020 Photos of Inconnu exhibition.

29 Sümegi, "Egy kiállítás utolsó felvonása"

30 ÁBTL 3.1.2. M-41071 Reports of "Lantos" and ÁBTL-3.1.-2.-M-37605 Reports of "Csikós"

was and if there were intentions to create an association among several universities.

The active period began in 1976 when the young teacher Gyula Jobbágy acquired the leadership position in the “Közgáz-club.” The most important events were the political debates, the so-called Polvax that operated between 1976 and 1984. It landed great interest as more and more young people listened to the lectures, coming from other universities in Budapest too. According to “Csikós,” some sensitive issues emerged, but initially the debate was formed in a proper way thanks to the fact that the invited guests were official party or state leaders, which meant an assurance of the politically correct interpretation. However, the speakers were also chosen from a group of opposition politicians and communist reformist party cadres, for example, the intellectuals Imre Pozsgay and Rezső Nyers as “communist reformist cadres,” Ágnes Heller as oppositional philosopher, and the poet Sándor Csoóri.³¹

In 1980 “Lantos” reported already on the danger and the negative effects of Polvax for the students’ mindset. He wrote that even though this is a very good opportunity to speak about social problems, these were discussed one-sidedly, which meant that the event caused more damage than benefit. He held that the organizers manipulated how the topics were interpreted by the speakers, which had a great impact on the audience. According to his judgment, these discussions showed a false picture of the society.³² The communist leadership of the university regarded the Polvax as the meeting place of the dissenting students and tied it to the debate circles of the revolution of 1956. It was banned twice.³³

In the spring of 1981, the “Meeting of Students of Universities and Colleges in Budapest” (“Budapesti Egyetemisták és Főiskolások Találkozója/Befőt”) stood in the main focus of university students and staff, and the political police’s attention as well. The aim of the discussion initiated by Gyula Jobbágy was to create a genuine advocacy forum that could provide the freer expression of opinions. His idea of “Befőt” meant a danger in the secret police’s opinion because they thought dissident university members’ unified actions would result from this process and they were afraid that these groups would become institutionalized. Finally, the political leadership of the MKKE prevented the meeting successfully thanks to its threatening of the members and controlling of commentary. At the Befőt meeting of 20 March 1981, the idea of an independent students’ forum just faintly appeared, but the project immediately failed to realize. Many students were disappointed because of the powerlessness of its initiation.

The files on the student club indicate that it was the subtle combination of grassroots autonomous organization and the rationale of any secret police op-

31 About the programs of Polvax: “Klub Közlöny,” MKKE

32 ÁBTL-3.1.-2.-M-41071, 40–44. Reports of “Lantos,” 10. March 1980.

33 Pünkösti, “Szeplőtelen fogantatás.”

eration, the disclosing of clandestine activism, that co-produced cultural opposition in the political police archives. In other instances, like the Fighting City exhibition that meant to openly provoke the regime, the role of the secret police was also enormous in collecting what they understood to be evidence of cultural opposition. In Hungary, where since 1956 the authorities had feared of undetected intellectuals undermining the political rule of the party by means of culture, the political police maniacally sought for and discovered the deeds of a subversive culture.

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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.

1

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 Nové, 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 historiofiji,” 212.

22 Janković, *Mijenjanje sebe same*, 27.

23 Ibid., 16; Najbar-Agić, *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 *Praxis 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 *Praxis 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 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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JÓZSEF HAVASRÉTI – SÁNDOR HORVÁTH –
YVETTA KAJANOVÁ – MIROSLAV MICHELA

Youth Cultures: Escape to Gospel Songs, Rock, and Punk

Introduction

From the 1960s on, many new forms of alternative mass and popular culture emerged, such as rock bands, hippies, punks, and youth cultural icons that developed their own autonomous spheres of cultural activism and criticism of the socialist regimes. Rock bands practiced a kind of criticism of the social and cultural repercussions of political repression and cultivated new models of individual autonomy and communities.¹ The youth subcultures developed various critical alternatives to socialist industrial societies (often in the context of semi-supported professional or leisure organizations). Members of these youth subcultures and consumers of popular music were often cast in state politics not as symbolic representatives of a possible way of life, but as enemies of the state, the family, youth, and socialism. The case studies in this chapter analyze the ways in which youth subcultures were represented as cultures of dissent and how their cultural representations were preserved as cultural heritage in the former socialist countries.

The construction of Eastern European youth cultures as countercultures helped foster imaginings of the West. Accordingly, the case studies in this chapter address the role of the official discourse in the construction of “youth cultures,” in part because these cultures and portrayals of these cultures by the regimes lie at the heart of identity politics concerning the younger generation at the time. The case studies also look at some of the youth subcultures that emerged in socialist Czechoslovakia and in Hungary, and they examine the ways in which the cultural productions of these subcultures were archived by private persons and later by semi-private and/or public institutions, as well as the motifs for these practices of archiving. They also examine how young people in the “East” perceived the “West” and how their interests in “Western cultures” were represented in the official discourse and in the collections which preserved the cultural heritage of these youth sub-cultures. The chapter demonstrates that the conceptual borders between the “East” and the “West” were not merely a kind of ideological Iron Curtain, but rather were elements of cultural practice with which social identities were created that

1 See: Risch, *Youth and Rock*.

mirrored the cultural opposition between East and West (socialist and capitalist), including the social identities of the younger generations. These identities were patchworks which included elements of generational conflicts, but they were also shrewdly manipulated by the regimes to reinforce political narratives. However, youth subcultures were not necessarily political, but could be apolitical (which under communism gave them a political dimension, i.e. they were cast as a rejection of the system) or could also be seen as “dropping out” cultures, especially the forms of culture and cultural identity that closely attached to musical genres.²

Accordingly, the case studies analyze the ways in which different genres of popular music became the basic components of youth subcultures and how these genres were represented as expressions of dissent in the official culture. The case study of Yvetta Kajanová constitutes a distinctive case in Slovakia: the social role of the gospel song as cultural opposition for the younger generations and the story of the events and movements attached to the history of gospel and spiritual songs during the socialist period. József Havasréti sheds light on a story of a photo collection from the 1980s, which contains photographs of the performers of contemporary alternative popular music at rock concerts in Pécs, a university town in Hungary. The third case study in the chapter, authored by Miroslav Michela, analyses the content and the history of three institutions in Prague. Michela focuses on the cultural products connected to the New Wave and Punk scenes in the Czech Republic, which were important elements of youth identities during late socialism.

The COURAGE Registry³ includes several hundred items concerning the topic youth cultures, and even some of the collections that were created not by private individuals or semi-private institutions/organizations, but by the socialist state are also included under the label “youth cultures.” For example, “The Commission for Ideological and Political Work of the People’s Youth of Croatia”⁴ (1945–1962) was crucial in the lives of young people from the perspective of the guidance and education they were given on the basis of socialist values. This Commission worked under the aegis of the Communist Party, and its primary task was to monitor all activities that were (allegedly) a form of opposition to the regime. Therefore, the numerous documents in this collection encompassing the period between 1945 and 1962 show different oppositional aspirations and activities of young people in Croatia.

The practices of youth cultures were documented by organs of the state authorities, such as party commissions and secret police departments which were created for express purpose of monitoring youth activities in the schools and universities. The response of the authorities to Western influences (such

2 See Fürst and McLellan, *Dropping out of socialism*.

3 <http://cultural-opposition.eu/registry> Accessed: August 22, 2018.

4 COURAGE Registry s.v. “Commission for Ideological and Political Work of People’s Youth of Croatia (1945–1962),” by Tatjana Šarić, 2017. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

as films, literature, music, fashion, and hair styles) helped shape new social identities and establish new norms of behavior among members of the younger generations. Accordingly, the authorities and the younger generations could interpret the Cold War as a cultural conflict and cultural practices (e.g. music and musical genres) as weapons. In this interpretation, musical genres represented the most influential weapon in this war, as new musical genres provided a resource with which young people could fashion new, rebellious identities and also led to the emergence of new cultural spaces and new cultural preferences with which young people could express their relative autonomy during the socialist period.⁵ Phil Cohen identifies four dimensions of style which characterized youth cultures: dress, music, ritual, and argot.⁶ Although one could draw distinctions between youth cultures according to their dress, ritual, or argot, the preservation of youth cultures is centered mainly on musical genres, and the collections dealing with the youth question as a generational or social conflict focus on music, even if the youth cultures with which they are associated were politicized in the eyes of the state.

The Gospel Song as an Escape from Violent Resocialization: the Slovak Case

Unlike the Czech environment, which was characterized by an active jazz and rock underground, the Slovak environment was characterized by the spread of new spiritual and gospel songs. Ideologues perceived the enemy worldwide in the new form of gospel and spiritual songs due to the resocialization of youth in the spirit of the "atheistic philosophy of Marxism-Leninism." In the 1950s, young Christians formed a new subculture. They had specific opinions about belief and stood against the socialist system and ideology, but they were not active in producing samizdat collections or albums. They only organized illegal events, such as secret meetings with young people. After their legal performances (the band Matuzalem, 1958; The Unity of Brethren Baptist, Crédo—big beat masses in Catholic churches in Bratislava, 1968) at home and abroad (Vienna, Vatican), they realized their popularity and influence among young listeners. After the Prague Spring of 1968, these musicians developed an underground movement and became active in producing illegal albums. They recorded 37 gospel albums in studios, and they distributed them in the former Czechoslovak Socialist Republic during the period from 1969 to 1989. Later, samizdat collections like *Smieť žiť pre Krista* (To have the privilege to live for Christ, 1977–1982), *Miluje nás Pán* (The Lord loves us), *Pod ochranou matky* (Under the protection of our mother), *Zmŕtvychstal náš Pán* (Our Lord raised from death), and *Narodil sa Pán* (The Lord was born, 1982–1984) were

⁵ Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels*, 67.

⁶ Cohen, *Subcultural conflict*.

issued by underground Christian groups, in which a new form of gospel song with influences from jazz, rock, and pop music was presented.

Young Christian Subculture

The young Christian subculture in the former Czechoslovakia was inspired and shaped by their sympathies with the history of oppression of African-Americans; consequently, they were interested in jazz music, spirituals, and gospel music, especially in the 1950s. The young Christian subculture in Czechoslovakia absorbed new impulses in the 1960s. The beat generation presented even freer thinking and was filled with new ideas about how to connect hard rock and Christian messages, as were young American hippies, such as Jesus Chapel and Jesus Freaks. The younger generation adopted and drew inspiration from the ideas of their parents, since their parents passed on Christian beliefs and values to them.⁷ The parents themselves mediated contacts among American, Western, and local Christian communities (in Italy, Germany, and the USA), receiving information, songbooks, recordings of spirituals, gospel music, and hard rock.

This situation was not typical of all of Czechoslovakia, but rather was particular the case in the lands of Slovakia and Moravia, where these cultural trends had parallels with cultural trends in Poland. If we compare the situation with Czech youth subcultures, like jazz, tramp, country, folk song, and rock, the most active movement against the regime was among jazz aficionados and rockers. Czech jazz fans were called “potápky”⁸ at that time (“hooligans” in the swing generation), and rockers were “bigbítníci” (“bigbeaters” in rock). They produced samizdat collections,⁹ illegal records, fanzines, and journals, and they translated poetry by forbidden poets and others. They organized illegal events—performances, workshops, and artistic parties¹⁰—where they spread their ideas about freedom and explained the political situation of the communist party and its undemocratic system of government. Sometimes, they experimented with drugs (such as marijuana and LSD).¹¹ They were organized through a group called the Jazzová sekce (Jazz section), an only partly legal organization of professional jazz musicians and fans which was founded in 1971, or they gathered around a rock band named Plastic People of the Universe (started in 1968).

7 Smolík, *Subkultury mládeže. Uvedení do problematiky*, 178, 221.

8 Koura, *Swingři a potápky v protektorátní noci: česká swingová mládež a její hořkej svět*, 10.

9 COURAGE Registry s.v. “[Audiovisual Section at Libri Prohibiti](#)”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2017. Accessed: August 22, 2018; COURAGE Registry s.v. “[Popmuseum](#)”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2018. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

10 Blüml, “The Jazz Section and its Influence on the Development of Regional Cultures in Czechoslovakia before 1989: The Music Scene in Olomouc,” 105–18.

11 Kříženecký, Miki Volek: *nespoutaný život krále českého rock and rollu*, 142, 177, 190.

Slovak jazz and rock subcultures could not produce any collections or samizdat at the time because their activists either emigrated¹² to the West or withdrew from the protest culture. But this was not the case with younger Christians, who were influenced by their parents, nor was it the case with authorities from different religious denominations. They did not give up. The first subcultures emerged in the Brethren Unity of Baptists, the Church of Brethren, and the Catholic Church in the 1950s. They strongly influenced the education of young people by spreading Christianity and providing basic information about human rights. There were other denominations, like the Orthodox Church, the Greek Catholic Church, the Evangelical Church, Apostolic Church, and many other smaller churches, which were still active in the underground movement in Slovakia after 1948. Although the communists attempted to destroy them by violent campaigns targeting the strongest and biggest churches, these churches continued to perform engage in forms of oppositional culture.¹³ Examples of this violent crackdown include the “Barbarian Night” from April 13 to 14, 1950, when the communists disposed of all monasteries of the Catholic Church, and the action known as “VIR,” which took place on March 27, 1983, when the State Security Apparatus [ŠtB] confiscated religious literature, liturgical objects, typewriters, and deposit cards.¹⁴

Youth Circles

Young people gathered illegally in the 1950s at regular meetings called “Kružok” (Circle, called “Stretko” in the 1970s), where they talked about the word of God, prayed, and sang songs. They did not arrange collections of music or illegal records. Gospel songs were sung by young people, and this represented a form of cultural opposition due to the atheist ideology of the socialist regime. The young people in these groups came from different social strata (the working class, farmers, and the intelligentsia), but most were from the latter, and in the 1960s this subculture included dissidents too. At first, they performed only in their local churches (1958, *The Matuzalem*, the band from Brethren Unity of Baptists, Slávo Kráľ, leader of the band).¹⁵ When they became aware of the success and power of new spiritual songs in the spread of Christianity, they began to regard these songs as new weapons against

12 Kajanová, “Slovak and Czech Jazz Emigrants After 1948,” 49–64. Between 1948 and 1967, of 255,000 people left Czechoslovakia, while in the period 1968–1989 244,507 people emigrated. ČTK (Česká tisková kancelář, Czech News Agency) 25/1/91, SWB EE/0981 B6, 28/1/91, ČSTK (Československá tisková kancelář, Czechoslovak News Agency) 16/3/92, SWB EE/1332, B/10 18/3/92.

13 Koura, et al., *Diktatura versus naděje*, 43.

14 COURAGE Registry s.v. “Dominican Book Institute”, by Vladimír Zvara, 2017. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

15 COURAGE Registry s.v. “Brethren Unity of Baptists”, by Vladimír Zvara, 2018. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

communist atheistic ideology. They did not utilize gospel music simply as an escape from communist reality, but also saw it as a countermeasure to the violent resocialization of the educational system. Young Christians did not want to be in opposition to the socialist regime, but they found no other possibility to “do their own things their own way.”

Their activities morphed into underground phenomena somewhat against their will, and they became a form of cultural opposition due to their beliefs. They attended public performances in the Blumental church in Bratislava (see, for example, *Credo*, the band from Ivanka pri Bratislave, 1968, led by the composer and guitarist Stanislav Zibala; see the collection of the University Pastoral Centre Bratislava).¹⁶ The first big beat mass was also recorded as a documentary movie by a team of filmmakers from the newscast *A Week in film* (1968). *Credo* recorded new albums legally in the Church of the Saint Trinity in Bratislava for the Supraphon label, but immediately before public distribution, hardliners banned their activity due to the Prague spring in 1968. The group decided to distribute an album among fans illegally, and it was also broadcast by Radio Vaticana and Radio Free Europe.

The choir of the Brethren Unity of Baptists Bratislava—Palisády performed at the Stadthalle in Vienna in 1969 and at the European Baptist Conference in Budapest the same year, along with American preacher Billy Graham. When they were invited to hold a performance in Prague, Graham ordered an airplane for them, though Czechoslovakia had already been occupied by the army of the Warsaw Pact.

Encouraged by their achievements, young Christians began to organize collective issues of songbooks and to record these songs on albums. They established underground mobile studios in different private locations, recorded albums, and distributed them illegally on reel-to-reel tapes and, later, on cassettes. Albums by Loving Teenagers and Južania, for example, were created in secret locations near Prague between 1970 and 1972, in Bratislava, and, later, in Hýľov (in 1984). The musicians on the records were simultaneously founders of the collections: for instance, Anton Fabian (see the Anton Fabian Collection),¹⁷ Amantius Akimjak, Mária Wiesnerová, and others. Young people were very active in Bratislava, where the choirs Ursus Singers, Kufříkovci, Kapucíni (1968), and Céčko (1973) performed legally in churches. Because they had a following, these young people recorded and distributed tapes and cassettes illegally.

16 COURAGE Registry s.v. “University Pastoral Center Bratislava”, by Vladimír Zvara, 2017. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

17 COURAGE Registry s.v. “Anton Fabian Collection”, by Yveta Kajánová, 2017. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

Collections of Gospel Songs

In the 1980s, ecumenical ideas were also spread through Taizé songs. Their lyrics were translated into Slovak, arranged in new versions, and performed by the Kapucíni choir (including Katarína Horváthová and Pavol Kaločaj) in Bratislava. Their secretly produced body of works is held now at the University Pastoral Centre Bratislava¹⁸ since 1997 and in the Music Museum of the Slovak National Museum (since 2016). Activists recorded albums in several other centers in Slovakia, including the Schola Cantorum at The Faculty of Theology of Comenius University in Bratislava, as well as in Tvrdošín, Ružomberok (Marcel Šiškovič), Hýľov (Anton Fabian), and Partizánske (Mária “Marina” Wiesnerová, see the Marina Wiesner Collection).¹⁹ To help produce better quality recordings, Maťo Lishák created the mobile studio Svetielko in 1986 and offered its services to gospel bands. The main leaders of the Schola Cantorum events were Amantius Akimjak²⁰ and Juraj Drobný (see the University Pastoral Centre in Bratislava). Amantius Akimjak gathered gospel songs at the Faculty of Theology in Bratislava and established, between 1982 and 1984, the collection of songbooks “Miluje nás Pán” (The Lord loves us), “Pod ochranou matky” (Under the protection of our mother), “Zmŕtvychstal náš Pán” (Our Lord raised from dead), and “Narodil sa Pán” (The Lord was born). Akimjak was persecuted for this activity: he was expelled from the university as a student of the Faculty of Theology and he was summoned for an interview (or interrogation) by the State Security (ŠtB). Similarly, Marcel Šiškovič, a member of the Loving Teenagers group, did not receive state approval for pastoral work after his graduation in 1974. Akimjak’s collection of songbooks is now located at the University Library of the Catholic University in Ružomberok and at the Dominican Book Institute.

Mária Wiesnerová worked separately in Partizánske, where several musicians and teachers at the Elementary Art School (Ľudová škola umenia), collaborated with her. The community and the band were known as “Radostné srdce” (Joyful heart), and they recorded eleven cassettes in an illegal studio in Bratislava between 1983 and 1989. The Joyful heart has been linked to activities of the Blue Cross movement in Switzerland and the Community of Christians in Prague since 1983.

In 1964, the Church of Brethren Collection²¹ formed the “Misijný spevokol mladých” (The missionary choir of the youth), and in 1967 it formed the

18 COURAGE Registry s.v. “University Pastoral Center Bratislava”, by Vladimir Zvara, 2017. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

19 COURAGE Registry s.v. “Marina Wiesner Collection”, by Vladimir Zvara, 2017. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

20 See the collection of COURAGE Registry s.v. “Collection The University Library of the Catholic University in Ružomberok,” by Vladimir Zvara, 2017. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

21 COURAGE Registry s.v. “Church of Brethren Collection”, by Vladimir Zvara, 2017. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

children's choir "Kvapôčky" (Droplets) under conductor Milica Kajlingová. During the process of recording certain activities of the Church of Brethren and the Brethren Unity of Baptists were connected. Sometimes the different Christian denominations cooperated—especially in the project *The Christmas Alphabet* (see Juraj Lexmann: "Vianočná abeceda," mg tape, Bratislava—CB Cukrová, 1979), in which musicians and activists from the Catholic Church and the Church of Brethren also participated. Several churches collaborated on the recording *Passion* by Michael Vulpius, and they illegally spread these recordings over the course of the next two decades: the Bratislava Evangelical Choir, the Missionary Choir of the Youth, the Children's choir "Droplets" from the Church of Brethren, the Matica slovenská choir, and the Evangelical choir from Stará Turá (MG, Bratislava, 1969).

The choir "Droplets" from the Church of the Brethren focused mainly on the education of children. It provides clear proof of a double culture in which a stern atheism prevailed in the public sphere and strong Christian ideals prevailed in private life. As noted by Ivan Valenta, the main organizer and editor of the songbook "Smieť žiť pre Krista" (To have the privilege to live for Christ), "You could live and die for socialism but not for Christ at this time."²² This captures the main reason why the Christian subculture of young people became a form of cultural opposition. One of the key phrases of the socialist regime was "Build and defend the socialist country, be ready!" The motto of the marching pioneers and members of the Socialist Union of Youth was "Always ready!"

The young Christian communities presented their specific characteristics not only in their opinions, beliefs, and religious views, but also in their behavior and clothing. They did not consume alcohol and, unlike rock fans, had no experience with "grass." Neither did they frequent pubs and discos, nor did they proclaim their ideas with aggression and violence like punk rockers. Rather, they asked simply that their private pursuits and practices be treated with respect. They dressed very casually, often imitating the clothes of the religious brothers, and the women did not use makeup. This characteristic disinterest in fashion was typical of only a small group of young Christians; others preferred sport clothes. What everyone had in common was an idealistic and monotheistic belief, independent of the religious denominations to which they belonged. If the authorities asked them about their worldview and religion, they answered, "that is a private affair." This question was part of interviews at competitions, assessments, and examinations at school or university during the period of socialism. Their reply represented a new idea of freedom and human rights, and it placed them into the ranks of cultural opposition.

After the Velvet Revolution in 1989, many young Christians became members of political parties like the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH,

²² Ibid.

founded in 1990), the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union – Democratic Party (SDKÚ-DS, 2000), and Ordinary People and Independent Personalities (OLaNO, founded in 2011). Sometimes, they even became active, high-level politicians (for instance Ján Čarnogurský, František Mikloško, Mikuláš Dzurinda, and Igor Matovič). Many musicians, artists, and important personalities from the underground Christian movements were influenced by these movements, including composer Daniel Matej, violoncellist Jozef Lupták, pianist Ivan Šiller, vocalists Iveta Matyášová and Jana Daňová, composer and producer Maroš Kachút, guitarist Stano Počaji, journalists Juraj Kušnierik and Štefan Hríb, poet, philosopher, and preacher Daniel Pastirčák, and many others who became leading figures in their fields.

The Photograph Collection of Ferenc Kálmándy and the Alternative Scene in Pécs: Documenting the Subcultures of the Younger Generation in Hungary

From the late 1970s until the late 1980s, photography artist and journalist photographer Ferenc Kálmándy documented the cultural life and events which took place in the alternative scene in Pécs, in particular events which were part of Hungarian post-punk and new wave music and visual arts culture. His private collection, which consists of photographs, sound recordings, and photographic records, is found in his residence in Orfű, a settlement in Baranya County. It contains some 100 print pictures, 400 negatives, and 2,000 photographic records (rock, jazz, blues, and alternative rock).²³

Pécs was the fifth largest city in Hungary, with a population of 200,000. Its university, the so-called Youth House, the Pécs Gallery, and the various community and cultural centers were sites of widely diverse underground and alternative cultural groups which were active in pop music, theatre life, literature, and the avantgarde visual arts.

The Photograph as a Document of Alternative Culture

Photographers who were interested in the Hungarian underground/alternative cultural scene took a particularly strong interest in the history of the sites where this culture blossomed. As an almost archetypal example, one could mention the work of Tamás Urbán, who was a professional journalist photographer. As a reporter for *Ifjúsági Magazin* (Youth Magazine), he took pictures of important events in the history of Hungarian rock music, including music festivals and members of the audiences which gathered for performances. János Kőbányai, a writer and sociographer who was also educated as

23 See the COURAGE Registry: COURAGE Registry s.v. "[Kálmándy, Ferenc Photo Archive](#)", by Lóránt Bódi, 2017. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

an attorney, was a representative of a different paradigm. As a member of the literary and musical group Fölöspéldány (Extra Copy), he used his sociographer-photographer skills to document primarily the everyday life of early Hungarian punk subculture, which drew many of its enthusiasts from the fans of the band Beatrice.

Kőbányai did not attempt to document the life of this subculture from the unbiased perspective of an external observer. Rather, he considered himself a kind of representative and standard-bearer of this culture among the intelligentsia. As a member of Fölöspéldány, he was attached both to the young, neo-avantgarde intelligentsia and young people who led somewhat vagrant lives.²⁴ In one of his essays, Dick Hebdige offers a detailed study of the iconography of the press photographs depicting British young people who belonged to the working class. Hebdige notes that, for the most part, these images were presented as illustrations of social problems, and the individuals were depicted as people who were opposed to social conventions. Thus, they created a kind of scenography out of the younger generation. The backdrops corresponded to this iconography: street scenes, provocative poses, facial expressions that seemed either offended or aggressive, and the visual signs of social deviance (shaved heads, ragged clothing, primitive tattoos, and body jewelry).²⁵ Urbán's and Kőbányai's subcultural repertoires were similar. János Vető represented a third paradigm. He was also part of the neo-avantgarde tendencies which were prevalent at the time, but he was active as someone who documented the underground/alternative scene in Budapest.²⁶ So, the photography at the time was marked by at least three tendencies: 1) the objective view of the reporter, 2) a commitment to the role of a representative of the alternative scene, and 3) aesthetic endeavors to create works of art.

If one takes the oeuvres of these three photographers as a point of departure, Kálmándy's approach to his art resembles that of Vető perhaps the most. As a professional journalist photographer and a member of the Focus photographers' group (which was drawn to avantgarde tendencies, among other things), Kálmándy both documented and shaped the milieu which was part of the alternative cultural scene in Pécs and the new wave pop music of the 1980s. In contrast with Urbán and Kőbányai, who used photography as it might be used by the reporter or the sociographer, Kálmándy and Vető at times focused quite deliberately on creating photographic compositions that were artistic in nature. These compositions, which were carefully arranged, were part of the neo-avantgarde trends in Hungarian photographic art. (Kálmándy's works and activities are not examined here as part of the history of the Focus group, so the presentation of this group is brief.)²⁷ Statements

24 Havasréti, *Alternatív regiszterek*, 233–40.

25 Hebdige, *Hiding in the Light*, 17–41.

26 Szilágyi, *Neoavantgárd tendenciák*, 283–85.

27 Kincses, *Focusban*.

made by members of the Focus group suggest that they considered the deliberately crafted nature of their compositions one of the most important distinctive features of their works, regardless of genre and technique. As Tamás Borbély noted, “we made pictures on given themes that were thought out and composed ahead of time.”²⁸

Between 1979 and 1982, Kálmándy worked as the exhibition designer for the Pécs Gallery, which was under the direction of Sándor Pinczehelyi. Until the mid-1990s the Pécs Gallery was one of the most influential centers of local underground/alternative cultural life. Many of the employees of the gallery played in new wave bands, which often performed in the Gallery at exhibition openings and also independently. Composer Kristóf Wéber offered the following recollection of the scene at the time: “Sometimes, the police even came, but there were never any particularly rough incidents. There were parties, of course, noise, breaking glass, that kind of thing. The cellar was used as more than just an audition space, a kind of underground club life started to take form, and more and more people would come. After one of the practice sessions, someone said that it wasn’t a try-out, it was a concert, cause there were more people in the audience than in the band.”²⁹

Pop Music, Fashion, Visual Culture

The late 1970s and early 1980s bore witness to the emergence of some striking shifts in style in the visual arts and music in Hungary. Post-avantgarde tendencies gained ground, including decorativeness, eclecticism, ironic and frivolous gestures, and the use of the symbols of pop culture as citations.³⁰ Pop music began to move away from the hard rock and progressive rock of the 1970s, and the subversive influence of punk began to be felt, followed by new wave.³¹

Music and the visual arts were by no means the only areas of culture which were undergoing a transformation. Youth fashion and clothing were also changing. These changes were palpable in Hungary, first and foremost in the world of subculture. The visual repertoire of the hobo subculture remained popular (narrow pants, a polka dotted kerchief, the soldier’s gasmask bag), but more elegant and to some extent mannered and even eclectic fashions also began to catch on, both in clothing and hairstyles. These styles rejected both the uniform fashion of the late Kádár era, i.e. jeans and a chequered shirt, and the hard rock and punk styles, for instance the torn leather jacket. This shift could be characterized as the emergence of a renewed appreciation for sophisticated dress, i.e. a kind of “anti-anti-fashion” or an attempt to move

28 Cited in Ibid., 55.

29 Koszits, *Lebegő tónusú monoton zeneművek*. Cited with the permission of the author.

30 Hegyi, *Élmény és fikció*, 113–32.

31 Szőnyi, *Az Új Hullám* évtizede, 1–2.

beyond the hippie styles which drew on the colorful world of counterculture (bellbottomed trousers and mottled shirts) and the “confrontation dressing” advocated by Vivienne Westwood, which borrowed from the visual world of punk.³² These shifts were also discernible in portrait photography, which constituted one of the defining trends of neo-avantgarde photography. Works by both Vető and Kálmándy could be cited as examples.

The codifier of the new style was the network of young people and artists in Budapest which shaped the new wave visual arts, film art, pop music, and design tendencies of the era. Members of this network closely followed the shift from punk to new wave, and they represented the new trends both on the level of everyday aesthetics and in their works. The photographs by Vető and Kálmándy documented the stylistic marks of a subculture and the members of this subculture, but this group was a decidedly artistic, intellectual subculture.

Conceptual Portrait Photography and New Wave Influences

Photography occupied a prominent place in the sort of “Gesamtkunstwerk” interest which was characteristic of the new wave in Hungary in the 1980s, both as an independent genre and as raw material for, vehicle of, and complement to the new endeavors in design. The endeavors in Hungarian neo-avantgarde photography which tend to be subsumed under the term “portrait concept” offer good examples of the above processes.³³

For the Budapest underground, one of the harbingers of these changes (and someone who was actually active himself in artistic life in Hungary) was Udo Kier, an actor from West Germany. Kier worked in Hungary as one of the principal actors in Gábor Bódy’s 1980 film *Nárcisz és Psyche* (“Narcissus and Psyche”), and for a short time, he became one of the prominent figures in the circle of artists which included Gábor Bódy, János Xantus, János Vető, Tibor Hajas, and György Kozma, as well as a veritable stylistic icon of the post-modern. Vető made several portraits of Kier, who at the time was best known as an actor who had worked for Andy Warhol and R. W. Fassbinder. As photography historian Sándor Szilágyi and photographer László Lugosi Lugo have observed, Kier’s hairstyle (brushed back and gelled, resembling the hairstyle of silent film star Rudolph Valentino), dress (a striped button-down shirt, jacket, and tie), and perhaps most of all his world-weary facial expression exerted a strong, even inspiring effect on the fashions of the time. “He thoroughly stirred up the stagnant waters of the art world of the Hungarian underground: his very being, his dress, his hairstyle, the way he moved in the world, it was as if he had come from some distant planet.”³⁴ According to

32 Hebdige, *Subculture*, 107.

33 Szilágyi, *Neoavantgárd tendenciák*, 231–310.

34 Ibid., 284.

Lugosi Lugo, "the mannerism which found expression in Udo's dress and his gelled hair, and which perhaps comes through in this picture, was very present at the time in Budapest."³⁵

Vető's portraits, both of Kier and of members of his own circle of friends, offer good examples of his visual tool box (for instance, estrangement effects, the elongation, clipping, and remounting of the picture) and of the clothing culture of the time, which in Budapest in the late 1970s only tended towards the styles mentioned above and, beginning in the 1980s, started to "catch up" with the Kier fashion. These photographs, even only in the case of the photographs taken by Kálmándy, represented a "micro-public sphere" which had been elevated to a distinctly exclusive level: the members of a circle of friends who turned inwards and closed themselves off from the prosaic world outside took their places in front of the camera and presented to the world their "membership as initiates" into a subculture.

The 1982 series by Kálmándy entitled *Barátaim és én* (Me and my friends) should be seen in this context. It is one of the most important items in his collection, a series made by Kálmándy of the familiar figures in the alternative scene in Pécs.³⁶ The first portrait is of Kristóf Wéber, one of the most prominent figures of the scene. Wéber was active in experimental/neo-avantgarde and contemporary music.³⁷ He contributed to the first album by the band Bizottság (the original name of the band was "Committee," but it was later changed to A. E. Committee in response to objections raised by the authorities, who felt that it was a challenge to the Central Committee, one of the main organs of power in communist Hungary; the initials stand for Albert Einstein), which was entitled *Kalandra fel* (Setting out for adventure, 1983), and he later became a member of several new wave music bands in Pécs. The respectable chalk-striped jacket he is wearing in the picture offers a clear example of the shift in styles described above.

The next image shows János Rauschenberger, who served as the editor of the periodical *Bercsényi* 28–30 (published by the College of Architecture at the Budapest University of Technology) between 1978 and 1980. He also did stage design for the theatre and later worked with visual artist Gyula Pauer. Rauschenberger's portrait, like the portrait of Wéber, linked the series to the alternative contemporary arts scene. The white denim pants and loose sweater perhaps cannot be easily characterized as a "marked value" (as a structuralist would say), but the unfazed glance and facial expression and the subject's weary posture can. Since the emergence of nineteenth-century decadence, the world-weary facial expression was an essential part of the appearance of the artist of the big city, the dandy who stood out in the crowd. The blasé attitude

³⁵ Lugosi Lugo, *Fényképművészet*, 78.

³⁶ Kálmándy P. *Ferenc fotói*.

³⁷ For more on his career see Koszits, *Lebegő tónusú monoton zeneművek*.

created a kind of veil around the individual and protected him from the effects of the prosaic world around him.

Animation film director Károly Papp (“Kása”) is depicted in the next photograph. At the time, he worked as an exhibition director. His striped suspenders, which are buttoned (an old-fashioned style), and his white, linen button-down shirt, which has an almost “vintage” effect, were both clear signs of his profession. This shirt was referred to as a peasant shirt at the time, whether it came from a peasant’s chest or a bourgeois household’s wardrobe. In the 1970s and 1980s, in part thanks to the growing popularity of the dance house movement, some elements of peasant garb were regarded as familiar parts of urban dress. The appearance of these elements of peasant garb (a peasant shirt and blouse, a short, fur-lined coat, a peasant hat, a vest, etc.) cannot be attributed necessarily or exclusively to “Narodnik” sentiments. Rather, they melted into the eclectic style at the time, which was considered modern. Furthermore, they were expressions of a distaste for the products of the garment industry, which often lacked imagination. “Kása” can be seen in the same garb in a series of photographs (made at the same time as the portraits) entitled *Elszaladni késő, itt maradni kár* (Too late to run away, no sense in staying).

The last image in the catalogue is Önarckép (Self-portrait). The photographer is depicted wearing white with a sloppily tied necktie, which is an essential accoutrement of his appearance. The necktie began to become popular in the 1980s in comparison with the shabby (punk) and organic (hippie) dress styles of the previous decade. He wears a pin which is similarly important. According to him, it may have been a Nina Hagen pin. In the early 1980s, these kinds of pins began to become increasingly popular as signs which bore the names of rock bands, punk bands, and new wave performers. There were distinctive, individually made pins too, for instance mirror fragments which harmonized well with the narcissistic overtones of the new style. The pins also offered an expressive form for spectacular exaggeration. In a 1982 group picture of the members of the Focus group, Kálmándy is wearing eight pins.³⁸

In Kálmándy’s collection, the aforementioned *Elszaladni késő, itt maradni kár* from 1982 is directly tied to the concept behind *Barátaim*.³⁹ The same people are depicted in each, and the photographs were made on the same occasion. The title is a citation from a song by János Vető, which was written for Trabant, a familiar new wave band from the 1980s. The work, which is narrative and sequential but which also contains conceptual elements, offers a good summary of Kálmándy’s endeavors involving the art photography tendencies of the contemporary neo-avantgarde and the subcultural movements. The 1985 catalogue contains a composition consisting of four pictures, and the *Focusban* (In focus) album contains one consisting of six. Both compositions

³⁸ Kincses, *Focusban*, 17.

³⁹ Ibid., 130–31.

express visually the paradox of Vető's line. The objects (in reality, of course, people) depicted in the images begin to move slowly and hesitantly and then this motion is hampered, capturing the futility expressed in the song and the melancholy which was typical of Trabant's songs.

Concert Pictures, Portraits of Musicians

Kálmándy made photographs of a wide variety of performers, including the bands which were active in the subcultural scene in Pécs, Európa Kiadó (which was a "superstar" of the "Hungarian underground"), Trabant, and even the Rolling Stones. Some of his photographs document the performances in Pécs held by Trabant, Európa Kiadó, and Bizottság. Thus, they constituted professional documents of the alternative concert life of the 1980s. His portrait of Ágnes Bárdos Deák, which was made at a concert held by the band Kontroll, won a prize at the *Rockfotó 1983* exhibition held in Miskolc. The cover of the album *Én mindig csak Pest* (I always just Pest) by the band Ági és a Fiúk (Ági and the boys) was also based on the portrait (author's publication, 2000).

At the opening in 1985 for the exhibition entitled *A három fő erény* (The three principal virtues) of works by visual artists András Wahorn, László fe Lugossy, and István ef Zámbó, who were known as members of the "Lajos Vajda Studio" in Szentendre and the band Bizottság, the band Neoszarvasbika (Neo-stag), an ad hoc group formed by the three artists themselves, performed.⁴⁰ Kálmándy made photographs which document the performance by the band (it contained a wealth of bizarre, grotesque, and Dadaist elements typical of their work) and the audience. The photographs document one of the essential aspects of the alternative cultural life of the 1980s: the *network-style* organization of this culture and its interdisciplinary and intermedial character (both of which stemmed in part from its network-like organization). Music, the visual arts, photography, and the social sphere were thoroughly intertwined, forming a distinctly *Gesamtkunstwerk* milieu that could be understood both as an aesthetic and a sociocultural phenomenon. The site for all this was the Pécs Gallery. Péter Hardy was sitting the closest to the musicians. Hardy was the front man for Bizonytalanság (Uncertainty), Gruppensex (Group sex), and Pécsi Underground Fórum, or PUF (Pécs Underground Forum).⁴¹ The situation itself was characteristic of the time. Hardy is seen recording the performance with a small tape recorder. The exchange of these kinds of "bootleg" copies was the typical and indeed one could say the only distribution method in the alternative cultural scene.

⁴⁰ See *A 3 fő erény*.

⁴¹ On Péter Hardy see Gróf, *A Mecsek Legalja*, 12–19.

Punk Rock as Youth Culture in Czechoslovakia

Being a punk rocker meant a great deal of shared challenges, tastes, and attitudes for people attached to this form of culture throughout the territory of socialist Czechoslovakia. This included the ways in which the punk image itself was fashioned and the problems with which this lifestyle was associated. In a country with limited access to information from the West and limited chances for average citizens to get their hands on desired pop culture artefacts, punk rock culture established itself only very slowly. It is also interesting to compare the situation in the Czech and Slovak parts of the country, and there were also differences in local conditions and possibilities. Punks in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic originally appeared in the largest cities of the republic, and soon active groups were formed in smaller towns and rural areas. Alongside the emerging oppositional culture in Prague and Bratislava, a strong scene was created in northern Bohemia in Teplice, for instance, where there were several important music bands, and in Jihlava, where the first Czech punk samizdat, *Punk Maglajz*, was published in 1985 by the members of the punk band Hrdinové nové fronty, also known as HNF (Heroes of the New Front).

Punk came into the Czechoslovakia in 1978 through various channels about two years after its big success in the UK. The main sources of information were foreign music magazines like *Melody Maker* and *New Musical Express*, as well as the German youth magazine *Bravo*. Popular music from the West spread mainly through foreign radio broadcasts and television and music recordings. Records were prized items, and they were subsequently recorded to tape and shared extensively by music fans. Most of the Punk rock and New Wave music could not be obtained officially, so its distribution was an important part of the alternative networks of the time. In addition to personal contacts, the collection and distribution of music recordings was also done through advertisements in youth magazines and in postal communications.

The Essential Underground samizdat magazine *Vokno* (The window) published in its first issue of 1979 six pages about Punk, and it emphasized aspects shared by the underground and this relatively new subculture.⁴² In the existing underground environment, punks were given a background to play at illegal concerts and to participate in the samizdat movement. Several punks even came out of the underground environment. The first punk festival was held at an underground squat (so-called barrack) in 1979 in Nová Víska, where the band Energie G performed.

42 In case of *Vokno* see the collection of the founder in the Registry: COURAGE Registry s.v. "[Cunas.cz](#)" by Chmátal, Jonáš, 2017. Accessed: August 22, 2018; and for this samizdat magazine online see: COURAGE Registry s.v. "[Vons.cz](#)" by Vrtálková, Anna, 2018. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

However, in Slovakia the situation was different. Initially, Punk had firm roots only in Bratislava, where in 1979 the band Tip began to play, which later transformed into Extip and in 1980 became the band Paradox, on the ruins of which an internationally recognized band named Zóna A later formed. Slovak punks primarily liked the melodic Punk 77. In the Czech lands, a harder and faster type of music was popular. This was also reflected in the punkers' appearances. The specific interest in melodic music was also reflected in the fact that the influence of hard core music in Slovakia came later than in the Czech lands.

From the early 1980s, the security forces, which had been busy mainly with the so-called "long hair folks," began to focus on the New Wave and Punk youth as well. The state authorities defined them as non-compliant with the social environment, hostile to work, and inclined to addiction, alcoholism, and drug abuse. There were also frequent allegations of sympathy with Nazism. Also, some Western punk bands used the Swastika, and this provocative act also became a part of punk culture in Czechoslovakia. Nazi symbolism became part of the provocation and the expressions of anti-communist sentiment. Although racism and anti-Roma sentiment were not widespread, racist and anti-Roma texts nonetheless appeared in punk songs beginning in the mid-1980s.⁴³

Subsequently, the state security was streamlined, and the State Security Services launched a secret campaign called *Odpad* (Waste). Both the secret police and the criminal police used intimidation as one of their primary methods. They tried to "correct" the youngsters by making it impossible to meet and perform concerts. They also made young people with long hair cut their hair, and they ripped out their earrings and seized patches, badges, and pyramid belts. The police would make targeted calls to schools, hospitality facilities, and workplaces and hold interviews with parents as part of their normal working procedure. Vlado Lamoš recalls that they even made a punk exhibition for parents at the police station.⁴⁴

As a result of these disruptive measures, many punk and new wave bands disappeared. When Perestroika gradually arrived, the situation began to become more relaxed. It gradually became clear to the authorities that tastes and attitudes could not be changed simply through repressive measures, so the security police modified their approach. The new tactic was to try to control young people's activities with the help of the secret agents who had been recruited from within the subculture scene. Beginning in the mid-1980s, a new generation of punks emerged with new bands and an expanding fan base. Alternative literature also began to emerge. Fanzines were spread through social circles in pubs and various musical productions. Articles, for example, about

43 Polák, "Věšme židy, komouše!," 70–85.

44 Interview made for Slovak film *Závadová mládež* (Troubled youth) (2008), 8:20–9:00 min., available online: <https://youtu.be/Z1oJvtBH3dE>. Accessed August 22, 2018.

the HNF, Visací Zámek (Padlock), or Šanov 1 appeared in popular newspapers, for instance in *Mladá fronta*. An important change was announced at the official Rockfest competition at the Prague Palace of Culture: *Rockfest 1988* would include a separate punk bloc under the listing “hardcore.” In October 1989, *Punkeden*, the biggest ever hardcore festival took place at Prague–Žofín, and it was attended by some 2,500 or 3,000 participants.

At the same time, an independent scene was developing: bands were producing their own demo tapes and several independent labels emerged. Perhaps the most important labels in new wave production were Mikuláš Chadima’s *Fist Records* and *Samizdat Tapes Cassettes and Videos* (S.T.C.V.), led by Petr Cibulka. S.T.C.V. had a huge catalogue of recordings, including almost 500 titles. The end of the 1980s saw the emergence of a number of smaller labels which tended to release music by local bands from a particular city or region. These labels included *Rytmická mládež* (Rhythmic youth) (Vlašské Meziříčí), *Motherfucker Distributing Company* (M.D.C.) (Lipník nad Bečvou), *Sysifos Independent Records* (S.I.R.) (Plzeň), *Fukkavica Records* (Trenčín), and *Inflagranti Records* (Bratislava), as well as several others connected mostly with bands. Punk compilation tapes were even created to capture the best of Czechoslovak punk and hardcore.⁴⁵ Independent magazines were also emerging in this era. Punk magazines like *Schrott magazín*, *Attack*, *Oslí uši* (Donkey ears), *Šot*, and *Sračka* (Shit) appeared in the Czech lands, and *In Flagranti* began to be published in Bratislava. Underground magazines like *Vokno* and *Mašurkovské podzemné* continued to publish articles about punk music and the surrounding scene. Many articles on new wave and punk also appeared in the independent music magazines, like *Za 2 Piva* (For 2 beers) and many others.

Collections and Institutions

The dissolution of Jazz section meant there was no official non-repressive institution in Czechoslovakia to collect information and artefacts associated with punk subculture. For this reason, many historical sources and artefacts can now be found in the personal collections of key figures or private collectors. This also explains why several major exhibitions about pre-1989 punk history have drawn so extensively on artefacts originating from private collections. The first of these exhibitions was the official showing of the photographs of punk archivist Štěpán Stejskal at Youth Gallery in Brno in 1993.⁴⁶ Prague’s Popmuseum⁴⁷ organized three subsequent exhibitions: “Hit the guitar and shout! Czech punk and hardcore during the totalitarian period” (January–September 2013), “Rockfest 1986–89: Hippies and Mohawks at the Palace of

45 Fuchs, *Kytary a řev*, 232–44; Andrs, “PLAY/REC/REW: Kazetový samizdat,” 101–10.

46 Photos from Stejskal’s collection also appear in the book *Punk v obrazech*.

47 COURAGE Registry s.v. “Popmuseum”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2018. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

Culture" (April–Jun 2016) and "Write, publish, disseminate. On my own!" (February–Jun 2018).

Popmuseum's archive is a significant source of material on the history of Czech and Czechoslovak popular music.⁴⁸ The archive, which was created in 1998, drew inspiration from work on the Czech Television documentary series "Bigbít" (Big Beat; Czechoslovak term for beat music).⁴⁹ At the time, a large collection of documents and musical artefacts had been assembled, but no existing institution would display them. The current collection includes music-oriented fanzines and literature, posters, photos, recordings, and interviews, and some of this material covers the history of pre-revolutionary Czechoslovak new wave, punk, and hardcore.

The Oral History Center at the Institute of Contemporary History of the Czech Academy of Sciences was set up in 2000 to collect oral history interviews and make them accessible.⁵⁰ Some of the recordings in this collection come from the Center's own projects while others are from projects led by its partners. At present, there are more than 2,000 interviews in the archive. Interviews with punks (mostly members of different bands) were recorded between 2006 and 2009 as part of a project that explored social and political aspects of the emergence of indie genres in the Czech lands from the 1960s to 1989.⁵¹

Several punk-related publications can also be found in the Samizdat Collection in the Czechoslovak Documentation Centre,⁵² which houses a unique collection of samizdat literature (1972–89) that was originally collected and kept in Germany by historian Vilém Prečan and his collaborators. In 2003, the collection was donated to the Czech National Museum,⁵³ and it is now part of the museum's archive.

In terms of both size and comprehensiveness, the most valuable collections on these topics are the Czech samizdat collection and audio-visual section at Libri Prohibiti.⁵⁴ This "library of prohibited books" in Prague was founded with the aim of assembling diasporic and samizdat literature in one place and making it accessible to the public to shed light on recent Czechoslovak history. Founder Jiří Gruntorád, a pre-1989 publisher and collector of samizdat literature and a signatory to Charter 77, was twice imprisoned for

48 See Popmuseum in the Courage Registry.

49 See <http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/specialy/bigbit/> Accessed: August 22, 2018.

50 Some interviews are available also in the Memory of Nations Online Collection: COURAGE Registry s.v. "Memory of Nations", by Anna Vrtálová, 2017. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

51 See: COURAGE Registry s.v. "Interviews collection of the Oral History Center", by Anna Vrtálová, 2018. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

52 COURAGE Registry s.v. "Samizdat collection of Czechoslovak Documentation Centre", by Jitka Hanáková, 2018. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

53 COURAGE Registry s.v. "National Museum of Czech Republic", by Jitka Hanáková, 2018. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

54 COURAGE Registry s.v. "Czech samizdat collection at Libri Prohibiti", by Michaela Kůželová, 2017. Accessed: August 22, 2018; COURAGE Registry s.v. "Audiovisual Section at Libri Prohibiti", by Michaela Kůželová, 2017. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

his samizdat-related activities. He was convinced that the library should remain private and independent and therefore decided not to give his collection to state institutions. The archive of samizdat periodicals includes more than 440 titles. The Czech samizdat periodicals in the collection were listed—along with Slovak samizdat periodicals—in UNESCO’s Memory of the World Register in 2013. Concerning punk subculture, the archive contains a very significant collection of fanzines as well as some rare individual publications. The audio-visual section of Libri Prohibiti features audio and video recordings of non-conformist music, or what is sometimes called musical samizdat. There is also a unique collection of demo tapes and recordings that were produced and distributed by independent labels and networks and were essential to the development of punk culture in the late 1980s.

An undefined quantity of materials regarding the subcultures and independent activities is held in the Security Services Archives.⁵⁵ In this respect, the police materials held in Kanice near Brno constitute a very interesting source of information which as of yet has hardly been consulted. Operative and Investigation files, materials of the regional offices of the State Security, materials of the IInd or Xth department of the counterintelligence directed against so-called inner enemies (e.g. “free youth”), and so-called Signal, Personal, and Object files which were created with the objective of controlling and disciplining punks are held in Prague. A great deal of digitalized material, mostly recordings and publications, can now also be easily accessed on the Internet.⁵⁶

For a long time, there has been no public interest in artefacts connected to the punk movement in Czechoslovakia. Therefore, no specialized collection or institution has been established on this subject. From time to time, interest among historians or among those who bore witness to this form of cultural opposition grows, but this topic is not seen as an important issue in the discussion on dissent and cultural opposition. Fortunately, several artefacts have become part of specialized collections of dissent and independent culture production, and they are now accessible for research. Documents that were created by the state and, especially, documents that were created by the state security forces constitute distinctive and informationally rich historical sources. They now can be studied because of the special law that makes them accessible to the public.⁵⁷

55 The original name is: Archiv bezpečnostních složek.

56 Two regularly updated Slovak blogs include digitalised versions of rare recordings and documents related to pre-revolutionary punk in Czechoslovakia. See: <http://muzika-komunika.blogspot.cz> and <http://zberatelp.blogspot.cz/>. The very useful www.Scriptum.cz web archive also provides access to various non-commercial and online Czech diasporic and samizdat periodicals. See: COURAGE Registry s.v. “[Scriptum.cz](http://www.Scriptum.cz)”, by Anna Vrtáková, 2017. Accessed: August 22, 2018.

57 Act No. 181/2007 of 8 June 2007 on the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes and the Archive of Security Services and on Amendments to Certain Acts; see: <https://www.ustrcr.cz/o-nas/zakon-c-181-2007-sb/> Accessed: August 22, 2018.

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NICOLE BURGOYNE – FRIEDERIKE KIND-KOVÁCS
– JESSIE LABOV – VERONIKA TUCKEROVÁ
– PIOTR WCIŚLIK

Unlicensed and Unbound: Researching Textual Traffic (Samizdat/Tamizdat) and Information Flow Across Borders

Introduction

The last two generations of Cold War researchers have had the luxury of access to rich archives across Europe that document the material and intellectual history of underground publishing in the former Soviet-controlled socialist states. This chapter will provide an overview of some of the most important archival collections in conducting further research in *samizdat* (underground, unlicensed, and/or self-published material), as well as important connections to wider phenomena in alternative culture and transnational flows of information. After a brief review of major milestones in samizdat research, four case studies will provide more in-depth treatments of archival collections that pertain to underground publishing during the Cold War.

Although the term “samizdat” as a broad category had been in regular use by opposition groups, state powers, and Western observers since it was coined in the Russian context in the late 1950s,¹ it was not until H. Gordon Skilling and Stanisław Barańczak’s work beginning in the early 1980s that attention focused on the *practice* of underground publishing as a phenomenon, and shifted the geographic scope to Central Europe.² Skilling stresses the social practices that had arisen around samizdat, extending samizdat’s domain from a completely clandestine underground operation to a much wider phenomenon of independent publishing. This was the beginning of an important trend in samizdat scholarship that persists to this day: that the only way to work comparatively across the many different activities is to put samizdat in a wider context of alternative culture (or “second” or “parallel” culture), such as foreign radio broadcasting, and cross-border exchanges of texts and other cultural products. More recently, interest in samizdat as a material practice

1 Early treatments of samizdat as seen by contemporary analysts include: Feldbrugge, “New Sources of Information”; Tökés, *Dissent in the USSR*, and Meerson-Aksenov and Shragin, *The Political, Social and Religious Thought of Russian “Samizdat.”*

2 See Skilling, “Return to the Pre-Gutenberg Era.”

led to a rich double-issue of *Poetics Today*, and several important articles on the implications of studying samizdat in the post-socialist context.³

This line of research leads directly to the parallel practice of *tamizdat* (publishing abroad), a term first used in connection with the publication of Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* in Russian by the Italian publishing house Feltrinelli Editore in Milan in 1957. Although the term *tamizdat* is connected to the appearance of *Doctor Zhivago*, the phenomenon was more often referred to as "Western publication" or exile publication, not distinguishing between the publication of the text by Western or by émigré publishers. It's also important to note how widely the practices of unlicensed print cultures underground (as well as émigré publishing abroad) differed from one national context to another. Poland is the most well-established case, with the Parisian émigré journal *Kultura* that ran from 1947 through the end of the century, and several intensive periods of underground publishing from the late 1960s which eventually reached true mass circulation in the late 1980s. The Czechoslovak dissident culture was consistently supported by *tamizdat* publications in Canada and France, as well as small-circulation but consistent publishing efforts underground. While similar structures existed in Hungary, dissident circles were even smaller and more compact, and the majority of the traffic of ideas from East to West occurred via semi-official systems such as cultural and academic exchanges. Finally, the GDR was in a unique situation due to its shared culture, language, and contiguous border with West Germany; this resulted simultaneously in the greater possibility of information flow via radio and eventually TV broadcasting, but also a correspondingly greater intensity of control at the state security level. Three publications by co-authors of this chapter make a collective argument that we can only understand what happened in underground or alternative culture in Eastern Europe with reference to the broader amplification of these voices in the West, which in turn created a feedback loop for the two-way development of ideas, political programs, and aesthetic shifts in art and culture.⁴ Both samizdat and tamizdat research have gathered momentum in the last decade, in each of the languages of the region as well as in English and German, and will continue to be fuelled by the digitization of key sources as well as the development of digital resources in this research area.

In order to map out the major archival holdings relevant to samizdat studies, it is necessary to return to the early years of the transition era, when in 1995 the largest single collection of material on underground publishing was dismantled and redistributed, namely: the Radio Free Europe/Radio Lib-

3 *Poetics Today* 29 and 30; Komaromi, "Samizdat and Soviet Dissident Publics"; "Samizdat as Extra-Gutenberg Phenomenon" and "Material Existence of Samizdat"; Oushakine, "Terrifying Mimicry of Samizdat."

4 Kind-Kovács and Labov, *Samizdat, Tamizdat and Beyond*; Kind-Kovács, *Written Here, Published There*; Labov, *Transatlantic Central Europe*.

erty (RFE/RL) holdings in Munich were moved to Prague and then split up in 1999.⁵ The Corporate and Broadcast Archives were donated to the Hoover Institution Archive in Stanford, California, while the archives of the RFE/RL research institute (as well as its successor, the Open Media Research Institute) went to the Blinken Open Society Archive in Budapest (OSA).⁶ Since that original division of fonds, there has been much redistribution and merging of records (for example, copies of some of the Corporate records were made available at OSA as well; copies of the Broadcast Archives were shared by Hoover with respective national libraries and archives in the region.⁷ Furthermore, as each of the relevant institutions pushes farther ahead with digitization and digital curation, the collections are slowly gravitating back into one coherent space online⁸, while they still bear traces of their itinerant provenance in their metadata and the cataloging ontologies they have passed through.

Beyond the RFE/RL behemoth, however, there are several smaller but equally important archives and collections, each with its own emphasis and specialized character. In Poland, the distribution of samizdat-related materials is broad, spanning the KARTA Centre Foundation⁹, the Institute of National Remembrance, and holdings at the National Library. In his discussion of Polish samizdat below, Piotr Wciślik notes some of the differences between these archives, and the profound impact that adjacent source material can have on the way we read unlicensed publications. The holdings at the Forschungsstelle Osteuropa Bremen (FSO Bremen) feature personal papers of key Soviet writers, Soviet samizdat journals (a number of which can be searched via Ann Komaromi's electronic archive Project for the Study of Dissidence and Samizdat), records of the Polish Solidarity union, and a large collection of Czech underground documents and publications, including the

5 See Stanford news item from 6 October, 1999. Accessed October 08, 2018. <https://news.stanford.edu/pr/99/991006HooverRFE.html>.

6 "Historical Archives." For a comprehensive treatment of the history of RFE/RL and its implications for Cold War studies, see Johnson and Parta, *Cold War Broadcasting*.

7 From "Historical Archives": "The National Digital Archives of Poland (<http://www.hoover.org/library-archives/collections/national-digital-archives-warsaw-poland>) and Polish Radio (<http://www.polskieradio.pl/68,Radia-Wolnosci>), the Hungarian National Széchenyi Library (<http://www.hoover.org/library-archives/collections/national-szechenyi-library-budapest-hungary>), the Czechoslovak Documentation Center (<http://www.hoover.org/library-archives/collections/czechoslovak-documentation-centre-prague-czech-republic>) at the National Museum, the National Archives of Estonia (<http://www.hoover.org/library-archives/collections/filmiarhiiv-rahvusarhiiv>), and the National Archives of Latvia (<http://www.hoover.org/library-archives/collections/national-archives-latvia>). Accessed September 28, 2018; COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Open Society Archive", by Béla Nővé and Tamás Scheibner, 2018. Accessed: October 10, 2018.

8 See CEU press release from 16 November, 2015. Accessed September 28, 2018. <https://www.ceu.edu/article/2015-11-16/rferl-hoover-institution-transfer-copies-historical-documents-blinken-osa>.

9 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "KARTA Center Foundation", by Macej Melon, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

Edice Petlice (Padlock editions). The Czechoslovak Documentation Centre (Československé dokumentační centrum, ČSDS), founded in West Germany in 1986, and Libri Prohibiti, founded in Prague in 1990, are two more valuable sources, both currently based in Prague, on the cultural and political opposition in Czechoslovakia. Later in this chapter, Veronika Tuckerová details the specific holdings of Libri Prohibiti, and focuses on one of its unique aspects, the Kafka collection, in order to highlight the instability and difficulties of cataloguing and curating samizdat texts.

In the case of the German Democratic Republic, the study of samizdat and dissident culture is dominated by the Robert Havemann Gesellschaft (RHG), which contains documentation of the most well-known GDR dissident Havemann, and the interlocking circles of opposition figures and artists in the Prenzlauer Berg scene. Nicole Burgoyne takes the RHG as a starting point in her survey of GDR underground publishing, but also includes an exploration of the Archiv unterdrückter Literatur der DDR (Archive of Repressed Literature of the GDR, AUL), as well as related collections of Stasi records at the State Security Service archives. She notes the richness of the Stasi records as a source on underground activity, as well as the difficulty of using such documentation responsibly. Finally, although there are many more national contexts for unofficial publishing that might be described and mapped out, this Chapter moves to the territory of tamizdat, in Friederike Kind-Kovács's rich illustration of the relevance of the Alexander Herzen Foundation (AHF) at the International Institute of Social History (IISH) in Amsterdam. Established in the early 1970s as a direct corollary to the work of the famous 19th century Russian exile Herzen, AHF served both as a surrogate publisher for Soviet authors *and* a source of Western books for students in Moscow. This last section of our Chapter also serves as a methodological demonstration of how Western correspondence and records can be mined to illuminate a transcontinental network of samizdat-tamizdat contacts, smugglers, sympathizers, and publishers who were essential to sustain underground culture in Eastern Europe, as well as an international investment in it.

Polish Unlicensed Print Culture at the Blinken Open Society Archives

Polish unlicensed print culture from 1976–90 is one of the most extraordinary chapters of the heritage of resistance and dissent, which surpasses the samizdat phenomena in other former socialist countries when it comes to its size (in total, the Polish National Library records 6,513 monograph editions and 5,957 press titles produced before the abolition of censorship in Poland in April 1990), and which in turn translates into employment of advanced duplication techniques (rather than re-typing typical of samizdat proper) and tens of thousands of people involved as editors, printers, distributors and readers.

The history of Polish unlicensed print culture as a whole, as well as the history of the most important journal titles and publishing houses has been widely described in journal articles, monographs and collected volumes. The most comprehensive introduction for the English reader will be found in the collected volume *Duplicator Underground*, which not only showcases the best of recent scholarship on Polish samizdat, but also contains a rich set of translated source materials.¹⁰

The documentary legacy of Polish unlicensed print culture is fairly well consolidated and accessible both online and in various archives around the world. The KARTA Foundation and the Institute of National Remembrance (Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, IPN) in Warsaw, the Blinken Open Society Archives (OSA) at the Central European University, Budapest, The Research Centre for East European Studies (Forschungsstelle Osteuropa, FSO) at the University of Bremen, and The Hoover Institution at the Stanford University, count among the biggest collectors of Polish underground prints. KARTA,¹¹ IPN¹² and OSA¹³ make the bulk of their collections accessible online. Even though the catalogue of dissident publications differs in each case, for the purpose of general orientation, each of these collections is a good place to start. Unless the researcher is looking for a very specific title, what really makes a difference when deciding where to conduct your research is the archival context, manifested by the adjacent source material that was collected or produced together with the unlicensed prints. At KARTA's Opposition Archives, for example, these come accompanied by personal papers of some of the most renowned dissident figures (including the digitized collection of Jacek Kuron's legacy), and a collection of subject files containing primary source materials on oppositional persons, organizations, initiatives, and events. At IPN, which holds the files of the repression and surveillance apparatus of People's Poland, the collection of unlicensed prints is in a way a side-effect of the operational activities of the secret police (and after 1989, of the research activities at the Institute). The uniqueness of IPN's archival legacy is constituted by the confidential reports of the informants of the security forces as well as more analytical materials prepared by its officers. In particular, the former complements the materials to be found at KARTA, since it is due to infiltration by the secret police that minutes from a good number of clandestine meetings were preserved (but should be carefully checked against other testimonies), and it is due to its repressive activities that some important documentation, especially related to the material and financial aspects of oppositional activities, has survived because it was seized and never returned.

10 Zlatkes, Sowinski, and Frenkel, *Duplicator Underground*.

11 <http://dlibra.karta.org.pl/dlibra/collectiondescription?dirids=714>. Accessed January 19, 2018.

12 http://repozytorium.encysoł.pl/wiki/Strona_g%C5%82%C3%B3wna. Accessed January 19, 2018.

13 <http://www.osaarchivum.org/digital-repository>. Accessed January 19, 2018.

In this vein, the aim of present section is to provide background information about the holdings of the Polish unlicensed print culture at the Blinken Open Society Archives at the Central European University in Budapest, and its distinctiveness.

The Collector: Polish Underground Publications Unit

The collection constitutes the documentary legacy of the Polish Underground Publications Unit (PUPU) of the Research and Analysis Department of Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty (RFE/RL). As explained in detail in the introduction to this Chapter, RFE/RL was, in addition to its broadcasting activities, one of the biggest hubs for intelligence-gathering on socialist Eastern Europe during the Cold War. RFE/RL's Research and Analysis Departments (RAD), divided into national units similarly to the broadcast desks, collected publications in official circulation and monitored the licensed radio, press and television, as well as conducted extensive interviews with travellers across the Iron Curtain through a network of field offices located at various transit points in Europe. These counter-surveillance activities, aimed at generating informed opinion on socialist bloc affairs as an alternative to the people's democracies' own media representation, materialized in the form of vast archives of monitoring transcripts, subject and personal files and card indexes, as well as analytical outputs: in particular, the regularly published background reports, and the occasional situation reports.

The decision made in December 1983 to set up the PUPU as an autonomous section which would focus exclusively on the Polish underground publications, similar to the Samizdat Archives established at Radio Liberty in 1968, reflected both the exponential growth and significance of the phenomenon in Poland. Even though the Polish independent publishing movement was a latecomer to the practice, it soon surpassed the Soviet samizdat scene, which had served as its main inspiration (both in terms of thematic and genre variety, and in terms of print runs—if not in terms of intellectual quality). Already before the emergence of Solidarity in August 1980, the circulation of unlicensed prints consisted of around 100 titles and 720 issues, among them *Robotnik* printed in twenty thousand copies on average. Between August 1980 and the imposition of the Martial Law in Poland, the number of titles increased twenty-fold. In total, the Polish National Library records 6,513 monograph editions and 5,957 press titles produced before the abolition of censorship in Poland in April 1990.

The emergence of the mass culture of independent publishing in Poland substantially changed the balance of forces on the propaganda front of the Cold War. Needless to say, the Polish opposition found a priceless ally in Radio Free Europe, with the ability to amplify their message on an otherwise unconceivable scale. At the same time, the existence of underground press was crucial to the mission of the radios. In the early postwar period, RFE/RL's

claim to represent an undistorted voice of the captive societies from behind the Iron Curtain relied—apart from careful monitoring of the official press and the available institutional resources—on the leaked information provided by domestic informants, defectors, Western visitors as well as on the émigré public opinion. Due to the secrecy of its sources and controversies surrounding the émigré circles, the political representations of RFE on behalf of the Eastern Bloc countries was often contested, not only by the communist propaganda, but also by the supporters of détente in the West. From the late 1970s onwards, the harvesting of independent public opinion expressed openly and immersed in the domestic realities made it possible for RFE to make up for this deficit of credibility, positioning itself as the genuine transmitter rather than a creator of the independent voice of Eastern Europe.

Already before 1980, the flood of uncensored printed matter had been a challenge for the RFE/RL Research and Analysis Department (RAD) Polish Unit, which, endemically understaffed, had started to collect and process the vast amount of first-hand information in a rather haphazard way. After a while, Weronika Krzeczunowicz was employed on a freelance basis to organize the archives and edit the first reviews of independent press which started to appear in 1977 as Background Reports.¹⁴ Once PUPU was established in December 1983, the section employed 2–3 permanent staff: Witold Pronobis as research analyst and unit's head (1983–89), Anna Pomian as chief archivist and Weronika Krzeczunowicz as editor. Pronobis was recommended for the post by Zdzisław Najder, the RFE/RL Polish desk director between 1982 and 1987, due to both his professional education (as historian and archivist) and his contacts with the underground press movement as well as the émigré publishers. He started working for RAD in 1983, taking over the task of the consolidation of the unlicensed prints holdings from Krzeczunowicz. In addition, at different times the section employed a few temporary staff: Wanda Kościa, Halina Kościa, Jolanta Murias, and Irena Sweykowska.

With the aim of processing the most current information about independent political and cultural life in Poland, various acquisition channels were established. The network included: Solidarity's Coordination Office Abroad (Biuro Koordynacyjne NSZZ "Solidarność" Za Granicą) in Brussels, counting Najder among the Office's advisors; Komitet Koordynacyjny NSZZ "Solidarność" w Paryżu (Solidarity's Coordination Committee, Paris), with Jacek Krawczyk as main contact; Solidaritet Norge-Polen (the committee for support of Solidarity in Oslo, Norway), with Paweł Gajowniczek as main contact; Mirosław Chojecki, founder of the veteran Independent Publishing House NOWA, who was responsible for coordination the transports of press equipment to Poland and edited the monthly *Kontakt* from his exile in Paris;

¹⁴ Sources for used in reconstructing the provenance of the collection include: Zamorski, *Pod anteną Radia Wolna Europa*, 111–12; Najder, "RWE 1982–1987. Zapiski dyrektora," 219–20; Pomian, *Polish Samizdat Holdings*; Pronobis, personal page.

Piotr Jegliński—Paris representative of the underground journal *Spotkania*; as well as representatives of the Solidarność Walcząca organization such as Jerzy Jankowski (Norway) and Andrzej Wirga (Germany).

By February 12, 1986 the unit's archival holdings included: 304 titles of underground periodicals published prior to Martial Law (December 13, 1981); 708 titles of underground periodicals published after Martial Law; 482 titles of underground monographs; 137 hanging folders of subject files and related publications issued in the West; 53 files of documents, 180 underground postage stamps and 158 items of other ephemera. By March 6, 1989 the holdings grew significantly to include: 1166 titles of underground periodicals published after Martial Law; 993 titles of underground monographs; 265 hanging folders of subject files and 52 hanging folders of related publications issued in the West; 67 files of documents. After 1989, the documentary legacy of the unit became a part of the East European Archives at the Information Resource Department of the RFE/RL Research Institute headed by a former staff of the unit, Anna Pomian-Srzednicka.

The Adjacent Source Material

In addition to Polish unlicensed periodicals and monograph holdings and their catalogues, the PUPU collection at the OSA contains a number of series which build on these materials in order to generate contextual information of broader relevance. That is particularly the case of the section's own analytical publications based on unlicensed printed matter.¹⁵ Partly as a continuation of the activities within the RAD Polish Unit from before 1983, the section issued three types of periodical publications for the use of the Polish and other broadcasting sections:

- *Polish Independent Press Summary*: published biweekly from September 1987 to July 1990 in Polish; contains copies of major articles, lists of contents from journals, and title pages of new books.

- *Polish Underground Extracts*: published monthly from June 1984 to August 1986 (until April 1985 known as Polish Samizdat Extracts) in English; contains translations of mainly press materials.

- *Polish Independent Press Review*: continuation of PUE in a situation report format, published from September 1986 to November 1989 in English; contains topical reviews of the contents of Polish unlicensed journals.

In addition, the PUPU staff contributed to RAD Polish Unit Background Reports and Situation Reports on irregular basis.

15 HU OSA 300-55-9 Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute: Polish Underground Publications Unit: RFE Publications Based on Polish Underground Press, accessible online at <http://hdl.handle.net/10891/osa:e0410998-f423-4efe-946b-751433c43594> Accessed January 17, 2018.

Other series arrange the materials into subject files composed mostly of unlicensed press clippings. By type, the collection contains four different sets of topical subject files,¹⁶ biographical files on dissidents¹⁷ and institutional files on independent political parties and groups.¹⁸ By origin, we can distinguish the series that were originally part of the PUPU archive, and the series that most probably belonged to specific RFE analysts working on unlicensed materials and whose composition reflects their specific research interests.¹⁹ Finally, the collection of unlicensed periodicals and monographs comes accompanied with a collection of émigré serials (produced mostly by the post-Martial Law political exile)²⁰ and a very rich collection of independent ephemera, including stamps, envelopes, postmarks and postcards, fake banknotes, calendars, photos, leaflets and posters.²¹

In terms of thematic scope, the source collection itself provides a rather comprehensive sample of the diversity of Polish underground print culture: ranging from political and literary samizdat through bulletins of Solidarity members and sympathizers; from workers and professionals (esp. in Education and Health) to Catholic community newsletters. The collection contains publications by green, pacifist, military *refusenik* and other new social movements, but otherwise does not do full justice to the alternative culture of the late 1980s, which in many ways emerged out of the exhaustion of the dissident veteran underground. The culture outside the dissident and Solidarity mainstream is even less present in the press clippings and the samizdat-based publications of the PUPU Unit, most likely due to the policy decisions of the RFE to remain loyal to the oppositional center, as well as due to generational differences. The Polish Section was dominated by the 1968 and 1980 migrants, who were rather distant from the cultural patterns of protest characteristic for the youth culture of the late 1980s, with its promotion of alternative lifestyles, punk attitude, and its symmetric estrangement from the main political fault lines.

16 HU OSA 300-55-10 Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute: Polish Underground Publications Unit: Subject Files.

17 HU OSA 300-55-12 Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute: Polish Underground Publications Unit: Biographical Files on Dissidents; HU OSA 300-55-13 Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute: Polish Underground Publications Unit: Democratic Opposition Related Files; HU OSA 300-55-14 Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute: Polish Underground Publications Unit: Democratic Opposition Related Files on Legal Matters.

18 HU OSA 300-55-11 Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute: Polish Underground Publications Unit: Polish Independent Parties

19 HU OSA 300-55-14 Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute: Polish Underground Publications Unit: Democratic Opposition Related Files on Legal Matters

20 HU OSA 300-55-8 Emigré Serials

21 HU OSA 300-55-7 Printed Ephemera; accessible online. Accessed January 17, 2018. <http://hdl.handle.net/10891/osa:554e8ec5-a131-4087-9b5d-4551cc82b291>.

When to Start at OSA?

For work towards a monograph on a given individual, group, journal or political current of the Polish dissident lifeworld, KARTA or IPN (in tandem, much better still) are more likely to contain a comprehensive set of materials. When it comes to comparative samizdat or dissident studies, OSA is one of the best places to carry out such research, although FSO and Hoover might offer comparable possibilities. The subject files are particular sources that are exclusively available at OSA and cannot be found elsewhere. These files cover an extensive range of topics from clippings related to various countries, through to labor relations and economic matters, women, youth, environment, Central and Eastern Europe (as a theme of independent political discourse), Yalta, culture and performative arts, religious and ethnic minorities, prison systems, and so forth. While the press clippings do not always present a comprehensive bibliography of the given topic, they can be considered a very useful first filter which will make the researcher's life much easier. Given that many of the subject files have their equivalents in the subject files of the RAD Polish Unit²² (whose more comprehensive index evidently guided the arrangement of the archives of the PUPU unit), containing mostly licensed material, OSA presents a unique possibility to study certain topics from a perspective that eludes the conceptual polarity of civil society versus the State. Finally, it is important to highlight that the PUPU publications, especially the translations of Polish samizdat press articles, as well as the reviews which contain detailed profiles of many of the most important journals and publishers, are probably the best companion to an English-speaking scholar taking their first steps in the field.

Researching Czechoslovak Samizdat at the Libri Prohibiti

There are two important Prague-based archival collections specializing in samizdat and exilic publications: the Czechoslovak Documentation Center (Československé dokumentační středisko, ČSDS),²³ founded in West Germany in 1984, and the library Libri Prohibiti, established in Prague in 1990. This

22 HU OSA 300-50-1 Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute: Polish Unit: Old Code Subject Files.

23 The Czechoslovak Documentation Center was founded in 1986 by a group of exilic writers, led by the poet Jan Vladislav and the historian Vilém Prečan. Its aim was to collect and document Czechoslovak post-1948 realm of independent writing. The Center was also instrumental in enabling publication of the original Czech works in exile, and in shipping and distributing such publications in Czechoslovakia. Since 1986, the collection was housed in the castle belonging to Karel Schwarzenberg in Scheinfeld. The entire collection was moved to the Czech Republic in 2000, and it was donated to the Czech National Museum in 2003. See COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Samizdat Collection of Czechoslovak Documentation Centre](#)", by Jitka Hanáková, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

study focuses on Libri Prohibiti, a unique institution that contains an extensive collection of Czech samizdat²⁴ and exilic materials,²⁵ but also smaller Slovak, Polish,²⁶ Russian and Ukrainian collections.²⁷

Libri Prohibiti opened in October 1990, less than a year after the events of November 1989 that led to the fall of communism in Czechoslovakia. Jiří Gruntorád, a Charter 77 signatory who published a samizdat series during the so-called “normalization,” post-1968 period in Czechoslovakia, founded the library. Gruntorád, who spent four years in prison from 1980 until 1984, has been its director since its inception. Gruntorád recalls how he conceived the idea of creating a samizdat library in the summer of 1990, after several boxes of samizdat books that had been confiscated by the secret police were returned to him: “These are books-non-books, onion-skin papers, a strange message from recent times.”²⁸ In 1990, the library was comprised of about 2,000 items that had been collected by Gruntorád during the 1970s and 1980s. The archival copies of his own samizdat series, *Edice Popelnice*, which Gruntorád started in 1978, formed the bedrock of the collection.

Libri Prohibiti includes books, magazines, and various other documents related to the opposition in Czechoslovakia and other communist countries of the Soviet bloc. It is currently located in a former apartment in Senovážné square, in Prague 1. As an institution conceived as a place documenting the “strange message from recent times,” the library also organizes exhibitions and various literary and other events thematically related to samizdat and exile, and unofficial Czechoslovak culture in general. In 2016, a group of distinguished Czech personalities of 1970s and 1980s samizdat—and with a connection to the library—declared October 12 to be the International Day of Samizdat. The collection focuses on Czech and Slovak samizdat during communism from 1948 until 1989 (books and magazines), exilic publications (including wartime exile from 1939–1945), audiovisual records, and numerous documents related to Charter 77; it houses for example an extensive collection

24 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Czech Samizdat Collection at Libri Prohibiti”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

25 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Czech Exile Collection at Libri Prohibiti”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

26 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Polish Underground Library at Libri Prohibiti”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

27 In addition to various bibliographical resources, e.g. *Česká samizdatová periodika 1968–1989* by Johanna Posset (Brno, 1993) a current project by The Institute for Czech Literature of the Academy of Sciences in Prague and Brno works on the Encyclopedia of Czech Literary Samizdat 1948–1989 (Encyklopedie českého literárního samizdatu 1948–1989), the first attempt at a comprehensive summary with a proposed date of publication of 2019. See COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Foreign Samizdat Collection at Libri Prohibiti”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018; COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Foreign Exile Collection at Libri Prohibiti”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

28 “Jsou to knihy-neknihy, průklepové papíry, zvláštní poselství z času nedávno minulých”; *Moderní Dějiny*, “Samizdat.”

of documents of the Committee for the Unjustly Persecuted (VONS). The Polish collection contains oppositional materials from 1970 to 1989.

Terms such as parallel, second, unofficial, non-conformist and underground culture have been used in Czechoslovakia to describe the kind of material contained in Libri Prohibiti. The phrase “banned books” in the library’s name evokes parallels between censorship in the communist era and similar practices in other historical periods or geographical locations. The Russian word “samizdat” entered Czech parlance in the 1970s.²⁹ It was later also used retrospectively for unofficial publishing reaching back to the 1950s. Among the oldest samizdat materials held in Libri Prohibiti are slim volumes from Edice Půlnoc (Midnight editions), which was founded by the poets Egon Bondy and Ivo Vodseďálek circa 1950/1951, and primarily published their own work and the work of their friends. Libri Prohibiti owns many of the forty-nine titles from Midnight Editions, some of them in facsimile or photocopy form. Unlike later samizdat activities (1970s and 1980s), these early samizdat volumes were not distributed beyond the small circle of the authors. Bohumil Hrabal’s texts were published in Midnight Editions, as were those of Jana Krejcarová-Černá, an original poet and the daughter of Milena Jesenská.

Libri Prohibiti’s Czech and Slovak samizdat materials range from 1948 to 1989. The collection contains 17,000 books, both from book series as well as individual samizdat items that were published outside of any of the established series. The 1970s and 1980s saw an extensive production and distribution of samizdat books and magazines. These unofficial enterprises employed typists, and their books were bound, carefully edited, and sometimes illustrated. They had a much wider distribution than the 1950s samizdat. The critic and editor Jan Lopatka (1940–1993) described the “technical procedure” of the samizdat production of the journal *Kritický sborník* (Critical anthology) published from 1981 to 1988: “We made a certain number of proofread copies—at the beginning there were about thirty-five, the original print run grew very fast to about one hundred twenty to one hundred fifty copies—which we distributed. Some subscribers copied each in ten to twelve copies. Later we copied part of the print run by Xerox machines. Therefore, it is hard to estimate the overall print run. My estimate is six hundred copies. The publicity was fairly good abroad. We sent copies to Vilém Prečan, who copied them and distributed further into libraries.”³⁰

Libri Prohibiti contains publications of about one hundred “editions,” book series produced by a few collaborators. Edice Petlice (Padlock editions) was founded by the writer Ludvík Vaculík in 1972 in Prague among the circle of writers who were banned after 1968. Other authors included Ivan Klíma, Jiří Gruša, Milan Jungmann, Petr Kabeš, Klement Lukeš and Sergej Machonin. Edice Expedice (founded in 1975 by Václav Havel and Daňa Horáková), not

29 The term was coined in 1950s in the Soviet Union. Machovec, “Types and Functions.”

30 Lopatka, *Šifra lidské existence*, 467–70.

only copied books that had been previously published in Padlock Editions, but also published new titles, including translations, essays, and works of the literary underground. Kvart, published by the poet Jan Vladislav, was established in 1974 and focused on poetry, criticism, and translation. Other important samizdat editions included Česká expedice (Czech expedition), Kde domov můj (Where is my home), and Popelnice (Trash bin). Also noteworthy is the Jewish samizdat Alef Editions, which published translations of Martin Buber and I. B. Singer.

The periodicals collection of Libri Prohibiti contains 420 titles, including the already mentioned *Kritický sborník*, *Křesťanské obzory* (Christian horizons), *O divadle* (On theater), *Paraf* (acronym for PARalelní Akta Filosofie), *Střední Evropa* (Central Europe), the underground culture journal *Vokno* (Window), and the samizdat newspaper *Lidové noviny* (1987–89). The very titles demonstrate the cultural, political, and religious diversity of Czech samizdat culture. Libri prohibiti provides an online bibliography of samizdat and exilic periodicals, and many of the periodicals are digitized. An important resource for historians of dissent is the periodical *The Information about Charter 77* (Informace o Chartě 77, Infoch), documenting the activities of the most important Czechoslovak human rights movement. Some of the journals have a distinct artistic quality: *Revolver Revue* and *Sado Maso*, which were published in the 1980s by the so-called “second generation of the underground,”³¹ are richly illustrated with original artwork and photographs. Attention to book design is characteristic also of book series such as Kvart and Expedition Editions.

The audiovisual collection³² includes records of non-conformist music as well as of lectures from underground apartment seminars, and numerous video documents. The archival documents include petitions, flyers, letters, and various other papers, including unpublished manuscripts.

The rich collection of exilic materials alongside home-based samizdat production allows for the study of networks of unofficial culture in and beyond Czechoslovakia. Exilic publications include books as well as periodicals. Among the most important exilic publishers were Arkýř (Munich), Index (Paris), or 68 Publishers led by Zdena Salivarová and Josef Škvorecký in Toronto. Libri Prohibiti also contains exilic materials from the World War II, and documents of resistance during the World War I. Truly unique is the extensive collection of exilic periodicals from the late 1940s until the present day (1,300 titles). Some of the journal series are complete, e.g. *Archa*, *Svědectví*, *Listy*, *Studie*, *Proměny*, *150 000 slov*, *Obrys*, *Západ*, *Reportér*, *Rozmluvy*, *Hlas domova*, *Text*, *Kanadské listy*, *Sklizeň*, *Okno*, *Modrá revue*, *Hovory s pisateli*, *Perspektivy*, *Bohemia*, *Skutečnost*, and *České slovo*.

31 Topol, “Contribution to a Closer Understanding,” 71.

32 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[Audiovisual Section at Libri Prohibiti](#)”, by Michaela Kůželová, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018. (forthcoming)

Samizdat materials related to Franz Kafka may offer a surprising example to illustrate the variety in forms of Czech samizdat. Kafka, who died in 1924, long before the communist takeover and the inception of Czech samizdat, is not a typical samizdat author. Still, these materials document the discontinuous afterlife of Kafka's works in the context of post-1948 censorship. Kafka was of paramount importance to Czech literature, culture, and especially the various manifestations of criticism of the communist system and the expression of dissidence. Kafka's texts were not officially published for long periods of time between 1948 and 1989. Libri Prohibiti contains typescript copies of Kafka's various works (often based on formerly officially published works), as well as essays about the author and literary works inspired by him, both in the original Czech and translation (altogether there are several dozen items). Among the earliest items is a c. 1959 essay by the surrealist poet Zbyněk Havlíček.³³ Other early items are typescript copies of Kafka's formerly published works from the early 1960s, such as *The Castle* and various short stories. In the early 1960s, the art critic, poet, and leader of Czech underground Ivan Martin Jirous copied several unavailable texts for his friends, using either older editions of the respective works, or translations and new works that had existed only as manuscripts (according to Libri Prohibiti, Jirous copied twenty-two titles in total). The bibliographical record for his typescript of *The Castle* informs us that Jirous is its author but his name does not appear on the typescript, nor does the information about the translator, or the year in which the typed copy was made.

Jirous copied the 1935 translation of *The Castle* using green carbon copy paper. The work took about six months.³⁴ The pages are not bound or numbered; the loose sheets of onion-skin paper are inserted between two cardboard sheets, and held together by rubber bands. On the right margin, some lines extend to the end of the page, and occasionally a letter is cut off. Jirous produced ten copies, which exceeded his more usual number of eight copies during one typing. The missing letters suggest that it was easy to misalign such a thick bulk of paper. The title of the novel and Kafka's name are written by hand, with a pencil, along with a note stating that the copy was made in 1962 at Brancourov (a slightly altered name of an existing place).

Kafka's works began to be officially published only a few years after Jirous had made his copies, but after 1968 his works were not published again for some time. Another batch of Kafka-related material in the early 1980s attests to the continued interest in the writer. The May 1983 issue of the samizdat journal *Obsah* (Contents), published since the late 1970s, included essays related to Kafka by Czech authors Petr Kabeš, Karel Pecka, Iva Kotrlá and Ivan Klíma, and a translation of an essay by Philip Roth. Kabeš's essay, which recounts his police interrogation on the topic of Kafka, suggests that the jour-

³³ Havlíček, *Psychopathologie v díle Franze Kafky*.

³⁴ Jirous, Interview.

nal's editors – as well as the communist secret police – anticipated an increased interest in the writer by foreign visitors in 1983, because of it being the centenary of Kafka's birth. For obvious reasons, the copy of the journal includes neither information about the date of publication, nor the editors.

These few examples illustrate the intricacies of cataloguing and researching samizdat materials. The items described above contain very little bibliographical information—for obvious reasons concerning the protection of people involved in the production of samizdat. These issues also raise fundamental questions about the nature of samizdat. Drawing on Soviet-era samizdat, Ann Komaromi elaborated on the idea of the “instability of the samizdat text,” that results from the mistakes made in subsequent copies and by textual interventions by translators and editors, comparing this production to the oral tradition and calling samizdat an extra-Gutenberg phenomenon.³⁵ The Czech case of samizdat, exhaustively documented in Libri Prohibiti's collections, show the diversity of samizdat materials, and instructs us that different types of samizdat adhered to different textual standards: they range from spontaneous copies made for one's own use or for a small circle of friends (whether from the 1950s or 1980s) to more professional and rigorous planning, professional editing and wider distribution in the 1970s and 1980s exemplified by the journal *Kritický sborník*.

Archival Resources for the Study of Samizdat in the GDR

The study of samizdat in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) has largely focused on the so-called “Prenzlauer Berg Scene.” Named after a neighborhood in East Berlin, the term refers to a broad network of interconnected individuals, performance and discussion groups, and unsanctioned publications also active in the GDR's other major cultural cities, Leipzig, Dresden, and beyond. Many uncensored periodicals included photographs, silk screen prints, drawings, paintings, and even collage along with poetry and prose texts, and thus multi-medial samizdat is one notable aspect of alternative culture of the GDR. The definitive treatise on the Prenzlauer Berg Scene in the English language was written by Karen Leeder in 1996.³⁶ Since its publication, a number of scholars have attempted to broaden the focus of East German samizdat studies: above all the idea that one particular generation of GDR authors desired and attempted to form alternative culture in the GDR (an idea buttressed by Wolfgang Emmerich's touchstone history of GDR literature) has been challenged.³⁷

Birgit Dahlke has also investigated alternative culture of the GDR, beginning with her 1997 monograph on female authors who published their work

35 Komaromi, “Samizdat as Extra-Gutenberg Phenomenon.”

36 Leeder, *Breaking Boundaries*.

37 Emmerich, *Kleine Literaturgeschichte der DDR*.

unofficially. Dahlke provided the sole contribution on alternative literature in a recent volume of note edited by Karen Leeder, which expatiated the current state of research on the GDR.³⁸ Despite the relatively limited engagement with unofficial literature of the GDR compared to better known authors such as Christa Wolf and Heiner Müller,³⁹ a plethora of available sources in Germany invite new research to broaden studies of both post-World War II Germany and alternative culture under Communism.⁴⁰ In the following section, three archives containing such material will be introduced.

The Robert Havemann Gesellschaft (RHG) is named after the GDR's most famous dissident, a chemist and Marxist philosopher active in the Communist resistance to the Nazis during World War II, who served as a representative in the GDR's parliament but was eventually stripped of his university post and expelled from the ruling party due to public criticism of the government. The archive is generally devoted to political opposition in the GDR and is comprised of a number of collections donated by organizations and individuals, including Havemann himself.⁴¹ The most notable collection donated to the RHG by an organization is that of the *Umwelt-Bibliothek*. *Umwelt*, meaning environment, suggests a particular focus of the political movements that coalesced in the GDR in the eighties, namely that devoted to protesting the widespread local pollution due to state-run heavy industry. Founded in 1986, the *Umwelt-Bibliothek* collected the unsanctioned newsletters, magazines, and fliers of local environmental, pacifist, and civil rights movements. In addition to producing its own samizdat newsletter, *Umweltblätter*, later renamed *telegraph*, the *Umwelt-Bibliothek* served as printing press to other newsletters and magazines, such as the popular *grenzfall*. Preparatory work with the bibliographic directory accessible online is highly recommended.⁴²

The RHG offers many sources that document the connections between political opposition in the GDR and other Soviet Bloc countries, especially neighboring Poland and Czechoslovakia.⁴³ For example, the personal papers of human rights activist Heiko Lietz include a typewritten copy of the famous “Two Thousand Words” manifesto to reform socialism by Ludvík Vaculík, translated into German, with an accompanying plea for support from German tourists in the wake of the Soviet invasion of 1968. The politi-

38 See Dahlke, *Papierboot*, and "Underground literature?" Dahlke has also published biographical literary analyses of Wolfgang Hilbig and Kerstin Hensel, authors also associated with East German dissent.

39 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Heiner Müller Archive / Transitroom", by Uwe Sonnenberg, 2017. Accessed: September 27, 2018.

40 See also Horakova "Learning from the Underground."

41 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Archive of the GDR-Opposition at the Robert Havemann Society", by Uwe Sonnenberg, 2018. Accessed: September 27, 2018.

42 https://www.havemann-gesellschaft.de/fileadmin/robert-havemann-gesellschaft/archiv/sammlungen/Samisdat/Samisdat_Findbuch.fb.pdf. Accessed September 28, 2018.

43 See Vilímek, *Solidarita napříč hranicemi*, and von Plato and Vilímek, *Opposition als Lebensform*.

cal samizdat collected by the RHG, such as the above-mentioned *grenzfall* frequently included reports of oppositional actions and their suppression across the Soviet Bloc.

The Archiv unterdrückter Literatur der DDR (Archive of Repressed Literature of the GDR, henceforth AUL)⁴⁴ is a collection of sources for the study of opposition including and beyond the Prenzlauer Berg networks. Curated by Ines Geipel and Joachim Walther, the AUL hoped to respond to the expectation that once the repressive regime of the GDR's government fell and the files of the East German Secret Police (known as the Stasi) were open to its victims and scholars, a flood of repressed literature would reach the public. Geipel and Walther present the fruits of their labor in a new literary history of East Germany, centered on a conscious effort to address oppositional culture from the immediate post-World War II aftermath of Soviet occupation to the fall of the GDR regime.⁴⁵ This literary history utilizes the files of the Secret Police, and indeed the archive often includes personal copies of secret police files acquired by the authors themselves. Walther previously worked in the Stasi archives as an independent scholar with unparalleled range of access, and is known in the field for his handbook to decoding the Stasi files from the cultural division, of which more below.⁴⁶ As an initial contribution to primary sources available to the public, Geipel and Walther have edited a series entitled "Die Verschwiegene Bibliothek" (The silenced library), publishing ten books of poetry, diaristic, essayistic or fictional prose from the archive.

As Geipel and Walther attempted to prove, and as Dahlke also mentions in her overview of unofficial literature, although the beginnings of samizdat culture are often traced to the Prenzlauer Berg scene of the early eighties, earlier efforts at repressed cultural collaboration have now been documented. For example, in the early seventies, a full decade before most studies of underground culture in East German began, Ulrich Plenzdorf, Klaus Schlesinger, and Martin Stade led a project to create an anthology that would be collectively edited by the participants, thus circumventing the usual censorship exercised by publishing houses and the regime's central publishing bureau. The editors and authors expected to officially publish the anthology with one of the publishing houses recognized by the East German state, despite refusing the usual input from the said institutions. Due to the intervention of the Secret Police, the anthology was not published until 1995, at which point it included the original contributions of eighteen short texts that had been collected by the editors from 1974 to 1975, as well as the Stasi records describing how and why the volume was kept from publication.⁴⁷

44 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Archives of Suppressed Literature in the GDR](#)", by Uwe Sonnenberg, 2017. Accessed: September 27, 2018.

45 Geipel and Walther, *Gesperrte Ablage*.

46 Walther, *Sicherungsbereich Literatur*.

47 Plenzdorf, Schlesinger, and Stade, *Berliner Geschichten*.

One contributor to this anthology project was Heidemarie Härtl, an author who became active in later Prenzlauer Berg scene publications as the editor of *Anschlag*, *Zweite Person* and the Bergen samizdat publishing series. Härtl also contributed her writing to *glasnost*, *Raster*, *Verwendung*, and *stechapfel*, the last of which continued publication into the nineties. Härtl's copies of the aforementioned samizdat publications from the eighties are available in AUL, as well as a number of manuscripts of poetry, short stories, and plays.⁴⁸ Härtl represents an interesting figure due to her connections to better known repressed authors of the GDR such as her husband, Gert Neumann and Wolfgang Hilbig. Härtl also had connections to the state in the form of employment at a school and publishing press for the blind and her one and only official publication in the GDR, which Stasi files reveal was part of an elaborate plot to end her close collaboration with her husband.⁴⁹

Paradoxically, given the lack of detailed catalogs from individuals repressed by the state, the Stasi archive⁵⁰ has emerged as a major source for the study of samizdat and oppositional culture in the GDR generally.⁵¹ Thus, the very governmental service devoted to annihilating oppositional forces within the GDR is now used to prove the hitherto underestimated extent of said forces. A Stasi file contains meticulously dated reports on the unsanctioned activities of individuals with extensive efforts to document connections with other individuals, places of meetings, and of course the heretofore secret actions taken by the government to impede this perceived opposition. It becomes abundantly clear when reading Stasi files that, due to their rigid use of hyperbolic vocabulary to describe the "crimes" under investigation, the files are subjective to the point of exaggeration. For this reason, the files are best used to present the government's views of publications and activities that have been corroborated by other sources.⁵²

48 A more complete collection of samizdat literary periodicals is held by the German National Literature Archive in Marbach. The Sächsische Landesbibliothek in Dresden also began collecting samizdat in the 1980s and has digitized their holdings under: <http://www.deutsche-fothek.de/cms/kuenstlerzeitschriften-ddr.xml>. Accessed: September 27, 2018.

49 See Geipel, *Zensiert, verschwiegen, vergessen*; Härtl, *Ach, ich zog den blauen Anzug an*, and Härtl, *Puppe im Sommer*.

50 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Stasi records", by Uwe Sonnenberg, 2018. Accessed: September 27, 2018.

51 Officially known as die Behörde des Bundesbeauftragten für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdiensts der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik or BStU (Federal Commission for the Records of the State Security Service of the former German Democratic Republic).

52 The broader issue of banned literature represents a blind spot in grasping what was actually available in the GDR. Unfortunately, anecdotal statements describing the smuggling of books from West Germany, or digging copies of the officially banned works by Nietzsche, Freud, Karl May, or even Karl Marx from dusty shops or grandmothers' bookcases currently suffice in the place of systematic study. Collections of interviews are the best source for these topics, such as those found in Lokatis and Sonntag's *Heimliche Leser der DDR*, or von Plato and *Opposition als Lebensform*.

The archive that holds the Stasi files is a fascinating institution deserving of study in its own right. Generally speaking, scholars have the right to access the files of those deceased individuals deemed to be people of public office, and this classification extends to notable authors. In all cases where the individual under consideration is alive, their express permission is required to view their files. It is strongly recommended to register with the archive and apply to view files several months before intended arrival.

In the immediate aftermath of the opening of the secret police files, some individuals decided to publish their own files. It is worth looking through publically available Stasi files to begin to acquaint oneself with the kind of information that may be gleaned. One of the earliest such publications was that of Reiner Kunze in 1990.⁵³ Born in 1933, Kunze studied under Ernst Bloch and Hans Mayer before withdrawing from the Karl-Marx-University in Leipzig in 1959 due to accusations of counter-revolutionary activity. In the early 1960s, Kunze lived in Czechoslovakia where he formed attachments to artists and poets. In 1976, Kunze was expelled from the East German Writers' Union, largely on the basis of his collection of short stories that were critical of GDR society and the invasion of Prague in 1968, entitled *Die wunderbare Jahre* (trans. *The wonderful years*, 1977). Reiner Kunze is often identified as a dissident, and the publication of highlights of his 3,000-page files are worth inspection.

The Dutch Connection: The Alexander Herzen Foundation and the Smuggling of Tamizdat in the Cold War

Amsterdam hosts one of the greatest institutes and archives to study the social history of Europe's twentieth century and in particular the "global history of labor, workers, and labor relations:" the *International Institute of Social History* (IISH) which was established in 1935.⁵⁴ Today, the most consulted holdings at the IISH archives are (among many others) the collections of Amnesty International, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Greenpeace International, and the Socialist League; however, the archives are also relevant for researchers with an interest in the transnational history of East European dissidence. In 2004 the IISH received the archive of the Dutch *Alexander Herzen Foundation* (AHF)⁵⁵ from Elisabeth Fisher-Spanjer, the literary agent of the AHF, and Jozien Driessen-van het Reve, the daughter of Karel van het Reve, one of the founders of the AHF. The IISH also obtained the private collections of Jan Willem Bezemer, professor of Russian history at the University of Amsterdam

⁵³ Kunze, *Deckname "Lyrik."*

⁵⁴ "Institute of Social History." For a detailed treatment of this series of decision, see Johnson and Parta, *Cold War Broadcasting*.

⁵⁵ The collection can be found here: "Archief Alexander Herzen Foundation" Accessed October 08, 2018. <http://hdl.handle.net/10622/ARCH02660>.

and as well a founder of the AHF, and of Elisabeth Fisher-Spanjer. What was the AHF and why are its archives worth researching?

Back in May 1969, Karel van het Reve, a professor of Slavic Literature at the University of Leiden, founded the AHF in Amsterdam, together with Jan Willem Bezemer, a Dutch historian, and Peter Reddaway, a lecturer at the London School of Economics (LSE).⁵⁶ Their goal was to publish uncensored literature from the Soviet Union which could not be officially published back home, and which had often been circulating in *samizdat* in the West. Inspired by Alexander Herzen's *Free Russian Press*, established in London in 1853 to publish revolutionary Russian literature that was prohibited inside Russia, the AHF published uncensored works of Russian authors such as Andrei Amalrik, Andrei Sakharov and Pavel Litvinov. Karel van het Reve expressed his conviction about the value of cultural exchanges in an article in 1973. "Cultural exchange," he stated, "is something which [...] should be applauded, as long as such exchange takes place in a situation of maximum freedom and with as little governmental intervention as is possible."⁵⁷ With his press he aimed to increase the cultural exchange between the Soviet Union and the West. For that end, the AHF acted not in isolation, but it relied on a complex system of personal and professional contacts both in the West and inside the Soviet Union. By making Max Hayward (who ran the New York-based Russian exile *Khronika Press*) and Leopold Labedz (the editor of the influential quarterly *Survey: A Journal of East and West Studies* in London) trustees of the foundation, the AHF expressed its aim to set up an international network that would promote Russia's uncensored writers. Gleb Struve at the University of California in Berkeley, Michael Scammell of *Index on Censorship*, Leonard Shapiro who also taught at the London School of Economics and the translator Manya Harari at Collins and Harvill Press in London⁵⁸ were key figures in this transnational undertaking. The communicative network between those institutions and individuals involved in the circulation and publication of the AHF's Russian books manifested itself in letters, joint projects and personal visits.

When it came to the publication of uncensored literature from inside the Soviet Union in Amsterdam, the AHF first scheduled the publication of Russian editions to establish copyright. It then negotiated editions in other languages, which depended on the specific expression of interest of Western publishers.⁵⁹ The Russian works were meant to be either smuggled back into the USSR or to circulate among Russian émigrés and Russianists. Van het Reve recalled in 1970 how Russian *samizdat* literature was actually circulating

56 For secondary literature on the AHF, see Reddaway, "One of the CIA's most zealous agents," 138. See also the subchapter on the AHF in my own monograph: Kind-Kovács. *Written Here, Published There*.

57 van het Reve, "The Free Exchange of Ideas and Information."

58 Hurst, *British Human Rights Organizations*, 16.

59 Parry, "Samizdat is Russia's Underground Press," 249.

among interested readers inside the Soviet Union and how it reached the West. The handovers happened during “meetings in restaurants, parks, cinemas, underground stations or on street-corners,” where “briefcases” were “exchanged” and “microfilms hidden in tubes of toothpaste, double-bottomed suitcases.”⁶⁰ In the Western sphere, Sovietologists were especially keen on receiving unmitigated information from inside the Soviet Union. Despite major obstacles in getting in touch with authors and gaining access to critical pieces of writing, the Russian-born academic Albert Parry observed in March 1970 that “comprehensive channels of information” did “thrive between samizdat and its Western sympathizers.”⁶¹ In various ways the Russian-language manuscripts found their way to the headquarters of the AHF in the “house on the canal at Amstel 268” where “anything of literary or political value, without regard to political or religious philosophy” would be published.⁶²

The archives of the AHF reveal the contacts between the AHF and various literary organizations in Western Europe. Secrecy shaped the literary contacts and the communication between the AHF, its literary partners, and the literary scene inside the Soviet Union. Some confidential letters from the 1970s give us an insight into the personal contacts between the AHF and the International Literary Association (ILA) in Rome. The letters reveal that the AHF, apart from publishing underground literature that was smuggled out of the Soviet Union, also distributed Western books among students in Moscow. A letter by Carol Boren, dated September 17, 1973 to Jozina van het Reve Israel, van het Reve’s wife, discloses that the ILA provided the books that were to be distributed in “M.,” meaning in Moscow. While asking Jozina for information about “the method of distribution and the recipients,” Boren clarifies that “details of this nature are extremely confidential” and that such information should not be sent to her by direct mail. Instead she asked for a simple confirmation of the books’ receipt in Moscow, and wished to later discuss it with her “privately.”⁶³ Three years prior to this event, in 1970, Lorraine Kaufmann inquired with Jozina if the books she had sent to the AHF were still on Reve’s bookshelves or if they had been distributed in Russia; if they reached Russia, she wished to know to whom the books were given.⁶⁴ In 1970, as another of her letters to Jozina uncovers, the ILA had even dared to send book packages immediately to a Russian writer “without mentioning his [the recipient’s]

60 van het Reve, “Samizdat,” 21.

61 Parry, “Samizdat is Russia’s Underground Press,” 249.

62 Schenker, “A Dutch Outlet for Banned Soviet Writers.”

63 Letter, Carol Boren to Jozina van het Reve Israel, Rome, September 17, 1973. Archief Alexander Herzen Foundation, Inv. Nr. 28. Archive of the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

64 Letter, Lorraine Kaufman to Jozina van het Reve Israel, Rome, October 27, 1970. Archief Alexander Herzen Foundation, Inv. Nr. 28. Archive of the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

name on the envelope.” Kaufmann acknowledged that it would be pure “luck” “if the censors don’t stop the package,” which “after all is pretty ‘hot.’”⁶⁵

While the AHF published the Russian works, the ILA circulated some of the printed books in the West. In a letter to the Russian writer and human rights activist Pavel Litvinov, Reddaway excused himself not only for having used the post box number on the postal address, but also for having handed it over to somebody even if he was trustworthy. He acknowledged that only afterwards he had received Litvinov’s request “not to give it to anyone.” Being terribly sorry for having put Litvinov’s safety at risk, he suggested to him to “look carefully at the envelopes of letters” he would receive in the future.⁶⁶ Such details were important not to risk the interrogation or imprisonment of the books’ recipients. Yet, at the bottom of some of the communication between Karel van het Reve in Holland and Gleb Struve in the US, one finds lists of addresses of recipients in Russia that were to be used to send books directly to Russia.

Beyond the dangers involved with the direct circulation of books, ‘publishing-over-there’ in the West, namely in *tamizdat*, equally endangered the lives of Russian authors. In a letter from 1968, Struve worried if “the publication of our collection” could “be used as a pretext for re-arresting him” [an author that ran under the pseudonym of ‘Grandison’].⁶⁷ Here the Western activities tangibly affected lives inside Russia. Similarly, also the Russian authorities tried to undermine the uncensored literary contacts between East and West. Some years before the AHF was set up, Karel van het Reve had been in touch with international scholars with whom he corresponded about the publication of uncensored Russian writers in the West. Struve addressed in a letter the—at times—uncertain and therefore highly problematic provenance of some books from Russia: “There is, of course, just now a great deal of suspicion attaching to mss. [manuscripts] that are smuggled out of the Soviet Union and a belief that some of them may be deliberately foisted upon Western publishers by the KGB.”⁶⁸ Yet, in order to prevent such insecurity, the AHF invested great effort into setting up secure distribution channels.

The transnational circulation of Russian books depended on a network of individuals, translators, publishers and publishing houses. To promote and place the AHF’s books among Western publishing houses, newspapers, and other media, and to negotiate editions in other languages, Mrs. Elisabeth Fish-

65 Letter, Lorraine Kaufman to Jozina van het Reve Israel, November 10, 1970. Archief Alexander Herzen Foundation, Inv. Nr. 28. Archive of the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

66 Letter, Karel van het Reve to Pavel Litvinov, August 17, 1974. p.1–3, p.1. Archief Alexander Herzen Foundation, Box 1–8, Archive of the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam. DSC_8733.

67 Letter, Gleb Struve to Karel van het Reve, August 27, 1968. Archief Alexander Herzen Foundation, Inv. Nr. 32. Archive of the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

68 Letter, Gleb Struve to Karel van het Reve, October 10, 1968, p.1–p.2, p.2.

er-Spanjer worked as the literary agent of the AHF. Van het Reve on the other hand was the key figure in Amsterdam. Struve called him his personal “intermediary,” but he took care not to mention his name to anyone in connection with the publication of certain works, such as Pavel Litvinov’s collection of documents *The Trial of the Four. A collection of Materials on the Case of Galanskov, Ginzburg, Dobrovolsky & Lashkova*, which appeared in 1972.⁶⁹ Struve, who arranged for the Russian edition of Pavel Litvinov’s collection of documents, hoped that van het Reve would equally like to obtain some copies and would possibly be able to “send some to Russia.”⁷⁰ Struve was aware that a “certain amount of ‘conspiratorial caution is sometimes desirable and even imperative in these matters,” which is why he neither mentioned van het Reve’s name to Max Hayward nor to Boris Filippov.⁷¹ To improve the secrecy of the communication, Struve addressed van het Reve in some letters even as “Karel Iosifovich” or “Karel Gerardovič,” in order to secure their communication. Also, the books’ material outlook was altered to distract the attention of the postal censors. Struve recalls an incident where an author’s name was taken off from the cover, yet where “no changes whatever have been made in the text”: “The idea of the cover with a different title was Filippov’s, the objective being to make the ‘smuggling’ of the book easier by not attracting immediate attention to Litvinov’s name.”⁷²

As authors inside the Soviet Union often found themselves in a precarious financial situation due to not being officially published, the AHF cared much about paying the Russian authors the royalties to which they were entitled. This was, however, not always an easy undertaking, as some authors were in prison and others difficult to reach inside the Soviet Union. Royalties would be at times physically carried to Russia and personally delivered to its recipients or intermediaries. One intermediary, simply addressed as “Henk” in one letter, no surname indicated, who was going to travel to Moscow in the fall of 1971, was instructed in a letter by Peter Reddaway to “not declare the rubles (sic!) at the Soviet border,” but instead “carry them loose in a pocket (not in your wallet).”⁷³ The royalties should then not be given to the author himself but to other intermediaries that would deliver the money to the actual beneficiary. Furthermore, he was asked to collect a long list of samizdat documents in Russia that were to be printed by the AHF, including certain issues of the Russian samizdat journals *Chronicle of Current Events*, *Veche* and *Social Problem* and letters of local human rights initiatives. Instead of smuggling the

69 Letter, Gleb Struve to Karel van het Reve, September 6 1968. Archief Alexander Herzen Foundation, Inv. Nr. 32. Archive of the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

70 Letter, Gleb Struve to Karel van het Reve, September 6 1968, p.1-p.2, p.1.

71 Letter, Gleb Struve to Karel van het Reve, February 27, 1969. Archief Alexander Herzen Foundation, Inv. Nr. 32. Archive of the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

72 Letter, Gleb Struve to Karel van het Reve, October 10, 1968.

73 Letter, Peter Reddaway to Henk, October 2 1971. Archief Alexander Herzen Foundation, Inv. Nr. 1–8. Archive of the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

documents out by himself, Reddaway suggested that the courier should either try to use the “diplomatic bag” or to go to the American embassy and “leave the documents in an envelope addressed to Mr. Jim Yuenger, The Chicago Tribune, c/o American Embassy.” To prove his integrity, he should insert a note that he was a friend of Reddaway. Code words and even entire sentences were prepared to secure that the literary works would not fall into the wrong hands. The courier was further instructed to obviously not mention Reddaway’s name to any Soviet official in Moscow, be it in private conversations or even over the phone. While in Moscow he should systematically collect information on how authors expected their royalties to be paid, either in the form of presents or money. When it came to the delivery of royalties to political prisoners, the AHF mentioned its close cooperation with Amnesty International, which played an important role in looking after the families of prisoners.⁷⁴ Royalties could become a vital means for securing the mere survival of the prisoners’ families and of those they left behind.

In contrast to other Western publishers that often cared little about the implications of a Western publication for the Russian authors, this collection shows how the AHF pursued a responsible publishing strategy. It not only published the works in their original language and took an active stance against “corrupt editions and bad translations,”⁷⁵ it also cared about its authors and the possible implications of certain publications on their authors’ lives. It published uncensored Russian books to draw attention to otherwise invisible or silenced authors and to advocate on their behalf. The foundation strove to see their authors’ works in print, to gain them a readership and to offer them proper payment for their intellectual work. The letters in the AHF collection provide us with a rare glimpse into the immense efforts of a few individuals in setting up a transnational publishing endeavor, without endangering the authors’ lives and securing the proper handling of their works. Serving as the ‘Dutch connection’ between the Russian writers and the Western publishing sphere, the AHF helped to build personal relationships across the Western sphere but also across the systemic divide.

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⁷⁴ Letter, Peter Reddaway to Henk, October 2, 1971.

⁷⁵ “Alexander Herzen Foundation,” Accessed August 17, 2018. <https://www.revolvy.com/page/Alexander-Herzen-Foundation>.

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ANDRÁS FEJÉRDY – TATIANA VAGRAMENKO
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Religious Resistance: Forms, Sources and Collections

After World War II, the communist regimes which were being established gradually in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe belonging to the Soviet Union's sphere of interest considered the religious communities not merely ideological but also political opponents. As religious communities played an important social role, they could become a refuge and reference point for alternative social structures which were independent of the regime. In the dichotomic perspective of the regime—independently of the communities' intentions and points of view—each and every ecclesiastical-religious activity which aimed at preserving values and a way of life different from the logic of the system was seen as a sign of resistance. Therefore, the concept of religious resistance is an idea made up by the regime. The members of religious communities never necessarily believed that their activities went beyond keeping up a way of life based on their faith, which demanded certain risks. This specific feature of religious resistance was especially well described by Ödön Lénárd, a Hungarian Piarist priest and teacher who was in prison for 18 and a half years: "the concept of the specifically Christian resistance is [...] different from the usual political one. Christian resistance has a religious, moral, and ideological character, thus, unlike political resistance, it is something positive. Political resistance wants to harm opponents, whereas Christian resistance means that, despite the prohibitions and persecutions, it is doing what it should not do: it is definitely building Christianity despite the risks it may come across."¹

Major Forms of Christian Resistance

Christian resistance cannot be limited to "illegal activities": the official framework of the Churches—in a most controlled way—included numerous possibilities to pass on Christian values and strengthen religious life within the church. Without providing a comprehensive list, one can say that it would include all the activities of the "legal" ecclesiastical institutions that went beyond the restrictions ordered by the state. On the other hand, and for the same

1 Lénárd, *Só*, 12.

reason, these activities originated in Christian conduct fully aware of the possible risks. As it will be demonstrated in the case study by Mateja Režek and Jure Ramšak, some activities of the “peace priests” loyal to the state can also be considered dissent, if they criticized the discriminative politics of the state regarding religion.

Although resistance was not an exclusive characteristic of the catacomb Church, special attention should be paid to the “underground” or “illegal” initiatives. Mostly, they were part of the legal Church structures in a way, but they took up responsibilities the official Church did not want to or could not take up. In several cases, the activities did not aim at new responsibilities, but rather represented a continuation of a vocation despite the limitations imposed by secular laws. It was Christian resistance *per definitionem* when the members of the monastic and religious orders disbanded by state laws, the jurisdiction of which was not accepted by the Church, did everything to live their monastic lives even under the new conditions.² Or, it was “illegal” resistance *ipso facto* when a parish priest who had not been given permission by the state to do so, continued his vocation and thus worked as a member of the “illegal” network of the Church hierarchy, which was established to a different extent in different parts of the respective countries.³

The pastoral activity reaching beyond the frameworks of the church constituted a special field of religious resistance. Youth pastoration, i.e., the formation of an “anti-elite” with the help of “illegal” religious education and community life, was considered especially dangerous by the regime.⁴ The regime also attacked the adult groups and communities that were usually formed around a priest or monk, as these groups provided the most efficient way to establish and preserve deep, personal faith. They defined themselves as “the small circles of freedom,” and they often prepared samizdat publications, including fiction or spiritual literature on Christian values, for themselves or for a limited audience. They were therefore also part of the “resistance.” Other special forms of opposition included the compilation of documents on religious persecution and the distribution of these documents in the country and abroad, where relationships with the emigrant communities played an important role.

2 See e.g. the second section of the volume: Fiamová and Jakubčín, *Prenasledovanie cirkví – Persecution of Churches*, 98–191.

3 See e.g. for Czechoslovakia: Fiala and Hanuš, *Verborgene Kirche*; Birtz and Kierein-Kuening, *Voices from Ecclesia Militans*. For Hungary: Fejérdy, “Progetto abbandonato.” For Ukraine: Bociurkiw, *Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church*; Serhiychuk, *Neskorena Tserkva*.

4 See also Mezey, *Hittan a katakombákban*; Wirthné Diera, “Katolikus hitoktatás és elitképzés”; Tabajdi, “Illegális ifjúsági munka.”

Types of Sources

The dearth of sources on religious opposition is a consequence of the fact that the members of the resistance rarely documented their activities. As secrecy is a feature of resistance, communication among people working on the borderline of illegal, semi-legal, or legal fields was mostly verbal. They did not want to leave behind evidence against themselves, and furthermore, they wanted to live their Christian faith above all, and documenting the frameworks and the content of their lives was important only if it helped them lead their personal and congregational religious lives. Despite the basically verbal character of the culture of resistance, there are contemporary and subsequent sources in various archives and collections with the help of which the major outlines of Christian resistance can be revealed.⁵ A group of contemporary sources consists of the documents prepared by non-ecclesiastical, i.e. state or communist party-based organizations. There are a lot of sources among the documents of the organizations of the one-party state dealing with the Churches, primarily the organizations of the Ministry of Interior, the judicial bodies, and the State Offices for Church Affairs, which are indispensable to the study of the history of Christian resistance, even if these organizations tended to distort the facts. A basic feature of the sources preserved in state collections, mainly in the archives of the state security organizations, is that according to the preconceptions based on the dichotomic perspective of the regime, they document the framework of Christian resistance, especially its structure, network, and functions.

State archives—especially the collections including investigation materials and court records—contain another type of important contemporary source. Some of the dissenters' notes and other congregational documents (such as samizdat literature) were obtained by the state organizations as a result of searches and seizures, and they were attached to investigation materials. Such documents can be found in the court file on the "Black Ravens" case (Hungary, 1960–61)⁶ in the collection of manuscripts of the Stasi.⁷ The copies of the samizdat journal entitled *The Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church*⁸ and other samizdat publications confiscated by the KGB⁹ and now held in the in the collection of the Sixtiers Museum in Kiev also comprise part of this group of documents. Unlike the documents prepared by the regime

5 See the collections described at: COURAGE: Collecting collections (registry). Accessed September 20, 2018. <http://cultural-opposition.eu/courage/>

6 See Wirthné Diera, *Katolikus hitoktatás és elitképzés*.

7 See COURAGE Registry, s.v. "CNSAS Confiscated Manuscripts", by Cristina Petrescu, 2018, Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming).

8 *The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*. Accessed September 20, 2018. <http://www.lkbkronika.lt/index.php/en/>

9 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Sixtiers Museum collection", by Orysia Maria Kulick, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

describing the organizational structures of the resistance, these specific ecclesiastical sources give us important information on the spiritual teachings of a given community.

As to contemporary Church sources, the documents of the official Church administration reveal the practice and characteristics of Christian resistance only indirectly: the scattered data on dispositions, religious education, and disciplinary procedures can be valuable only together with or compared to other sources.¹⁰ More systematic source groups on religious resistance can be found among communities with a certain institutional background. There are some unique sources on Christian resistance. For example, the leaders of the Jesuit Order, who were forced to work underground, prepared circulars to unite and strengthen the scattered monks.¹¹ Mónika, a member of the “underground” female Cistercian community formed in 1955 in Hungary, wrote the spiritual diary for her superior, who was in prison at the time.¹² Or one could mention the diary entries of Julijans Vaivods, the first cardinal of the Latvian Catholic Church.¹³ Alongside the contemporary inner Church sources, correspondence, teachings in written form, samizdat literature, and the very few surviving diaries, photos are a special kind of source. Although like most written sources, the photos are personal and were not taken to be “documents,” they nonetheless provide essential information on the lives and activities of various communities. For example, there is a private collection documenting the programs of the Calvinist youth group in Pasarét,¹⁴ or one can study Zwbigniew Galicki’s photos on the life of the Mistrzejowice parish in Krakow¹⁵ or some pieces of the unique Fortepan collection shared online, which documents the history of twentieth-century Hungary.¹⁶

Due to the one-sided opinions found in the state documents and the limited number of contemporary inner Church documents, it is necessary to use retrospective sources. In many cases, the memoirs written by the participants and the leaders of Christian resistance or the different kinds of interviews done with them are considered the only sources in order to get information on the different aspects of contemporary events. The sources of *oral history* have becoming more and more valuable as the people who shared their experiences in the 1990s or in the 2000s are no longer alive, or because of their age or health are less and less able to pass on their memories.

10 See Mózes, “Állami Egyházügyi Hivatal.”

11 Bánkúti, *Jezsuiták*. 77–80.

12 Monika, *Zeugnis*.

13 Vaivods, *Bīskapa Julijana Vaivoda dienasgrāmata*.

14 See Erdős, “Református ifjúság élet,” 116–25; COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Collection of Calvinist Youth Congregation of Pasarét”, by Kristóf Erdős, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

15 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Zbigniew Galicki Photographic Collection”, by Maciej Melon, 2018. Accessed: 20 September 2018.

16 Fortepan online photo archives. Accessed September 20, 2018. <http://www.fortepan.hu/>

The Typology of the Collections

As this short outline shows, the sources on Christian opposition were preserved in archives and collections with different profiles. Some of the specific collections regarding Christian resistance activities are the result of organic development. For example, collections the corpus of which was created, collected, and preserved by the resisting community or person fall into this category, such as the “missionary archives” of Ferenc Nádosy described in one of the case studies. There are similar collections, including the spiritual legacy of a charismatic person whose teachings were collected and passed on in Hungary and abroad. One example of this kind of collection is the collection of the writings of Lutheran bishop Lajos Ordass.¹⁷ A separate group includes the collections created abroad documenting the activities of the Church in the world, the international (Church) organizations, and the émigré community. Like the Keston Archives described in the first case study, some of these considered it a priority to document the situation of persecuted Christians as extensively as possible: one of them was the UKI, which was run by Hungarian Jesuits in Vienna,¹⁸ or the documents belonging to the private collection of the Estonian Karl Laantee, who worked for Voice of America.¹⁹ Others, such as the Polish Dominican Book Institute²⁰ and the Hungarian Opus Mystici Corporis publishing house in Vienna, focused on strengthening the activities of the persecuted Churches,²¹ so they published religious samizdat literature, and others, such as the organization Kirche in Not – Ostpriesterhilfe, which was founded by the Dutchman Weerenfried van Straaten, gave financial and other kinds of aid to persecuted Churches.²²

A very frequent type of collection on Christian resistance is the one that was formed as a result of academic research. The COURAGE Registry includes contemporary collections, such as the material collected by the Hungarian István Kamarás in the course of his scholarly work on religious sociology,²³ as well as ones compiled later, such as the Eastern Archive of KARTA

17 Terray, “Ordass Lajos.”; COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Collection of Ordass Lajos”, by Katalin Mirák and Zoltán Pál, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

18 Borbándi, *Nyugati magyar*. 230; COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Archives of the Jesuit Order Hungary”, by Béla Mihalik and Zoltán Pál, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018, doi: 10.24389/10677.

19 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Karl Laantee Collection at the Estonian Cultural History Archives”, by Koppel Taavi, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

20 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Dominican Book Institute”, by Yvetta Kajanová, 2018. Accessed: September 28, 2018, (forthcoming).

21 Borbándi, *Nyugati magyar*, 279–80.

22 Straaten, *Sie nennen mich Speckpater*; See also the chronology at the website “Kirche in Not” at <http://www.kirche-in-not.de/wer-wir-sind/geschichte>, Accessed: September 28, 2018.

23 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Religious Sociological Collection of István Kamarás”, by István Kamarás, Zoltán Pál, and Péter Apor Accessed: September 20, 2018.

in Poland²⁴ and the documents collected by the Bulgarian project entitled *Everyday Life in Southwest Bulgaria in Socialism*.²⁵ Almost all researchers investigating the history of the Church in this era have a collection of mostly secondary documents regarding a very specific field or a broader perspective, the most important parts of which they have already published.

The history of Christian resistance is relatively rich in sources, but the sources are random and they are rarely kept in specific collections. From the perspectives of future research and the preservation of the documents, the fact that most specific collections are private and have no institutional background constitutes a serious challenge. If the collectors/owners die, the professional preservation of the documents can only be ensured if a reliable institutional background is created.

The Keston Archive and Library

Two Babushkas from Pochaev

In 1964, two old women from Western Ukraine started their long journey to Moscow. In their luggage, Feodosia Varavva and Anastasia Pronina were hiding a letter they had written. It was an account of the persecutions against the Pochaev Lavra, one of the biggest Orthodox monasteries in Ukraine. The Lavra was under extensive pressure from the Soviet authorities, who aimed to close it down. Its land and some of its buildings had been confiscated, the monks brutally evicted, and some of them sent to psychiatric clinics. In Moscow, the two babushkas looked for a foreigner who could smuggle the letter to the West and spread the word about religious persecution.

Through a French schoolteacher of Russian origin coming to Moscow on holidays, the letter reached Paris and then London, where a young Anglican priest, Michael Bourdeaux, received it. By that time, Bourdeaux had completed university degrees in Russian and French, and he later completed a degree in theology. He had spent some time in Moscow as an exchange student. He was particularly interested in religious life in the Soviet Union, gathering information about the persecution of Christians, and by that time he had completed the first draft of his book *“Opium for the People.”* The letter from the two Ukrainian babushkas triggered his search for more evidence of religious persecutions. He managed to travel to Moscow again. Miraculously, while visiting the ruins of a recently destroyed Orthodox church in Moscow, he

24 COURAGE Registry, s.v. *“Eastern Archive of the KARTA Centre”*, by Melon Macej, 2017. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

25 COURAGE Registry, s.v. *“Everyday Life in Southwest Bulgaria in Socialism”*, by Anelia Kasabova, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018.

encountered some Orthodox believers. Among them, he found the two babushkas from Pochaev. They gave him an updated account of the Pochaev persecutions and asked Bourdeaux to be their voice and to speak for them.²⁶ This encounter changed the course of his life, as Bourdeaux understood it as a divine calling. He responded to this call by dedicating his entire life to collecting, processing, and disseminating information on religious life in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

In 1969, Reverend Canon Dr Michael Bourdeaux, along with political scientist Peter Reddaway, diplomat and writer Sir John Lawrence, and Soviet historian Leonard Schapiro, set up the Center for the Study of Religion and Communism, later known as Keston College and the Keston Institute. It soon grew into a widely known British human rights organization and a recourse center, unique in a way, as its field of expertise focused on church-state relations and persecution of religious believers behind the Iron Curtain. From its foundation, Keston had as one of its primary aims the creation and development of an archive of documents. Nowadays, the Keston Archive and Library is a unique collection of primary-source material on religious life and religious persecution in socialist countries, containing, among other materials, the world's most extensive collection of religious *samizdat*. In the history of religion in socialist countries, the Keston collection fills an important gap between state historical records and official church histories, giving voices to ordinary believers in their everyday struggles to express their faith freely.

Cold Warrior

Keston College is often mentioned as playing an important role in drawing the world's attention to religious persecution in the Soviet Union.²⁷ Keston was a child of the Cold War—as Bourdeaux himself admits²⁸—serving at its “religious frontline.” Its work reflected the political climate of human rights activism of the 1970 and 1980s.²⁹ When the Soviet dissident movement became a major political concern in the West, the increasingly important politics of expertise, what Mark Hurst³⁰ calls, “the rush to expertise,” allowed Keston to gain international authority in the representation of religious dissidents. Keston supplied the international media with news and analytical reports on religion in socialist countries, and it provided advice for policy makers. Keston activists advised Jimmy Carter, Harold Wilson, David Owen, and Margaret Thatcher. Although they never organized public campaigns, Keston ran a special news service and organized conferences, public talks, and lectures in or-

26 Bourdeaux, *Risen Indeed*, 2–10; Robertson, *Be Our Voice*; Shlikhta, *Kak uchredit'*.

27 Hurst, *British Human Rights Organizations*; French, “Michael Bourdeaux i Tsentr”; Luehrmann, *Religion in Secular Archives*.

28 French, “Michael Bourdeaux i Tsentr,” 240.

29 Hurst, *British Human Rights Organizations*.

30 *Ibid.*, 179.

der “to improve the speed and efficiency of news items and information from Keston College to churches, individuals and the media.”³¹ They published an international journal, *Religion in Communist Lands*, a bi-monthly glossy magazine, *Frontier*, and produced more than thirty books. Undoubtedly, Keston made effective use of smuggled material, widely popularizing it. As Sonja Luerhman³² points out, their dissemination system and public news releases fueled an emerging field of human rights activism for religious freedom.

Yet, the optics through which Keston saw religious life in “communist lands” shaped the image the West was getting as a result. Although Keston College was established as an independent non-denominational organization, aimed to further the objective study of church-state relations in the communist world, its activism reflected the religious and political principles of its founders. Guided by the hand of God, as he saw it, Bourdeaux served the Church in Eastern Europe—a novel missionary destination in the 1970s. For him and his colleagues, Keston College was an extension of their faith, a witness for the Church, and part of a mission “to be the voice of the voiceless.”³³ This attitude made the Keston collection a sort of martyrology of Soviet-era churches. What fascinated Keston leaders (and hence enriched the collection) was cases of open resistance to Soviet authorities, which they translated in religious terms. In the focus of their interests were mainly religious minorities and marginal dissident groups within mainstream churches, who were in open conflict with the socialist regime. Persecuted believers were depicted as heroes, martyrs, and even prophets,³⁴ struggling against both an atheist state and official church hierarchies oftentimes positioned in the Keston collection as collaborators or betrayers.

Similar to other human rights organizations of the Cold War period, Keston expressed distinctive anti-Sovietism and anti-communism, and its leaders had the fullest sympathy for the Soviet dissident movement.³⁵ Religion and communism, for Keston’s activists, were incompatible and conflictual notions, with no room for dialogue. This had further politicized implications. Keston’s policy recommendations called for turning from Western governments’ political neutrality and non-interference in Soviet affairs towards active advocating for repressed religious groups.³⁶ Bourdeaux publicly criticized the World Council of Churches for silencing the issue of religious persecution in the Soviet bloc.³⁷ His tough statements against the Russian Orthodox Church hierarchy and a too rigorous (as believed by the WCC) criticism of the Soviet regime triggered further tensions between Keston College and the

31 Robertson, *Be Our Voice*.

32 Luehrmann, *Religion in Secular Archives*, 135.

33 Robertson, *Be Our Voice*; French, “Michael Bourdeaux i Tsentri,” 237.

34 Bourdeaux, *Patriarch and Prophets*; Bourdeaux, *Risen Indeed*.

35 Hurst, *British Human Rights Organizations*.

36 French, “Michael Bourdeaux i Tsentri,” 239.

37 Bourdeaux, *The Russian Church*.

WCC, to the extent that, at a later stage, Bourdeaux was dismissed from participation in international ecumenical processes.³⁸

Chronicle of Religious Martyrdom

The documented evidence of religious persecution in socialist countries, which the Keston center had been collecting over the course of more than 50 years, developed into what Sonja Luehrmann calls a counter-archive “engaged in a kind of documentary arms race.”³⁹ The collection sought to give a contrasting perspective on religious life in communist lands, deconstructing official historical records. The selection of materials and the design of the record-keeping system, Luehrmann continues,⁴⁰ shape the logic of the collection and creates a new context within which the documents will be read. “(T)he catalogue reads like a list of grievances against the state,” writes Luehrmann, giving an example of rubrics within one subcategory: “Oppressive practices” (SU12/6): it contains folders on harassment, physical assault, fines, interrogations, trials, state interference in church affairs, interference in parish life, discrimination in employment and in education, misuse of psychiatry, and a loss of parental rights.⁴¹

With its selective material (representing mainly voices of marginalized religious minorities and dissident groups) and shifted perspective towards religious dissent as political protest, the Keston collection produces an alternative narrative. It demonizes the communist atheist state, undermines official church hierarchies, and shifts reader’s attention towards grassroots religious revival, bottom-up religio-political opposition, and reform movement (the extent of which perhaps is exaggerated in the collection). The heroization and politicization of religious dissent were expressions of Keston’s explicit bias and the rather simplistic dichotomy to which it ascribed between “the supreme moral virtue of the Christians and the bloodthirsty villainy of the Communists.”⁴² This perspective, however, neglects wider patterns of everyday religious practices and other forms of religious non-conformism that was not always expressed in political terms. It gives no room for compromise, circumvention, “defiant compliance,”⁴³ and other non-confrontational challenges to political regimes, which different religious groups developed over time. The collection is similarly blind to different modes and the “functional ambivalence” of Soviet religious policies,⁴⁴ shifting frontiers of secularism, and often the blurred line between state agents/informers and victims among

38 French, “Michael Bourdeaux i Tsentri,” 222.

39 Luehrmann, *Religion in Secular Archives*, 137.

40 Ibid., 141.

41 Ibid., 141.

42 Scanlan, *Book Review*, 443.

43 Wanner, *Communities of the Converted*, 81–86.

44 Ramet, *Cross and Commissar*, 51.

the faithful in socialist histories. Keston's main contribution, however, was in drawing close attention to internal conflicts within churches in Eastern Europe, which Keston's activists saw as a positive symptom of people's religious revival and the struggle for religious freedom. The Keston collection looks more deeply into the heterogeneous religious landscape of the socialist countries and adopts the perspectives of ordinary believers who often faced double marginalization from both state organs and official church structures.

An Outline of the Collection

The letter written by the two Pochaev women laid the foundation of the Keston collection. Soon, the abundance of various samizdat documents from different religious groups in the Soviet Union and later all countries of the Soviet bloc began to reach Keston. The center then scrupulously filed, translated, and analyzed materials and published the most important items in the Keston News Service. At the peak of its work, Keston's staff included twenty-five specialists, who organized material in twenty languages.⁴⁵

Over fifty years later, the Keston collection holds more than 4,000 items of *samizdat* material documenting religious life in the Soviet era, including correspondence, petitions, pamphlets, trial transcripts, symposia, and memoirs. The collection represents different religious groups—Baptists, Adventists, Jews, Pentecostals, Orthodox, and Roman Catholics—from Russia, Ukraine, and other republics of the former Soviet Union (roughly 40 percent of the collection), Romania (15 percent), Poland (15 percent), the Czech Republic (15 percent), and other countries of the Soviet bloc (15 percent).⁴⁶ It includes unique material on some widely known religious activists and dissidents, including Georgi Vins, Gleb Yakunin, Aleksandr Men', Alexander Ogorodnikov, Nikolai Eshliman, Pavel Adelheim, Anatoli Levitin, Aida Skripnikova, Nijole Sadunaite, Gheorghe Calciu, and many others. It also has a collection of newspaper cuttings, newspapers, and journals published in Eastern Europe. Keston's audio-visual collection consists of 3,000 rare and one-of-a-kind photographs, along with 150 videotapes, 500 sound recordings, a few paintings, and 50 original Soviet anti-religious posters. After the fall of the USSR, Keston also obtained copies of nearly 500 documents from the Russian state archives (KGB archives and Council for Religious Affairs regional archives). The collection is also enriched by a unique library consisting of approximately 10,000 books and 200 periodicals relating to religion and politics in Eastern Europe.

After the collapse of the Soviet bloc, Keston underwent a major crisis. It did not succeed in its attempts to integrate itself into the academic life of Oxford University, and it had to terminate most of its projects (including Keston

45 Hillman and Seago, *Alive and Available*; Bourdeaux, *Pioneering Religious Freedom Advocacy*.

46 Percentage according to Daniel, *The Keston Archive*, 10.

News Service) and gradually reduce its staff. However, unlike other human rights organizations of the Cold War period, Keston survived and tried to adapt to a changed world. In search of new directions for its activities, the Keston centre tried to widen its research focus and geographical range, including monitoring religious freedom in the newly-formed countries on the post-socialist landscape, Europe in general, and North Korea and China.⁴⁷ But eventually, it narrowed its perspective on historical analysis and contemporary surveys of religious liberty in the former Soviet Union and made it a priority to concentrate its resources on preserving the Keston collection.⁴⁸ In 2007, in order to sustain the integrity of its archive and library, the Keston Institute moved its collections to the J. M. Dawson Centre at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, where it became part of the newly established Keston Center for Religion, Politics, and Society. There, the collection is being carefully conserved, re-catalogued, and digitized. Researchers can receive unlimited access to the Keston Digital Archive, which, by 2016, included 7,500 files from the Keston archive, including 1,000 photographs.⁴⁹ Several scholarships for researchers to visit Baylor and work in the Keston Archive and Library are available from the Keston Institute, UK.

The Missions Archives of Ferenc Nádosy and Sources on the Illegal Distribution of Documents in the Scientific Collections of the Reformed College of Sárospatak

It is a major task—maybe even the most important task—of the Church to preach. This covers much more than just sermons on Sundays. In addition to preaching in the congregation, the mission is also part of this profession, which, according to the terminology of the Reformed Church, means telling people about the crucifixion and redemption of Christ and inviting them to join the faith. In practice, this normally includes the renewal of congregational life by adding Prayer Days, evangelizations, and the search for people who have drifted away from the Church. To organize missions to other countries is a special area of activity, during which missionaries introduce people living far away to the Christian faith.⁵⁰

While there was a serious revival movement in Hungary following World War II, missions both in the country and abroad became more and more obstructed after 1945. The elimination of social and ecclesiastical associations and movements began on July 4, 1946, with a regulation by the Minister of

⁴⁷ Peterlin, *An Analysis of the Publishing Activity*; Stricker and Sawatsky, *Postscript*.

⁴⁸ Bourdeuax, *Ringling the Changes*; Peterlin, *An Analysis of the Publishing Activity*; Dennen, *Letter from the Chairman*.

⁴⁹ Dennen, *Letter from the Chairman*.

⁵⁰ Kádár, *Ekkleziasztika*, 89–91.

Interior. The next step was taken on October 5, 1949, when the Ministry approved the proposal made by the Universal Convent of the Reformed Church of Hungary aiming to disband the 14 most important associations.⁵¹ Meanwhile, mission work became impossible, especially after Albert Bereczky sent his letter to the deans on January 8, 1952 and the Mission Regulation came into force on March 1 of the same year.⁵² After this, the Reformed Church limited its activity to preaching. During the period in which the Church leadership faced legal restrictions and limitations, many formerly public activities went on illegally. Prayer Days, evangelizations, and youth events were organized under cover, and typographical copies of Christian records were circulated as samizdat literature.

There is an extremely rich collection of records and documents like the one in Sárospatak, the Ferenc Nádosy collection, which is one of the biggest collections of sources regarding Hungarian Protestant resistance between 1945 and 1989. The handwritten documents consisting of around 5,500 pages, the nine archival boxes—around 3139 documents—containing the so-called “mission archives,” and also the two archival boxes of the material of the Mission traveling exhibition were given to the Scientific Collections of the Reformed College of Sárospatak by Nádosy in several instalments after 1981.⁵³ In many cases, the collections even include additional copies, most of which were obtained from pastoral legacies. The collection of documents presents a detailed picture of the illegally operating reformed and evangelical organizations during the communist dictatorship, with particular emphasis on the missions to other countries.

A Biographical Sketch of Ferenc Nádosy

Ferenc Nádosy was born in the city of Zólyom on September 28, 1907, the son of an evangelical couple, Ferenc Nádosy, a newspaper editor, and Márta Korcek.⁵⁴ He studied medicine at the Faculty of Medicine at Pázmány Péter University. He graduated in 1934.⁵⁵ After that, he worked as a researcher and practiced in several hospitals in Budapest. He was a medical officer in World War II from September 1944 to May 1945, where he was captured and taken to Tecuci, where he worked in the hospital of the Soviet prison camp.⁵⁶ After returning home, he started to work as a local practitioner in the village of

51 Kollega, *Magyarország a XX. században*. Vol. II. 425–26.

52 SRK TGy Levéltár, R.E. VIII. 6/5, 19/1952.

53 SRK TGy Kézirattár, An. 4739. Nádosy Ferenc, “A régi tragédia az Akikazen I. Molnár Mária halálának körülményei”; SRK TGy Kézirattár, Kt.d. 7372, Nádosy Ferenc, *Nyílt levél egy lelkész-testvéremhez*, 16.

54 Lutheran Church register, Zvolen, Slovakia. Accessed October 16, 2017. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-9T94-4LP?i=43&cc=1554443>

55 Molnár, *Pázmány Péter Tudományegyetem*, 154.

56 SRK TGy Kézirattár, An. 12360, Nádosy Ferenc, “Prognózisok és információk,” 3.

Tótvázsony in Veszprém County. He described the communist takeover as follows: "I approved of the economic, industrial, and social changes of the new regime in many respects, but I rejected most of the intellectual conclusions of its ideology." The confrontation between Ferenc Nádosy and the communist state was predictable. His samizdat-authoring and publishing activities also started in 1946.

First, the communist state attempted to "re-educate" Nádosy in an ideological sense. A brigade of workers visited him on a weekly basis and tried to persuade him—without any success. The first open clash between him and the communist regime took place at the time of the elections in 1949. Despite being aware of the possible consequences of such an act, Nádosy and his wife both openly voted against the People's Front in front of the counting committee during the open polls election in Tótvázsony. A police investigation was started against Ferenc Nádosy shortly afterwards because of alleged malversation, but it was closed because the authorities could not find anything against him. A few weeks later, he was dismissed from his medical post.⁵⁷

Since the communist state authorities never tolerated Ferenc Nádosy's activities, during his time in Litér he was repeatedly subjected to police interrogations, house searches, and harassment by his boss, who made sure that Nádosy was overwhelmed with work. The main aim was to make him stop his missionary service. In addition, he was constantly monitored by the communist state security forces: many reports were submitted on him in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, and his name frequently came up during investigations regarding the "translation and dissemination of religious propaganda."⁵⁸

Ferenc Nádosy's Missionary Work and Activity as a Samizdat Author

The correspondence regarding the missions to other countries and the related samizdat literature are the most important part of the work of Ferenc Nádosy among the documents in Sárospatak. According to his contemporaries, Nádosy's missionary work began at the most urgent moment. Shortly after the communist takeover, in 1949, the leaders of the Reformed Church in Hungary eliminated the Hungarian Reformed Association for Missions, which provided the institutional background for missions to foreign countries. According to László Draskóczy, one of the most outstanding representatives of mission work, people occupied with missions became psychologically paralyzed. This was when Ferenc Nádosy's letter arrived, in which he asked about the work of Mária Molnár, a missionary who was killed by the Japanese on the Admiral Islands during World War II, and the addresses of the Liebenzell mission and the mission to Manus Island. Nádosy then contacted these institutions via post. During his mission work, Ferenc Nádosy managed to contact even more

⁵⁷ Ibid., 4.

⁵⁸ ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-12348/1, Nádosy Ferenc; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-12049/9, "Hitvallók."

institutions. According to a source from before 1956, he was already communicating with the mission in Truk Lagoon (Caroline Islands) and a missionary working in Japan, and he had already acquired information on Billy Graham's evangelization trips, the mission work in China, and the revival movements in Brazil, France, and Italy.⁵⁹

Ferenc Nádosy published the news he collected through his continuously expanding network of contacts and through his extensive correspondence in the form of samizdat. He edited papers between 25 and 30 pages in length entitled *Missziói levelek* (Mission letters) from June 1955 to March 1956, *Missziói lapok* (Mission papers) from 1956 to 1958, and *Misszió* (Mission) from June 1958 to February 1963. He then continued his work by entitling it *Külmissziói körlevél*, *Missziói Körlevél* (Mission circular) in the 1970s and the 1980s.⁶⁰

There was already a kind of working community functioning with the samizdat mission journal of Ferenc Nádosy at its center in the 1950s. There are 15 people who are known to have been authors of the 23 published volumes of *Misszió*⁶¹ who used their own names, and an additional four names were involved with production and reproduction in the 1950s. Nádosy managed to distribute the papers by post. With a typewriter, he was able to produce several copies simultaneously, and he used separate identifiers for each. He then sent them to his correspondents and readers. Due to the limited number of copies available, Nádosy used a technique he called "ring-connection," which meant that several recipients would read the same copy in a specified order.⁶² In other cases, he asked his readers, in writing, to send the documents back after two or three weeks.⁶³ We have very little information about his readers. According to his circular from December 1983, the group of his readers included a young priest, a public prosecutor, a psychologist, a psychiatrist, a parish priest, and an elderly ecclesiastical leader.⁶⁴

The missionary work of Nádosy consisted of more than just contact and information networking. According to his correspondence, he also took part in organizing relief efforts. According to a letter from 1976, within the framework of the handwork action of the Danubian Baptists and Nádosy's mission community, they sent a donation of 9,000 forints to India through the Basel Mission before 1969. This money was enough for a village to build a well. There was another relief action of which this letter from 1976 gives an account. The mission community and the Danubian Baptists contributed to the dona-

59 SRK TGY Kézirattár, Kt. 8168, Nádosy Ferenc, *Missziói lapok*, 27–28.

60 Ibid., 26.

61 SRK TGY Kézirattár, Kt. 8164, Nádosy Ferenc, *Misszió*, 1.

62 SRK TGY Kézirattár, An. 4932, Nádosy Ferenc, "A yokohamai hadbírótság tárgyalása / Molnár Mária halálának körülményei"; SRK TGY Kézirattár, An. 4936, Nádosy's letters on theological topics 1.; SRK TGY Kézirattár, An. 12370, Nádosy's letter to György Benke; SRK TGY Kézirattár, An. 12371, Nádosy's letter to the circle of Józsefné dr. Haraszti.

63 SRK TGY Kézirattár, An. 12,367, Nádosy's letter to György Benke.

64 SRK TGY Kézirattár, Kt.d. 7371, Nádosy Ferenc, "Decemberi mindenféle" (Circular letter), 3.

tion made by the Red Cross of Szentendre to Ethiopia by donating 30,000 forints.⁶⁵ There is another source from 1976 according to which an aid package was sent by Nádósy to the Soviet Union with the permission of the Hungarian National Bank.⁶⁶ Nádósy also tried to send money to the Carmel Evangelical Mission in West Germany in 1978,⁶⁷ and later, in 1980, he started to organize aid for flood victims in Békés County.⁶⁸

In addition to the literature which grew out of his mission work, Nádósy also composed a number of texts about society and Christianity. His works include *Spiritualismus und materialismus* (Spiritualism and materialism) from 1948, *Krisztusi magatartás szovjeturalom alatt és a nagygazdagok hatalmában* (Christlike conduct under Soviet rule and the rule of the wealthy) from 1951, *Kiút a materializmus tévedéseiből* (Way out of the blunders of materialism) from 1954, and *Materializmus, idealizmus, keresztyénség* (Materialism, idealism, christianity) from 1969. After 1970, he also wrote about beat, hippies, sexuality, hooligans, bums, and drugs. His work covers these topics until the 1980s. He then began to write global political studies and essays on the reconciliation of theology and the natural sciences. The former texts include topics like the nuclear threat, terrorism, and, after the decade had come to an end, *glasnost*. He introduced the dissemination strategy used for these texts in a publication at the end of 1989 entitled *Messzelátó* (Field glasses/Farsighted). According to this publication, he shared his political and politico-futurological writings with many people working in the government and the fields of diplomacy, science, and mass media.⁶⁹ There are many clues in his work leading us to this. In his circular of December 1983, he mentioned that he had sent his text entitled *Érett észszel, józanul* (With a mature mind, sanely) to an editor of a weekly magazine in Budapest. Although he was aware of the fact that they would not publish his article, he still hoped that some of his thoughts would affect the journalist.⁷⁰ In another one of his personal letters, he made the same wish for politicians and diplomats.⁷¹ He also forwarded his letters to them after the end of the 1980s. He had a study on foreign policy that he even sent to the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, the Secretariat of the Council of Ministers, the Patriotic People's Front, the Hungarian Young Communist League, the Secretariat of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and the British and Soviet Embassies.⁷²

65 SRK TGy Kézirattár, An. 4488, Answer of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences to the study of Nádósy entitled "Az Ötdimenziós kontinuum."

66 SRK TGy Kézirattár, An. 4735, Nádósy Ferenc, Circular letters on the mission abroad.

67 SRK TGy Kézirattár, An. 4940, Circular letter of Nádósy on the inner mission.

68 SRK TGy Kézirattár, An. 6101, Circular letter of Nádósy on the aid for the flood victims.

69 SRK TGy Kézirattár, An. 12363, Nádósy Ferenc, *Messzelátó*, 7.

70 SRK TGy Kézirattár, Kt.d. 7371, Nádósy Ferenc, "Decemberi mindenféle" (Circular letter), 11.

71 SRK TGy Kézirattár, Kt.d. 7372, Nádósy Ferenc, "Nyílt levél egy lelkesztéstvéremhez," 2–3.

72 SRK TGy Kézirattár, An. 12360, Nádósy Ferenc, "Prognózisok és információk," 1; SRK TGy Kézirattár, An. 12364, Letters of Nádósy.

The Significance and Impact of the Collection

During his mission work, Ferenc Nádosy successfully established relations beyond the iron curtain and organized the routes of information processing. He did this in a period when each of these activities was forbidden. According to inventory lists and archive records, it seems that his works have been read.⁷³ His legacy surely deserves the attention of researchers, but the documents kept in Sárospatak also show the unique details of the process of his work. Here one can find his correspondence next to the manuscripts of his finished works, the samizdat publications, and many of the replies, as well. The Nádosy legacy is thus an exceptional documentation of the daily work done by a Christian samizdat author and his efforts to establish a network of contacts. It also contains information concerning the organization of the missionary working group, and it introduces the processes according to which the documents were distributed, foreign communication, and the process of samizdat production, as well.

Religious Dissent in Socialist Slovenia

It is difficult to offer a historiographical overview of religious dissent in Slovenia, as is the case with any form of public criticism, due to the specific self-management system and position of this northern republic within Yugoslavia. During the period of socialism, a distinctive *modus vivendi* formed between the Catholic Church and Communist Party hierarchies in the Slovenian, virtually mono-religious Catholic environment.⁷⁴ Between the first post-war decade, when relations between the state and the Catholic Church were extremely tense, and the end of the 1970s, this relationship improved to such a degree that the Head of the Cabinet of the Vatican Secretary of State and former rapporteur for Yugoslavia Pier Luigi Celata described it as stable and cooperative.⁷⁵ In the Catholic press, Slovenian Catholic journalists frequently criticized and accused government officials of a negative attitude towards the church, while in Croatia that could not have been done, as religious expert Paul Mojzes observed.⁷⁶

Nevertheless, up to the end of the 1980s, even in Slovenia the attitude of the state authorities towards churchgoers still reflected a Leninist understanding of religion as defined in the 1958 program of the League of Communists of Yugo-

73 MREZSL. 89. László Draskóczy's legacy, Box 8, "Ti mikor kezditek el...?" Interview with Gyula Brebovsky Accessed March 4, 2018. <http://www.evelet.hu/archivum/2009/45/25>

74 In 1953, 85 percent of the population in Slovenia declared themselves religious; by the beginning of the 1980s the share had decreased to less than 50 percent (Roter, *Vernost in nevernost*).

75 SI AS 1211, Box 3, Folder 1979, Memo about the conversation between the First Secretary of the Embassy P. Kastelic with Pier Luigi Celata, December 31, 1979.

76 Mojzes, *Religious Liberty*, 369.

slavia (LCS).⁷⁷ Although the introduction of socialist self-management was supposed to make the Communist Party take a step back from direct authority and only preserve its position as an alleged vanguard in the realm of ideas, its ideological starting-points remained the foundations of regulation and everyday practice in relation to believers at all times. Disagreement with the status of second-class citizens, to which the religious population felt relegated in the atheist school system, discrimination in employment, distorted representations of religion in the media, and the prevention of charitable activities were the key engines of public criticism by individual Catholic intellectuals. With the anti-Communist core of the Slovenian clergy mostly situated abroad and the members at home pressured into silence, it was mostly highly-educated theologians who exposed themselves in these controversies, learned people who were no strangers to socialism and Marxism and who were often part of the mechanisms of "self-management democracy," one way or another. Critical interventions by Catholic theologians and, to a lesser extent, laymen were most frequent in times of anti-religious campaigns, with the circumstances of their activities and places where they could express their views changing significantly between the post-war era of the 1950s, which was marked by belligerent political atheism and the suspension of diplomatic relations with the Holy See, and the 1960s and 1970s, when Yugoslavia renewed its diplomatic contacts with the Holy See and gradually developed a more tolerant attitude towards religion.

The relations between the state and the Catholic Church were most tense in the first post-war decade.⁷⁸ The revolutionary authorities were determined to break the power of the Catholic Church and contain religion within church walls and the private lives of individuals. Initially, the authorities distinguished between what they referred to as reactionary clericalism and progressive Christians; but as soon as they established supremacy over open political opponents, they focused repressive measures on any potential opposition.

In 1945, all pre-war Catholic magazines had been suppressed, making public expression of the Christian worldview practically impossible. During the first post-war years, relations between the state and the Catholic Church in Yugoslavia were also marked by Tito's attempts to separate the national episcopate from the Holy See and establish an autonomous, national church. Within this framework, but even more so with the aim of internal differentiation of the clergy, the state authorities encouraged the formation of priestly associations. Seeing these as the germs of schism, the Holy See took a hard line against these associations—even handing out excommunications—and church authorities in Yugoslavia, in Croatia especially, met them with open opposition or at least stark reservations.

⁷⁷ *Sedmi kongres*, 479–80.

⁷⁸ Režek, "Cuius Regio Eius Religio."

In Slovenia, there was a priestly association called the Cyril-Methodius Society of Catholic Priests of the People's Republic of Slovenia (CMS),⁷⁹ established in 1949. Around half of the Slovenian priests joined this association, prominent members of which included many intellectuals from the ministerial profession, such as academics from the Faculty of Theology (Stanko Cajnkar, Janez Janžekovič, and Anton Trstenjak), Church historian Maks Miklavčič, writers Fran Saleški Finžgar and Fran Ksaver Meško, former Partisan army chaplain Jože Lampret, and others, while the highest church dignitary who entered CMS was the apostolic administrator of the Goriška archbishopric, Mihael Toroš (though he soon withdrew). In their programmatic documents, members of priestly associations declared their loyalty to the Church and homeland, referred to themselves as “patriotic priests,” and emphasized their anti-clerical orientations, their espousal of socialism, and their efforts towards an agreement between Church and state.

The state authorities promoted membership in priestly associations by offering various benefits, including the possibility for CMS to publish its own periodical. In addition to news about the activities of CMS, its magazine *Nova pot* (New path) published meditative theological, philosophical, and sociological articles, and it spurred questions on the topical issue of the relationship between Church and state. Writings by the contributors to *Nova pot* were tailored to social reality and frequently had the ring of propaganda; but occasionally articles that could not have been more out of tune with the expectations of the regime found their way into the magazine, too, making the authorities soon detect sparks of opposition in the circle of the magazine's contributors,⁸⁰ particularly the threesome of Edvard Kocbek, Stanko Cajnkar, dean of the Faculty of Theology and *Nova pot*'s editor-in chief, and Janez Janžekovič, professor of philosophy at the Faculty of Theology. In fact, the archival documents of the State Security Services prove that Kocbek and Janžekovič were put under surveillance by the secret police—the former all the time, the latter occasionally—and suggest that Cajnkar must have been, too.

In 1952, the belligerent political atheism in Slovenia reached its peak. A widespread retaliation against Catholic intellectuals took place, this time aimed at pre-war Christian Socialists.⁸¹ In the eyes of the regime, Christian

79 The archival material of CMS is only fragmentarily preserved, as most documents were destroyed during the relocation of the association in the early 1960s (Kolar, “The Priestly Patriotic Associations,” 248). Some of the CMS materials are held at the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia in the personal collection of Jože Lampret (SI AS 1405), co-founder of CMS and Secretary of the Religious Commission with the Slovenian government. This fond also preserves some documents about the magazine *Nova pot* (New path).

80 SI AS 1589, Box 2, Session of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Slovenia (CPS), November 20, 1950, 3; SI AS 1589, Box 1, VII Plenum of the Central Committee of CPS, January 26–27, 1952, 33; SI AS 1405, Box 10, A New Path or the Old One? A General Evaluation of Writings in *Nova pot*.

81 In December 1952, two priests and pre-war Christian Socialists were sentenced to long-term imprisonment at a show trial in Ljubljana. They were Jakob Šolar, a linguist and associate of

Socialism was dangerous, because it competed with Communism with its social postulates, while remaining firmly anchored in religious tradition. The chief Slovenian Communists considered the Christian Socialist clergy even more dangerous than the conservative church leadership.⁸² In 1952, Edvard Kocbek, the last Christian Socialist to occupy a high political position, was forced to resign from all political offices and withdraw from public life. For a decade to follow he was prevented from publishing as well, though he continued to write for *Nova pot*, signing his contributions with initials, usually M. M. and sometimes E. K.

One of the most productive contributors to *Nova pot* was Janez Janžekovič, who published numerous theological and philosophical articles in the magazine, in which he searched for a means of dialogue between Christianity and Marxism, detecting a common point between the two in ethics, where Christianity and Marxism could not only meet but even work together. Janžekovič agreed that “where there is science, there is no place for religion,” but neither is there place for “dialectical materialism or any other worldview,” as each of them contains some extrapolation and each becomes a religion. He wrote: “Lay school has to teach science, real science, all science and all its hypotheses—yes! But to teach a worldview—no!” Introducing a determinate worldview into schools would mean reviving the infamous principle “*cuius regio eius et religio*,” which Janžekovič strongly opposed.⁸³

In the mid-1950s, the momentum of the anti-religious campaign was slowly waning. In October 1956, Slovenian party leaders were already determining that Catholic intelligentsia no longer posed a threat, and they also acknowledged that the policy towards the Catholic Church was not necessarily sustainable and should be relaxed.⁸⁴ The state authorities replaced belligerent political atheism with activist atheism; i.e., providing the conditions when religion, which was said to emerge particularly in circumstances of material underdevelopment, would no longer be socially necessary. The time from the early 1960s onwards can be considered a period of a search for compromises, both on the part of the state and on the part of the Catholic Church, which slowly set out on the path of *aggiornamento* following the Second Vatican Council. This time of more tolerant coexistence also foreshadowed a diplomatic reconciliation between Yugoslavia and the Holy See, while in Slovenia the new era was reflected in the expansion of the Catholic periodical press: in

the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, and Janez Fabijan, a professor at the Faculty of Theology (SI AS 1931, Box 80–3).

82 SI AS 1211, Box 54, Opinions and Evaluation of the Policies to Date towards the Clergy and the Church: A Paper by Stane Kavčič, 1957, 2–3; SI AS 1211, Box 53, Folder 124/67, Attitude towards Religious Communities in the SRS, 1967, 2; etc.

83 Janžekovič, “Izkustvena znanost, svetovni nazor, svoboda vesti” (Experiential Science, World-view, Freedom of Conscience).

84 SI AS 1589, Box 7, Session of the Executive Committee of the Central Committee of LCS, October 29, 1956, 1.

1965, the pre-war scientific journal of the Faculty of Theology called *Bogoslovni vestnik* (Theological quarterly) resumed publication.

In the early 1970s, a new controversy involving the civil rights of believers arose because of the adoption of a new constitution which sought irrevocably to establish the principles of socialist self-management. In October 1973, the Catholic weekly newspaper *Družina* (Family) published a press release by the Bishops' Conference of Yugoslavia, which—as evidenced by the documents of the Commission for Religious Affairs⁸⁵—the Slovenian bishops somewhat mitigated. While the communication of the Yugoslav diocesans covered all controversial points in the state's stance towards believers, the Slovenian bishops separately addressed the republic constitutional commission with similar demands: equal treatment of worldviews, prohibitions against anti-religious propaganda, freedom to express religious beliefs, extension of the right to attend religious schools to laymen, and the right of parents to have a bearing on the worldview education of their children in schools.⁸⁶

The state security apparatus ascribed authorship of these demands to Franc Perko, a Catholic theologian and one of the leading members of the Slovenian Priestly Society, which in 1970 succeeded CMS. Perko had published a series of critical articles in *Znamenje* (Sign), a progressive theological journal of the period, in which he did not so much problematize the leading ideological role of the Communist Party, but rather expressed discontent with the latter “advocating a certain worldview as a political force and associating it with a certain type of politics.” At the same time, he demanded that the new constitution preserve the current clause prohibiting the abuse of religion and religious activities and add to it a clause on the unconstitutionality of restricting religious freedom.⁸⁷ He also recalled the already known requests for the abandonment of the “atheist worldview foundation” of Marxism and demanded that the Communist Party rise from the level of political dogma,⁸⁸ for only after the abolishment of the atheist worldview as a criterion for joining

85 The Religious Commission of the Presidency of the Slovenian National Liberation Council (SNOS) was established within the framework of the Partisan movement in 1944. After the war, a separate religious commission also operated with the Presidency of the Government of the People's Republic of Slovenia (PRS). In 1953, both commissions were abolished and in their place the Religious Commission of the Executive Council of PRS was established. In 1965, it was renamed the Commission of SRS for Religious Affairs. It operated under this name until 1975, when it changed its name again to the Commission of SRS for Relations with Religious Communities, a name which it kept until its dissolution in 1991. The materials of the religious commission are preserved at the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia in the fond SI AS 1211, which—owing to the administrative and advisory character of this body—represents the key source for the study of the dynamics of relations between the state and religious communities under socialism.

86 SI AS 1931, A-21-29, Newsletter Security Situation in the July–August Period, September 10, 1973, 191.

87 Perko, “Ob osnutku nove ustave” (On the draft of the new constitution), 290, 294.

88 Perko, “Svoboda vernih v samoupravni družbi,” 2.

the ranks of the party could Christians start living in complete and constitutionally guaranteed equality.⁸⁹

Occurrences of religious dissent that the state authorities prevented in some way or another from being published can be found in the archival documents of the aforementioned religious commission, the public prosecution, a mass organization called the Socialist Alliance of Working People, and in particular the Central Committee of the LCS, which occasionally dedicated whole sessions to topics of this kind. One such case was the merciless article by theologian Franc Rode entitled "Resnično krščanstvo" (True Christianity), which Rode intended to publish in 1979 in *Zbornik predavanj s Teološkega tečaja o aktualnih temah za študente in izobražence* (Proceedings from a theology course for students and intelligentsia); i.e., in a collection of public lectures in Ljubljana and Maribor. At these widely attended lectures,⁹⁰ theologians Franc Rode, Franček Križnik, Tone Stres, Rudi Koncilija, and other intellectuals, including Dušan Pirjevec, delivered a good deal of sharp criticism at the expense of party hegemony. In this sense, but also in that of the incompatibility of Marxism and Christianity, Rode raised a question in the aforementioned "voluntarily" withdrawn article: "How can a Christian become engaged in a society that takes him for a simpleton and plans as well as expects him to lose his purpose in life?"⁹¹

There were other intellectuals who also showed themselves to be sensitive to discrimination against the faithful, among them Vinko Ošlak, one of the few Slovenian intellectuals whose independent views and ways of life met the criteria of a classic Eastern European dissident. In 1972, when the door to one of the major sociological journals, *Teorija in praksa* (Theory and practice), was still open to him, he wrote stridently against the prevalence of atheism in public schools,⁹² and he presented even harsher views later⁹³ in the pages of the cultural magazine *Dialogi* (Dialogues). That same year he addressed a letter to the main Slovenian daily *Delo* (Labor), in which he claimed that opting for any non-Marxist philosophical view was a fatal political decision for an individual, as not even "fanatical" fighters for workers' rights among the religious population could find employment in public administration; but his letter—as one would have expected—was not published.⁹⁴

From the late 1970s onwards, the younger, more liberal generation of party leaders already started acknowledging the legitimacy of some grievances of Catholic criticism, such as the polemics triggered by a dogmatic representation of history and the anthropological substance of religion in a primary school

89 Perko, "Slovenski kristjan v samoupravni družbi," 185–86.

90 AJ 837, Folder II-5-d/103, Information of the State Security Services, January 6, 1975, 6.

91 SI AS 1589, Box 547, Folder 5734, Rode, "Resnično krščanstvo danes in jutri."

92 Ošlak, "V odgovor tovarišu Kejžarju."

93 Ošlak, "O neangažirani šoli."

94 SI AS 1592, Box 9, Folder 57/1974, Ošlak, "Malleus maleficarum," November 24, 1974.

textbook for social education and ethics.⁹⁵ This was a significant departure from the practice of previous years, when complaints by the faithful would *a priori* have been labelled clericalist attacks and party ideologists would mainly have devoted their energies to preventing “unacceptable” public interventions by the faithful rather than focusing on the contents of complaints. In truth, they would resort to repressive and administrative measures only in exceptional cases,⁹⁶ but they were all the more eager to encourage “differentiation” among Christians. In late socialism, the Communist Party started leaving public discussions to highly educated and ideologically open-minded Marxist theoreticians, which contributed significantly to a more tolerant dialogue between Marxists and Christians and gradually, though never definitely, allowed for a vision of a more democratic socialism, open even to believers, to emerge.⁹⁷

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BALÁZS APOR – MIKOŁAJ KUNICKI
– TATIANA VAGRAMENKO

Cultural Opposition Goes Abroad: The Collections of Diaspora Communities

Introduction

The notion of “diaspora collection” and its relationship to the concept of “cultural opposition” in the countries of the former Soviet bloc warrants an explanation. The term does not simply denote collections that were compiled “abroad,” by émigré intellectuals or exiled dissenters. Intellectuals who had emigrated did not always engage with their fellow expatriates, nor did they necessarily participate in the life of diaspora communities and organizations. One of the most prominent examples of a non-conformist cultural figure in exile who remained reluctant to get involved in the activities of diaspora groups was Andrei Siniavskii. The Siniavskii collection in the Hoover Institute highlights not only the blurred boundary between non-conformism and opposition, but also the importance of making a conceptual distinction between the more generic notion of “collections abroad” and “diaspora collections.”¹ “Diaspora collections” should also be differentiated from collections that were established by Western intellectuals or organizations, such as Radio Free Europe, which had the aim of collecting material from behind the Iron Curtain. While such collections testify to the significance of transnational links in the dissemination of information, as well as non-conformist cultural products, and demonstrate to various extents the links between emigration and the “home nation,” they are not normally integrated into the social and cultural practices of diaspora communities. The term “diaspora collection” therefore, refers to collections that were consciously created by representatives of diasporas with the specific aim of preserving—but also shaping—the perceived cultural heritage of the nation. Diaspora collections are thus not (normally) isolated projects, but are embedded in broader mechanisms and techniques of preserving national and cultural identities in diaspora communities. At the same time, it needs to be highlighted that the distinction between “collections abroad” and “diaspora collections” is not always straightforward. Intellectuals working for non-diasporic organizations, such as Voice of America or RFE, sometimes reported on and supported the cultural initiatives of

1 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[Andrei Siniavskii papers](#)”, by Orysia Maria Kulick, 2016. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

diaspora communities. “Collections abroad” therefore, may contain important material pertaining to the cultural heritage of East European diasporas.

Due to the fact that a significant proportion of East European diasporas, especially from the republics of the Soviet Union, emigrated as a response to the establishment of Soviet power, the collections such groups created are oppositionist by nature and display a general antagonistic attitude towards communism. However, the theme of cultural opposition is not always the main organizing principle behind the collection of material. Diaspora collections often revolve around the “national question” under communism, and themes that are considered components of an imagined national identity (religion, folk art, national literature, military resistance to communism, national movements, etc.). For this reason, cultural opposition in diaspora collections tends to be more closely linked to nationalism than in the case of collections created in the countries of the former Soviet bloc, and it is more clearly represented as an integral aspect of the cultural heritage of the respective nation. At the same time, diaspora collections have been shaped significantly by the social, political and cultural environment of the host country, hence they display a degree of hybridity. Such collections operate within the legal framework of the respective countries, and their opportunities are fundamentally defined by local institutional cultures as well as funding mechanisms. The acts of collecting and displaying material were also shaped by the wider availability of trained experts and networking opportunities, as well as broader social attitudes towards cultural heritage that is reflected in the mentality of curators and visitors alike.

The size, location and socio-cultural function of diaspora collections that were established during the period of communism and which reflect on aspects of cultural opposition vary significantly across the board. The social significance of such collections depends heavily on a number of factors, including pre-communist patterns and traditions of migration; the timing and the scale of migration; the size and the geographical spread of the diaspora; the strength of diaspora institutions and their embeddedness into the institutional cultures of host societies; and the potency of social and cultural links to the home nation.² Substantial differences in the importance of such factors resulted in vast imbalances in the social role of collections in the life of diaspora communities. Long-established diaspora communities with well-organized cultural institutions and active links to the “home nation” were more successful in creating, preserving and promoting collections of cultural opposition than smaller, dispersed groups whose ties to the homeland were less prominent and dynamic. The contribution of the host environment to the development of the collections and the shaping of their social and political function

2 For the most comprehensive assessments of East European diasporas see Mazurkiewicz, *East Central Europe in Exile*, vols. 1–2. Ziemer and Roberts, *East European Diasporas*. For a theoretical assessment of the notion of diaspora see Braziel and Mannur, *Theorizing Diaspora*.

was also crucial in specific contexts. In the United States, for example, East European diasporas and their cultural activities—especially those with an anti-Soviet angle—were supported and sometimes even financed by the government and the CIA. Diaspora activities therefore gained political connotations, and cultural initiatives, including the creation and promotion of collections, were shaped to an extent by strategic priorities during the Cold War.³ In such cases, the political and diasporic functions of the act of collecting are difficult to separate from each other.

This chapter explores the notion of diaspora collection through the examples of two of the most successful communities—the Polish and the Ukrainian—to establish and preserve collections of cultural opposition abroad, and to integrate narratives of opposition into practices of promoting the cultural heritage of the nation. In both cases, a wave of emigration—although not on the same scale—was provoked by the Russian Civil War and the proclamation of the Soviet Union. Subsequent waves of migration were also closely linked to key events—High Stalinism, World War II, Sovietization, 1956, 1968, and 1981—in the history of communism in the region. Polish and Ukrainian émigrés established cultural institutions (the Shevchenko Library in London, for example) whose task was to nurture national identity in the context of exile, and promote the heritage of military as well as cultural resistance to Soviet rule.⁴ Such collections exist across the Western world; the most prominent ones being in the United Kingdom, the USA, and Canada. At the other end of the spectrum, there are the East German people who deserted to West Germany from the GDR (*“Republikflucht”*) and integrated smoothly into the host society. Since a “GDR diaspora” did not really exist, collections of cultural opposition that were established abroad were not linked to a diasporic (German) identity. The other nations of the Soviet bloc are located on the spectrum somewhere between these two poles. In some cases, the diaspora played a less prominent role in the history of cultural opposition (even if individual émigrés did), whereas in others (the Baltic states or Croatia), émigré communities—despite their relatively small numbers—proved to be crucial in promoting ideas and representations of dissent to communism abroad. Czech and Hungarian dissenters and non-conformist cultural figures benefited from the extensive transnational networks that connected East and West, as well as from links with diaspora groups, yet the most prominent collections that demonstrate the potency, and shape the legacy of oppositionist movements in the two countries were preserved by domestic actors.

While this chapter focuses on two of the most dynamic and well-organized diasporas, the Polish and the Ukrainian, the COURAGE Registry features a large number of collections that were created by other (Croatian, Czech,

3 Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*.

4 For comprehensive assessments of the Polish and the Ukrainian diaspora see Sword, *Identity in flux: the Polish Community in Britain*, and Satzewich, *The Ukrainian Diaspora*.

Romanian, Hungarian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Bulgarian, etc.) national groups. There is also a collection that testifies to the contribution of an East European diaspora community (Ukrainian) in another Sovietized country (Czechoslovakia) to the development of cultural opposition to Soviet power.⁵ The collections in the database represent all the main types of oppositionist practices COURAGE engages with, including intellectual dissent, non-conformist and subversive art and literature, samizdat and tamizdat publishing, religious movements and practices, national movements, human rights movements, folklore and folk art. Some collections also testify to the importance of censorship and state surveillance in the development of oppositionist ideas and practices. At the same time, diaspora collections demonstrate once again the crucial significance of transnational networks in the distribution of thoughts and materials of dissent.

Although all the major types of opposition are represented in diaspora collections, some themes feature more prominently than others. Since the main actors in the process of collecting and/or transporting (smuggling) material abroad were intellectuals (academics, artists, writers, etc.), the relevant collections highlight various aspects of intellectual dissent, and the role of intellectuals in preserving the cultural heritage of opposition. While the key actors in diaspora collections tend to be intellectuals, one of the main themes that the diverse material address is nationalism. The national question is reflected upon in several collections established abroad—especially by the Polish, Ukrainian, and Croatian diasporas—with a particular emphasis on national/minority movements under communism and the legacy of armed resistance to Soviet power. The theme of nationalism also appears in collections in which the organizing principle was a different concept; religion Action of Light Collection the Karl Laantee Collection, etc.), or illegal (samizdat) publishing, for example.⁶ Although diaspora collections tend to revolve around conceptions of national identity, representations of nationhood in the collected material and even practices of gathering were contested. As the second case study in this chapter shows, the act of collecting sometimes provoked a competition between various actors in exile, and caused significant rifts and antagonisms within the diaspora. At the same time, representatives of different ethnic groups sometimes cooperated with each other and produced joint cultural initiatives. Such initiatives further emphasize the transnational aspects of cultural opposition.

The genesis of diaspora collections was often linked to individual initiatives, prompted by the emigration of dynamic and ambitious intellectuals (the

5 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Zina Genyk-Berezovska Collection," by Orysia Maria Kulick, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

6 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Action of Light Collection", by Daina Bleiere, 2016. Accessed: September 28, 2018; COURAGE Registry, s.v. "The Karl Laantee Collection," by Taavi Kopel, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

Solidarity Collection, the Vinko Nikolić Collection, the Nikola Čolak Collection, the Smoloskyp Collection, the Rațiu–Tilea Personal Library Collection, etc.).⁷ At the same time, diaspora collections sometimes moved from one location to another—even to different countries—and some of these collections, or parts thereof, were returned to the home countries after the collapse of communism (the Solidarity Collection, the Smoloskyp Collection, etc.). The social use of diaspora collections tends to be very imbalanced, and it depends largely on the geographical location of the collection, access to funding and the cohesion of diaspora communities which oversee their development. Some collections are used extensively by researchers and are visited by the broader public, while others are barely known. The Smoloskyp Collection in Kyiv can be interpreted as one of the most prominent “living collections,” the legacy of which continues to play a role in contemporary Ukraine and shapes current political events (Euromaidan) to a remarkable extent.

The two case studies included in this chapter—Polish Émigré Collections in the UK, and the Smoloskyp museum in Ukraine—introduce some of the most prominent diaspora collections preserved by Polish and Ukrainian émigré communities that reflect on the importance of cultural opposition in the former Soviet bloc. As the authors show, the collections discussed in the narrative were integrated into the life of the respective diasporas and they also represent the links between diaspora and the “home nation.” In addition, they represent the division, conflicts and changes in the diaspora, as well as the home society, and thereby highlight the significance of cultural ties across the Iron Curtain. The case studies also show that diaspora collections do not merely represent counter-narratives to Soviet political discourse, but are considered components of the cultural heritage of the nation. The collections therefore show the organic links between cultural opposition and cultural heritage in diaspora cultures.

Polish Émigré Collections and Holdings on Poland abroad: A Selective Overview

The establishment of Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe in the wake of World War II, coupled with communist takeovers that took place between 1944 and 1948, resulted in the massive exodus of hundreds of thousands of people. Those who fled their native lands or decided to stay in the West following the end of hostilities represented a wide specter of groups and organizations: former POWs and concentration camp inmates, anti-communist re-

7 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[The Vinko Nikolić Collection](#),” by Stipe Kljaić, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018; COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[The Nikola Čolak Collection](#),” by Stipe Kljaić, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018; COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[Rațiu–Tilea Personal Library Collection](#),” by Corneliu Pintilescu, 2017. Accessed: September 28, 2018.

sisters and collaborators, members of political elites and displaced persons. In this medley of people, Poles occupied a unique and prominent position having set up a Government-in-Exile and numerous political, cultural and educational networks. The richness of the Polish post-war émigré community was, however, fueled not only by the mass presence of Polish soldiers who fought in the West under allied command (approximately 200,000 men and women) and the continuing presence of government institutions since 1939, but also by the historical traditions of the Great Emigration, which included thousands of Poles who went into exile after the defeat of the anti-Russian November Uprising in 1831.

The parallels between the Great Emigration and anti-communist exiles are particularly striking. Both movements created quasi governments, involved members of political, cultural and military elites, and organized hundreds of institutions that would preserve national identity, help Polish emigrants to acclimatize to their new surroundings, and provide moral guidance to compatriots at home. Like their 19th-century predecessors, the post-World War II émigrés understood the role of independent publishing, which could undermine the impact of communist propaganda and censorship. Due to the presence of the Polish Government in London during World War II, Great Britain constituted the main center of Polish émigré politics, culture and education. The three distinguished cultural institutions that to this day hold important archival and library collections, the Polish Library POSK in London, the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum, and the Józef Piłsudski Institute in London, trace their origins either to the Polish Government or the émigré community made up of members of the Polish Armed Forces. Consequently, their holdings include government documents, military files, personal papers acquired from individual donors and corporate records of diaspora organizations. Émigré collections had a profound impact on the life of the Polish diaspora in the UK; they facilitated family research conducted by relatives of members of the Polish Armed Forces and enabled the publication of edited volumes of historical sources. Consider *Armia Krajowa w dokumentach* (The Home Army in Documents), the flagship project of the Polish Underground Movement Study (currently a unit of the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum) which was published in six volumes between 1970 and 1989. Prior to 1989, it was impossible to write any historical compendium on the Polish resistance movement and the Polish Armed Forces in the West without consulting these collections and their publications. Since the collapse of communism, émigré holdings have been critical for research into the interwar and wartime periods, military history and a history of international relations.

In 1946, a small group of Polish émigrés in Rome led by Jerzy Giedroyc (1906–2000) created yet another, but very distinct cultural and political institution, the Literary Institute, a Polish-language publishing house, which gradually became more influential than the London-based organizations. The Institute, which relocated to France in 1947, published the monthly journal

Kultura, the quarterly *Zeszyty Historyczne* (History Notebooks), and hundreds of books in the Biblioteka *Kultury* (*Kultura Library*) series. At the heart of Giedroyc's policy stood the notion that, while struggling for Poland's independence, diaspora could not separate itself from the country. To quote Timothy Snyder, "Giedroyc intended to influence politics in communist Poland, rather than create a substitute Poland abroad."⁸ He rejected the division of Polish literature in exile, and in Poland, publishing writers who resided on both sides of the Iron Curtain and represented different nationalities, Czesław Miłosz, George Orwell, Raymond Aron, Milovan Đilas and Andrei Siniavskii, to name just a few. Giedroyc's press also released special editions published in original languages, Russian, Ukrainian and Czech. It was the mission of the Literary Institute to influence political opinion in Poland according to "the principles of political equality, social justice, and respect for human rights and human dignity."⁹ The Literary Institute began smuggling its publications to People's Poland in the 1950s. By the late 1970s, the trafficking of forbidden books went both ways as the *Kultura* milieu started collecting Polish samizdat and underground publications released by the democratic opposition.

Similar trends occurred in Great Britain where émigré librarians, bookstore owners and publishers, among which Zdzisław Jagodziński (1927–2001) of the Polish Library POSK in London and Jerzy Kulczycki (1931–2013) of Odnova press, supplied institutions and individuals in People's Poland with books published in exile and by Western publishers.¹⁰ The Polish Library was one of several distribution centers that participated in the Cold War project coordinated by the International Literary Center (ILC) in New York and secretly sponsored by the CIA. This initiative resulted in the shipment of some 4 million books to Poland and 10 million to the entire Soviet Bloc.¹¹ Jagodziński collected books, serials, brochures, leaflets and posters that had been released by major and minor opposition groups in Poland and smuggled to United Kingdom by Polish visitors and members of the exile community. The underground publishing network in Poland was unparalleled in the Soviet Bloc. It has been estimated that between 1976, the year of the formation of the Workers' Defense Committee and publication of its information bulletins, and 1990, some 4000 underground periodical titles and 6000 books and pamphlets were published.¹²

The acquisitions of Polish underground publications were not limited to émigré institutions. The Hoover Institution Archives in Stanford, the Polish language desk of Radio Free Europe in Munich, the Research Center for East

8 Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations*, 1569–1999, 220.

9 *Kultura Paryska*, "The Literary Institute." Accessed July 18, 2018. <http://kulturoparyska.com/en/historia/instytut-literacki>

10 Kulczycki, *Atakować książkę*, 204–43.

11 Sowiński, *Tajna dyplomacja. Książki emigracyjne w drodze do kraju 1956–1989*.

12 Magda Szkuta, "Solidarity Collection." Accessed July 18, 2018. <http://blogs.bl.uk/europe-an/2015/08/solidarity-collection-.html>

European Studies at the University of Bremen, and the British Library in London, to name a few, also acquired substantial holdings of Polish samizdat literature. The Solidarity Collection at the British Library consists of 1,759 books, 831 periodical titles and 469 ephemeral publications.¹³ The origins of the collection go back before the times of Solidarity, to the 1970s, when Hanna Świdowska (1930–), curator of Polish collections at the British Library, began buying smuggled illegal publications from anonymous visitors. Having organized unofficial book exchanges between the British Library and the National Library in Warsaw and the Jagiellonian University Library in Krakow, Świdowska had an excellent network of collaborators among Polish librarians sympathetic to the opposition. She also received Polish samizdat from the Literary Institute.¹⁴ In 1984, Świdowska used these materials in the British Library exhibition, “Works of George Orwell in the languages of Eastern Europe.” In February 1989, the collection included 293 books and pamphlets and 324 mostly incomplete titles of bulletins, newspapers and journals.¹⁵

The Solidarity Collection significantly expanded after the collapse of state socialism in Poland. The British library purchased Polish samizdat items, books, periodicals and ephemeral publications from three collectors: Marek Szyszko from Lublin, Marek Garztecki, journalist, diplomat, and former Solidarity representative in London, and John Taylor, an activist of the Polish Solidarity Campaign formed by British sympathizers of the Solidarity movement. In 2010, the Polish Library POSK in London donated a large pool of underground publications, including books and journals. At present, the Solidarity Collection at the British Library is the second largest repository of Polish independent publications in the British Isles. Of prominence are book holdings which include forbidden works by Polish authors, including such masters of Polish literature as Tadeusz Konwicki, Marek Nowakowski and Stanisław Barańczak. The large selection of non-Polish authors testifies to three important features of Polish independent publishing: the important role of translators in the development of samizdat, the openness of the Polish cultural opposition to the outside world, and cultural exchanges between Polish émigré publishers and the underground press in People’s Poland. By the late 1980s, the underground publishing houses became a significant alternative to state-owned publishing houses which could not publish the works of George Orwell, Arthur Koestler and Evgenii Zamiatin, to name a few writers.

There are numerous books in the Solidarity Collection that demonstrate the wide scope and intellectual horizons of Polish independent publishers. However, three titles stand out, *Książki najgorsze* (The Worst books, 1981) by Stanisław Barańczak, Evgenii Zamiatin’s *My* (We, 1985) and the first 1979 underground edition of George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* (*Folwark zwierzęcy*, 1979).

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Hanna Świdowska (Curator, British Library), interviewed by Milan Grba, London, March 2012.

¹⁵ *Polish Collections in the British Library*, 6.

Stanisław Barańczak (1946–2014), a leading poet, essayist, translator, academic and collaborator of the Workers' Defense Committee, was also known for his wit and subtle sense of humour. In 1981, the KOS underground press published *The Worst Books*, a selection of literary reviews which had been submitted to the *Student newspaper* in 1975 by Feliks Trzymałko and Szczesny Dzierżankiewicz, a fictional pair of critics but which in fact had been written by Barańczak. The author set about trashing bad literature, which included people's militia detective stories published by the Ministry of National Defense Press, the erotic novels of former Stalinist minister of culture Jerzy Putrament, and many other gems of literary kitsch that had been released in People's Poland. Relating to Vaclav Havel's concept of "the aesthetics of banality," Barańczak described his book as the study of "graphomania with state imprint" and the relationship between totalitarianism and bad literature, a phenomenon, which flourished under state socialism due to the superiority of ideological criteria over artistic values.¹⁶ Barańczak's humorous book constitutes cultural resistance to communist regimes at its best. While its 'totalitarian' aspect might have lost its sting and edge, *The Worst Books* remains a cult title of Polish samizdat literature.

Published by the largest underground press, Independent Publishing House (Niezależna Oficyna Wydawnicza, NOWA), and translated by Adam Pomorski, Zamiatin's *We* was a blueprint for such classics of anti-totalitarian literature as George Orwell's *1984* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. The NOWA edition went on public display in 2011 as one of the items presented at "Out of this World: Science Fiction but not as you know it," the British Library's first exhibition to explore science fiction through literature, film, illustration and sound. Curated by Andy Sawyer, Science Fiction Collections Librarian at the University of Liverpool, the exhibition traced the development of the genre and showed how science fiction had turned from a niche into a global phenomenon.

Translated in 1945 by Teresa Jeleńska, the mother of Konstanty Jeleński who was one of the closest collaborators of Jerzy Giedroyc of the Literary Institute milieu, Orwell's *Animal Farm* was first published in Polish by the Radio Free Europe in 1956, and later in 1974 by Jerzy Kulczycki's émigré Odnova press. Jeleńska met Orwell in London during World War II and corresponded with him until his death in 1950. In 1979, NOWA, the emerging giant of Polish samizdat, re-published the London edition with the illustrations and cover page designed by Andrzej Krauze (1947–), a Polish and British political cartoonist known for his damning portrayals of the party nomenklatura and communist rituals of power.¹⁷ Krauze's contribution to the NOWA publication cost him his job at the *Kultura* weekly in Warsaw. In the same year, Krauze emigrated to the West and eventually settled in Great Britain where he joined

¹⁶ Barańczak, *Książki najgorsze*, 9–11.

¹⁷ *Gdy rozum śpi... Rysunki Andrzeja Krauzego 1970–1989*.

the team at *The Guardian*, reviving the art of political cartoon in the British press. A staunch anti-communist, he often attacked the General Jaruzelski government and martial law in Poland, abuses of human rights in his fatherland, and negotiations between the communist regime and opposition in 1989. A copy of the NOWA edition of *Animal Farm* was included in the 1984 British Library exhibition on George Orwell's works in the languages of Eastern Europe.

Skillfully described by British Library curators, listed in the library's online and digital catalogues, and available in paper formats and microfilms, the Solidarity Collection at the British Library is fully accessible to the public. Although smaller than the collection of Polish Underground Publications in the Polish POSK Library in London, it is a fully processed, invaluable repository of Polish samizdat in the heart of London and at one of the most iconic library institutions in the world. The history and content of the Solidarity Collection provides important insights into the relationship between Western European cultural institutions, dissident movements and cultural resistance to state socialism in East Central Europe.

The Smoloskyp Collection

The Smoloskyp phenomenon is perhaps one of the most striking examples of how the formation of both organizational and informal networks of the Ukrainian diaspora became inseparable from cultural and political life in their home society. Deeply involved in political and cultural opposition in Soviet and post-Soviet Ukraine, Smoloskyp built a communication channel between Soviet Ukraine and the international community, making the case of the Ukrainian oppositional movement internationally known.

The human rights publisher Smoloskyp, named after the poet Vasyl Symonenko, was originally founded in Baltimore, US, in 1967. Traditionally one of the biggest publishers of Ukrainian dissident literature, Smoloskyp nowadays holds the largest collection of Ukrainian *samizdat* (Ukr. *samvydav*) and material of the Ukrainian resistance movement (*Rukh Oporu*), 1960–1990. The phenomenon of Smoloskyp, however, goes far beyond the scope of a publishing house. Smoloskyp is considered the hub of human rights activities of the Ukrainian diaspora and it played an active role in various human rights campaigns in Ukraine.¹⁸ It (co)founded several human rights organizations: Smoloskyp Organization for the Defence of Human Rights in Ukraine, Washington Helsinki Guarantees for Ukraine Committee, and the Committee for the Defence of Ukrainian Political Prisoners in the USSR. Smoloskyp activists took part in follow-up meetings to the Helsinki Final Act (1975), held by the OSCE in Belgrade in 1977–78, Madrid in 1980–83, and Vienna in 1986–89.

¹⁸ Mykolayenko, "Pravozakhystna diyal'nist'."

They participated in the International Sakharov Hearing and spoke at the US Congress. Smoloscyp organized a series of protest campaigns against political repression in Soviet Ukraine, and fought for the independent participation of Ukraine in the Olympic games. It ran information services in the US, Canada, and Argentina, widely disseminating factual information on political repression and dissident movements in Ukraine. It cooperated with international human rights organizations (such as the Amnesty International) and sent humanitarian aid to Ukrainian political prisoners. Its secret communication channels along with its own network of specially trained couriers allowed Smoloscyp to establish a two-way traffic of censored information and clandestine materials flown across the Iron curtain.

Separate collections of *samizdat* documents, literature and poetry banned by the Soviet state, political journalism, official letters of protest and petitions, leaflets, interviews, photos, memoirs, and correspondence, as well as detailed lists of Ukrainian political prisoners were carefully processed, catalogued, and preserved by the Smoloscyp group. After the dissolution of the USSR, this collection moved to Ukraine and was institutionalized as the Museum-Archive and Documentation Centre of Ukrainian Samvydav in Kyiv.

Changing Context, Changing Content

The story of Smoloscyp goes as far back as Paris in 1950, when a young Ukrainian migrant student named Osyp Zinkevych established a Ukrainian youth organization and started a special column on Ukrainian youth in the émigré newspaper "The Ukrainian Word" (*Ukrainske Slovo*), which was the main periodical of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists. Since that time, Zinkevych has been the continuous leader and the ideologue of Smoloscyp's metamorphoses: from a column in a newspaper, to an independent quarterly (1956), a publishing house in the US (1967), an information service (1967), a human rights organization (1970), and finally an international charitable foundation and a museum-archive in Kyiv (1998). Zinkevych was a member of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), and remained a member of its governing body until 1974. Therefore, Smoloscyp, although an independent non-party organization, was fully involved in the political life of the Ukrainian diaspora and its internal conflicts that were triggered mainly by the multiple split in its major political party, the OUN.

The focus of Smoloscyp's activities, and what they collected and published depended on the changing social and political context of the Ukrainian diaspora and its home country. During the Paris period (1950–55), Smoloscyp was mainly concerned with the life of Ukrainian youth in both the diaspora and the Soviet Union. By that time, the Smoloscyp group had also started to collect materials about the so-called Ukrainian "executed renaissance" – the generation of Ukrainian writers and artists of the 1920–30s that had been repressed by Stalinism. During the 1960s, when Smoloscyp was institutionalized as a pub-

lishing house in Baltimore, the primary focus of their collections became the *shestydesiatnyky* movement in Ukraine. Acquiring and publishing works of alternative Ukrainian writers and literary critics was a primary concern for Smolenskyp during the 1960s. They were the first to publish the literary criticism of Ivan Svitlychny and Ivan Dziuba, a novel by Oles Honchar, and the poetry of Lina Kostenko and Mykola Kholodny. With the radicalization of the dissident movement in the Soviet Union, the expansion and the politicization of the Soviet *samizdat*, and the development of the open national resistance in Ukraine (*Ruch Oporu*) in the 1970s, Smolenskyp entered a new phase of activity. Apart from banned literature and poetry, Smolenskyp started to smuggle and collect materials produced by the human rights movement in Ukraine, documents of the Ukrainian resistance movement (mainly circulated in *samizdat*), political journalism, official petitions, and public letters of protest. To draw wider international attention to mass arrests and the harassment of dissidents in Ukraine, Smolenskyp translated *samizdat* into English, French, Italian, and Spanish.

"We are the Third Front": Smuggling Operations

During the 1970 and 1980s, communication between dissidents and oppositional groups in Soviet Ukraine and smuggling operations (of *samizdat* materials and other government-suppressed literature and documents) became more systematic. Despite the Cold War, communication channels between the Ukrainian diaspora and the Soviet bloc functioned well, and thousands of underground publications and documents were smuggled abroad. Smolenskyp was one of the important chains in this clandestine communication system.

What differentiated Smolenskyp from many other Ukrainian diasporic institutions was that it had no structured organization; it was primarily an informal group of young volunteers.¹⁹ Functioning as a non-profit public organization, with its office in the basement of the Zinkevych's house, Smolenskyp was a node in an informal network where the access to information and resources was regulated by informal relationships, friendship and trust, suspicion and surveillance, and personal and political antagonism.²⁰ Information exchange routes were coordinated by personal phone calls and correspondence, and clandestine meetings and verbal agreements. Various split diaspora groups, Soviet dissidents and underground oppositional organizations, Soviet sailors and sportsmen, international human rights activists, American and Soviet secret services, and even Communist party officials were part of this informal network. Either willingly or unknowingly, they played their roles in structuring the flow of information and in disseminating ideas and materials "infected" by the "bacillus of freedom," to use one of Zinkevych's expressions.²¹

19 Mykolayenko, "Ukrains'ke vydavnytstvo 'Smolenskyp'," 22–24.

20 Zinkevych, *Shchodennyk*.

21 Zinkevych, "Batsyl' svobody."

In his diaries, Zinkevych draws a vivid picture of how Ukrainian diaspora lived in an atmosphere of secrecy, distrust and suspicion, where every person was suspected of being a CIA or a KGB agent, or working for a rival diasporic group.²² He describes how Ukrainian groups, organizations and parties in the diaspora competed for the rights to acquire *samizdat* materials first hand, and how they infringed copyright, sometimes stealing smuggled documents from each other, or even falsifying them.²³ At the same time, both American and Soviet secret services intended to control the flow of information and documents. "A few years ago, during one of the receptions, I met a former KGB colonel," Zinkevych recalled. "When I said to him that I was from Smoloskyp, he reacted, 'Oh, you are from Smoloskyp! I am so pleased to meet you. Do you remember Halyna Pisetska who you sent [to Ukraine] to meet Antonenko-Davidovych (a Ukrainian dissident), so he could pass his memoirs to the West? But she was so afraid to smuggle *samizdat*, or maybe Antonenko-Davidovych didn't want to give them to her'."²⁴ It was a hide-and-seek game, and the KGB were often well informed about smuggling operations, trying to control them and sometimes inserting false documents or heavily edited writings of dissidents. This constant fear often aroused the most heated debates in the Ukrainian diaspora, as for example with the publication of Danylo Shumuk's memoirs by Smoloskyp in 1974. The OUN declared that the memoirs were a KGB provocation and demanded their withdrawal from publication, with the threat of a Revolutionary Tribunal over Zinkevych.²⁵ Under the fear of death, he nevertheless published the memoirs.

Within such an environment, Smoloskyp managed to survive as an independent group of volunteers, having transparent fundraising campaigns, running effective smuggling operations, translating and publishing Ukrainian *samizdat*, and organizing international human rights campaigns. Smoloskyp developed its own network of voluntary couriers, who, as tourists, students, or members of official delegations, travelled to Soviet Ukraine on secret missions to meet dissidents and human rights activists and to obtain illegal materials. Smoloskyp developed a unique *Training course for couriers* for those about to travel to the Soviet bloc.²⁶ A courier had to learn about the literary movement in Ukraine, the names of *shestydesiatnyky* writers and their work, and importantly, they received secrecy training and learned how to behave during interrogations in case of arrest. Once a courier had obtained *samizdat*

22 Zinkevych, *Shchodennyk*.

23 See also Obertas, *Ukrains'kyi Samvydav*, 64; Mykolayenko, "Ukrains'ke vydavnytstvo 'Smoloskyp'," 24–6.

24 Zinkevych, "Yak distavavsia."

25 Zinkevych, *Shchodennyk*, 257–259. The issue of the authenticity of Shumuk's memoirs is still the topic of much discussion among historians: Omelkovets, "Rol' intsidenta"; Petrenko, "De-konstruktsii dekoratyvnoho"; Zabilnyi, "Yak KGB dopysuvav spohady"; Zinkevych, "Pro spohady Danyla Shumuka."

26 Zinkevych, *Rukh Oporu*, 768; Zinkevych, *Shchodennyk*, 429–444; 156–157.

in Ukraine, the problem was to safely smuggle it out of the country. Manuscripts were usually copied as microfilms and hidden in luggage or parcels. Osyp Zinkevych admitted that, for their smuggling operations, Smoloskyp agents sometimes used official Canadian Communist delegations that visited Ukraine, as their luggage was checked less thoroughly at the border. Unbeknown to them, Smoloskyp agents attached microfilms to their luggage or talked them into carrying some souvenirs (with microfilms hidden inside). "Once they crossed the USSR border, they (Smoloskyp agents) racked their brains thinking how to get those microfilms from their luggage," Zinkevych wrote.²⁷ Many years later, Petro Kravchuk, a leader of the Ukrainian Canadian communist movement, published a protest letter after he discovered how he and his delegations had been "abused" by Smoloskyp.

Another channel to obtain censored materials and information was international sport events. Zinkevych managed to receive accreditation as a sport journalist in the Olympic games (in Mexico, Melbourne, Rome, Montreal, München, and Los Angeles) and in other international sport competitions. This allowed him to meet Ukrainian sportsmen and journalists who carried hidden *samizdat* materials.²⁸ International sport competitions also were a perfect platform to organize protest campaigns against political repression in Soviet Ukraine.²⁹ Soviet sailors were also used as Smoloskyp's emissaries. The Smoloskyp group had a secret meeting point at the Port of Copenhagen. Some trees in a local park were marked and served as a hiding-place for secret messages. This was how Zinkevych and his companions arranged secret meetings and received information about approaching Soviet ships. Here is one of the stories as told by Zinkevych:³⁰

[I] had arrived and got a message about a meeting near the fountain at 10 pm. But I knew that sailors could leave their ship and visit the city only until 8pm... I approached the fountain and saw a person dressed in a civilian coat, waiting at the arranged place. We exchanged our passwords and he... gave me a package, wrapped in newspaper and tied up with a simple lace. The sailor was in a hurry and soon left. I knew the story of the assassination of Yevhen Konovalets in Rotterdam, when he got a similar package from a Soviet ship, with a bomb in it. That same moment I got horrified, I was sure that there was a bomb in the pack. I was afraid to go to the hotel with the "bomb." I jumped over the park fence, hid near the lake under an old oak tree, and put the package on the other side of the tree. I was awake the whole night, waiting. I was convinced that the bomb would explode,

27 Zinkevych, "Yak distavavsia."

28 Woronowycz, "Smoloskyp Publishing House."

29 Deychakiwsky, "Two Groups," 1, 5.

30 Zinkevych, "Yak distavavsia."

but it didn't. At dawn, I crawled to the package and untied the lace with my left hand (I didn't want the bomb to tear away my right hand). Suddenly, sheets of documents flew up to the lake.

This was how Smoloskyp acquired the first documents of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group. It was through these channels and other similar ones that Smoloskyp obtained the vast majority of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group papers. These were then translated into English and passed on to OSCE, the US Congress, the Canadian Parliament, and international human rights organizations, and were later published as a series of volumes.

Among other smuggled materials were all issues of the Ukrainian *samizdat* chronicle "Ukrainian Herald" (*Ukrainsky Visnik*); documents pertaining to the Ukrainian resistance movement *Rukh Oporu*; "The Chornovyl Papers" (*Lykho z rozumu*, the first detailed information about mass arrests and trials in Ukraine which attracted worldwide attention); "Cataract. An autobiographical portrait" (*Bilmo: Avtobiohrafichny narys*) by a Ukrainian journalist and political prisoner Mykhaylo Osadchy; the memoirs of Ukrainian political prisoner Danylo Shumuk; the writings of human rights activist Mykola Rudenko, and many others. Smoloskyp agents also managed to bring the collection of photos and paintings to the West, and even the remains of the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen, whose graves were destroyed in Western Ukraine by the Soviet regime.³¹

Smoloskyp disseminated Ukrainian *samizdat* and information on Ukrainian dissident activities, and their range was not limited to the West. Their aim also was to make the case of the Ukrainian opposition widely known in the Soviet Union itself. They broadcasted dissident writings and news from the Ukrainian underground, reaching Soviet listeners through Radio Liberty and Voice of America. They published miniature books with dissident writings and smuggled them back to Ukraine. Later, in the late-1970s, Smoloksyk organized an open campaign to send the bulletin, "*Obloga*," which contained *samizdat* reprints, to the Soviet Union. Published in a pocket-size format and packed in different envelopes with postage stamps from different countries, journals were posted to dozens of addresses in the Soviet Union, including Soviet writers, artists, scientists, and even Party officials.³² At some point, Smoloksyk activists were even preparing to secretly ship their publications to the Soviet Union in canisters through the Black and Baltic seas: "We need to learn the waves, streams, and the wind, and how to pack and to choose shipping points," Zinkevych wrote in his diary in 1974.³³

31 Zinkevych, *Rukh Oporu*, 249.

32 Zinkevych, *pislyamova*, 236–37.

33 Zinkevych, *Shchodennyk*, 250.

Kyiv period

In 1991–1992, when Ukraine declared its independence, Zinkevych and his Smolenskyp moved to Kyiv.³⁴ While thousands of *samizdat* manuscripts and other documents of the Ukrainian dissident movement were packed in boxes and stored in Zinkevych's apartment, the idea arrived to establish a museum-archive where these collections could be openly displayed. Nowadays, the Museum-Archive and Documentation Centre of Ukrainian Samvydav in Kyiv holds the most extensive collection of Ukrainian *samizdat*, diasporic Ukrainian periodicals, as well as hundreds of photos of Soviet-era political prisoners and dissidents, and the archives of several committees for human rights in Ukraine from the US, Canada, Australia, Argentina, and other countries. The collection holds Smolenskyp correspondence with international human rights organizations. Smolenskyp's financial documentation is also available for readers.

In 2004, the Museum-Archive joined the International Samizdat Research Association, an informal network of over twenty research institutions and archives, studying and preserving *samizdat* collections. In order to make its collection as readily available as possible to international scholarships and a general audience, the Museum-Archive organized a number of national and international exhibitions of Ukrainian *samizdat*.

Similar to its diasporic period, Smolenskyp in Kyiv was embedded into the political texture of transitional Ukraine. Its main bulletin, *Smolenskyp Ukrainy*, and the informational bulletin of the Museum-Archive, *Ukrains'ky Samvydav*, covered the Orange Revolution events and expressed the fullest sympathy to the Euromaidan movement. The collection was politicized too, as its curators re-conceptualized the legacy of the Soviet-era dissident movement in the context of present-day transitional Ukraine. Widely citing dissident writers and *samizdat* masterpieces from the collection, Smolenskyp activists represented contemporary political protests in Ukraine as an extension of the Ukrainian liberation movement in the late-Soviet period. They promoted the legacy of Ukrainian human rights activists, political prisoners and dissidents of the 1960s–1990s and their historical contribution to Ukraine's fight for democracy. The Museum-Archive also became a platform for intergenerational dialogue. It organizes annual seminars and meeting-conferences, where Ukrainian creative youth meet former political prisoners, *shestydesiatnyky*, and activists of *Rukh Oporu* to discuss the history of Ukrainian dissent movements and their political and cultural implications for present-day Ukraine.

Smolenskyp is an active collection. It periodically adds new documents to its collections that are related to the Soviet-era Ukrainian human rights movement and *Rukh Oporu*. Such documents are acquired by the Museum-Archive as a result of its various search campaigns. Smolenskyp continuously enriches

34 Mykolayenko, "Ukrains'kyi period"; Woronowycz, "Smolenskyp Publishing House," 12.

its collections by attracting and publishing contemporary young Ukrainian writers, poets, publicists, and historians. Smoloskyp has founded a charitable foundation and undertakes fundraising campaigns within the Ukrainian diaspora to support a young generation of Ukrainian writers. From collecting documents and writings of the Ukrainian executed Renaissance of the 1920-30s, publishing *shestydesiatnyky* literature, collecting documents pertaining to the Ukrainian oppositional movement of the 1970s-80s, towards publishing contemporary young Ukrainian authors, Smoloskyp has united generations of writers and artists, and produces the history of Ukrainian cultural non-conformism.

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Unlocking New Histories of Human Rights in State Socialist Europe: The Role of the COURAGE Collections

Introduction: Human Rights Activism in Eastern Europe

The collections featured in the COURAGE online archive offer a resource for exploring the history of human rights activism in socialist East Central Europe from a range of innovative perspectives. This chapter draws on a range of collections which offer insights into diverse forms of human rights activism in socialist Europe, including Romani civil rights activism in Czechoslovakia, feminism in Yugoslavia, environmental mobilization in Hungary, and human rights campaigns in Soviet Ukraine. These case studies promise to shed new light on histories of human rights activism, which have typically focused on a few well-known examples, such as Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia, the Workers' Defence Committee in Poland, or the Moscow Helsinki Committee. The activities of these citizens' associations are essential not only for a more nuanced understanding of campaigns for human rights within Eastern Europe under socialism, but also for a richer grasp of the history of human rights more broadly. The turn towards human rights by opponents of repressive regimes in the Soviet bloc (and Latin America) was one of the factors that contributed to the "breakthrough" of human rights in international politics in the 1970s. Thus, human rights activism in Eastern Europe was crucial, according to Samuel Moyn and Jan Eckel, in shaping this decade as a turning point in the global history of human rights activism.¹

In the 1970s, East European dissidents could make their voices heard internationally as a result of the shifting diplomacy of détente. The Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which was signed by thirty-five states in Helsinki in 1975, created an East-West forum for the monitoring of human rights in the Soviet bloc.² According to Sarah Snyder, the principles agreed on at Helsinki helped build a transnational network which connected dissidents in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to advo-

1 Eckel and Moyn, *The Breakthrough*.

2 Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect*.

cacy groups or government officials in Western Europe and North America.³ This network internationalized dissidents' criticisms of human rights violations and carved out a space for human rights advocacy in the multilateral diplomacy of the CSCE. But another reason for the success of the human rights movement was a general loss of faith in other utopian political languages, above all, the language of revolutionary socialism. In the wake of the upheavals of 1968, Soviet and East European dissidents became an object of fascination for Western intellectuals, for example on the French Left.⁴ Thus, the story of human rights activism in Eastern Europe became entwined with the figure of the "dissident" as a moral witness to the crimes of communism.

The case studies featured in this chapter demonstrate that struggles for human rights involved a far wider range of social actors than was acknowledged by the earlier focus on intellectual, and often male, dissident elites. They also contribute to scholarship that challenges the established "Helsinki narrative" as the dominant mode of explaining the history of human rights in East Central Europe since the 1970s. The collections which inspired these case studies include the archives of the Museum of Romani Culture in Brno, Czech Republic; the papers of prominent feminist intellectuals at the Library of the Women's Centre in Belgrade, Serbia; the documents of the Hungarian Danube Circle Association and other collections related to the Danube movement's campaign against the so-called "Dunasaur," a massive dam between Hungary and Czechoslovakia; and the Kharkiv Human Rights Group's (KHPG) Virtual Museum of the Dissident Movement in Ukraine. Each of these collections provides important insights into the politics and lived experiences of human rights activism under state socialism, and they connect these histories in different ways to continuing struggles for human rights in post-socialist Europe today.

Tracing the History of Human Rights through Archives

The accessibility of archives has been a significant factor in shaping research on the history and memory of human rights activism in the former Soviet bloc. During and immediately after the socialist era, accounts of human rights activism in Eastern Europe were typically written by dissidents themselves or by émigré scholars and activists who had settled in Western Europe or the United States. The transnational networks that enabled mobilization around human rights claims also functioned as conduits of knowledge about these campaigns in local contexts. For example, the archives of Radio Free Europe, held by the Open Society Archives in Budapest, are a rich resource for the study of the production and circulation of knowledge about human rights

3 Snyder, *Human Rights Activism*.

4 Horváth, "'The Solzhenitsyn Effect,'" 879–907.

within and beyond the borders of socialist regimes. Collections of samizdat (self-published texts produced by oppositional and nonconformist groups) and tamizdat (texts that were smuggled to the West and published there) have been studied by historians interested in alternative forms of communication and networks that enabled an exchange of ideas about human rights (and other subjects) across the East-West divide.⁵ Historians of the “Helsinki effect” have drawn on diplomatic archives and the publications of dissident groups in Eastern Europe, although their focus is typically the international history of human rights activism rather than the domestic politics and everyday experiences of the dissidents themselves.⁶ More recently, the archives of communist regimes and re-readings of contemporary theoretical texts have yielded insights into the ways in which government officials, legal scholars, and political theorists developed conceptions of human rights that harmonized with Marxist theory.⁷

Drawing on a diverse range of archival collections, the case studies featured in this chapter, although very different, demonstrate some common themes. First, as mentioned above, they complicate or challenge our conventional understandings of the figure of the “dissident” and force us to ask how gender, ethnicity, and nationality shaped activists’ understandings of human and civil rights and their own positions as subjects within wider processes of cultural dissent. For example, the history of Romani activism challenges us to find space within the familiar narratives of Czech dissent (which has often tended to focus on canonical figures such as Václav Havel) for individuals such as Miroslav Holomek, the first president of the Czech Union of Gypsies-Roma (1969–1973), who was in many ways a loyal citizen and party member, but who simultaneously challenged official policy by calling for expanded cultural rights for Czechoslovak Roma. As we see in the case of the Kharkiv Human Rights Group’s (KHPG) Virtual Museum of the Dissident Movement in Ukraine, there was a tension between the subjectivity of activists, many of whom explicitly refused to identify with the “political” nature of dissent, and the categories of analysis imposed on them by scholars and curators.

The act of decentring the “dissident” as moral witness connects the case studies in this chapter to the wider social and cultural contexts of social mobilization in late socialism. As Benjamin Nathans has remarked, there has been a tendency to write the history of Soviet dissent in isolation from the social and cultural context in which it developed.⁸ Recent work on late Soviet society, however, has increasingly called into question the “binary categories” of “oppression and resistance [...], official culture and counterculture, totalitarian language and counter-language, public self and private self, truth and

5 Kind-Kovács and Labov, *Samizdat, Tamizdat and Beyond*.

6 Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect*; Snyder, *Human Rights Activism*.

7 Richardson-Little and Ned, “Dictatorship and Dissent,” 49–67.

8 Nathans, “The Dictatorship of Reason,” 632.

lie.”⁹ Indeed, many of the movements under discussion in this chapter did not view themselves in these terms: their relationship with the communist regime or wider society was far more complex and ambiguous. The need to overcome these binary categories is particularly evident in the case of the Danube Circle Movement in Hungary. Social movements such as the Danube Circle attracted mass support precisely because they did not present their actions as “political.” Nor can the case of environmental activism or, indeed, feminism be categorised unproblematically as a “human rights” movement. These movements were also influenced by forms of cultural dissent stemming from revisionist Marxism and the wider student movements after the upheavals of 1956 and 1968.¹⁰

Third, these case studies are implicitly or explicitly transnational. Histories of human rights activism have typically either been written from the perspective of international history or have remained caught in the national frame of the historiography on resistance and opposition to communist regimes in particular countries. But the case of the Danube Circle Movement, for example, demonstrates that not only were problems such as environmental pollution inherently of a cross-border nature, but citizens’ social mobilization around questions such as the hydroelectric dam between Gabčíkovo and Nagymaros (on the Slovak and Hungarian banks of the Danube respectively) can also only be understood in a transnational frame. From a different perspective, the history of feminist thought in Yugoslavia in the 1970s and 1980s was also produced through a constant circulation of ideas, texts, and people across borders, whether the internal borders of the various republics or the borders between feminists in Yugoslavia and the women’s liberation movements of the West or women’s movements in postcolonial countries.

At the same time, these collections also illuminate the continuing importance of nationalism and the nation in the history and politics of human rights activism in socialist Eastern Europe. In East Central Europe, dissidents’ embrace of human rights was also tied to a desire for national self-determination and a reclaiming of the national past from the communist regime.¹¹ After 1989, the exclusionary potential inherent in campaigns for liberation through collective national rights was felt in full force by members of national or ethnic minority groups (above all, Roma) and women. Feminists in socialist Yugoslavia who had mobilized around the question of sexual violence in the 1980s were forced to confront the consequences of nationalist war in the 1990s. In the case of one prominent activist, Lóránd notes, anti-war activism led to a recognition that her “partisan past brought her closer to feminism in the context of the nationalist war, despite the contradictions between the women in the party organisation and the new feminists before the war.” In the territories

9 Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever*, 5.

10 Gildea, et al, *Europe’s 1968*.

11 Kopeček, “Human Rights Facing a National Past.”

of the former Soviet Union the legacies of the socialist-era “national question” have been particularly violent. As Kulick shows, Soviet authorities suppressed Ukrainian dissidents’ expressions of resistance “by couching the struggle in national terms,” thereby misrepresenting the Ukrainian human rights movement, “which was and remains a force for reforming these polities through appeals to legality, rights enshrined in the law, and a recognition of the basic dignity of each and every Soviet citizen.” This reflects the argument of Benjamin Nathans, who notes that Soviet dissent was diametrically opposed to the well-known strategies of twentieth-century civil disobedience campaigns in places such as Birmingham, Alabama or Bombay. Rather than publicly defying certain laws, Soviet dissidents invented a form of radical *civil obedience*: “engaging in or insisting on practices formally protected by Soviet law – such as freedom of assembly or transparency of judicial proceedings – but frequently subject to the wrath of the regime.”¹²

Finally, all of these collections have been the subject of conflicts about the writing of history in post-socialist Eastern Europe. In the 1970s, as we have seen, the Soviet dissident emerged as a symbolic focus for Western intellectuals eager to discover a moral witness to the crimes of communism. But the more complex histories that speak through collections such as those featured in this chapter, were written in the context of the 1990s, when debates about recent history and particularly the period between 1945 and 1989 were overshadowed on the one hand by campaigns for retroactive justice (such as property restitution, legal rehabilitation, financial compensation, prosecution of war criminals and agents of the political police), lustration, generational conflicts, and political fighting and, on the other hand, by national and international efforts (for example by the European Commission) to create days of commemoration and celebration, monuments, museums, hagiographies, and textbooks.¹³

The Museum of Romani Culture, Brno, Czech Republic

The Museum of Romani Culture, which is located in the Moravian city of Brno, is one of the most important institutions documenting the history of Romani culture and politics in post-war Europe.¹⁴ Established after the collapse of the communist regime in Czechoslovakia, the museum was the result of many years of campaigning by Roma activists during the socialist era. Its archives, which include the personal papers of leading figures in Romani political and ethnic movements, are important for understanding the history of state policy and social mobilization for Roma rights in socialist Czechoslova-

12 Nathans, “The Dictatorship of Reason,” 630.

13 Antohi, “Narratives Unbound,” xv–xvi.

14 Accessed September 28, 2018. <http://www.rommuz.cz/>

kia and the post-socialist Czech and Slovak republics.¹⁵ The museum also holds valuable collections relating to Romani visual and material culture in East Central Europe. Furthermore, museum staff have conducted numerous interviews with Roma survivors of genocide and persecution during World War II, and it has taken a leading role in initiatives to commemorate the victims of the Roma Holocaust. The materials archived in the museum demonstrate that Romani struggles for citizenship rights in post-war Eastern Europe are central to the broader history of civil rights activism during and after state socialism.¹⁶

The Museum was established in 1992 by activists linked to the first collective organization for Roma in socialist Czechoslovakia: The Unions of Gypsy-Roma (1969–1973). Romani activists, especially in Slovakia and south-eastern Moravia, had been petitioning the Czechoslovak government and Communist Party for permission to establish cultural and social organisations for Roma since the late 1940s. The Unions of Gypsies-Roma were finally established after Czech and Slovak Roma activists took advantage of the opportunities for political mobilization that opened up during the Prague Spring of 1968. As high-ranking officials were thrashing out the details of the Action Program to reform and democratize communist rule in Czechoslovakia, a Slovak Roma activist named Anton Facuna began to lobby the Slovak authorities for permission to establish a Romani cultural association. Facuna was sharply critical of bureaucratic efforts to assimilate Roma in 1960s Czechoslovakia, which had included a “resettlement” programme intended to disperse Roma from the poorer regions of Slovakia across the country. In his petition to the authorities, Facuna described this scheme as a violation of Romani citizens’ rights to freedom of movement. Facuna and other activists hoped that Roma might be recognized as a national minority in the new federal constitution, which aimed to assuage Slovak complaints about the centralization of power in Prague. National minority status would have given Roma the right to claim state support for the Romani language and culture. But their efforts failed, and Roma were not included in the nationalities law that granted—admittedly limited—cultural rights to Hungarians, Ruthenians, Poles, and Germans. Instead, the government allowed Roma to set up Unions of Gypsies-Roma to support social integration of the country’s diverse Romani population. The Unions undertook numerous activities, including efforts to improve housing, welfare, and education, to combat discrimination, promote Romani cultural identity, and to raise awareness of the racial persecution of Czech and Slovak Roma during World War II.¹⁷

15 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Museum of Romani Culture Collections”, by Anna Vrtálková, 2018. Accessed: October 10, 2018.

16 Donert, *The Rights of the Roma*.

17 Donert, *Rights of the Roma*; Sokolová, *Cultural Politics of Ethnicity*; Pavelčíková, *Romové v českých zemích*; Jurová, *Vývoj romské problematiky*.

Important insights into the history of Romani political mobilization are provided by the personal papers of Miroslav Holomek, president of the Czech Union of Gypsies-Roma (Svaz Cikánů-Romů) from 1969 until 1973. Holomek was born into a family of Moravian Roma which had been integrated into local society for centuries. Many of Miroslav Holomek's relatives were killed during the Nazi occupation of Bohemia and Moravia during the World War II. Together with another Moravian Romani family, the Daniels, members of the Holomek family played an important role in setting up the Czech Union of Gypsies-Roma after the Prague Spring and, later, in founding the Museum of Romani Culture. The Czech and Slovak Unions of Gypsies-Roma were mass organizations set up under the National Front. When read alongside the archives of the Roma Union stored at the Moravian Provincial Archive and party and government reports at the National Archives of the Czech Republic in Prague, the Slovak National Archives in Bratislava, regional archives in cities such as Košice, and the reports of the State Security, the Holomek papers offer fascinating insights into the politics and everyday experiences of one of the first organizations for Roma in post-war Europe.

The museum also holds the papers of a number of individuals who did not identify as ethnically Roma but supported Romani activists in their claims for equal rights. These materials include the papers of a leading demographer, Dr. Vladimír Srb, who joined forces with leaders of the Roma Unions to lobby the government for Romani cultural rights. Moreover, the museum received the papers of the leading scholar of Romani language and culture in socialist Czechoslovakia: Milena Hübschmannová. As a student of Indian languages at Charles University in Prague in the late 1940s, Hübschmannová was struck by the similarities between Romani and Hindi. Unable for political reasons to pursue her dream of travelling to India, she threw herself into the study of Romani, building up an extensive network of contacts with Roma from Slovakia and Moravia and large numbers of Slovak Roma migrants to the Czech Lands after the war. When these papers are catalogued, they will be an invaluable resource for researchers.

Equally significant is the collection of private papers donated by Miroslav Dědič, a schoolteacher who established a boarding school for Roma children (the School of Peace) in the early 1950s. Influenced by the Soviet pedagogue Anton Szemjonovics Makarenko, Dědič wanted his school to serve as a place where Roma children would learn to become model socialist citizens. The collection includes diaries written by Dědič and documents relating to the history of the school, for instance correspondence with government agencies and state-run radio and newspapers and letters to Romani activists, journalists, film-makers and writers who were engaged in various projects to support the integration of Roma into socialist society. Many of these projects were highly assimilationist, reflecting the contemporary belief that assimilation, implemented if necessary with coercion, was the best path

to full citizenship for people described paternalistically in official terminology as “citizens of gypsy origin.”¹⁸

The founders of the Czech Union of Gypsies-Roma were already seeking to establish a museum of Romani culture in the early 1970s. Preserved in the museum’s collection is the card catalogue listing objects collected by the Roma Unions during this period, including artefacts made by Roma blacksmiths sourced by the historian Bartoloměj Daniel. These objects were displayed in an exhibition of Roma crafts and were intended to lay the foundations for a Romani museum, but after the liquidation of the Unions they were deposited for over twenty years at the Institute for Ethnography of the Moravian Provincial Museum until they were returned to the Museum of Romani Culture in 1992.¹⁹ In addition, the museum has assembled a number of collections pertaining to Romani material, visual, and audio culture. These materials include collections of textiles and clothing, jewellery, caravans and domestic interiors, posters and postcards, creative works of art, video documentaries, audio recordings, photographs, and traditional crafts and trades. It was also in this period that historians working in Czechoslovakia began to conduct archival research on the persecution of Roma during World War II. The historian Ctibor Nečas began his research during this period, but he was only able to publish a small number of articles in rather obscure academic journals. Not until the 1990s was Nečas able to publish the results of his research as a major monograph. In addition to functioning as a repository, the Museum has also conducted numerous interviews with Czech and Slovak Roma survivors of persecution and genocide during the World War II.

The Czech and Slovak Roma Unions were forced to close down in 1973 at the tail-end of the purges that the communist leadership introduced in the name of “normalization” after the Prague Spring was crushed. But the networks that connected activists such as Miroslav Holomek were maintained throughout the ensuing decades of socialist rule. Romani activists from Czechoslovakia participated in the first World Romani Congress in London in 1971, and a Slovak Romani émigré, Ján Cibula, became head of the International Romani Union. Charter 77 sought to publicise the plight of Czechoslovak Roma in the language of human rights in the late 1970s, but the story of Miroslav Holomek and the Roma Unions reminds us that Romani citizens in socialist regimes were not simply victims. Rather, Roma were agents and advocates for their own rights under socialism.

The transformation of Romani activism after 1989 can also be explored in the Museum’s collections, for example the papers of poet and activist Vladimír Oláh, or documents relating to the Roma Civic Initiative (Romská občanská iniciativa, ROI). In recent years, the Museum of Romani Culture has played a

¹⁸ Spurný, *Nejsou jako my*.

¹⁹ Accessed January 31, 2018. <http://www.rommuz.cz/odborna-verejnost/oddeleni/fond-sebe-dokumentace/>

leading role in campaigns to commemorate the victims of the Roma Holocaust in the Nazi Protectorate. After years of campaigns by Romani advocacy groups, the Czech government has finally agreed to purchase a pig farm that was built on the site of a former concentration camp for “gypsies” in Lety. The Museum has been entrusted with the task of creating and maintaining the memorial at the site. More than 1,300 people were interned in this camp after 1940. An estimated 327 Roma died in Lety, and a further 500 were deported to Auschwitz, most of whom did not return. Nearly all the 6,500 Roma and Sinti living in pre-war Czechoslovakia were killed during the war. The history of the Roma Holocaust in wartime Czechoslovakia has been one of the most controversial questions surrounding Romani history since 1989, and one in which the Museum has played an important role. The story of the Museum of Romani Culture has been entwined with struggles among Romani activists to come to terms with the legacies of genocide from the earliest post-war years. No longer a non-governmental organization, but a public institution operating under the Ministry of Culture, the Museum of Romani Culture continues to play an important role in documenting and producing historical accounts of the Romani experience (including struggles for civil and human rights) during and after the socialist era.

The Neda Božinović and Žarana Papić Collections at the Library of the Women’s Studies Centre in Belgrade

The library of the *Centar za ženske studije*, the Women’s Studies Centre in Belgrade, holds important collections of two feminist intellectuals who defined the feminist movement in Yugoslavia and, later, Serbia for decades. The Women’s Studies Centre was itself a product of the post-World War II history of the feminist movement in Yugoslavia and Serbia. The library is part of the Women’s Library Network throughout Serbia. It holds the personal archives and book collections of two prominent feminist intellectuals, Neda Božinović (1917–2001) and Žarana Papić (1949–2002), whose activism links the story of the library to the history of human rights and civil rights. The library also holds materials relating to the history of the archive itself, and the process of establishing the archive was central to the activism of Yugoslav feminists. While the historical relationship between feminism and human rights movements is far from unproblematic, the history of feminist activism targeting violence against women from the 1970s and against the war in the 1990s connects the story of feminism in Yugoslavia to human rights in important ways.

The Women’s Studies Centre was founded by members of the feminist group *Žena i društvo* (Woman and society).²⁰ The women who became the founders of the group started to meet, talk, and publish feminist texts in the

20 Lóránd, *The Feminist Challenge to the Socialist State in Yugoslavia*.

early 1970s, creating the most organized feminist critical group in East Central Europe after World War II. The group, or rather groups, worked in the three biggest cities of Yugoslavia: Belgrade, Ljubljana, and Zagreb. They started as small discussion circles of women and some men, mostly still students, at the universities and in student cultural centres, and their activities became more formalized over time. The individual stakes and life trajectories, the different intellectual approaches, the inherent differences within the local scenes intellectually and in the actual infrastructures make this a loose network, connected, however, by the shared fascination with a feminist critique of socialism in Yugoslavia. Their early discussions were mostly academic, as they were reading texts freshly appearing in the “West” as a result of the revived feminist movement (the “second wave”) together with Marxism, the Praxis philosophers, and other Marxist revisionist schools. “Western” theories served as inspiration for a local version of feminism, thinking about the Yugoslav self-managing society, and the realities of women in Yugoslavia. However, some publications were focused very much on critical theory, such as the interpretations of the *écriture féminine* in French post-structuralist theories.

Writings on art and literary theory were produced in tandem with art works and literature with feminist aspects: some pieces adopted an explicitly feminist position, while others were fascinated by the same issues as the feminist theorists and social sciences around them. 1978 was an important turning point after the early small group discussions and publications: the *Studentski kulturni centar* (SKC) [Students’ Cultural Centre] in Belgrade hosted the first international feminist conference in Yugoslavia. The documentation of this event, together with the exhibitions, podium discussions, open lectures, and film screening related to the *Žena i društvo* group are available in the archives of the SKC.²¹ The early phase focused on the philosophical and social roots of women’s oppression from a social science and humanities perspective, largely relying on the official state socialist discourse about women’s emancipation, but rethinking the ideas and concepts that constituted the official language and ideology in order to point out the shortcomings or even failures of the regime in the emancipation of women.

Feminist texts also appeared in newspapers and women’s magazines, especially in the 1980s. This decade brought along the “activist turn” of the group: from around 1985, radical feminism was no longer simply theoretical but rather became the way in which the group organized itself.²² This was the time when the lesbian movement became an important ally and source of inspiration for Yugoslav feminists and when new energies were gained from the women-only groups. The major concepts of the time were sexuality and

21 Accessed: 25 August 2018: <https://www.arhivaskc.org.rs/> See also: Bonfiglioli, “Back to Belgrade, 1978,” and Lóránd, *The Feminist Challenge*.

22 I explain the main motivations and the most important actors and ideas behind this turn in Chapter 5 in Lóránd, *The Feminist Challenge*.

violence, and a further crucial theme was women's health. The widespread and shared interest in these themes arose from the recognition, discussed in the writings of Lepa Mladenović, Sofija Trivunac, Lina Vušković, Vera Litričin, and Vesna Mimica, among others, that both are symptoms and sources of other forms of inequality. The new Yugoslav feminists gained more and more access to the international feminist movement, as well as to human rights movements. The first SOS helpline for women and children victims of domestic violence was created in 1988 in Zagreb as *SOS telefon za žene i djecu žrtve nasilja* [SOS telephone for women and children victims of violence], although feminists in Belgrade had been planning such a helpline before this. In 1989, a helpline was set up in Ljubljana and in Belgrade in 1990. The institutional preparations of the SOS helpline are well-documented in the case of Belgrade, and the materials are part of the collection of the ŽINDOK Centar, now in the holdings of the Library of the Women's Studies Centre in Belgrade. Here, one can see the long list of state institutions, including the organs of city government, the police, hospitals, and social services, contacted by the feminists from the *Žena i društvo* group for information about women who had been raped.

The break-up of Yugoslavia, the war, and the emergence of semi-authoritarian regimes following the democratic elections created different challenges for feminists.²³ While there was diversification among and even serious clashes between feminists, an important strand of feminist anti-war activism grew out of the *Žena i društvo* group of the 1970s.²⁴ The post-1991 anti-nationalist, anti-war feminist agenda largely relied on the agenda from the late 1980s, using its concepts and building itself from its forms of organisation. The 1990s in Serbia saw the creation of the Women in Black, i.e. *Žene u crnom* group (mostly organising anti-war activism) and the Autonomous Women's Centre, i.e. *Autonomni ženski centar* (for victims of violence) and AŽIN, the Association for Women's Initiative, which is an NGO working with rural women, "promoting women's cooperatives and small businesses, assisting the self-organisation and networking of women throughout Serbia."²⁵

As the feminist activist scene grew more diverse in the 1990s, the first women's studies courses and study programs were created. The feminist academics in the Yugoslav groups, such as Rada Iveković and Lydia Sklevický in Zagreb, Žarana Papić and Anđelka Milić in Belgrade, Silva Mežnarić, Vlasta Jalušić, and Tanja Renner in Ljubljana, and Nada Ler-Sofronić in Sarajevo were teaching feminist theory in their classes before 1990, and the Inter-university Centre in Dubrovnik offered feminist summer schools as early as 1987. There

23 On conditions during the period of war, see Žarkov, *The Body of War*; Helms, *Innocence and Victimhood*; Lóránd, "Feminist Criticism of the 'New Democracies'."

24 Miškovska-Kajevska, *Feminist Activism at War*. On the challenges feminists faced see Mladjenović [Mladenović] and Hughes, "Feminist Resistance to War and Violence in Serbia."

25 Miškovska-Kajevska, *Feminist Activism at War*, 53.

were two crucial steps towards the foundation of the present-day Women's Studies Centre, which holds feminist archival documents today. One was a course introduced into the curriculum of the University of Belgrade with the title "Women and Society," while the other was the creation of an NGO with the name *Centar za ženske studije*, Centre for Women's Studies, which offered access to women outside the university to the study of feminist theory and social science.²⁶

The two most important collections documenting the history of the feminist movement in Serbia and Yugoslavia since the 1970s are the legacy of Neda Božinović (1917–2001) and Žarana Papić (1949–2002). They document the work of two women from different generations whose paths met and merged in the feminist anti-war movement of the 1990s. Papić was one of the initiators of the *Žena i društvo* group in the 1970s, a sociologist who went to great efforts to understand the stakes of second wave feminism in the "West," translate its relevance to the Yugoslav reality, and organize women to articulate a feminist critique of the state-controlled women's emancipation agenda. In the volume *The Anthropology of Women*, which she put together with Lydia Sklevický, a historian from Zagreb, they introduced the category of gender as a useful analytical concept for the social sciences.²⁷ After her early death, her collection of books and notes were donated to the Library of the Women's Studies Centre, which she helped create and where she taught until the end of her life.

Whereas Papić started her career in the 1970s, Neda Božinović was already active in the pre-World War II women's and student movement, and she joined the partisan army during the war. She held several high official positions in socialist Yugoslavia, including that of judge of the federal Supreme Court. After more than a decade of retirement, she became active again when the war broke out: she was one of the founders of the Women in Black anti-war group, and she wrote a book about the history of women's movements in Serbia. She realized that her partisan past brought her closer to feminism in the context of the nationalist war, despite the contradictions between the women in the party organization and the new feminists before the war. She authored an important overview of the women's question and the women's and feminist movements, and complementing this work, collected and catalogued masses of documents from the history of the feminist group in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s.²⁸ The collection was in the care of ŽINDOK, the *Ženski informaciono-dokumentacioni trening centar*, i.e. Centre for women's information, documentation and training, a small Belgrade-based women's rights NGO, until the opening of the Library of the Women's Studies Centre.

26 Blagojević, "Feminist Knowledge and the Women's Movement in Serbia," 191–92.

27 Papić and Sklevický, *Antropologija žene*. Zbornik.

28 Božinović, *Žensko pitanje u Srbiji u XIX i XX veku*.

The holdings of the collection include the documentation of the *Akciona Anketa*, i.e. action research, which the feminist group in Belgrade initiated during the process of the creation of the SOS helpline. The aim of the *Akciona anketa* was to gain knowledge about women's experiences. The polls in three subsequent years (1986–1988) were organized around three topics, closely related to each other: women's dissatisfaction with men (1986), solidarity among women (1987), and women's health and violence against women (VaW; 1988). The venues of the polling were the following central spaces in Belgrade: the Terazije (1986), Kalenić pijaca (Kalenić market, 1987), and the main railway station and Knez Mihajlova street, Belgrade's main street (1988). The answers were valuable material for further organizing, even if the sample was not representative of all of Yugoslav society, considering that it was women in the centre of Belgrade who answered the questions. Doing the surveys was one of the first steps to initiate discussions with ordinary women on the streets about their views on their situation in Yugoslav society. The results of this small-scale research project provided feedback for the group about what women in Yugoslavia wanted and what their realities and problems were. The themes and questions resonated with the ideas and practices of the worldwide feminist struggle against VaW. Also, from the outset these questionnaires had the underlying aim of building a wider women's movement, both by the act of asking women about these experiences and thus raising their awareness of their situation and by publicizing the results of the surveys. The questionnaires also were intended to assess women's willingness to organize and, moreover, women's willingness to organize for the betterment of their own position. The Library of the Women's Studies Centre in Belgrade now has the original questionnaires and analyses, including those that were not published anywhere.

The Danube Movement, the “Dunasaur” and the Role of Environmental Movements in Late Communism

Environmental movements played a distinct role in the authoritarian regimes in the former Soviet bloc. Rapid industrialization and the race for production in the countries of the Eastern bloc had obvious environmental consequences: widespread use of agricultural chemicals, deforestation, nuclear waste (the disaster of Chernobyl being the most emblematic of all issues), and water pollution. Since the environment was seen as a “soft” issue, environmental activism offered citizens a chance to participate in politics without being directly involved in oppositional activities. With the softening of almost all the communist regimes in Eastern Europe, however, environmental movements channelled collective dissatisfaction, and through effective mobilizations, they contributed significantly to the collapse of the regimes. Notable environmental movements included protests in the early 1980s in Ruse, Bulgaria

against chlorine pollution from chemical plants on both the Bulgarian and the Romanian side of the Danube River (documented by the collection *Ecological Protests against the Chlorine Pollution in Ruse* in the COURAGE Registry²⁹); ecological movement groups in Poland (as mentioned in the *Fuck '89* collection); the Brontosaurus movement in Czechoslovakia; the Ecoglasnost rally that directly preceded the resignation of Todor Zhivkov in Bulgaria, and the rallies against the Ignalina nuclear power plant in Lithuania.

This case study focuses on the 'melting pot' Danube movement in Hungary, which mobilized against the building of a dam (known as the "Duna-saur," the monster on the river) between Nagymaros in Hungary and Gabčíkovo on the (then) Czechoslovak side of the Danube River. The movement is of particular significance not only because it played a major role in bringing down the regime at the end of the 1980s, but also because it left its imprint on the later evolution of all of civil society in Hungary. The Danube movement collection *Documents of the Danube Circle Association* can be found among the COURAGE project's collections of cultural resistance, and for a good reason. The Danube Circle was at the heart of this initiative. However, the Danube movement extended far beyond this group, which was in any case institutionalized only after 1989 and thus did not have an "official" regular membership. The collection consists of professional documents, analyses of the construction project, as well as press materials, documents of the association, and documentary films which were in the private possession of one of the members and which have been given to the Budapest City Archives, where they are being digitalized, a process which in principle will come to a close in 2018, at which point they will be made open to the public and available for research.

1. The Plant – the Idea and a Chronology

The plan to build a hydroelectric plant on the Danube River goes back to the 1950s, but according to some sources the initial ideas go back as far as the 1910s.³⁰ After years of delay, it became a reality in the 1970s. In 1977, an agreement was signed by János Kádár of the People's Republic of Hungary and Gustáv Husák on behalf of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic to start construction work. The goals of the project were to gain electric power supply, enable navigation, and have a reasonable flood controls on the river. Construction was delayed several times for financial reasons linked to the impending debt crisis facing both countries. In the early 1980s, as the environmental and economic costs of the project become more and more apparent, voices against building the dam became more and more strident. A committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences condemned the project, and discus-

29 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Ecological Protests against the Chlorine Pollution in Ruse", by Anelia Kasabova Dr. 2017. Accessed: October 5, 2018.

30 Manning, "Patterns of Environmental Movements in Eastern Europe."

sions about it came to the surface, with probably the most influential among them being those of János Vargha (in 1981 and in 1984).³¹

In 1984, the Danube Circle was formed as an organization aiming explicitly to raise public awareness about the environmental and economic disaster that this construction would entail and to push for legislation to stop the entire project. Since the moment of its foundation, the authorities persecuted the organization and its members; public gatherings were disrupted by the police and flyers and leaflets were banned.³² Nevertheless, the movement had a significant influence on the Hungarian public. People managed to distribute materials illegally, and the organization's newsletter was published, also illegally.³³ Radio Free Europe broadcast reports about its activities, and its members held lectures at universities.³⁴ A documentary about Dunasaur was shown to the public several times, and it became well-known before the authorities decided to ban it.³⁵ The movement, moreover, gained international recognition when it was awarded the Right Livelihood Award in 1985. The movement organized illegal demonstrations, and eventually the largest demonstrations since the revolution of 1956 took place in September 1988 with 30,000 participants, forcing the government to start negotiations about the dam. This was also a possibility for the Danube Circle to put pressure on the government and demand changes which proved to be comprehensive.

A shift finally occurred when the reform communist branch took over and Miklós Németh became prime minister. Németh dissociated himself from the official standpoint represented by the old leadership of Károly Grósz and announced Hungary's withdrawal from the project in May 1989. He had no doubt realized the significance of the Danube question. In February 1989, 140,000 signatures were collected demanding that the state stop the project.³⁶ The Hungarian government started negotiations and finally pulled out of the agreement in 1992. The issue was far from closed, but it was now reframed. Instead of an internal conflict between an oppositional

31 Szabó, "Zöld mozgalmak és polgári kezdeményezések Magyarországon"; Haraszti, "The Beginnings of Civil Society."

32 Fleischer, "Jaws on the Danube."

33 The name itself, the Danube Circle (Duna Kör) first appeared on the first newsletter of the movement in 1984. Fleischer, "Jaws on the Danube."

34 Szirmai, "Protection of the environment and the position of green movements in Hungary."

35 The film was directed by Ádám Csillag and shot for five years (1984–1988) at the BBS – Balázs Béla Stúdió, which also figures in the Registry as *Balázs Béla Stúdió Research Archive*. The BBS "was meant to function as a training ground, where filmmakers who had completed their formal instruction could make short films that were not produced to be screened. Precisely this latter criterion, which was a kind of cautionary measure, granted special freedom to the Studio, since the films were not subjected to censorship until after they had already been made." COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Béla Balázs Studio Research Archive](#)", by Balázs Beöthy, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018, doi: 10.24389/2099 The film can be watched here: <https://vimeo.com/15330203>

36 Fleischer, "Jaws on the Danube."

movement and an authoritarian system, it became a foreign policy issue between Hungary and Slovakia.³⁷ Even though the history of the Danube movement is undoubtedly an essential part of the history of resistance against the communist regime in Hungary, it also played a significant role later on in shaping institutional politics.

2. Layers of the Protest Movement – Why was it Important?

The Danube movement is significant in a variety of ways. First, it enabled active opposition to the regime, as environmental activists could remain in the shadows of the grey zone for a while. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, several clubs and circles, “quasi-movements” were allowed, such as the Hungarian Ornithological Society as early as 1974 or the Youth Environmental Council of the Communist Youth Organisation in 1984. They were founded partly as a sign of the softening of the regime, but also, as Szirmai points out, “none of these were initiatives of civil society but, on the contrary, were the official and formal responses to ecological demands of the society at the time.”³⁸ These organizations demonstrate the prevalence of a widespread popular demand for environmental issues, but they were not openly engaged in criticism of the entire system. As Gille points out, the environment was also essential as a symbolic issue, since environmental catastrophes reflected the communist state’s relationship to its own citizens and its inability or unwillingness to provide protection.³⁹ Meanwhile, the official narrative of the state represented environmental disasters as occurring only within capitalist systems.⁴⁰

Hungarian citizens identified with the Danube question in multiple ways, since it involved emotional, traditional, anti-systemic, and even nationalistic-patriotic values. The “melting pot” capacity of the movement mentioned in the introduction refers to the fact that the Danube movement was far from unified, as underlined by Haraszti, who regards the movement as an “archetype of democratic pluralism,” where conflicting rival groups had to cooperate.⁴¹ These groups included the “Blues,” who were openly against the regime, the “Greens,” who emphasized environmental problems, and “Friends of the Danube,” who were pushing for a compromise. By the end of the 1980s, the movement moved toward a more general criticism of the regime, and it came to include leaders from the oppositional parties, which later entered the Hungarian parliament after the first free elections in 1990, namely: the conservative MDF, the liberal SZDSZ, and the (then) liberal FIDESZ.

37 Szabó, “External Help and the Transformation of Civil Activism in Hungary.”

38 Szirmai, “Protection of the environment and the position of green movements in Hungary,” 49.

39 Gille, “Is there a Global Postsocialist Condition?”

40 Manning, “Patterns of Environmental Movements in Eastern Europe.”

41 Haraszti, “The Beginnings of Civil Society,” 80.

A less obvious element in the resistance was nationalism/patriotism, which is peculiar, as this motive did not become dominant in the analytical frames of the Danube movement. As diverse and colourful as it was, the urban/rural divide within the Hungarian opposition seems to have made it difficult to situate nationalistic voices within a (predominantly) urban movement. Nevertheless, voicing support for purportedly national interests played an important role in the communist regime, and the alleged “internationalism” of the “brotherly nations” was among the central values, while addressing national issues was a taboo. This becomes obvious on the basis of a ground-breaking article by János Vargha (under the pseudonym Péter Kien)⁴², founder and leading figure of the Danube Circle, in the samizdat journal *Beszélő*. Vargha not only writes about the environmental and economic consequences of the dam project but also develops an argument about the potential threat of Hungary losing territory to Czechoslovakia, and about Czechoslovak national interests as contrary to Hungarian ones. This narrative was certainly present among the Hungarian dissident community, but it was almost never a theme in the primarily liberal atmosphere of the democratic opposition.

3. The Birth of a Movement and the Importance of the Danube Movement after the Democratic Changes

The influence of the Danube movement in the fall of the regime is almost self-evident in the literature of civil society and social movements today.⁴³ A further impact of the Danube movement is found in the academic discipline of the study of social movements. With his first analyses of the Danube movement as a new social movement, Máté Szabó and other social movement scholars sought to connect the new Hungarian social movement scene to West European traditions. Academic scholarship in this vein sought to contribute to the central project of the new democratic government by putting Hungarian movements on the map of the (Western-dominated) scholarship on social movements. On the one hand, this was an essential contribution to the existing literature on environmental movements, and it also offered a new analytical perspective on the relationship between green movements and the institutional system.⁴⁴ On the other hand, this perspective contributed to the West-

42 Vargha, “A nagy szlovák csatorna.”

43 Börzel and Buzogán, “Environmental organisations and the Europeanisation of public policy in Central and Eastern Europe”; Láng-Pickvance, Manning and Pickvance, *Environmental and Housing Movements*; Manning, “Patterns of Environmental Movements in Eastern Europe”; Szabó, “Zöld mozgalmak és polgári kezdeményezések Magyarországon”; Szabó, “External Help”; Kerényi and Szabó, “Transnational Influences on Patterns of Mobilization within Environmental Movements in Hungary.”

44 Szabó, “External Help”; Szabó, “Zöld mozgalmak és polgári kezdeményezések Magyarországon”; Láng-Pickvance, Manning and Pickvance, *Environmental and Housing Movements*.

ern bias in the study of social movements.⁴⁵ It played a significant role in internalizing the metaphor of “catching up,” which has been present implicitly or explicitly in most analyses of the movements in the region, and it articulated expectations of the green movement based on the success story of the German Greens, for instance.⁴⁶ The influence of the Danube movement, moreover, did not stop at the democratic changes around 1989. Even though scholarly interest in the Danube Circle focuses primarily on the late 1980s and early 1990s, the organization played an important role in the demonstrations against the Socialist government in 1998. According to the polls, these demonstrations changed voters’ preferences and contributed to the fall of the Socialist government. In spite of or, rather, together with these complex, sometimes contradictory phenomena and processes, the history of democratic changes in Hungary can hardly be discussed without discussion of the role of the Danube movement.

History, Memory, and the Legacy of the Ukrainian Dissident Movement

This case study focuses on the Kharkiv Human Rights Group’s (KHPG) Virtual Museum of the Dissident Movement in Ukraine. This online archive aims to preserve and publicize the heritage of dissent, as it is based on the notion that knowledge is a crucial tool in the fight for social and political reform in the present. As an NGO and successor to Helsinki-inspired organizations, KHPG approaches the memorialization of dissidence from the perspective of long-standing practitioners of human rights work. The organization’s virtual online museum was founded in 2003, at the end of President Leonid Kuchma’s second term and on the eve of a highly contested and fraudulent presidential election in 2004.⁴⁷ The political climate in Ukraine at that time was fraught. The sitting president flirted with authoritarianism while fending off domestic and international scandal.⁴⁸ His alleged involvement in the disappearance and death of journalist Georgiy Gongadze precipitated the largest public protest since independence, called the “Ukraine without Kuchma” movement in 2000–2001.⁴⁹ During this dark time for Ukraine, human rights practitioners, like KHPG, prioritized making public the stories of individuals who fought injustice in Soviet times in order to inspire their compatriots,

45 Gagyí, “Social Movement Studies for East Central Europe?”

46 Szabó, “External Help.”

47 Myagkov, et al. “Fraud or Fairytales.”

48 Bondarenko, *Leonid Kuchma*; Way “Kuchma’s Failed Authoritarianism,” 131–45; Koshiw, “Be-headed”; Clines, “Evolution in Europe.”

49 Hrabovsky, “The First and Second Murders of Heorhiy Gongadze”; Svistovych, “To everybody!”

some of whom were jailed for participating in the 2000–2001 protests.⁵⁰ In an introductory essay to a book published by KHPG in 2003 about Soviet-era dissidents, Boris Zakharov argues that because Ukrainians remained unaware of the struggle over human rights in the Soviet period, they tolerated similar infractions after independence.⁵¹

KHPG's online Virtual Museum to the Ukrainian Dissident Movement is a repository for documentation about dissent in 1956–1987, including memoirs, biographies, letters of protest, and other primary sources.⁵² Most of these materials are related to efforts of human rights activists to reform Soviet socialism from Khrushchev's Thaw in the mid-1950s through the Gorbachev reforms of the mid-1980s. However, the site's periodization extends beyond those established temporal parameters to include nationalist struggles against the Soviets following the annexation of western Ukraine (and also western Belarus, the Baltics States, and adjacent territories), as per the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, signed clandestinely by the Nazis and the Soviets in 1939. Recognizing the multifaceted and intergenerational nature of the struggle over human rights, the Virtual Museum also provides memoirs, documents, and other materials about religious communities resisting Soviet rule, the democratic political opposition, activists focusing on economic and social reforms, and representatives of what is broadly referred to as the Ukrainian national movement. The lattermost category includes information about members of nationalist organizations in the annexed territories of Galicia and Volyn and cultural institutions anchored in Kyiv, Kharkiv, and the rest of Ukraine.

The Virtual Museum has materials in both Ukrainian and English, though the Ukrainian language site is far more developed. It includes almost 400 biographies of notable dissidents as well as descriptions of approximately 30 organizations involved in the dissident movement—including those affiliated with religious denominations, the democratic opposition, and organizations devoted to fighting for better social and economic rights. Organizations underpinning the Ukrainian national movement, such as the Club for Creative Youth in Kyiv, the Ukrainian Youth Association in Galicia, the Ukrainian Helsinki Group, the Ukrainian National Front, and many others, are also catalogued under a separate heading.

The site includes a glossary of almost 200 terms associated with human rights in the Soviet Union and terms specific to the dissident movement in Ukraine. This feature is particularly useful for students and researchers who require more context, and the most important entries have also been translated into English. The glossary has mini essays about articles in the criminal codex that the Soviet authorities used to prosecute dissidents, like “anti-Sovi-

50 “Sprava aktyvistiv ‘Ukraina Bez Kuchmy’ 8 bereznia 2001 roku.”

51 Zakharov, *Narys istorii dissidentskoho rukhu v Ukraini 1956–1987*, 6–9.

52 Virtual Museum of the Dissident Movement in Ukraine. Accessed November 17, 2017. <http://museum.khpg.org/>.

et agitation and propaganda,” as well as prison slang, like the term “kartser,” which was a punishment cell (*shtrafnoi izolyator*, called *shizo* or *kartser* for short).⁵³ This section also has longer essays about important primary documents, such as the “Letter from Creative Youth in Dnipropetrovsk,” written by loyal Soviet citizens and committed Marxists who were critical of the suppression of Ukrainian language instruction and publications in the 1960s and 1970s and described this suppression as anti-Leninist in orientation.⁵⁴ We see in this text that resistance and opposition were not necessarily by-products of antipathy, but were at times part of a desire to reform the system from within.

There are also references to particularly important turning points and investigations, which precipitated massive crackdowns, or “pogroms” as they are sometimes referred to on the website, against nationally conscious Ukrainian dissidents and human rights activists. The “Dobosh Case (or Affair)” figures prominently, as it involved the arrest and interrogation of Yaroslav Dobosh, a young Belgian national of Ukrainian origin, who implicated many Ukrainian dissidents in a vast web of so-called anti-Soviet activity. He had travelled through Prague, where he met a Lemko woman from Slovakia who apparently gave him the contact information for a number of dissidents in Kyiv and Lviv, including Ivan Svitlychny.⁵⁵ He met with many of them and was caught later with a copy of the “Dictionary of Ukrainian Rhymes” written by political prisoner Sviatoslav Karavansky. Dobosh’s confession, whether made by a naïve and eager twenty-five-year old émigré activist or an active KGB agent, provided the pretext for a wave of arrests of prominent Ukrainian dissidents in 1972–1973.⁵⁶ According to literary scholar Mykhailyna Khomivna Kotsiubynska, the State Security Services took full advantage of the moment. They pressed both Kotsiubynska and Zenovia Franko, close relatives of two canonized Ukrainian literary figures, to rescind publicly their support for those arrested. Franko was immediately detained and interrogated and eventually relented under sustained pressure, publishing a recantation in *Radianska Pravda*, while Kotsiubynska managed to figure out the KGB’s strategy and resisted.⁵⁷

It bears mentioning that the Virtual Museum has 204 interviews with dissidents in Ukrainian (64 of which have been translated into English). Many of them were conducted by Vasyl Ovsienko, a member of KHPG and former

53 Rasma, “The Organization of Power in Soviet Labor Camps”; Ovsienko, “Kartser.”

54 “Lyst Tvorchoyi Molodi Dnipropetrovska,”; Zhuk, “Culture Wars,” 77–78.

55 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Ivan Svitlychny,” by Orysia Maria Kulick, 2017. Accessed: October 5, 2018.

56 “Dobosh Case”; “Karavansky, Sviatoslav Josyfovych”; “Arrests of the Ukrainian intelligentsia 1972–1973”; Zakharov, *Narys istorii*, 97–98.

57 Bogumiła, Hnatiuk, and Kharchuk, *Bunt pokolinnia*, 26; “Y moyemu zhytti bulo tak bahato dobra”; COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Mykhailyna Kotsiubynska,” by Orysia Maria Kulick. Accessed June 25, 2018; COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Vasyl Stus Collection,” by Orysia Maria Kulick. Accessed June 25, 2018.

Soviet political prisoner who also served time in Mordovia and later in Perm-36, a strict regime hard labour camp located near the settlement of Kuchino.⁵⁸ Taken together, these interviews reveal a great deal about the dissident movement, including the day to day pressures and surveillance techniques used by the KGB, alliances between Jews and Ukrainians in the hard labour camps, and the perspectives of prisoners of other nationalities (Armenian and Lithuanian) on the common struggle being waged together with Ukrainian political prisoners.⁵⁹

In some cases, the insights are startling and raise an entirely new set of questions. In strict regime camps, human rights activists intermingled with the "25-ers," or members of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) and national resistance forces from the Baltic States and other countries in the western borderlands, who were arrested and given 25-year sentences in the immediate post-war years. Not all were amnestied in the 1950s and, as a result, they met men like psychiatrist Dr. Semyon Gluzman from Kyiv, who came to the defence of General Petro Grigorenko, a fierce human rights activist and defender of Crimean Tatars. Gluzman argued in his diagnosis in 1971 that attempts by Soviet authorities to declare Grigorenko mentally unfit were an egregious misuse of psychiatry.⁶⁰ Shortly thereafter, Gluzman himself was arrested and sent to the labour camps in Perm, where he met Ukrainian and Baltic nationalists. He emerged from this exile sympathetic to the "25-ers," who ultimately entrusted him with their legacy, sending him countless letters about their experience, which are now preserved in archives at the Research Centre for East European Studies at the University of Bremen.⁶¹

The Virtual Museum also contains an interview with Armenian Paruyr Hayrikyan, who shared his story and his impressions of poet Vasyl Stus and the journalist Viacheslav Chornovil, both of whom he met in the Siberian camps. Hayrikyan was one of the most active leaders of the democratic movement in the Soviet Union, becoming the head of the National United Party (NUP) after its leaders were all arrested in 1968. The organization's main goals were independence for Armenia and Russia and confronting the consequences of the Armenian genocide. Because of his outspokenness about self-determination and Armenian independence and leadership of an organization pursuing those ends, Hayrikyan was arrested twice, serving two terms in Perm-36. In an interview with several members of KHPG in 1999, he recalled that, at first, he was somewhat disappointed by Stus, believing that a real fighter was in the camps, but learning that his perspective was not political. Neither Chornovil nor Stus behaved as though they were prisoners in a concentration camp. They lived for

58 "Ovsiyenko, Vasyl Vasylyovych."

59 Stetsyshyn, "'Zhuchky', agenty KGB i dissident"; Ovsienko, "Zustrich z Ar'ye Vudkoyu"; "Interview Balisa Hayauskasa Vakhtangu Kipiani U Vilniusi, 1995 h."

60 "Countrymen remember General Grigorenko"; "Grigorenko, Petro Hryhorovych"; "Gluzman, Semyon Fyshelyovych."

61 This information was shared with me in a conversation with Gluzman in Kyiv in June 2017.

the sake of literature, art, and Ukrainian history. Hayrikyan said that Stus' Ukrainian comrades deliberately shielded him from the banal language of Soviet protest, at times insisting that he not sign petitions so that his poetry could speak for itself.⁶² Stus' poetry remains underappreciated to this day, having been overshadowed by the story of his multiple arrests, incarceration, and sadistic treatment by the Soviet regime. His poetry was "intrinsically European, modernist, intellectual," and fiercely individualist, written by a deeply sensitive and principled person.⁶³ The only time Hayrikyan cried in the camps was when Stus' poetry was read aloud to him. The Stus he describes is someone who maintained his humanity, never resorting to violence even when attacked by other prisoners. When his manuscripts were confiscated, Hayrikyan helped organize a hunger strike demanding that Stus' papers be returned to him.⁶⁴ According to literary scholar Alessandro Achilli, it was "the *private* rebellion of Stus's conscience," rather than the *political* implications of his words and deeds, that constituted the greater threat to the "homogenizing fury of Soviet ideology."⁶⁵ That the camp administrators returned the nearly 100 manuscripts taken from Stus indicates that they were trying to prevent Stus' private principled rebellion from spreading to other inmates.

As powerful a force as Stus was in unofficial circles and among Soviet internal exiles comingling in hard labour camps and in émigré communities, he was not that well known in his own country until the late 1980s, when the policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika* lifted the veil over the suppressed recent past. In an interview with Mykhailyna Kotsiubynska, Yevhen Zakharov, director of KHPG, said the first time he heard of Stus was in 1988, when he managed to get his hands on a volume published outside the Soviet Union. Zakharov was floored by how much Stus' poetry pushed past what was imaginable in Soviet Ukraine. When asked whether she was a dissident, Kotsiubynska answered, as most do, that she never considered herself one, as she viewed dissidents as politically minded people.⁶⁶ This Virtual Online museum thus also allows researchers to think deeply about categories and frames of analysis that have in many ways been imposed on people involved in the Soviet human rights movement.

KHPG's efforts to honour this legacy dovetail with its own mission to fight for the primacy of the rule of law in Ukraine today. As the successor to the Kharkiv branch of "Memorial," founded in 1988, KHPG has tracked human rights violations in Ukraine since 1992, as well as the positive and negative effects of electoral and constitutional reforms, the consequences of lustration, and transparency in the political process more generally. Its members

62 Ovsienko, "Paruyr Hayrikyan: interview about Vasyl STUS and about himself."

63 Achilli, "Vasyl' Stus and Death," 10–12.

64 Ovsienko, "Paruyr Hayrikyan: interview about Vasyl STUS and about himself."

65 Achilli, "Vasyl' Stus and Death," 10–12.

66 "Kotsiyubynska, Mykhailyna Khomivna."

have participated regularly in public demonstrations and protests against malfeasance and corruption in government. They were also involved in the EuroMaidan rebellion of 2013–2014, as were the dissidents themselves.⁶⁷

One of the consequences of recent events—EuroMaidan, the annexation of Crimea, the ongoing war in the Donbass, and deteriorating relations between Ukraine and Russia—has been a mass rejection of a commonly shared Soviet past. Therefore, archives and collections representing the human rights movement and preserving its legacy are ever more crucial, as they highlight cooperation among like-minded individuals across borders. For instance, microbiologist Nina Strokata-Karavanska met Larissa Bogoraz and other Moscow-based human rights activists while visiting her husband in prison. Shortly thereafter (in 1968), the *Chronicle for Current Events* began publishing, and Strokata-Karavanska reported regularly for them on the state of human rights in Ukraine.⁶⁸ Even so, it remains clear from materials in the Virtual Museum (and other collections at the Sixtiers Museum in Kyiv and the Prison on Lonskogo St in Lviv) that the Soviet nationalities policy left its mark on the Ukrainian dissident movement, giving this human-rights-based resistance the character of a struggle for national liberation.⁶⁹

A failure to deal with the long-standing consequences of contradictory policies and approaches to the national question has led to gross oversimplifications about what happened in the Brezhnev era with these human rights activists. The materials available at the Virtual Online Museum to the Ukrainian Dissident Movement reveal that they resisted the homogenizing fury of Soviet communism in culture and politics by trying to carve out and defend autonomous spheres of thought and action. Because of Soviet discomfort with the nation as a category, the authorities suppressed forms of resistance by couching the struggle in national terms, which as the cases above show, misrepresents the human rights movement, which was and remains a force for reforming these polities through appeals to legality, rights enshrined in the law, and recognition of the basic dignity of each and every Soviet citizen.

Conclusion: The Use and Misuse of Archives

All the case studies featured in this chapter have been the subject of conflicts over the writing of history in the post-socialist era. At the heart of many of these conflicts is the question of the “totalitarian” nature of communist re-

67 Sverstiuk “Uroky z Maidanu.” The Sixtiers Museum in Kyiv has a photo display in the foyer with photos of Soviet-era human rights activists gathered in front of a large banner with a photo of Vasyl Stus, who died under mysterious circumstances in Kuchino in 1985, and the slogan “I am with you.”

68 Much of the *Chronicle of Current Events* is available online here: <https://chronicleofcurrentevents.net/> Accessed: October 17, 2018.; See also, Strokata, *Ukrainian Women in the Soviet Union*.

69 Zakharov, “History of Dissent in Ukraine.”

gimes and the degree to which state violence under socialist rule was comparable to the mass violence and genocidal policies of the Third Reich. The history of the Roma exemplifies the complexities of these debates, particularly in light of endemic structural and societal discrimination against Roma across Eastern Europe today, ranging from segregation in “special schools” for children with learning difficulties, coercive sterilisation of Romani women, the removal of children into institutional care, ghettoised housing, racial violence, and social and economic exclusion. Histories of Romani civil rights activism under socialism have been overshadowed by fierce debates about the Romani Holocaust and particularly the role of local authorities in implementing anti-Gypsy regulations during the Nazi Occupation.⁷⁰ The Museum of Romani Culture has played an active role in these debates, conducting oral history interviews with Romani genocide survivors, organising events to commemorate the victims, and seeking to expand public awareness about the experiences of victims and survivors. In the Czech Republic, the deeply contested history of the concentration camps for “Gypsies” established at Lety and Hodonín became a focal point for these debates. After years of campaigning by Romani activists, the Czech government finally agreed in 2017 to purchase a pig farm that was built on the site of the Lety camp in the 1970s. The Museum has been given the task of overseeing the memorial that will be built at Lety to commemorate the Roma and Sinti who lost their lives in the camp.

From a different perspective, the history of women’s experiences under socialism has also triggered impassioned debates among scholars based in the region as well as in Western Europe and the United States. Here the emphasis has been on the extent to which socialist rule emancipated women and the degree to which mass organisations for women under communist regimes can be defined as “feminist.”⁷¹ These debates can be seen as both part of a longer tradition of socialist feminism dating back to the nineteenth century and as a response to the rapidly growing levels of social and economic inequality in post-socialist states, the effects of which are often felt more acutely by women. Many women experienced the collapse of socialism after 1989 as a loss of the social and economic rights guaranteed by the communist regime. But the struggles to interpret the meaning of socialist-era women’s organising is also part of wider debates about the legacies of socialism for civil society in the region today.

Efforts to recover the history of socialist-era activism in order to understand civil society today are also evident in the ambivalent legacies of the Hungarian Danube Circle Movement and its successors. Initial attempts to write the Danube Circle into the history of Western environmental movements did manage to put such movements on the map for Western scholars, but at the same time they reinforced the perception that social movements in

70 Nečas, *Českoslovenští Romové*.

71 De Haan, *Ten Years After*.

the East were simply “catching up” with practices “pioneered” in the West. Moreover, the activities of the Danube Circle continued through the 1990s. Meanwhile, the case of the KHPG virtual online museum, founded in 2003 just before a highly contested presidential election in Ukraine, demonstrates the clear and urgent connections between human rights struggles today and the legacy of dissent. The museum was established in a fraught political climate. Amidst the largest public protests in Ukraine since independence in 2000–2001, human rights practitioners focused on publicising the stories of human rights activists from the Soviet era. This effort was driven by the desire to commemorate the past and bring attention to human rights violations in the present. The EuroMaidan rebellion of 2014, the annexation of Crimea, the ongoing war in the Donbass, and deteriorating relations between Ukraine and Russia all demonstrate the importance of initiatives such as the Virtual Online Museum in the documentation of the history of human rights activism across borders in the recent past, and these initiatives may also serve as a source of inspiration for the immediate future.

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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 Vezenkov* 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.¹ 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.

¹ 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.²

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.

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.³

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-

3 For a general overview: Stoyanov, *Turskoto naselenie v Bălgariya mezhdū polyusite na etnitcheskata politika*; Gruev and Kalyonski, *Vāzroditelniyat protzes*; Avramov, *Ikonomika na “Vāzroditelniya 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.⁴

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-

⁴ Baeva and Kalinova, *Vāzroditelniyat protses*, 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.⁵

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

5 Boyadzhieva, *Sotzialnoto inzhenerstvo*, 177; Yalâmov, *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*).⁶

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,⁷ diaries, and other texts written for private use.⁸

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.⁹ 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 *Därzhavna sigurnost i malkinstvata*.

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

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

9 Stamenova, *Etnosotzialni 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"¹⁰ merits mention.¹¹ 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.¹²

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.¹³

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. Interviu 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.¹⁴

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.¹⁵

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

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.¹⁶ 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.¹⁷

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 cenacle 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.¹⁸ 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 Tőkés of Timișoara. The protest was signed by several Hungarian intellectuals, including Gyimesi.

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.¹⁹ 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.²⁰ 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.²¹ 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

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,²² 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.²³ 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.²⁴

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.²⁵ 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.²⁶

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.

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.²⁷

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.²⁸ 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.²⁹ 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

28 Radelić, *Hrvatska u Jugoslaviji 1945. – 1991*. 360–66.

29 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.³⁰

The Bogdan Radica Collection³¹ 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.³² 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, *  ivjeti i nedo  ivjeti*.

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.³³

The Bogdan Radica Collection originates from a donation of his private papers made by Radica in 1988 to Sterling Memorial Library at Yale University.³⁴ 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)³⁵ and *Živjeti nedoživjeti* (To live and not to live to see), vols. 1–2,³⁶ 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*³⁷ (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-

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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JACQUELINE NIESSER – THOMAS SKOWRONEK
– FRIEDERIKE KIND-KOVÁCS – ULF BRUNNBAUER

Cultural Opposition as Transnational Practice

Introduction

In an essay on cultural life in state socialism, historian György Péteri claimed that “the curtain was made of Nylon, not Iron.” Péteri stresses that the curtain “yielded to strong osmotic tendencies that were globalizing knowledge across the systemic divide about culture, goods, and services.”¹ By the mid-1950s, the aggressive isolationism of Stalinism gave way to increasing engagement between socialist countries and capitalist countries. Culture was an important and in many respects pioneering sphere in these encounters. The long-held Cold War view of East and West as largely separated realms interacting only in the field of international politics has been decisively refuted by recent research. These new interpretations stress the shaping of the Cold War by multi-dimensional entanglements and transfers across the geopolitical divide.

State socialist societies were influenced not only by a myriad of trans-systemic interactions, but also by contacts among the communist countries. These contacts again ranged from the official (e.g. the cultural propaganda of the notorious societies for friendship with the Soviet Union) to the informal and the illegal. Cultural relations between “brotherly” countries were not limited to Europe. They also included sympathetic countries in the “Third World.” Diverse cultural flows thus connected the societies of Eastern Europe and individuals in them with other parts of the world, opening new vistas and spaces of creativity.² These relations generated dynamics that transcended official policy intentions. The outcome of these exchanges could never be fully predicted or controlled.

Transnational fields of action were an important arena for dissenters. This chapter will present three case studies which highlight the importance of the transnational dimension for cultural opposition in state socialism. The case studies present momentous entanglements in “high” culture involving well-known personalities of the arts world. They highlight the significance of such encounters and the agendas behind them and also point to contradictions and ambiguities. The case studies show that the transfers were multidimensional.

1 Péteri, “Nylon Curtain,” 4. See Kind-Kovács, *Written here, published there*, 6–7.

2 Stöcker, *Bridging the Baltic Sea*.

rectional and that they created “third spaces” which transcended Cold War boundaries. Non-aligned Yugoslavia was an emblematic such third space, as illustrated by the BITEF festival (see below) or the famous Korčula Summer School, where critical philosophers from East and West met.³ Yet also the staging of a play by an East European playwright in New York or an arts fair could create ephemeral third places where new relations were formed.

Transnational encounters importantly contributed to shared meanings of opposition and dissent and, more generally, of communism in East and West.⁴ However, these encounters also evoked misunderstandings resulting, for example, from different political agendas: oppositional groups in the communist countries were often at odds with the right-wing agendas of anti-communist émigrés who claimed to speak for their “captive” nation, for instance. Western audiences sometimes struggled to understand the impulses of Eastern artists or reduced their work to political messages, overlooking their aesthetic qualities.⁵ Texts and artefacts often acquired varying meanings when they were seen in different cultural contexts and submitted to processes of cultural translation.⁶

The very fact that cultural opposition had a strong transnational dimension should not come as a surprise: culture is never limited to state borders, and artistic life in general is characterized by a high degree of international mobility and transnational transfers. The conditions of the Cold War, however, gave rise to a number of peculiarities for cross-border engagement, both in terms of channels and purpose. Cultural activists who were repressed by a communist regime faced particular hurdles in their aspirations and attempts to engage with the “West.” We should not forget that despite the increasing openness of borders, receiving a passport and being able to travel were not birth rights in state socialism, especially for people whom the state suspected of “hostile” attitudes. Borders at the time were hard, and the extensive apparatus of the state security closely followed real or suspected dissenters. There were channels to smuggle underground publications out of the communist world or to smuggle oppositional texts printed in the West into it.⁷ However, these arduous conditions for exchange naturally limited the material scope of these activities.

The intensity of osmosis across the divide and its societal impacts were, therefore, strongly dependent on politics. The pioneering volume “Entangled Protest,” for example, highlights that the viability of transnationality depended in part on the politics of détente.⁸ The partial and often only temporal liberalization of cultural life in the 1960s and 1970s offered artists and intellectu-

3 See Stefanov, “Message in a Bottle,” 109–28.

4 Brier, “Historicizing 1989,” 348.

5 E.g. on the case of music: Beckles, “Longing for a National Rebirth,” 38.

6 Kind-Kovács and Labov, “Introduction,” 9.

7 Kind-Kovács, *Written here, published there*.

8 Brier, *Entangled Protest*.

als in the socialist countries new options to engage with the West. Not by chance, our three case studies had their roots in the 1960s, not least because this was, first, a period of growing interest in the West in social and cultural life in Eastern Europe and, second, a decade when non-conformist arts challenged the status quo in the West too, and Western radical artists saw in East European dissidents a source of inspiration and similarly minded figures. A non-conformist "Republic of Letters" crossing geopolitical divides began to emerge.

The Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation (CSCE), signed in Helsinki in 1975, was a watershed in cultural relations between the two "blocs."⁹ Two elements of the Final Act proved particularly erosive for the communist regimes. First, all signatories (in Europe, only Albania did not sign) pledged to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms. This helped turn the language of human rights into a universalist principle to which groups like the Helsinki committees could hold their governments.¹⁰ The internationally validated discourse of human rights was a source of empowerment for opposition groups in Eastern Europe.¹¹ This gave rise to groups like Charta 77 in Czechoslovakia, which demanded their governments "only" respect and protect the rights which they had recognized in Helsinki. Dissident groups, especially in Central Europe, also paid visits on one another, exchanging information and ideas and adding a new dimension to intra-socialist transnationalism.¹²

Second, the "Third Basket" of the Final Act stipulated the promotion of East-West contacts in the areas of culture, information, and academia, and also between individuals. Nicholas J. Cull concluded that this "opened the way for the greater flow of Soviet ideas westward and the spread of Western culture and ideas in the Soviet orbit."¹³ One consequence was the end of the communist governments' practice of jamming Western radio stations. The influence of radio programmes targeting state-socialist listeners, especially the US-funded Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, and Voice of America, consequently increased dramatically.¹⁴ These programmes became important sources of information for audiences in Eastern Europe as well as means of cultural transfer, for example by discussing and airing readings of *samizdat* and *tamizdat* texts.¹⁵

But why did members of the cultural opposition in Eastern Europe both-
er to engage with like-minded people in the West at all and thereby increase their political exposure at home? As our case studies show, for many of them,

9 Cull, "Reading, viewing, and tuning in," 456.

10 Foot, "The Cold War and human rights," 459–61; Snyder, *Human Rights Activism*.

11 Szulecki, *The Figure of the Dissident*, 175.

12 Kenney, "Electromagnetic Forces and Radio Waves," 44–45.

13 Cull, "Reading, viewing, and tuning in," 456.

14 On RFE see Bischof and Jürgens, *Voices of freedom – western interference?*

15 Kind-Kovács, "Radio Free Europe," 87.

the question was not why, but why not. Many non-conformist writers, artists, and intellectuals considered themselves part of a cultural landscape that knew no (national) borders, very much in an Enlightenment tradition and also building on transnational networks from the interwar period. Avant-gards and counter-cultures in East and West fertilized each other. Their discontent was directed against a political and aesthetic Cold War status quo, which was seen as equally oppressive on both sides of the Iron Curtain.¹⁶ In both the East and the West, avantgarde artists contested oppressive power using radical aesthetics. One consequence of this was similarities in aesthetic forms.

However, for the cultural opposition in Eastern Europe, contacts with the West had further functions. As Robert Brier observes, “The dissident experience drew heavily on the imaginary of a ‘court of world opinion’ to which the dissidents could appeal as they sought help against political repression; raising international awareness for their plight was thus a constitutive element in the dissidents’ political tactics.”¹⁷ International visibility increased the political costs of persecuting writers and artists for the communist regimes, which were also concerned about their international images. However, they were even more concerned about their power, and they did not refrain from jailing well-known writers and artists, if deemed necessary. Václav Havel experienced this frequently.

The following three case studies highlight the vitality and significance of transnational cultural encounters as challenges to political domination. They also point to ambivalences stemming from the fact that the Iron Curtain was an epistemological boundary and, to some degree, the arts served different purposes on both sides of the divide. The case studies represent different genres and are drawn from different countries: the theatre (Yugoslavia), the visual arts (Poland), and literature (Czechoslovakia). They exemplify forms of transnational encounters that go beyond mono-directional transfers across state borders. In these encounters, new meanings were produced in the interactions between practitioners of culture from East and West. Another commonality is the importance of ephemeral or transitory spaces of encounters, such as a festival, a stage production, or an arts fair.

We do not claim that the three cases are the most important transnational encounters in the field of cultural opposition. Other cases in the COURAGE Registry have a transnational or international dimension and would merit closer inspection as well. But the selected examples are highly illustrative of the creative potential and the political salience of transnational exchanges. They also point to the fact that these kinds of encounters did not totally dissolve entrenched (mis)conceptions about East and West in the West and the East. Interacting with the “other” was also a way of positioning oneself in the domestic context. Crossing boundaries could simultaneously create new ones.

¹⁶ Suri, “Counter-culture,” 460–80.

¹⁷ Brier, “Entangled Protest,” 12–13.

“Non-aligned Culture.” The Belgrade International Theatre Festival (BITEF)

“BITEF always had problems,” said former dramaturge Borka Pavićević.¹⁸ The few existing accounts of the “Belgrade International Theatre Festival,” better known by its acronym BITEF, however tell a story of success and acclaim. BITEF is presented as “a platform between East and West.”¹⁹ BITEF is cited as an illustration of Yugoslavia’s status as non-aligned country, as a third space between the two blocs. Yet, how can we measure the success of an avantgarde theatre festival? Was causing trouble precisely a kind of success for avantgarde art? Dragičević Šešić and Stefanović conceive of dissonant heritages as “institutional traumas” which are not revealed by institutional histories, but rather by the memories of eyewitnesses and closer looks into the mirror of the works which were produced by people active in the cultural sphere at the time.²⁰

One remarkable feature of BITEF is its continuity: this international theatre event has been held every autumn since 1967. Thus, it has survived more than fifty years of political turbulence. This continuity marks a striking contrast between the Theatre Festival and the history of Yugoslavia itself. BITEF’s fortieth anniversary publication in 2007 presents a story of triumph: “BITEF is the most tangible evidence that in Belgrade, Serbia and Yugoslavia, cultural pluralism and universalism was [sic!] the weapon for conquering freedom in the world of political monism and political bipolarism.”²¹ The anniversary publication and an exhibition were prepared by the non-conformist historian Branka Prpa, who significantly reformed the Historical Archives of Belgrade as director after the overthrow of Slobodan Milošević.²² The anniversary exhibition invokes BITEF’s legacy of liberal thought and unconventional artistic forms, which stood in stark contrast to the dominant values of its time in Yugoslavia. However, BITEF had served the Yugoslav agenda well. For Tito’s regime, it was “a showcase of socialist Yugoslavia as a free society in which it was possible to question different aspects of social reality.”²³ Ana Vujanović claimed BITEF represented a form of “state ordered freedom.” Foreigners who attended the festival were indeed impressed. The Austrian art theoretician

18 Pavićević, interview. June 2016, Belgrade.

19 Dragičević Šešić and Stefanović, “How Theaters Remember,” 24.

20 Ibid., 13.

21 Branka, Prpa. Accessed June 28, 2018. <https://www.arhiv-beograda.org/en/bitef-40-years.html>.

22 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Prpa, Branka”, by Jacqueline Nießer, 2018. Accessed: October 09, 2018. and COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Historical Archives of Belgrade”, by Sanja Radović, 2017. Accessed: October 09, 2018.

23 Vujanović, “Nove pozorišne tendencije,” 377.

cian Georg Schöllhammer, for example, called it a theatre mecca and “one of the internationally most connected spots of avantgarde art in Europe.”²⁴

The story of BITEF, therefore, also highlights paradoxes in the role of avantgarde art in Cold War Europe. BITEF goes back to the small, off-scene theatre “*atelje 212*” in Belgrade (212 indicated the number of seats). Important personalities of the Yugoslav literary scene, such as the non-conformist writer Danilo Kiš (who later went into exile),²⁵ and the director Borka Pavićević were involved in *atelje 212*. It became BITEF’s home for the first twenty years. Much of the festival’s specificities were rooted in the spirit of *atelje*: it was a place for unconventional theatre, and it also had a gallery where new visual art trends were exhibited. It functioned, furthermore, as a forum of exchange between artists and intellectuals. *Atelje* was founded in 1956 and gained fame as the site of the first public performance in Eastern Europe of Beckett’s “Waiting for Godot.” This was a sensation because only two years earlier a production of this play by the Belgrade Drama Theatre had been stopped because of an intervention following a comment by the famous Yugoslav writer Miroslav Krleža about its nihilistic message.²⁶

Despite the cultural opening of Yugoslavia which began in the late 1950s, theatre life did not enjoy complete freedom. There were practices of informal censorship which led to self-censorship, and also instances of official censorship. When a play such as Dragoslav Mihajlović’s “When the pumpkins blossomed” addressed politically sensitive issues (in this case, the infamous labor camp on the Goli Otok Island), even the head of state, Tito, intervened and prohibited further performances in 1969.²⁷ At the same time, the communist leadership discovered the usefulness of non-conformist art for the projection of an image of Yugoslavia as a country that had broken with the Soviet orthodoxy and was open to the world. Cultural diplomacy was part of Tito’s policy of non-alignment, which is why the government supported the establishment of the Belgrade International Theatre Festival in 1967. Its mission was to reflect the newest theatre developments in the world “in the spirit of humanistic aspirations and [...] in the spirit of the international politics of non-aligned socialist Yugoslavia.”²⁸ Non-alignment and Yugoslavia’s (at that time) good relations with NATO and with Warsaw Pact countries made it possible for theatre companies and visitors from East and West to participate. This is why BITEF became a place where experimental and radical theatre groups from

²⁴ Ibid., 376–77.

²⁵ COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[Danilo Kiš Collection](#)”, by Sanja, Radović, 2017. Accessed October 09, 2018.

²⁶ Dragićević Šešić and Stefanović, “How Theaters Remember,” 20.

²⁷ Featured COURAGE item: COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[Documentation of the ban of the play “When pumpkins blossomed” by Dragoslav Mihailović](#)”, by Sanja, Radović, 2017. Accessed October 09, 2018.

²⁸ Statut Beogradskog internacionalnog teatarskog festivala – BITEF [Bylaws of the Belgrade International Theater Festival, BITEF], Belgrade, November 9, 1980. Article 3.

the US like "The Living Theatre," the "Bread and Puppet Theatre," and Schechner's "Performance Group" came together with similar groups from Poland (such as Jerzy Grotowski's "Teatr Laboratorium") or the Indian "Kathakali Dance Theatre," for instance. BITEF was led by Mira Trailović until her death in 1989. Trailović was one of the first female directors in Yugoslav theatre. She was succeeded by Jovan Ćirilov, who was festival director until his death in 2014.

In part because it was a festival, BITEF helped create a space for free expression, as it was less controlled and more spontaneous than a permanent establishment. Thus, it did enjoy some advantages as an ephemeral event. The ephemeral nature of BITEF underpinned its consistently "countercultural" approach.²⁹ The festival invited performances and groups that were part of the counterculture in their native countries, whether from the socialist or the capitalist camp. One of the famous avantgarde theatres taking part in BITEF, for example, was the "Living Theatre" from the USA.

"The Living Theatre" was greatly influenced by Jerzy Grotowski.³⁰ Because of its unorthodox performances, it was in constant conflict with the New York authorities. This anarchic-pacifist group was led by actress Judith Malina and painter-poet Julian Beck. "The Living Theatre" had to leave the US in the mid-1960s after having been convicted of tax fraud and after its members had been briefly imprisoned following the play "The Brig" (1963), which assailed the US navy. On their exile tour through Europe, "The Living Theatre" staged a play at the first BITEF in 1967. The British theatre critique Peter Roberts commented: "Jovan Ćirilov, a young, multi-lingual Belgrade writer who is the festival's artistic director, had been shrewd enough to pick up both Grotowski's Arts Laboratorium and the Living Theatre's *Antigone* for last year's first BITEF fling. Neither company, at the time of writing, has yet appeared, as they are now constituted, in dear old insular London."³¹

Considering that BITEF's mission was to challenge "everything which is in one society considered unquestionable, unspeakable and untouchable,"³² it may come as no surprise that the festival faced troubles. Interestingly, initially the least of its problems came from confrontations with state authorities. First and foremost, the new theatre shocked its visitors. Belgrade's public had been used to classical theatre, which revolved around text. Suddenly, the body (moreover, often naked bodies) was at the centre of the performance; a garage or the street became the stage, and visitors got spit at.³³ Many visitors left the performances outraged, and the press attacked the festival for this "pornography."³⁴

29 Susa, "1968 i liberalizacija," 613.

30 Innes, *Avant Garde Theatre*, 181.

31 Roberts, "Belgrade: Europe Festivals," 48.

32 Prpa, "Izložba Bitef."

33 Susa, "1968 i liberalizacija," 616–17.

34 Ćirilov, "Kako smo stvarali," 13.

BITEF was also criticized by members of the contemporary theatre scene itself: conservative artists and intellectuals insinuated that these new theatrical forms were a “decadent Western import which was wasting the money of the working class.” It allegedly would destroy professional theatre conventions. Pavičević remembered phone calls from other theatre directors calling BITEF “anarcho-liberals, homosexuals, decadents.” “BITEF really annoyed those guys,” she recalled, pointing to the fact that debates about theatre were part of larger discussions about artistic, political and sexual liberty.³⁵

BITEF as a symbol for avantgarde theatre was under special scrutiny after 1973, after a purge of liberal party leaders in Serbia, Croatia, and Macedonia. The political climate again became more oppressive, and this had a strong impact on the cultural scene as well. Critical filmmakers of the “Black Wave,” for example, were persecuted and could not show or even produce their movies. “Only in paintings and sculpture could artists continue to push boundaries. The regime probably did not feel any threat from these elitist circles.”³⁶ The government installed a commission that would pre-screen performances and decide on their suitability. However, the censors did not understand what they were seeing, and so in the end BITEF managed to retain its artistic autonomy.³⁷ BITEF faced also interventions from the outside. In particular, the Soviet Union tried to influence the festival’s program.³⁸ Jovan Ćirilov recalled that there was an informal agreement with Moscow: when a non-conformist Soviet theatre group was selected to perform for one year, a classical Soviet performance would be shown the other year. Natalia Vagapova, a Soviet expert on Yugoslav theatre, served as a watchdog for Soviet theatre companies participating in BITEF.³⁹

Nevertheless, Tito, who never attended BITEF, continued to consider this annual festival an ideal way of presenting Yugoslav culture as open, innovative, and free. At least for a few weeks in the autumn, these ideals were not mere illusion, but reality. However, this reality concerned only a small circle of people interested in avantgarde theatre, and this may have been one reason for the lenience of the authorities. The ephemeral nature of the encounter as a festival made its liberalism possible, but also defused its critical potential. Nevertheless, BITEF stands out as a space where culture, even if only for a limited time, was liberated from the constraints of Cold War binaries.⁴⁰ BITEF represents a Yugoslav counter-history of triumph rather than trauma. It still

35 Susa, “1968 i liberalizacija,” 141.

36 Marković, “Where Have All the Flowers Gone?” 133.

37 Susa, “1968 i liberalizacija,” 141.

38 Vučetić, *Koka-kola socijalizam*, 298.

39 Vagapova, *Bitef*.

40 Šuvaković, “Noavangarda i neoavangarde,” 281.

exists; and thanks to its comprehensive documentation efforts, its history as a countercultural forum and endeavour did not fall into oblivion.⁴¹

The Foksal Gallery from Warsaw and the Meta-Politics of Cultural Gatekeeping

When the Foksal Gallery was founded in 1966 by the art critics Wiesław Borowski, Hanka Ptazkowska, and Mariusz Tchorek, some of the most respectable Polish artists of the time, such as Tadeusz Kantor and Henryk Stażewski, joined the gallery. Predominantly, it presented exhibitions that problematized the artistic process itself. Political questions did not play any significant role. However, in a country in which everyday life was heavily influenced by the state, even seemingly neutral artistic activities had political implications. In particular, there is an interesting amalgamation of aesthetic universalism and dissimulated political engagement in Foksal's activities. From an international viewpoint, it conveyed the image of a dissident or non-conformist institution; at the same time, it was part of the dominant institutional framework of the Polish art world.⁴² Thus, the example of Foksal allows an examination of how close and almost indiscernible aspects of dissidence, instrumentalization, and opportunism could become.

Foksal Gallery was one of the few cultural institutions in socialist Poland that could develop strong contacts with international partners. Thanks to its backing by the art community, the gallery entered the international art scene during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Kantor's words became a leitmotif: "National art only matters when it transcends its own national borders. Otherwise, it becomes particular."⁴³ The political system, however, imposed certain restrictions, and the first international engagement of the gallery began almost by chance. The "official" history of Foksal's travels abroad begins with the invitation to the 3e Salon international de Galeries-pilotes in 1970.

Salon was an exhibition of art galleries held in the Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts in Lausanne. In 1970, a total of forty-three galleries from Europe, North and South America, and Japan exhibited at Salon. From socialist Europe, there were three institutions besides Foksal: the Gallery of Contemporary Art (Zagreb, 1966), the Galerie Art Centre (Prague, 1966), and the Moderna Galerija (Ljubljana, 1970).⁴⁴ In the words of organizer René Berger, Salon functioned as an observatory confirming and reinforcing the ultimately scien-

41 Since 2004, the Historical Archives of Belgrade holds BITEF's documentation, comprising 443 boxes on more than 50 metres of shelf space. See COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[BITEF Collection](#)", by Jacqueline Nießer, 2018. Accessed: October 09, 2018. (forthcoming)

42 For a broader discussion of Foksal's foreign experiences see Skowronek, "Crossing the border," 379–89.

43 This article is based on an interview with Wiesław Borowski in Warsaw, September 16, 2010.

44 See <http://college-de-vevey.vd.ch/auteur/gp123/index.html>. Accessed May 10, 2013.

tific role of galleries.⁴⁵ Considering the political division during the Cold War, Salon functioned as a means of transgressing borders based on apparently “objective” indicators. Art as “science” and galleries as “observatories” were two of the main metaphors that shaped Salon’s program. Berger called for artistic “research facilities” that would help grasp not only “known constellations” but “flashing lights” as well.⁴⁶ According to Borowski, the focus stayed on art; no ideological or political issues were raised.⁴⁷ In the preface to the catalogue of the second edition of Salon, though, Berger mentioned the struggle of the superpowers.⁴⁸ While being presented as mainly aesthetic and universalistic, the notion of transnational knowledge production, thus, was also affected by geopolitics. Moreover, Berger regarded scientific discoveries as the foundation of supremacy. The self-perception of the galleries at Salon as “pure avantgarde,” therefore, reinforced Foksal’s power interests precisely by dissimulating the societal scope of its politicized epistemology.

After Salon, Foksal’s next experiences abroad were in Scotland in 1972 and 1979. It was Kantor, once again, who functioned as a key mediator for Foksal. Richard Demarco, one of the organizers of the Fringe Festival in Edinburgh, was fond of the art he saw in the gallery.⁴⁹ He therefore agreed to invite Kantor’s theatre Cricot 2, together with Foksal and other artists from Poland.⁵⁰ Contemporary art from Poland was considered part of a cutting-edge visual culture. As a consequence, Demarco continued his cooperation with Foksal in subsequent years. In 1979, the Foksal Gallery was in Edinburgh again. In his review of the “Polish month in Edinburgh,” Paul Overy writes: “This September was the fortieth anniversary of the German invasion in Poland, and Britain’s somewhat tardy declaration of war two days later. In Edinburgh, Richard Demarco presented four exhibitions of Polish art for the Festival.”⁵¹ With this opening, Overy places his following deliberations in a political context. He attributes to Foksal “the most interesting work today,” and he recognized something familiar in the exploration of the “area between drama and the visual arts.” “[It’s] worth reflecting that much of the most interesting work in Britain today, like that of Stuart Brisley or Ian Breakwell, lies in that area too.” Thus, while Germany was mentioned at the beginning of the review, at the end Britain is situated alongside Poland, almost as compensation for the “somewhat tardy” response in 1939.⁵² This highlights the embeddedness of art processes in the symbolic order of politics.

45 Berger, “Préface.”

46 Berger, “Bedeutung und Ziel,” 10–11.

47 Borowski, interview.

48 Berger, “Bedeutung und Ziel.”

49 Ibid.

50 Although the exhibition in Edinburgh was similar to the one in Lausanne, it represented a changed institution. Ptaszkowska, “Wspólny czas i wspólne miejsce,” 450–52.

51 Overy, “Edinburgh’s Polish month,” 10–11.

52 Ibid., 10.

As had been the case in Lausanne, Foksal's attendance in Edinburgh must, therefore, be seen in a geopolitical context. In 1979, though, it was no longer Germany that constituted an "obstacle," but the socio-political regimes in Communist Europe.⁵³ For the exhibition in Edinburgh and Salon in Lausanne, Foksal served as a frame for the rhetorical appropriation of Polish art and its separation from the Eastern bloc. To cite Overy again, "[It] is not entirely surprising that in its variety, international awareness, internecine aggressiveness and peculiar brittleness, the art scene in Poland reminds one most of Italy among Western countries." The "Italianization" of Polish matters appears to have served as a means of constructing familiarity in alien territory because "East Europe [...] remains unknown ground."⁵⁴ Comparable to Salon in Lausanne, Foksal functioned as a vehicle with which to convey the notion that Eastern Europe was, hypothetically at least, part of a common knowledge space. Although the events in Lausanne and Edinburgh differed with regards to the degree of their politicization, similar methods for regulating the symbolic order were in operation: the idea of a scientific and neutral representation of contemporary art.

In the subsequent years, Foksal's network and its international relevance expanded. In its home country, however, the gallery's reputation did not remain unchallenged. While exhibiting modern and avantgarde art, the gallery kept an apparent distance from governmental endeavours to instrumentalize art. As a public institution on the margins of the state-owned Visual Art Workshops (*Pracownie Sztuk Plastycznych*), however, it received infrastructural and material support to organize its projects. Foksal's combination of different institutional layers and artistic discourses provoked ambivalent reactions. A specific conservatism and latent opportunistic attitude were among the most commonly criticized features.⁵⁵ Some made Foksal responsible for conveying the notion of avantgarde and non-conformism to the political system. Foksal took advantage of these debates. Borowski ambivalently divided the Polish art world into "real" and "fake" avantgardists. With reference to the West and thus based on his experiences, he took an external viewpoint in order to regulate internal matters.⁵⁶ The gallery (or at least Borowski) cultivated its image of artistic self-marginalization in the name of promoting seemingly universalistic values, while at the same time fighting against possible domestic competitors. This ambiguous and rather cynical attitude towards political matters was apparently shaped by Foksal's Western experience.

53 Of course, in 1939 and later, Germany was not a mere "obstacle" to national and cultural development in Poland, but a hostile aggressor.

54 Overy, "Polish Pluralism," 12–15.

55 In recent years, a number of publications have focused on the gallery's artistic and institutional strategies. Krajewski, *Strategie upowszechniania sztuki*; Nader, *Konceptualizm w PRL*; Lachowski, *Awangarda wobec instytucji*; Polit, "Warsaw's Foksal Gallery"; Skowronek, "Institutionelle Introjektionen."

56 Borowski, "Pseudoawangarda," 11–12.

In particular, it seems as if the Cold War division into East and West overlapped with and partially realigned Borowski's differentiation between "real" and "fake" avantgarde. While neither a political nor a dissident art institution per se, Foksal operated strategically in a transnational cultural sphere that was highly politicized. Accepting national as well as foreign stereotypes did not necessarily amount to collaboration with the regime; nevertheless, the impression of opportunism could arise. In any case, Foksal's activities can be called meta-political insofar as they interacted with principles and desires that were characteristic for discourses about catchy concepts such as "official" or "dissident" art. Instead of writings on political theory, Foksal demonstrated its epistemological capacity by dissimulating the political nature of the artists' claims to universalism and by concomitant procedures of gatekeeping.

From a post-socialist perspective, it would be worth examining in greater detail the extent to which the notion of institutional superiority affected the further history of the gallery and the Polish art scene in general. In particular, this concerns the problematic relationship between the gallery and the Foksal Gallery Foundation (FGF), which was established in 1997, because the standing of FGF in the contemporary art community is not undisputed. For a long time, FGF was considered the predominant institution in the contemporary Polish art scene, especially when speaking about international contacts in the late 1990s and 2000s. However, FGF was sometimes criticized for its arguable monopolization of contacts with influential Western institutions. Beyond that, the conceptual and rhetorical struggle regarding the foundation's position showed traits of a "Borowskian" determinism and dichotomization. While regularly participating in art fairs, FGF disclaimed any similarity with commercial galleries.⁵⁷ At least partially, therefore, FGF seems to reproduce Foksal's gatekeeping role and dissimulative attitudes. However, claiming a post-materialistic nature of one's endeavours while attributing commercial interests to others is common practice, especially on art markets.⁵⁸ In addition, idealistic worldviews, such as artistic universalism and anti-materialism, were cultivated in East and West, if not on the same societal scale (keeping the meta-conflict between capitalism and socialism in mind) then at least with comparable passion in the particular art worlds. Most likely, therefore, the Cold War's highly ideological theoretical and ethical positions continue to shape contemporary encounters between former opponents. Thus, we can speak of a history of discursive dominance and cultural alternativty that is closely connected to the discursive fabrication of dissidence and the reproduction of power interests.

57 Cf. Adam Szymczyk in a panel discussion during the conference "Kunst Werte Gesellschaft" on May 16, 2008 in Berlin. Accessed August 18, 2012. http://www.kwg.kunstvereine.de/doks/16_05/kunstspektakel.html.

58 See Skowronek, *Marktgestalten in Sorge*.

Havel in New York: Performing Central Europe on Stage

"Writers have more disagreement, less commonality of principle and interest than is generally admitted," read the caption of a caricature in the *New York Times* depicting the debates at the 48th annual International PEN Congress in New York in 1986. Indeed, transnational communication in the Cold War faced manifold obstacles, which were not solely caused by the impermeability of the Iron Curtain. Even if non-conformist literature, alternative art, and uncensored theatre plays managed to cross the systemic divide, their cultural translation often failed. The result were expressions of cultural alienation between East and West. In particular, the transfer of non-conformist theatre plays and their performances in the West resulted at times in misunderstandings and miscommunication.

First, transnational theatre performances enabled the creation and recreation of social and cultural relationships. As plays can be understood as an enactment of the written word, theatre performances of non-conformist dramas from countries behind the Iron Curtain provided the Western viewer with an opportunity to see and experience literature on stage from these largely unknown parts of Europe. In contrast with the written word, through their enactments on stage, Havel's non-conformist plays turned into "performed Samizdat,"⁵⁹ or rather performed Tamizdat, as it was exiled, translated, and adapted to North American conditions and realities.⁶⁰ The Russian novelist Vassily Aksyonov, who was stripped off his Soviet citizenship in 1980 and remained in American exile for the next ten years, once declared "where can a contemporary writer find more vertiginous adventure [...] than in literary exile."⁶¹

Many dramas by the famous Czech playwright and dissident Václav Havel reached the West.⁶² Theatre directors in New York were among the many influential figures of theatre life who took an interest in them. Joseph Papp, the director of the Public Theater in New York, remembers that in 1986 "Havel told me 'I don't know who I am writing for anymore.' [...] He can't test it against an audience. He is writing in a vacuum."⁶³ As Havel's literature was banned in Czechoslovakia after 1968, he was writing his plays without ever seeing them performed, like a "composer who never hears his or-

59 Duda, "Message from a playwright."

60 On the adaptation of Polish theater to the German context, see: Fischer and Sellner, *Polnische Dramen*.

61 Freedman, "The Writer as an Exile," 11.

62 Václav Havel is well represented in the COURAGE registry, with two collections specifically devoted to his legacy: COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Václav Havel Collection of the Czechoslovak Documentation Centre", by Anna Vrtálová, 2018. Accessed: October 09, 2018. COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Václav Havel Library", by Michaela Kůželová, 2018. Accessed: October 09, 2018.

63 Freema, *Portrait of a Playwright*.

chestra.”⁶⁴ One way for Havel to escape this cultural isolation was to have his plays staged in New York. In the context of the New York Shakespeare Festival, Havel’s “Memorandum” was performed in 1968 at the New York Public Theater. It was the first and last production in New York the opening of which Havel was able to attend in person.⁶⁵ The adaptation of “Memorandum” was well-received. Its stage director Joseph Papp won praise for “carefully calculated matter-of-fact staging” and his ability to translate the play for a Western audience. The play was considered a “wittily thought-provoking play in itself.” Critics said that it would increase American interest in culture from Czechoslovakia.⁶⁶ Papp appreciated not only that Havel had a “tremendous sense of satire,” but that he most importantly did not “carry his ideology on a placard.”⁶⁷ In 1983, the adaptation of Havel’s play “Private View” was staged by the female director Lee Grant in New York. It was also judged a success. One critique said that the director had managed to turn the text, which exposed the “dehumanizing effects of totalitarianism” with “wounding honesty and irony,” into “an event of artistic and political urgency.”⁶⁸

Havel and his works and plays became well-known in the United States and beyond. As theatre performances are always the product of interaction between actors and audience, playwright and director, text and performance, Havel’s plays in New York enabled cultural and artistic encounters that went far beyond what had the official approval of the communist government. While protest inside Central and Eastern Europe took on a “theatrical dimension” in so far as it was performed in public places, mobilized masses, and relied on a certain rhetoric, “real” theatre performances of non-conformist literature constituted a form of non-conformist protest, whether in the East or the West.

In 2000, Havel claimed that theatre was not “just another genre” but the “only genre in which, today and every day, now and always, living human beings address and speak to other human beings.” Therefore, theatre was and still is far “more than just the performance of stories,” but instead “a space for authentic human existence that transcends itself” with the aim of “[giving] an account of the world and of itself.”⁶⁹ Theatre can overcome the East-West binary. As an acknowledgement of the successful cultural translation of Havel’s works, Havel received the North American *Off-Broadway Theater Award* (OBIE) for his plays “Memorandum” (1968), “The Increased Difficulty of Concentration” (1970), and “Private View” (1984). This award acknowledged the importance of Havel’s works for the American audience.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ New York Times, “Czech Writer,” 14.

⁶⁶ Barnes, “Drama,” 55.

⁶⁷ Andelman, “A Thoroughly Politicized Czech Playwright,” A3.

⁶⁸ Gussow, “Stage,” 16.

⁶⁹ Havel, “Foreword,” 40.

In addition to such public acknowledgment, literary transfers also helped foster cultural solidarity among artists, writers and playwrights which reached beyond the Iron Curtain. According to Richard Dean, the increase in the "number and scope of contacts" between East and West resulted in the "increasing sophistication of the dissidents" with regard to their awareness of the political situation in their home countries and in the West.⁷⁰ The West also served as a kind of archive: through writings smuggled into the West, Havel's "bits of life [...] [could] be assembled into a mosaic" which resembled a "portrait of the artist as enemy of the state."⁷¹ The Western cultural scene served as a sounding board, without which the marginalized dissident cultural elite in Eastern Europe would have been limited to performing their art in the cultural underground. In the case of Havel, when he was arrested in 1979, there were outpourings of transnational solidarity. Many American and Western writers and intellectuals, such as Joseph Papp, Arthur Miller, Kurt Vonnegut, Tom Stoppard, and fifty others demonstrated against his imprisonment in New York.⁷²

However, publicly expressed solidarity was just one side of the game. Literary exile or the transfer of one's literary works to an unknown audience also had ambiguous implications. Tom Stoppard remembered Havel's reaction when he came to visit Havel in Prague: "He was glad to see me," yet "he also made it clear it was a little bit of a drag to see another Western sympathizer wheeled in. He felt a bit like a tourist attraction, like the Taj Mahal."⁷³ There was, it seems, a degree of sensationalism in the curiosity of Western intellectuals for dissident writers and playwrights from communist countries.

The transnational adaptation of texts often also caused cultural alienation. Although well-acquainted with New York intellectuals, writers, and directors, Havel was not allowed any say in the actual stage productions of his plays. When his play "Largo Desolato" was performed in New York in 1986, the American critique Frank Rich denounced the incapacitating attitude of the Western producers towards Havel. He pointed out that "the lesson Public Theater audiences are likely to learn at 'Largo Desolato,' [...] is not necessarily the one its author intended." Instead, the performance told the audience "less about the suffering of writers in a police state" than "about the self-indulgence of American directors who plaster their egos over playwrights' words." Rich felt it wrong that Havel lacked "the freedom to supervise the liberties Mr. Foreman has apparently taken with his work."⁷⁴ Some critics also felt that over time, the novelty of plays from Eastern Europe dissipated. Henry Popklin, for example, observed in 1977 that "not so long ago" East Europe-

70 Dean, "Contacts with the West," 51.

71 Freeman, *Portrait of a Playwright*.

72 Gwertzman, "U.S. Harshly Rebukes," A3.

73 Freeman, *Portrait of a Playwright*.

74 Rich, "Stage," C15.

an theatre had looked like “the only true home of wonderful novelty, the source of dazzling comets that zoomed across the sky and presaged revolutions in our theatrical life.”⁷⁵ But by 1977, he and the American audience were disappointed, as they felt that “Eastern Europe’s bag of tricks” appeared “not quite so dazzling” anymore. He acknowledged, however, that East European theatre still “contributes more than its share to enlivening our theater stage.”⁷⁶

Against this backdrop, one can conclude that the transnational transfer of Czech non-conformist plays to New York and their adaptation to the local conditions affected their meanings in ambiguous ways. This transfer did indeed enable the reception and consumption of otherwise inaccessible cultural products. Yet it also caused feelings of alienation and misunderstanding. As Henri Voigt concisely pointed out, alienation means that people feel “alienated, estranged, or even subjugated,” regardless of whether their alienation was “voluntary or forced, societal or psychological,” or whether it was “negative or positive.”⁷⁷ With that in mind, dissidents and non-conformist playwrights felt “powerless,” and not only inside their own socialist societies.⁷⁸ The difficult and sometimes even impossible cultural translation of their non-conformist literature and plays from East to West could trigger similar feelings of powerlessness and disillusionment.

Conclusion

The stories of the BITEF theatre festival in Belgrade, the Warsaw Foksal Gallery, and the staging of Havel’s plays in New York highlight the fact that, while the Cold War may have divided the world, it also stimulated cultural practices that strove to overcome these divisions. The specific political conditions for transnational encounters during the Cold War era overdetermined and politicized East-West engagements. Some of the hopes pinned on them were disappointed, in part because cultural translation proved tricky, as exemplified by the reception of Havel’s plays in America. The actors engaged in these encounters pursued their own agendas, which were not merely universalistic but sometimes also individualistic. Nevertheless, despite these ambiguities, transnational encounters were an important element in the peculiar vitality of “Cold War cultures.”⁷⁹ Intellectuals, writers, and artists in Eastern Europe found eager audiences in Western Europe and North America, to whom they often represented a form of idealism that Westerners thought to have lost. Engagement with art from the East was a means of self-reflection

75 Popkin, “The Brilliance.”

76 Ibid.

77 Voigt, “*Between Utopia and Disillusionment*,” 160.

78 Havel, *The Power of the Powerless*.

79 See Lindenberger, Vowinckel, and Payk, *Cold War Cultures*.

for Western observers. For non-conformist cultural activists from the East, the West provided publicity at a time when their works were often banned in their home countries.

At the same time, the nature of transnational encounters during the Cold War should not be romanticized. For one, the repressive apparatus of the state was never far away. Many well-known and less known figures of the cultural opposition lived precarious lives and faced persecution by the state, some of them precisely because of their Western exposure. For many dissidents, there was also a significant "mismatch between international acclaim and little domestic impact."⁸⁰ Communist regimes even exploited the transnational activities of critical minds in order to portray them as "vassals of imperialism" who were estranged "from the people." As shown by the case studies, encounters with the West were also not free of misunderstandings. These were ultimately underpinned by the power asymmetry in these relations: East European dissenters were in a more existential need of Western support than vice versa. As the example of Havel's reception in New York shows, the West's engagement with dissident art was not without narcissism, as Western observers ultimately attributed only a particularistic message to East Europeans, while they claimed a universalist stance for themselves. Nevertheless, transnationality was an important force of creativity and made the Cold War a distinct cultural phenomenon for which efforts to cross the Iron Curtain were as constitutive as efforts to build and maintain it. The fact that many collections described in the COURAGE Registry have a transnational aspect offer testimony to this.

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⁸⁰ Szulecki, *The Figure of the Dissident*, 177.

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Folklore Revivalism and Ethnography: Alternatives to Everyday Culture

This chapter presents folklore, the heritage of peasant culture, and ethnographic activities as a form of oppositional culture and counterculture during the period of socialism in Eastern Europe. This chapter is not, however, a study of how ethnography as an academic discipline constructed images of peasant traditions or folk culture as an expression or form of opposition to communist rule. Its goal, rather, is to explore how various social groups appropriated folklore and ethnography in order to carve out alternative cultural spaces of their own. The main purpose of this chapter is to show how ethnography, folklore activities, and the cultural heritage of the peasantry created the sense of a unified community and alternative modes of thought in the period of socialism, even if the application of folklore was multi-faceted in the socialist period and ethnographic studies and folk culture activities were mobilized to service the ideological needs of the state and state policies intended to enforce the cultural hegemony of the communist regimes in most socialist countries.

In nineteenth-century Eastern Europe, the peasants in the emerging nation states were viewed as the soul and identity of the nation, and folklore was regarded as the legitimate expression of peasant culture. National movement activists considered folklore and folk art important parts of modern national culture. The intelligentsia and intellectuals believed that products of peasant culture (songs, stories, sayings, dances, etc.) were an important part of the general national culture. National movement activists and leftist intellectuals (e.g. Béla Bartók in Hungary, Jurgis Dovydasaitis in Lithuania, etc.) in the late nineteenth century and also during the interwar period collected, published, and researched folk culture. Collecting, preserving, and analyzing the artifacts of the past played an important role in creating the emerging identities of nations.¹ This nation-based character of folk and peasant culture remained a palpable attitude in many countries of the Soviet bloc under socialism.

There were paradoxical interpretations of folk culture and related nationalism during the socialist era. Communism as a political ideal was strongly connected with internationalism, and indeed nationalism was officially and,

1 Herzog, “‘National in Form and Socialist in Content’?”; Silverman, “The Politics of Folklore in Bulgaria.”

in the early phase of communism, also practically condemned as a bourgeois ideology. However, communist leaders elsewhere in the Soviet bloc realized that notions of national identity were things they could and needed to use. From the outset communist leaders started to support folk art with a focus on art traditions. They recognized that folk art was closely connected to the people they were addressing and from whom they hoped to derive their legitimacy. In addition, folk cultures were also considered important and were supported by the socialist governments in various ways. For instance, the regimes sponsored folklore festivals, folk schools, and ensembles and they also supported and oversaw ethnographic research.

Nevertheless, several aspects of traditional folk culture, including its religious, ethnic, and conservative characteristics, were incompatible with the goal of creating a unified socialist folk culture. Folklore movements and ethnographic activities focused on patterns of human creativity in rural life. These movements revealed the distinctiveness of the cultures of the villagers, their creative skills, their aesthetic sense, and other values which were often distinct or even distant from the culture of the working class. Significant interest and demand had arisen for folk arts and crafts, festivals, holidays, and folk song and dance in most of the countries of the Soviet bloc during the socialist era. These processes can be regarded as folklorism or revived folklore because in this context folklore existed outside of its source community, but it could return to its original settings. Hermann Bausinger² argues that for something to be folklorism, the artifacts of the folk culture in question must be shown outside of their original context with new functions and purposes, and he also talks about the case of revived folklore, when folklore reassumes its traditional functions in a new cultural context. Bausinger states that in such cases of “second existence folklore,” it is difficult to distinguish between folklorism and folklore, as there are no firm boundaries.³ In the following, some descriptions are offered of forms of folk culture which bore countercultural connotations and were excluded from the state supported socialist folk art and ethnography.

Countercultural folk art activities at times were based on everyday recreational characteristics of folk culture as an alternative form of cultural life and youth culture and as a channel for the expression of critical opinions. In this context, folklore exists outside of its “source community,” and it is materialistic and popular.⁴ The Hungarian folk revival movements, including the so-called “dance house” (táncház) movement and the Studio of Young Folk Artists (the so-called Nomadic Generation), which were formed at the end of the 1960s, demonstrate very well this aspect of folk art. The dance house movement was an urban grassroots youth revival movement that emerged in the

² Bausinger, *Folk Culture in a World of Technology*.

³ March, *The Tamburitza Tradition*.

⁴ Šmidchens, “Folklorism Revisited”; Bausinger, *Folk Culture in a World of Technology*.

1970s and 1980s in the period of late socialism in Hungary. It “provided alternatives to officially supported, mandatory youth activities and played a vital role in the everyday life of young people in socialist Hungary.”⁵ The dance house movement can be regarded as a subculture which was able to create a shared identity with an intrinsically oppositional stance.⁶ Members of the younger generations living in urban settings and urban intellectuals integrated folk culture into the culture of modern city life. The dance house movement reinvented the institution of the village dance house in urban settings. “In the period of milder political suppression of late reform socialism, the dance house established strong communities of young people with similar tastes, values, sets of identities and critical ideas deviating from the official view.”⁷ Members of the Studio of Young Artists aimed to draw inspiration and influence from deeper spheres of folk culture, instead of the schematic folk art. Members of dance house movement and members of the Studio of Young Artists rediscovered the cultures of the Hungarian-speaking communities in Transylvania and other neighboring countries, and in these cultures they discovered a depository of Hungarian traditions. This grassroots discovery of minority Hungarians and their folk culture became highly awkward for the regimes on either side of the border. Cultural artifacts drawing on the traditions of suppressed minority Hungarians and the narratives of minority grievances in the neighboring countries were strong statements against the attitudes of the communist leadership toward Hungarian minority issues.⁸ The hiker’s movement in Lithuania and other tourism-based initiatives in the Baltic states had very similar characteristics. They were also so-called “back-to-the-roots” movements and organizations which aimed to rediscover their country’s history and culture, including authentic folk culture. These kinds of activities were very popular among university students and young people.⁹ Thus, in the socialist era, the “folklore movement was part of a wide stream of amateur culture, which it exceeded in many respects, and formed strongly not only the professional and personal lives of individuals, but also knowledge of folk culture in general.”¹⁰

Folklore became part of the mission to recover national themes, and it had a significant effect on cultural and political discourse everywhere in the socialist countries with varying strength. Folk elements appeared in pop culture, e.g. in rock music. Folk rock was very popular in Hungary beginning in the 1970s. One of the most successful examples of the fusion of folk and rock elements is the Hungarian rock opera “Stephen, the King,” the first perfor-

5 Balogh and Fülemile, “Cultural Alternatives,” 43.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid., 44.

8 Ibid.

9 Herzog, “‘National in Form and Socialist in Content’?”

10 Pavlicová and Uhlíková, “Folklore Movement and Its Function in the Totalitarian Society,” 31.

mance of which was held in 1983. It constitutes a rediscovery of national themes, and it had a significant effect on cultural and political discourse.¹¹

Other types of folk-inspired pop music were seen as countercultural manifestations and were excluded from the official and state supported folk music in several countries during the socialist era. Wedding music in Bulgaria is one of the best example of this. Wedding music became a mass underground cultural phenomenon in Bulgaria in the 1970s. It was prohibited by the socialist government and it was labelled kitsch. One of its important characteristics is that it was mostly played by Roma musicians, who were regarded as a quintessential “other” by Bulgarians, thus wedding music was outside the authentic state-sponsored Bulgarian folk music and was excluded from official folk events and festivals during the socialist era.¹² The case of Newly Composed Folk Music (NCFM) in the 1970s in Yugoslavia is very similar. This music was also characterized by a combination of pop music and regional folk elements, and it was seen as an expression of opposition to the progressive modern Yugoslavia and as the realm of uncultured, uneducated, and generally backward people, so it was excluded from both the progressive Yugoslavian cultural scene and the allegedly authentic, state-supported Yugoslavian folk music.¹³ It is important to emphasize that NCMF was the basis of so-called turbo-folk music, which was one of the most important cultural expressions of nationalist thinking and war propaganda in the 1990s in the post-Yugoslav successor states.¹⁴ Not only the nationalist but also the commercial aspects of this folk-inspired pop music (e.g. wedding feast rock in Hungary, *svatbarska muzika* in Bulgaria) were important. This music was the first commercial success of rock music infused with rural popular music. It was a viable economic niche located in the realm of the free market in several countries of the socialist bloc in the 1980s.¹⁵

Many aspects of research on folk culture and ethnography enjoyed the support of the socialist states in most of the Eastern-European countries. Everyday life in small villages during the period of forced industrialization (for instance the everyday lives of miners) became the most important issue for new socialist folk research. Workers replaced peasants as the nation's main representatives in these new folk research endeavors. Nevertheless, several aspects of ethnographic research collided with Soviet ideology and so-called role models.¹⁶ Several filters were used to create a proper image of the nation. However, ethnographic research was done with a proper archival system in all of the countries involved, which means that many hidden and offi-

11 Feischmidt and Pulay, “Rocking the Nation.”

12 Silverman, “Bulgarian Wedding Music Between Folk and Chalga.”

13 Cvorovic, *Turbo-Folk Music and Cultural Representations of National Identity in Former Yugoslavia*.

14 Feischmidt and Pulay, “Rocking the Nation.”

15 Szelényi, *Városi Társadalmi Egyenlőtlenségek*, 79; Feischmidt and Pulay, “Rocking the Nation”; Silverman, “Bulgarian Wedding Music Between Folk and Chalga.”

16 Pavlicová and Uhlíková, “Folklore Movement and Its Function in the Totalitarian Society.”

cially discouraged parts of folk culture and the peasant heritage were collected and archived, even if they were not selected for publication in many cases. The case of ethnomusicological research in Kladensko (a coal mining region near Prague) by the Institute for Ethnography of the Czech Academy of Sciences demonstrates the possible political pressure which sought to manipulate the publication of research findings.¹⁷ A comparison of the book on Kladensko published in 1959 with archival and research materials offers a very different picture. "A rich assortment of drinking, erotic, religious, and humorous songs was collected, but they were not deemed suitable for publication."¹⁸ In most cases, the ethnographic research was not a form of conscious resistance or criticism of the regimes, but the topics, interests, and values created an alternative culture and mode of thinking which broke and even collided with the state ideology and identity. The folk music collection of László Lajtha¹⁹ in Hungary provides insights into the private practices of alternative culture and opposition on the level of the private individual during socialist era. Lajtha's documents represent a pre-communist cultural heritage which had a kind of critical perspective on communist ideology. Several ethnographers in the socialist countries managed to maintain their autonomy in their research at the communist state institutions, and they conducted ethnographic research in many cases in contradiction with the official cultural policies. Ethnographic research at the ASTRA Museum in Sibiu in Romania, for instance Cornel Irimie's ethnographic research, illustrate this very well.

Alongside the artistic heritage of the peasantry, the notion of peasant origin and cultural bonds also created alternative cultural attitudes and forms of behavior that could have been interpreted as expressions of opposition. Artists and intellectuals could embody and also be regarded as representatives of pre-communists on the one hand and alternative and oppositional culture and values everywhere in the Socialist bloc on the other. The rural is represented as the lost and found community, lost and found traditions, lost and found beauty, etc. There was a strongly idyllic view of rural pastimes. The rural idyll is strongly connected to nostalgia. Rural places can be regarded as sites of memory. Nostalgia is an important emotion in society. Nostalgia in the social sciences revolves around three main topics: collective memory, a yearning for the past, and a yearning for identity. The scholar who introduced the concept of collective memory to Western discourses was Maurice Halbwachs,²⁰ who argued that collective memory is always socially constructed to explain the past in the present. The sociology of nostalgia is also rooted in the assumption that nostalgia is an individual experience, but its origins and

17 Kratochvíl, "'Our Song!' Nationalism in Folk Music Research and Revival in Socialist Czechoslovakia."

18 Ibid., 402.

19 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Folk Music Collection of Lajtha, László", by Gabriella Vámos, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

20 Halbwachs and Coser, *On Collective Memory*.

implications are highly social. Davis²¹ defines nostalgia as a longing for the past, and he sees nostalgia as a tactic used by people to hold on to a sense of identity. Gáspár Nagy, a deeply religious Catholic poet of peasant origins, was one of the first people to allude to the 1956 Revolution in his poems. His works were banned many times in Hungary, and he became a significant figure of the opposition by the 1980s. One also might think of Arsenie Platon, a Moldavian poet with a peasant background who criticized the ethnic discrimination of Moldavians and called for the overthrow of Soviet power. In his poems and short proclamations, he created a kind of art-based grassroots cultural opposition during the socialist era. Peasant heritage and behavior also became topics of focus in the social science discourses from the 1980's, especially in Hungary and Poland, from a more social than art-based point of view. Descendants of the former middle-class and wealthy peasant families were regarded as potential agents and the most important actors of the social transformation and the liquidation of the state socialist system. As Iván Szelényi stated in 1988, "The main hero of the Socialist Entrepreneurs is the Hungarian peasant and worker becoming petit bourgeois: those men of the street who, during the four decades of communism, have invented how to create a life-space for themselves in the iron hoop of redistributive economy and how they could break up the social and economic system of state socialism by undermining it slowly for decades—in the book I call this a 'quiet revolution coming from below'."²²

To summarize, we can say that several aspects of folk culture and peasant heritage included the potential for alternative culture and thinking as well as expressions of cultural opposition. In this chapter, some countercultural forms and manifestations of folk and peasant culture during the socialist era were described, such as (1) folk art in recreational and youth culture, (2) folk in pop culture, (3) ethnographic research and archives on countercultural elements of folk culture and (4) peasant heritage in the values and behaviors of dissents and social transformation. In the following, the subchapters provide deeper insight into the different forms countercultural trends and movements and aspects of folk culture and ethnographic activities in the socialist countries. The first two subchapters examine the forms of folk art which inspired youth and recreational culture during the socialist era, such as the dance house movement in Hungary and the folk movements, especially tourist movements, in the Baltic states. The third subchapter presents the so-called underground ethnographic research in Romania.

21 Davis, *Yearning for Yesterday*.

22 Szelényi, *Városi Társadalmi Egyenlőtlenségek*, 79.

“The Dance Movement, Nomadic Generations”:
Archives of the Hungarian Folk Music and Dance Revival
Movement of the 1970s and 1980s

The “dance movement” which began in Hungary in 1972 was definitely a Hungarian phenomenon, but it was not a unique tendency in folklore trends. It belongs among the array of revival movements of the era (movements which could be found all over the world and which shared numerous characteristics).²³ The essence of the movement was the return to roots and peasant culture and the use of folk music and folk dance as leisure time activities that could help build a sense of community and a sense of identity amidst the circumstances of modern life.²⁴ On the cultural palette of socialist Hungary, the dance movement was located somewhere between the “tolerated” and “forbidden” categories of Kádár’s cultural policies (various forms of culture and recreation were grouped according to the three T’s under Kádár, “támogattott,” “tűrt,” and “tiltott,” or supported, tolerated, and forbidden).²⁵

From the outset, some of the prominent representatives of the movement strove to document the more important events and collect and preserve all the relevant materials on which they could get their hands. Some of these private archives eventually wound up as part of institutional holdings and are accessible to researchers, while some are still in private possession and are difficult for scholars or historians to use.

This chapter offers a brief overview of the history of the Hungarian folk music and folk dance revival movement and its social and political background. It focuses in particular on the dance movement of the late socialist era (i.e. the 1970s and 1980s), and it provides descriptions of the most important archives created by the members of this movement.

“Folklorism” – The Dance House and Folk Art Movement

The discovery and deliberate *reinterpretation* of peasant culture and, within this, folklore (folk songs, folk music, folk dance) and the decorative arts and, furthermore, the elevation, as it were, of this culture to the status of “high” culture (culture of classes other than the peasantry) were part of a larger pro-

²³ Livingstone, “Music revivals.”

²⁴ The dance movement’s acquisition of an institutional form was quite unique: the activities that were organized and the organization frameworks that were developed in order to further the preservation and revival of elements of folk dance, folk music, and folk arts which produced object works of art were remarkably successful. In 2010, the so-called “dance house” method was added to the UNESCO World Heritage registry of “the best practices of preservation” as “the Hungarian model of the transmission of intellectual and spiritual cultural heritage.” Accessed March 14, 2016. <http://www.unesco.hu/kultura/tanchaz-modszer-mint>.

²⁵ Klaniczay, *Ellenkultúra*, 10, 17–24.

cess that began in the nineteenth century. Sometimes, this culture bore the elements of a form of counterculture (as part of or a tool of an ideology belonging to a spiritual, cultural, or political trend that constituted a break from the mainstream) and sometimes it served the goals of the prevailing power. Within this, the notion of folklore as a distinctive kind of “mother tongue” gathered ever more currency beginning at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. At the turn of the century, the artists of Gödöllő, for instance, tried to incorporate peasant culture into their everyday lives in a “Tolstoyesque” manner, and at the same time, they elevated elements of folk culture into high culture in a Bartókesque fashion.²⁶ In the interwar period, István Györffy, who came to regard folk tradition as the foundation of national culture and education, formulated practical notions concerning the appropriation and use of folk culture.²⁷ Without going into excessive detail concerning the “folklorism” of the interwar period (which was motivated in part by social concerns and in part by national, patriotic visions and which touched almost every stratum of society), it is worth noting simply that almost all of the later folk revival movements and trends borrowed a great deal from Györffy.²⁸ After the communists seized power in 1948, the state cultural policy, which was based on the Soviet model, strove to do away with peasant culture, while at the same time the Folk Art Institute, an institution created in 1951 and based, again, on the Soviet model, assumed close supervision of every sphere of contemporary folk art. The purpose of the institution was “to inspire the folk to compose folk art in order to capture ever more clearly the new life and the socialist message” by “promoting the artistic guidance of the cultural mass movement.”²⁹ The cultural regime also strove to reform the folk dance performed on stage in the spirit of “Moiseyevism”: the typical choreographies were amalgamations of stylized, simplified motifs and rigid motions and theatrical contrivances that were entirely foreign to peasant culture. The unfavorable political-ideological context notwithstanding, the Folk Art Institute became a leading center for research on folk music and folk dance.³⁰ Indeed, as a kind of “countercultural” studio, it also provided something of a refuge for many “class enemies,” including prominent personalities (including for instance Elemér Muharay and László Lajtha) who in the interwar period had

26 Much as Bartók did with music (Lendvai, *Béla Bartók*; Schneider, *Bartók*), in their paintings and frescos István Zichy and Aladár Körösfői Kriesch (Szabó, *Zichy*) used elements of folklore in a manner that allowed them to preserve their distinctive original features and value while nonetheless appearing in an entirely new aesthetic quality in a non-peasant setting. Similarly, Mariska Undi did this with clothing design (Juhász, “Ot narodnogo kostyuma,” 14–15).

27 Györffy, *Néphagyomány és nemzeti művelődés*.

28 László Diószegi, for instance, makes this contention in connection with the twentieth-century Hungarian dance movement (Diószegi, “Historic Moments.”), as does American scholar Mary N. Taylor on the basis of research she did for several years in Hungary on the dance house movement (Taylor, “Does Folk Dancing Make Hungarians.”)

29 Cited from the 1953 work plan.

30 Continuing the program outlined by Kodály and Györffy.

been part of the so-called “Gyöngyösbokréta” or “Pearly Bouquet” movement and who, along with the young people who came to work alongside them (for instance György Martin and Ernő Pesovár), became some of the most influential figures of the scholarship on Hungarian folk music and folk art. They helped members of the generation of young choreographers who, beginning in the 1960s, started to search for new paths in the art of dance as they took part in amateur ensembles in progressive workshops that were maintained by trade unions and were less strictly controlled by the state.³¹ At the end of the 1960s, a new era began in other fields of the folklore revival. In part because of the influence of two television contests, *Nyílik a rózsa* (“The rose opens”) and, later, *Röpülj páva* (“Fly, peacock”), folk songs became popular among every social stratum, and parallel to this, in intellectual circles a vibrant discourse was underway concerning the role of folklore in modern culture.³²

Following all these antecedents, in the early 1970s, at the initiative of urban young people, the so-called “dance house movement” began to flower. As Taylor observes, this movement “arose from the interaction of state socialist cultural policy, the activities of populist cultural managers, global trends in folk revival, and spontaneous youth movements.”³³ The dance house movement offered new interpretations of the tradition of village dance occasions in an urban setting.³⁴ The first dance house, which was organized in 1972 originally as a private function, was made an open event in response to widespread interest, and dance instruction was even added. This was the spark which started the dance house movement as a phenomenon which spoke to the wider strata of Hungarian society. Village dances and village folk music became one of the new forms of urban entertainment and leisure-time activity. The members of the Studio of Young Folk Artists, who borrowed a phrase from oppositional poet Sándor Csoóri and dubbed themselves “the nomad generation” as an attempt to capture their lifestyle and their relationship to the regime) used peasant architectural and handicraft traditions in their ecological, landscape, and creative work.³⁵ The handicrafts, folk music, and folk

31 Diószegi, “Historic Moments,” 5–6.

32 Vargyas, “Akarjuk-e, hogy éljen a népdal?”

33 Taylor, “Does Folk Dancing Make Hungarians,” 18–19. See Halmos, “The Táncház Movement”; Ronström, “Revival in Retrospect”; Taylor, “The Politics of Culture.”

34 A very archaic dance and musical culture has survived in the city of Szék in Transylvania (Sic in Romanian), which lies to the north of the city of Cluj and the population of which is almost entirely Hungarian-speaking. The term “dance house” comes from Szék. It referred to regularly weekly dance occasions. This format was adopted in 1972 at the first dance house club evening that was organized by four amateur Budapest dance groups. The participants in the event danced the entire set of traditional dances in tradition form together with guests who had come from Szék (“just like back in Szék”) and with the cooperation of the members of the recently formed Sebő band.

35 According to György Földes, the right-wing opposition which began to form in the 1970s used three key terms (market, democracy, nation). Of these terms, “nation” was also an important rallying cry for the new folk revival movement (Földes, *Hatalom és mozgalom*, 168–69).

dance movements, which shared many closely interwoven threads, offered an invigorating alternative to the socialist youth culture and leisure-time activities of the 1970s and 1980s, which were strictly monitored and saturated with ideology. “The vibrant sound of the newly discovered authentic music, the liberating feeling of improvisational movement, the joy of the creative activity and the social experience of the fellowship of like-minded young people all contributed to a critically minded young generation’s expression of rebellious worldviews.”³⁶ This folk art movement can be interpreted as one of the (nostalgic) countercultures of the period of Kádár socialism.³⁷ As Márczi argued:

This culture exerted a strong influence on a receptive group among the members of the younger generations of the 1970 and 1980s, an influence which even led to the emergence of new lifestyles. It was able to produce forms of culture that were expressive of identity, in contrast with the vapid slogans of socialist culture and the products of the entertainment industry. (...) It provided a genuine alternative to forms which had become rigid in power: the freedom of one’s own existence, self-organization, and self-expression.³⁸

Logically, the search for original traditions led members of these movements to the Hungarian-speaking communities beyond Hungary’s borders, where the very circumstance of life as a national minority and the distinctive cultural trajectories of the neighboring countries added a good three or four decades to the life of traditional peasant culture. The pilgrimages to sources of living folk art beyond Hungary’s borders also began to raise questions which until then had been muted at best concerning the condition in which the minorities communities lived. This was an “awkward” subject for the regime (one of many), which branded the dance house movement and the intellectual circles³⁹ associated with it with the label nationalist. In the eyes of the regime, which was founded on an ideology which it claimed was international, these expressions of sentiments of national attachment and cravings for national autonomy seemed ideologically dangerous. This may have been one of the reasons behind the campaigns of harassment which were launched by the authorities beginning in 1974. One of the common methods of exerting pressure adopted by the

36 Fülemile, “Folk Art Heritage,” 72. For more on the folk dance and music revival as one of the forms of cultural opposition see Balogh and Fülemile, “Cultural Alternatives.”

37 See Klaniczay, *Ellenkultúra*.

38 Márczi, “Hová lett a Nomád nemzedék?”

39 From the outset, several members of the folkish-national opposition (officially, the opposition which was “attacking on the basis of a nationalist platform”), which as is widely known was the same group of people which came to form the core of the Hungarian Democratic Forum, had close ties to the members of the dance house movement and the nomad generation. They were regular participants in the dance houses and the folk art camps, often as invited presenters. They were also kept under close watch by the secret police and figured, for instance, in the one of the major cases led by the Ministry of Interior in which they were referred to by the codename “Subások,” meaning “sheepskin-wearers,” but also suggesting a kind of clandestine operation (since the phrase “suba alatt,” or “under the sheepskin” in Hungarian refers to something done surreptitiously).

state was the use of undercover informants who were always present at the dance house events, including tours held by the dance ensembles in Hungary and abroad, as well as the (sometimes successful) attempts to recruit new agents, disciplinary proceedings, denunciations, rejections of applications for passports (justified with references to state interests), etc.

Beginning in the mid-1980s, the oppositional tone of the dance house and folk music movements and indeed their attachment to the emerging opposition became increasingly unequivocal. The first "national" rock opera, *István a király* (King Stephen of Hungary), which was composed and performed for the first time in 1983 as a cooperative endeavor among Hungarian folk musicians, folk dancers, and rock musicians, was a major success, as were some of the iconic pop songs of the time which had subversive implications, such as "Nem úgy van most, mint volt régen" (Things today are not as they used to be) and "Adjon Isten mind jobbat, ne csak mindig a rosszat" (Let God provide ever better, not always the bad), arrangements of two folk songs on a record released in 1986 by the group Muzsikás. For the "sharp-eared" audience of the time, which had grown accustomed to reading between the lines under socialism, the original texts of the folk songs acquired immediate political meaning and were interpreted as oppositional messages. At the end of the 1980s, folk musicians often took part in the various gatherings and demonstrations against the system, where the protesting crowds would sing along as the bands performed these and other patriotic songs (for instance the Kosuth-nóta, or Kossuth song, which was one of the most popular recruitment songs of the 1848–49 Revolution and War of Independence). During the campaigns before the free elections in 1990, a line from the popular folk song "Hidegen fújnak a szelek" (Cold winds are blowing) was used by the Alliance of Free Democrats as one of its main slogans: "Szabad élet szabad madár," or "free life free bird."

*Institutional Archives, Private Collections*⁴⁰

The primary goal of the COURAGE project is to find and study archives which contain important information concerning forms of cultural opposition under socialism and make these archives more widely familiar to the larger public. In the case of the dance house movement and the so-called nomad generation, these archives include the private collections belonging to the more prominent representatives of the movement, the complete digitalized contents of *folkMAGazin* (a periodical which began publication in 1993), and the bequests of prominent individuals (Ferenc Kiss, Sándor Csoóri, László Nagy, Imre Makovecz, and others) who were in some way affiliated with the

40 For more on the dance house and folk art movement and the interviews in its archives see Juhász, "Nomád nemzedék."

movement.⁴¹ Since the organization and cataloguing of the latter are still underway, in this chapter, we present the three archives described below, which are highly significant as collections and relatively easily accessible: the Dance House Archive,⁴² which was created by Béla Halmos (one of the founders of the dance house movement); the collection of Ferenc Bodor⁴³ concerning the dance house movement and the nomad generation; and the digitalized archive of *folkMAGazin*.

The Dance House Archive

Beginning in the early 1970s, Béla Halmos and his wife and fellow musician Katalin Gyenes began collecting newspaper clippings, placards, program booklets, photographs, etc. that were related to the dance house movement. In 1997, in connection with an exhibition organized to celebrate the 25-year jubilee of the dance house movement, he outlined that purpose of the Dance House Archive, which documents the history of the movement, as well as its various activities and tasks, the principles according to which it functions, the kinds of items it includes in its collection, and the main collection units. Even at the time, Halmos was already envisioning a digital collection which would be more space efficient, more easily accessible, and searchable, and he also addressed questions concerning copyright protections.⁴⁴

In 1999, the Dance House Archive began to operate as a section of the Folk Art Division of the Hungarian Cultural Institute⁴⁵ (after the Hungarian Heritage House was founded in 2001 as its legal successor, it became a collection unit of the Lajtha László Folk Documentation Center). Because of the lack of human resources, the Archive was unable to pursue systematic collection work, but it nonetheless managed to make occasional acquisitions. Béla Halmos was able to complement the materials in the collection, which consisted primarily of photographs and documents, with several hundred hours of interviews which he systematically planned and held (the “Oral Archive”).⁴⁶ In these interviews, members of the movement (the “dance housers”) share their memories of the events, as do prominent figures of the intelligentsia and the art world. As they speak about their attachment to folk culture and the move-

41 Ferenc Kiss’ bequest was catalogued and digitally arranged by his son, Ferenc Kiss II, a folk musician and composer (Kiss, “Nomád nemzetség.”). With the support of the state, a separate building has been set aside for the bequest of Imre Makovecz.

42 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[Folk Dance House Archives](#)”, by Gabriella Vámos and Katalin Juhász, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018. (forthcoming)

43 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “[Nomad Dossiers](#)”, by Zoltán Pál, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

44 Halmos, “The Táncház Archive.”

45 In the early years, the author of this sub-chapter, Katalin Juhász worked as part of the staff of the Dance House Archive.

46 The interviews held in the Oral Archive, which were done over the course of almost 15 years (1995–2009), come to a total of 434 cassette tapes of recorded material.

ment itself, most of them also touch on the ways in which the dance house movement was tied to cultural opposition. Following Halmos' death in 2014, his entire bequest was made part of the holdings of the Hungarian Heritage House, where under the leadership of Péter Árendás the staff of the Folklore Documentary Library and Archive is currently organizing and cataloguing it.⁴⁷ In connection with the work being done as part of the COURAGE project, it became clear that there is a serious need to add to the interview materials from new perspectives. The staff of the archive is now continuing work on the interviews from the new perspectives which have arisen.⁴⁸ After the renovations which are currently underway on the building have been completed (hopefully by early 2019), the complete material of the Dance House Archive will be available for research in the Hungarian Heritage House Library.

The Bequest of Ferenc Bodor: "Nomad Dossiers"

Historian Ferenc Bodor, who was born in Budapest of parents from Háromszék (once a county in Transylvania, now it lies in the counties of Covasna and Braşov), served as the librarian of the Hungarian College of the Applied Arts and the later as the director of the Tölgyfa Gallery (Oak Tree Gallery). He was familiar among members of the dance house movement as "the stormy rag-leg of the dance houses and the parties at private residences, the expert on artistic monuments in Slovakia and Transylvania, an excellent patriot whom the communist secret police keeps under close observation and harasses, both on this side of the border and on the far side, because of his roots, his work in the preservation of spiritual values and objects of value, and his beard, which in the eyes of the regime is unruly."⁴⁹ After Bodor's death, the materials in his bequest, which were thematically rich, ended up in the holdings of various public collections. In 1996, the People's Artistic and Public Education Informational and Methodological Center (which grew out of the Studio of Young Folk Artists and which later became the Public Education Informational Institute and then the Foundation for Cultural Innovation and which was housed in what was once the so-called Silk-Winding building in Óbuda) received the collection on the subject of "Nomad newspapers and photographs," which consisted of 18 boxes of newspaper articles, small prints, and photographs. The Center was linked to Bodor by many threads. Under the direction of József Zelnik, this studio unified the youth folk art movement which emerged in Hungary in the 1960s (Zelnik was also the person who managed to prevail on Hungaroton to issue the first dance house phonographic records). Bodor

47 See the detailed introduction by Péter Árendás on the website of the Hungarian Heritage House. Accessed March 14, 2017. <http://www.hagyomanyokhaza.hu/fdk/hagyatekok/>.

48 Barbara Szecsődi, one of the members of the staff at the archive, is one of the people preparing the new interviews.

49 Zelnik, "Szent lődörgő."

erected a monument to this era as one of the participants in and organizers of the movement with the emblematic volume of documents entitled *Nomád nemzedék* (Nomad Generation), which he edited and which was published by the studio, and which in the meantime has become almost legendary.⁵⁰ The library of the Foundation for Cultural Innovation has become famous in Hungary as a “green library.” Alongside the materials in its holdings on ecological issues, it also collects documents and literature concerning the nomad generation.⁵¹

The folkMAGazin Digital Archive

Alongside the two collections presented above, *folkMAGazin*, the periodical launched by the movement in 1994, is also a major source. The issues which were published over the course of the past almost 25 years can be consulted today as a kind of database that sheds light on the shifts in the movement “from inside.” The various documents (interviews, opinion pieces, debates) offer information directly from the “dance housers” themselves about both the events and the social, political, and cultural milieu in which folklorism emerged and evolved. The digitalized version of *folkMAGazin* has also been issued on a CD-ROM which contains all the issues published from 1994 until the end of 2016, including the special issues.⁵² All the issues of the periodical are also available online.⁵³ *folkMAGazin* nicely complements the materials in the Dance House Archive and the Bodor bequest. It also provides useful reference points which will help readers and researchers orient themselves when looking into the collections.

Summary

The dance house movement which was launched in Hungary in 1972 was a distinctive Hungarian folklorism phenomenon which can be seen both as an organic continuation of antecedents in Hungary and part the international youth and folklore movements which were taking place in the late 1960s. The archives presented here contain not simply the materials or “mementos” of the first decades of the cultural life of the nomad generation and the dance house movement. They are also, if perhaps indirectly, value documents of an

50 Bodor, *Nomád nemzedék*.

51 The complete registry of the bequest and some of the digitalized materials are also available online. Accessed September 17, 2017. <http://www.kia.hu/konyvtar/bodor/bodor.htm>. The video recordings of the interviews done for the five-part documentary film *Nomád nemzedék* (Nomad Generation), directed by Márton Ledniczky, are also held here as part of the bequest. Excerpts from the interviews were published in the periodical *Ökotáj* (Eco-Landscape), edited by Bodor.

52 *FolkMAGazin*. CD-ROM.

53 Accessed September 17, 2017. <http://www.folkmagazin.hu/index.php/olvasoterem>

era which present the cultural life of the last two decades of the Kádár era from a distinctive, even everyday perspective. Research on the materials in these archives will yield innumerable fascinating insights. With the appropriate source criticism and the inclusion of other sources, once the proper preparatory work has been done, a comprehensive scholarly work on the history of the dance house movement could be written which would nicely complement and counterbalance the volumes of news reports and memoirs and the highly readable but nonetheless one-sided historical works written primarily by journalists.

Folk Movements in Lithuania during the Soviet Period

Several factors influenced the attitudes of the Soviet government and its policies on ethnography and folk culture in the Baltic states during the soviet period. Nevertheless, the Soviet government did not consider *folk culture* or various ethnographic activities dangerous to the regime *per se*. According to the Soviet government, it was important to protect the folk movement from "external," i.e. "bourgeois nationalist" attempts to politicize it and turn it into a way of fighting the political system.

Folk movements became particularly intense in the Soviet Baltic republics after Stalin's death during the so-called de-Stalinization or political liberalization ("thaw") period. Several important "trends" can be distinguished in the folk movements from this period. The first was practically controlled by the government and "party organs," despite formally having "social organization status." These organs included ethnographic societies,⁵⁴ which had their own publications, and a republic-wide organizational structure. The government supported the activities of ethnographic societies. However, sometimes their activities drew some criticism. A collection of articles compiled by ethnographers who were well-known in Lithuania (Stravinskas, Dundulienė, and famous geographer and traveler Česlovas Kudaba) about Gervėčiai (a settlement that was incorporated into the Belarusian SSR, even though the absolute majority of its inhabitants were Lithuanians) became the focus of this sort of criticism. According to party bosses, the collection of articles was "drenched" in the "idealization of the pre-socialist way of life of Lithuanians who lived Gervėčiai." This episode would suggest that even "official" ethnographic activities were quite closely monitored and controlled by the government.

In the 1960s, new types of folk movements emerged in all three Soviet Baltic republics, which despite having begun "from below," i.e. at the initiative of separate individuals or groups, were ultimately accepted by the government and won active support. In Lithuania, self-organized ethnographic

54 The chairman of the society was usually a deputy of the Minister of Culture.

ensembles first became established in Vilnius.⁵⁵ Amateur folk dance and song ensembles were also popular in Estonia and Latvia. In Estonia, they were established within various institutions: culture and folk culture centers, higher education institutions, museums, etc. In addition to these types of folklore movements, which were rather easily “integrated” into the official Soviet culture and were even considered representations of that culture, there were other forms of folk movements that balanced on the “edge” of Soviet legality. They comprised another “trend” in folk movements.

In the early 1950s, tourist clubs and so-called travelers’ clubs started forming in the three Soviet Baltic republics. The government supported the emergence of these kinds of clubs in a variety of ways. University students became actively involved in this “tourist movement” at the end of the 1950s.⁵⁶ The official aim of the tourism clubs was “to rear the young builders of socialism,” to strengthen them physically, and to nurture young people as loyal defenders of the USSR. As the tourism movement became increasingly developed and the student body became even more involved, its aims also started to change. In Lithuania, a hikers’ (*žygeiviai*) movement formed under the banner of tourism-travelers clubs. Its objective was to become better acquainted with the country’s history and culture, to study the nation’s customs and traditions, and to look after monuments important to the nation’s history. Hikers’ congresses celebrated various pagan festivals, especially the *Rasos*, or Summer Solstice festival, during which various rituals were performed.⁵⁷

Folk movements also formed in Estonia and Latvia in the late 1960s. They were similar to the Lithuanian hikers’ movements in terms of their objectives and character. In Estonia, an example of this kind of folk movement was the “back-to-our-roots” type of organization, which searched for “authentic” folk culture, unaffected by modernity or Soviet influence.⁵⁸ A similar movement existed in Latvia among the youth and university student body.⁵⁹ Neither in Estonia nor in Latvia were folk movements that had arisen “from below” as widespread or organized as in Lithuania.

In Lithuania, the hikers’ movement gained momentum and grew in 1968–1971. It was even tolerated by the government for some time. This kind of government policy probably depended on several circumstances: first, a certain *inertia of political liberalization*, which was determined by the de-Stalin-

55 Šmidhens, “A Baltic Music: The Folklore Movement,” 120–21.

56 In Lithuania, the first tourist clubs started forming in 1952–53. The LSSR Tourism Federation was founded in 1953. It encouraged mass sports-tourism. In 1962, it was reorganized to become the Lithuanian Republican Board of Tourism and Excursions. The Vilnius University Tourism Club was founded in 1958, and the Vilnius City Tourism Club was founded in 1961. At roughly the same time, tourism clubs started forming in other cities of the LSSR. They were often under the patronage of local professional union committees.

57 Ramanauskaitė, *Subkultūra: fenomenas ir modernumas*, 55.

58 Hercog, “National in Form and Socialist in Content,” 132–34.

59 Šmidhens, “A Baltic Music: The Folklore Movement,” 132.

ization policies. On the other hand, toleration of the movement could have been due to the cultivation of pagan traditions in the hikers' movement. We could say that the government considered "paganism" a counterweight to the traditional Lithuanian religion, Catholicism, and thus expected to draw young people away from the influence of the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, we cannot ignore the circumstance that in effect, the attitudes of government, party, and security officials towards this kind of self-organized movement was cautious and suspicious. It was believed that its members could easily become "politicized" under the effects of "bourgeois nationalist ideology" and thus the movement could become a suitable medium for the spread of anti-Soviet attitudes and ideas.

Indeed, the hikers' movement did start gradually to "overstep" the "boundaries" of legal ethnographic activities that were tolerated by the government. We know of at least several hikers' events that had more than just a "purely" ethnographic character, such as the tidying up of the birthplaces of the pilots Steponas Darius and Stasys Girėnas, who died under tragic and mysterious circumstances.⁶⁰ In May 1969 at Dariškės, the birthplace of Steponas Darius, around 800 hikers used their hands to build a 3 meter-high grave. Near the grave they erected an altar hewn from rock and a 4 meter-high oak pillar lowered to the ground with the inscription "1933–1969" (the author was the art institute student Žulys). They also tended Lithuanian army volunteer graves and hill-forts, etc. Some hiking clubs (such as the Kaunas city Polytechnical Institute's club *Ažuolas*, which evolved out of the *Eiklios kojės* tourism club) also had their own "informal" oath. In which members were urged physically and mentally to prepare for the struggle for their homeland's freedom. One of the more memorable hiking events took place on May 1, 1968 in Perloja, where over one-hundred hikers with flaming torches in their hands surrounded the monument to the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Vytautas. Another well-known event was a hike during which the participants took photographs of crosses carved by Vincas Svirskis (1835–1916), one of the most famous nineteenth-century cross carvers, and also collected items about him. In 1969, hikers visited the location of the Battle of Durbe (near Liepāja in Latvia).⁶¹

Hikers tried to coordinate their activities. A hikers' congress took place in 1969 during which a kind of "code of honor" (a charter) was introduced.⁶² A

60 Pilots S. Darius and S. Girėnas departed from New York in 1933 in the small airplane *Lituani-ca* for Kaunas. Having successfully completed most of their route, the pilots were unexpectedly involved in a tragic accident under suspicious circumstances and died before reaching Kaunas. In the interwar Republic of Lithuania, they were posthumously given state awards and various memorials were erected. For a long time, the pilots and their flight were ignored in official Soviet Lithuanian culture. An exhibition on their lives was opened at the State History Museum only in the post-Stalinist period in 1958 in Kaunas.

61 "Lietuvos žygeivių judėjimo ištakos ir istorija."

62 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Gediminas Ilgūnas Collection", by Vladas Sirutavičius, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

third hikers' congress was held in April 1970 in Poškai (Šalčininkai district, in the Dieveniškės region in eastern Lithuania). Its aim was to help keep the Lithuanian language, culture, etc. alive in the region, which was dominated by Poles and Belarusians. Around one-hundred hikers from various higher education institutions in Lithuania participated in the gathering. Generally speaking, support for "Lithuanian-ness" in the neighboring Soviet republics, primarily in Belarus and the Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation, became one of the main goals of these hikers. In 1970, hikers from Vilnius University and the Kaunas Polytechnic Institute visited "Lithuanian islands"⁶³ in the territory of Belarus. In addition to collecting ethnographic material (which was later passed on to the Institute of the Lithuanian Language and Literature), they also distributed Lithuanian books and materials from the Lithuanian press. During the same hike, they also visited a monument in Červonka (in Latvia, near Daugpils) erected in memory of Lithuanian volunteers who died fighting the Bolsheviks.⁶⁴

In roughly 1971, the hikers' movement started to face greater restrictions. According to the movement's leaders themselves, this kind of response from the government could have been provoked by certain events which had a "clearly political" character,⁶⁵ such as commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of the Lithuanian writer and philosopher Vydūnas on Rambynas Hill, paying respect to and maintaining the graves of Lithuanian volunteer soldiers in Červonka, or the "visiting of Lithuanian islands" in Belarus.⁶⁶ We should also note that some members of the hikers' movement maintained close ties with the dissident movement, spreading prohibited, anti-Soviet literature, engaged in self-publication, and cooperating with the Catholic Church chronicles (such activities were clearly political in character and were persecuted by the government).

A good illustration of the evolution of the hikers' movement's that influenced changes in the government's attitude towards the movement was the Vilnius University's *Ramuva* club. It was founded in roughly 1969. Until then, various ethnographic clubs had been established at the university, but around 1969, it was decided that they should all be combined into one group. The initiator of this move was the philologist Jonas Trinkūnas (1939–2014). The university's party committee approved of the initiative and *Ramuva's* activities. An Ethnographic Research Board was established at the university the aim of which was to unite and "supervise" the folk movement. Incidentally, Česlovas Kudaba was appointed chair of the Research Board. He was known as an organizer of various ethnographic research expeditions. This develop-

63 Settlements in neighboring Soviet republics in which a majority of the population was Lithuanian were often called "islands." This term is even used today by Lithuanian linguists and ethnographers.

64 "Lietuvos žygeivių judėjimo ištakos ir istorija."

65 Matulevičienė, "Algirdo Patacko pogrindis, virtęs pastoge."

66 "Lietuvos žygeivių judėjimo ištakos ir istorija."

ment was testimony to the university administration's (primarily rector Jonas Kubilius') favorable view of the folk movement.⁶⁷ In this way, the *Ramuva* folk and hikers' movement was legalized, and its activities were legitimized. The university administration's favorable attitude may have been driven not only by the goal of keeping the movement within the boundaries of legality and stopping it from becoming politicized, but also by the personality of Jonas Trinkūnas himself. *Ramuva* started to intensively organize research expeditions, during which folk culture was collected and recorded. Pagan festivals were also celebrated. Before long, similar clubs started forming in other institutions of higher education in Lithuania.

However, before long the favorable attitude towards *Ramuva* started turning negative. This started to become apparent in 1971 and strengthened after 1972. It would be difficult to say what prompted the changes that led to the persecution of the most active hikers. One can presume that after the self-immolation of Romas Kalanta in 1972⁶⁸ and mass protests in Kaunas, the government and the KGB began to pay more attention to the folk hikers' movement. The members of the group were increasingly viewed as potential promoters of anti-Soviet ideas, and the movement itself was seen as a social-cultural seedbed for the formation of various anti-state and anti-Soviet dissident groups. Archival material confirms these assumptions. After the detection of an "anti-Soviet group" in Kaunas (it consisted of five individuals, several of whom were members of a Kaunas hiking movement), its organizers were found to have links with the leader of *Ramuva* in Vilnius, Jonas Trinkūnas. (The criminal case also mentioned the researcher, traveler, writer, and hiking movement activist Gediminas Ilgūnas). Trinkūnas came within range of the KGB because he tried to *collect documentary material about the self-immolation of Kalanta in 1972 and the protests that followed*. It was also discovered that Trinkūnas was rewriting anti-Soviet literature and the papers of US émigré Lithuanian historians. (Nevertheless, a criminal case was not brought against Jonas Trinkūnas, as there was insufficient evidence of his guilt). The leader of *Ramuva* was ousted from the party (he was a candidate) and dismissed from Vilnius University; he was offered no other academic positions in Soviet Lithuania.

So, one could say that after the mass youth protests and demonstrations in Kaunas in 1972, the government's attitude towards the hikers' and folk movement in general became "stricter," and repressive measures were taken against some members who had become involved in dissident activities. On the other hand, security and party organs were finally convinced that the self-organized youth movements that developed "from below" soon became overtly politicized and fell under the influence of "bourgeois nationalists."

67 Mačėikus, "Vilniaus universiteto kraštotyriminkų Ramuvos kompleksinės ekspedicijos," 198.

68 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Romas Kalanta collection](#)", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

Nevertheless, *Ramuva* was not disbanded, and the organization was allowed to continue its activities. The main aim of the organization was to conduct ethnographic expeditions and collect artifacts of folk culture. In the period between 1975 and 1991, 17 expeditions were organized in which 100 or more individuals participated.⁶⁹

Underground Ethnography and Cultural Policies in Ceaușescu's Romania

The cultural policies of the communist regime in Romania concerning folklore had distinctive peculiarities in comparison with the policies in other countries in the Eastern Bloc due to the turn towards national communism that took place in the 1960s and the “mini-cultural revolution” launched by Ceaușescu through the so-called July 1971 Theses.⁷⁰ Consequently, the communist regime transformed folklore into a vehicle of national propaganda.⁷¹ The use of folklore within the nationalist discourse, however, was not an invention of the Ceaușescu's regime. The cultural scene in interwar Romania was dominated by debates between those labelled by the historian Keith Hitchins “traditionalists,” who promoted what they considered to be indigenous cultural values and rejected foreign influences, and the so called “Europeanists,” who argued that Western cultural influences should not be perceived as negative.⁷² In this debate, peasant culture was perceived by the “traditionalists” as a main source of the “authentic” Romanian cultural values. This intellectual tradition was suppressed in the late 1940s and 1950s, when folklore became secondary and came to play an ornamental role within the official discourse.

In the 1960s, the turn by the Romanian communist regime towards nationalism led to a better position for those conducting research on or collecting folklore within the state cultural institutions. Folklore in its official version was promoted as a quintessence of national identity, and it was displayed in its many and various forms, such as music and dance performances during mass manifestations in Ceaușescu's Romania. These performances, which became increasingly frequent in the late 1970s and 1980s, were in fact conceived in order to meet the taste and expectations of the nomenklatura and represented a kitsch version of folklore. Those conducting research on folklore and collecting or displaying it in museums obtained a privileged status in what Katherine Verdery called the “mechanisms of bureaucratic allocation.” According to Verdery, this was a system through which the state bureaucracy

69 Mačeikis, Venantas. “Vilniaus universiteto kraštotyrininkų Ramuvos kompleksinės ekspedijios,” 199.

70 Shafir, *Romania, Politics*, 92; Petrescu, “Building the Nation.”

71 Vasile, *Viața intelectuală*, 75–77.

72 Hitchins, *Rumania*, 292–98.

controlled the cultural actors through a process of distributing resources in which “competition and bargaining” played a significant role.⁷³ In the late 1960s and 1970s, research institutes and faculty departments specialized in folklore, and many ethnographic museums were created all over the country. Most of the leading intellectual figures co-opted through these cultural policies were intellectually formed during the interwar period. Consequently, their approach to folklore was not easy to adjust to what the state institutions expected of them. Many of them participated in the interwar period in the research programs launched by Dimitrie Gusti, a Romanian sociologist considered the founder of the school of sociology at the University of Bucharest, who after World War II was purged from the academia.

One of the disciples of Gusti was the sociologist and ethnologist Cornel Irimie, who in 1963 established the Museum of Folk Technics (*Muzeul Tehnicii Populare*) in Sibiu. The collections of the Museum of Folk Technics, which later became ASTRA Museum, illustrate the contradictory relationship between folklore and the state institutions in Ceaușescu’s Romania. Enjoying academic prestige, Irimie was able to negotiate with the communist authorities and secure a significant degree of autonomy for the ethnographic research conducted by the employees of the museum.⁷⁴ Thus, he and his team of researchers were able to conduct field research on topics that were in contradiction with the cultural policies of the communist regime, such as religious customs and beliefs, labelled by the state propaganda as “religious prejudices.”⁷⁵ Irimie and his team also collected also religious artifacts, such as orthodox icons and triptychs. The findings of the field research and the artifacts collected are held today in the collections of the ASTRA Museum, including for instance the Cornel Irimie Collection.⁷⁶

Irimie’s non-conformist approach to folklore and the international collaborative endeavors he developed explain in part why the Securitate kept him under close observation. Although many of his findings could not be made public at the time due to censorship, valuable data and religious artifacts which today are considered part of Romanian national heritage were rescued. The “underground” ethnographic research conducted by Irimie and his colleagues illustrates the contradictory relationship between those dealing with folklore and the state authorities. Although some aspects of their ethnographic research were in contradiction with the official cultural policies, the state institutions tolerated them because the regime was interested in co-opting the folklore specialists.

73 Verdery, *National Ideology*, 89–94.

74 Interview with Lucian Nicolae Robu, April 27, 2017.

75 Archives of the ASTRA Museum, Collection Cornel Irimie, file no. 145.

76 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Cornel Irimie Collection at ASTRA Museum Sibiu”, by Corneliu Pintilescu and Cristina Petrescu, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018, doi: 10.24389/12937

This contradiction is also palpable in the case of the Ethnographic Research in the Dobrogea Ad-Hoc Collection.⁷⁷ This collection has a very complex character due to the variety of the topics researched and the artifacts collected by the employees of the Museum of Folk Technics, who conducted ethnographic field research in Dobruja, a multiethnic region in the southeastern part of Romania and northern Bulgaria. It contains statistics on the population of the villages, descriptions of their economic life, maps, field research notes, drafts of scientific papers, files with information about the pre-industrial artifacts rescued, and photos of traditional dwellings, churches, triptychs, and churchyards. The items of the collection are the result of two different campaigns. The first was carried out by Hedwig Ulrike Ruşdea, a specialist in pre-industrial mills from the ASTRA Museum, and her colleagues. She and her team managed in the 1960s and 1970s to conduct research and rescue several windmills which were almost destroyed by the agricultural modernization drive that followed the completion of the collectivization process in the region in 1957. Ruşdea not only managed to rescue these pre-industrial artifacts, which were later reassembled in the open-air permanent exhibition, but also collected valuable data about these items and the rural societies that produced them.⁷⁸ A second part of the collection is the result of the field research conducted from 1976 to 1984 by the employees of the museum in the villages that were demolished by the construction of the Danube–Black Sea Canal. The results of the ethnographic field research in Dobruja illustrate how the modernization drive destroyed the cultural heritage of the villages, and they also contain an implicit criticism of this process. However, as in the case of the Cornel Irimie Collection, the employees of the museum would not have been able to conduct field research in Dobruja had the communist authorities not turned a blind eye to their activities.

If the ethnographic collections created within the state cultural institutions such those presented above reflects the limits of the autonomy that ethnographers could enjoy in Ceauşescu's Romania, the collections created by private persons in the same period, most of them amateurs, illustrate a different relationship with the communist regime. The two collections created by the members of the Hungarian minority in Romania and selected for analysis here offer insights into the complex relationship between folklore, nationalist propaganda, and the regime's aim of creating a culturally homogenized society.

The Bethlen Foundation Collection⁷⁹ was created by the Romanian Hungarian countess Anikó Bethlen, currently a retired person living in Târgu Mureş/Marosvásárhely. The collection contains objects created by different

77 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Ethnographic Research in Dobrogea Ad-Hoc Collection at ASTRA Museum Sibiu](#)", by Corneliu Pintilescu, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018, doi: 10.24389/383397

78 Archives of the ASTRA Museum in Sibiu, Collection: Hedwig Ruşdea, file no. 139.

79 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "[Bethlen Foundation Collection](#)", by Csongor Jánosi, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

ethnic groups living in Transylvania, and it epitomizes the multicultural character of this region. Most of the items in the collection come from the Transylvanian Saxons (a German speaking population), who were allowed by the communist authorities to emigrate to the Federal Republic of Germany in exchange for significant amounts of Western currency paid by the West German state. The Transylvanian Saxons who emigrated were allowed to take with them only a strictly limited amount of luggage (determined by weight). In this context, as they prepared to leave the country (for good, as far as they knew at the time), many Transylvanian Saxon families passed valuable artifacts on to members of the nearby Roma communities through purchases or exchanges. Anikó Bethlen, who due to medical reasons traveled to Western Europe often at the time, observed these practices and came to the conclusion that this phenomenon would lead to the cultural impoverishment of her native region due to the gradual disappearance of the material traces of the diverse Transylvanian cultures. She decided to collect as many cultural artifacts as possible in order to insure their preservation *in situ* and rescue valuable works. A substantial part of the 3,000 pieces of the collection dates back to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and includes objects produced by craftsmen, so this collection is one with significant cultural value. In the 1970s and 1980s, the Securitate kept Anikó Bethlen's activity under surveillance and warned her twice not to conduct "hostile activity against the regime."⁸⁰ However, the secret police monitored her ties to people in the West more than they did her work as a collector. Countess Bethlen never enjoyed any state support whatsoever in her solitary endeavor, but she skillfully exploited the informal tolerance of the authorities.

The second collection created by a member of the Hungarian minority in Romania discussed here was initiated by Zoltán Kallós, a Transylvanian Hungarian ethnographer and folk music collector. The Zoltán Kallós Ethnographic Collection⁸¹ represents the largest private ethnographic collection in Romania. It contains Hungarian, Romanian, Transylvanian Saxon, and Csángó ethnographic artifacts (almost 6,000 items), photos (approx. 6,000 items), and a folk music collection (14,000 pieces). The latter is the most comprehensive collection of its type in the Carpathian Basin. Some of the objects collected were inherited by Kallós from his relatives. Other items were added to the collection as a result of his lifelong efforts. Kallós collected the ethnographically important artifacts through unorganized initiatives. This ethnographic collection represents one of the most successful individual attempts to salvage the Transylvanian ethnographic cultural heritage.

From late 1950s up to the late 1980s, Kallós worked together with specialists from the Institute of Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and

80 ACNSAS, FI 0264646/1-7; FI 82862/4; FR 229601/4; FR 310575/2-4.

81 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Zoltán Kallós Ethnographic Private Collection", by Csongor Jánosi, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

collected folk music from Transylvanian villages. From the mid-1970s, Kallós' collaboration with the experts from Hungary was extended to the so-called dance house movement, the former becoming one of the advisors behind this movement in Transylvania. The dance house movement was a form of cultural opposition in Hungary and among Romanian Hungarians. It promoted authentic folklore by organizing performances of folk dances in organized groups. The role assumed by Kallós in this respect consisted of providing the pieces that were played or sung in the dance house, not only in Transylvania but in Hungary as well.⁸² Thus, Kallós was involved in cross border cultural transfers between Romania and Hungary in a period in which Ceaușescu's regime promoted cultural isolation. Furthermore, the activity of collecting folklore in Romania was under the control of the state institutions, and all fieldwork in this area required special authorization from the local county directorate of culture. Those who ignored this regulation were punished by a fine.

Fearing searches and confiscation of the items he had collected, Kallós entrusted his collection of materials to the Archives of the Institute of Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The recorded materials were smuggled to Hungary by his colleagues, friends, and acquaintances, who undertook the mission to take the written tunes and tapes across the border. Thus, Kallós' initiatives in the practice of collecting folklore and his willingness simply to ignore the communist authorities' claim to control over it were open acts of cultural opposition. During the communist period, Kallós conducted his ethnographic work outside the state institutional framework and did not benefit from state financial support for his research. On the contrary, his activity was monitored by the Securitate, and he was subjected to criminal proceedings after having purchased an object in an unsuccessful effort to prove him guilty of fraud and trafficking.⁸³ He was convicted three times by Romanian courts of law for common-law offences, and his sources—folk singers—were continuously harassed.⁸⁴

In Ceaușescu's Romania, folklore became one of the main vehicles for nationalist propaganda. Significant efforts and resources were invested to coopt people who were conducting research or collecting folklore. This interest of the regime in folklore created a two-edged relationship between those dealing with folklore and the communist authorities. On the one hand, the regime supported an official version of folklore and promoted specific practices of displaying in order to fuel nationalist discourses. On the other, those studying, collecting, and displaying folklore were well-positioned to negotiate their autonomy with the communist authorities. The employees of the ethnographic museums, such as the Museum of Folk Technics in Sibiu, were tolerated by the state institutions when they approached topics in contradiction

82 Interview with Gyöngyi Balázs-Bécsi, September 27, 2017.

83 ACNSAS, FI 375159/1–2.

84 ACNSAS, FP 051484, 2–46; ÁBTL 1.11.4. 2nd series. Romania. T-2/1975/1, 6–7.

with the official cultural policies and were allowed to collect items such as religious artifacts, which were unsuitable for an ethnographic collection belonging to a state institution.

In addition to these collections created by employees of the state, private individuals who were passionate about folklore collected impressive ethnographic collections outside the cultural state institutional framework. This was in contradiction with the official policies, which tried to keep the collecting of folklore under the control of the state institutions. As the two collections created by members of the Hungarian minority illustrate, people who sought to collect folklore among the national minorities also opposed the official cultural policies of the Ceaușescu regime, which promoted a dissimulated cultural homogenization.

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Abbreviations

- ÁBTL Állambiztonsági Szolgálatok Történeti Levéltára (Historical Archives of the Hungarian State Security)—Hungary
- AHF Alexander Herzen Foundation (Alexander Herzenstichting)—Netherlands
- ANRM Arhiva Națională a Republicii Moldova (National Archive of the Republic of Moldova)—Moldova
- AOSPRM Archiva Organizațiilor Social-Politice a Republicii Moldova (Archive of Social-Political Organizations of the Republic of Moldova)—Moldova
- ASA Archives State Agency (Dürzhavna agentsiya “Arkhivi”)—Bulgaria
- ASISRM Arhiva Serviciului De Informații Și Securitate Al Republicii (Archive of the Intelligence and Security Service of the Republic of Moldova)—Moldova
- ATA Archiwum Teatru Alternatywnego (Alternative Theater Archive)—Poland
- AUL Archiv unterdrückter Literatur der DDR (Archive of Suppressed Literature)—Germany
- BAK basis voor actuele kunst (base for art, knowledge, and the political)—Netherlands
- BBC British Broadcasting Corporation—United Kingdom
- BITEF Beogradski Internacionalni Teatarski Festival (The Belgrade International Theatre Festival)—Serbia
- BNFA Bulgarian National Film Archive (Bŭlgarska Natsionalna Filmoteka)—Bulgaria
- BStU Die Behörde des Bundesbeauftragten für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik (Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Records of the Former GDR)—Germany
- CC Central Committee
- CDU Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands (Christian Democratic Union)—Germany
- CHRR Committee for Human Rights in Romania (Comitetul pentru Drepturile Omului în
- CIA Central Intelligence Agency—USA
- C-MAP Contemporary and Modern Art Perspectives—USA
- CNSAS Consiliul Național pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității (National Council for the Study of Securitate Archives)—Romania

ABBREVIATIONS

- CPF Parti communiste français (Communist Party of France)—France
 CSCE Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
 ČSDS Československé Dokumentační Centrum (Czechoslovak Documentation Centre)—Czech Republic
 ČSSD Česká Strana Sociálně Demokratická (Social Democratic Party of the Czech Republic)—Czech Republic
 DALO Derzhavnyi arkhiv L'vivs'koi oblasti (State Archive of the Lviv)—Ukraine
 ELTE Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem (Eötvös Loránd University)—Hungary
 EXAT 51 Eksperimentalni atelje (Experimental Atelier in 1951)—Yugoslavia
 FDJ Freie Deutsche Jugend (Free German Youth)—GDR
 FDP Freie Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic Party)—Germany
 FGF Fundacja Galerii Foksal (Foksal Gallery Foundation)—Poland
 FIDESZ - Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége (Alliance of Young Democrats)—Hungary
 GDA SBU Galuzevyy derzhavnyi arkhiv sluzhby bezpeki Ukrainy (The State Archives Department of the Security Service of Ukraine)—Ukraine
 GDR German Democratic Republic (Deutsche Demokratische Republik)—GDR
 GRRCL Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania (Lietuvos Gyventojų Genocido ir Rezistencijos Tyrimo Centras)—Lithuania
 HAR Hungarian Autonomous Region (Magyar Autonóm Tartomány)—Romania
 HI Hoover Institution—USA
 HNF Hrdinové nové fronty (Heroes of the New Front)—Czechoslovakia
 HNV Hrvatsko narodno vijeće (Croatian National Council)—Croatia
 HSS Hrvatska Seljačka Stranka (Croat Peasant Party)—Croatia
 HZDS Hnutie za Demokratické Slovensko (Movement for Democratic Slovakia)—Slovakia
 IISH International Institute of Social History—Netherlands
 ILA International Literary Association—Italy
 ILC International Literary Center—USA
 IPN Instytut Pamięci Narodowej (Institute of National Remembrance)—Poland
 ISP PAN Instytut Studiów Politycznych Polskiej Akademii Nauk (Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences)—Poland
 ISTR Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes (Ústav pro studium totalitních režimů)—Czech Republic
 ITI International Theater Institute (L'Institut International du Théâtre)—France
 KDH Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie (Christian Democratic Movement)—Slovakia

- KDU-ČSL Křesťanská a Demokratická Unie – Československá strana lidová (The Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party)—Czech Republic
- KGB Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti (Committee for State Security)—Soviet Union
- KHGP Kharkiv Human Rights Groups (Xarkivs'ka pravozakhisna grupa)—Ukraine
- KISZ Magyar Kommunista Ifjúsági Szövetsége (Hungarian Young Communist League)—Hungary
- KOR Komitet Obrony Robotników (Workers' Defense Committee)—Poland
- KSČM Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy (Communist Party of the Czech Republic and Moravia)—Czech Republic
- LCY League of Communists of Yugoslavia (Savez komunista Jugoslavije)—Yugoslavia
- LDPD Liberal Democratic Party of Germany (Liberal-Demokratische Partei Deutschlands)—GDR
- LSA Lithuanian Special Archives (Lietuvos ypatingasis archyvas)—Lithuania
- LSSR Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic (Lietuvos Tarybų Socialistinė Respublika)—Lithuania
- MDF Magyar Demokrata Fórum (Hungarian Democratic Forum)—Hungary
- MfS Ministerium für Staatssicherheit (Ministry for State Security)—GDR
- MGB Ministerstvo gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti (Ministry for State Security)—Soviet Union
- MGIMO Moscow State Institute for International Relations (Moskovskiy Gosudarstvennyy Institut Mezhdunarodnykh Otnosheniy)—Soviet Union
- MKKE Marx Károly Közgazdaságtudományi Egyetem (Karl Marx University of Economic Sciences)—Hungary
- MNV Městský Národní Výbor (Municipal National Bureau)—Czechoslovakia
- MSSR Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic (Republica Sovietică Socialistă Moldovenească)—Moldova
- MSU Muzej Suvremene Umjetnosti (City Gallery of Contemporary Art)—Croatia
- MSZMP Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt (Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party)—Hungary
- MSZP Magyar Szocialista Párt (Hungarian Socialist Party)—Hungary
- MUC Moldavian Union of Cinematographers (Uniunea Cineaștilor din Moldova)—Moldova
- MWU Moldavian Writers' Union (Uniunea Scriitorilor din Republica Moldova)—Moldova
- MWW Muzeum Współczesne Wrocław (Museum of Contemporary Art in Wrocław)—Poland
- NAMU National Art Museum of Ukraine (Natsional'nyy Khudozhniy Muзей Ukrayiny)—Ukraine

ABBREVIATIONS

- NCFM Newly Composed Folk Music (Novokomponovana Narodna Muzika)—Yugoslavia
- NDH Nezavisna država Hrvatska (Independent State of Croatia)—Croatia
- NEB Nemzeti Emlékezet Bizottsága (Committee of National Remembrance)—Hungary
- NKVD Narodnyy Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs)—Soviet Union
- NLCM National Library "St. St. Cyril and Methodius" (Narodna Biblioteka "Kiril i Metodij")—Bulgaria
- NMI Nation's Memory Institute (Ústav Pamäti Národa)—Slovakia
- NOWA Niezależna Oficyna Wydawnicza (Independent Publishing House)—Poland
- NUP National United Party (Natsional'naya Ob'yedinonnaya Partiya)—Soviet Union
- OBIE Off-Broadway Theater Award—USA
- ODS Občanská Demokratická Strana (Civic Democratic Movement)—Czech Republic
- OLaNO Obyčajní Ludia a Nezávislé Osobnosti (Ordinary People and Independent Personalities)—Slovakia
- OSA Vera and Donald Blinken Open Society Archives (Vera és Donald Blinken Nyílt Társadalom Archívum)—Hungary
- OUN Orhanizatsiya Ukrayins'kykh Natsionalistiv (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists)—Ukraine
- PCR Partidul Comunist Român (Romanian Communist Party)—Romania
- PCRM Partidul Comuniștilor din Republica Moldova (Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova)—Moldova
- PNP Památník Národního písemnictví (Museum of Czech Literature)—Czechoslovakia
- PRL Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa (Polish People's Republic)—Poland
- PUPU Polish Underground Publications Unit (Polskie Wydawnictwa Podziemne)—Poland
- PWM Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne (The Polish Music Publishers)—Poland
- PZPR Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza (Polish United Workers' Party)—Poland
- RCH Research Centre for the Humanities (Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont)—Hungary
- RCP Romanian Communist Party (Partidul Comunist Român)—Romania
- REEAC Russian and Eastern European Acquisition Committee—England
- ReTörKI Rendszerváltás Történetét Kutató Intézet (Research Institute and Archives for the History of the Hungarian Transition)—Hungary
- RFE/RL Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty—USA
- RHG Robert Havemann Gesellschaft (Robert Havemann Society)—Germany

ABBREVIATIONS

- RNM *Renașterea Națională a Moldovei* (National Rebirth of Moldavia)—Moldova
- ROI *Romská Občanská Iniciativa* (Roma Civic Initiative)—Czechoslovakia
- România)—Romania
- SANU *Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts* (*Srpska Akademija Nauka i Umetnosti*)—Serbia
- SBU *Sluzhba Bezpeky Ukrayiny* (Security Service of Ukraine)—Ukraine
- SDKÚ *Slovenská Demokratická a Kresťanská Únia – Demokratická strana* (Slovak Democratic and Christian Union-Democratic Party)—Slovakia
- SDL *Strana Demokratickej Ľavice* (Party of the Democratic Left)—Slovakia
- SED *Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* (Socialist Unity Party of Germany)—GDR
- SIE *Serviciul de Informatii Externe* (Foreign Information Service)—Romania
- SIS *Serviciul de Informații și Securitate* (Archive of the Moldovan Intelligence and Security Service)—Moldova
- SIS *Slovak Information Service* (*Slovenská Informačná Služba*)—Slovakia
- SMER *Smer–Sociálna Demokracia* (Direction – Social Democracy)—Slovakia
- SNS *Slovenská Národná Strana* (Slovak National Party)—Slovakia
- SPD *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (Social Democratic Party)—Germany
- SRH *Socijalistička Republika Hrvatska* (Socialist Republic of Croatia)—Croatia
- ŠtB *Štátna Bezpečnosť* (State Security)—Czechoslovakia
- StUG *Stasi-Unterlagengesetz* (Stasi Records Law)—Germany
- SZDSZ *Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége* (Alliance of Free Democrats)—Hungary
- TsDAHOU *Tsentrál'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv hromads'kykh ob'ednan' Ukraïny* (Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine)—Ukraine
- TsDAMLM *Tsentrálny derzhavnyi arkhiv–muzei literatury i mystetstva Ukraïny* (Central State Archive–Museum of Literature and Arts)—Ukraine
- UPA *Ukrainska povstanska armia* (Ukrainian Insurgent Army)—Ukraine
- ÚPN *Ústav Pamäti Národa* (Nation's Memory Institute in Slovakia)—Slovakia
- USSR *Union of Soviet Socialist Republics* (*Szozuz Szovjetszkikh Szocialisztikuscseszkikh Reszpublik*)—Soviet Union
- VB *Verejná Bezpečnosť* (Public Security)—Czechoslovakia
- ZKP *Związek Kompozytorów Polskich* (Polish Composers' Union)—Poland
- ZZF *Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung* (Centre for Contemporary History Research)—Germany

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The **COURAGE Handbook** ushers its reader into the world of the compellingly rich heritage of cultural opposition in Eastern Europe. It is intended primarily to further a subtle understanding of the complex and multifaceted nature of cultural opposition and its legacy from the perspective of the various collections held in public institutions or by private individuals across the region.

Through its focus on material heritage, the handbook provides new perspectives on the history of dissent and cultural non-conformism in the former socialist countries of Central, Eastern, and South-eastern Europe.

The volume is comprised of contributions by over 60 authors from a range of different academic and national backgrounds who share their insights into the topic. It offers focused discussions from comparative and transnational perspectives of the key themes and prevailing forms of opposition in the region, including non-conformist art, youth sub-cultures, intellectual dissent, religious groups, underground rock, avantgarde theater, exile, traditionalism, ethnic revivalism, censorship, and surveillance.

The handbook provides its reader with a concise synthesis of the existing scholarship and suggests new avenues for further research.

