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NEGATIVE EMOTIONS' IN ACTION – TWO EXAMPLES FROM THE 15TH CENTURY RAGUSAN DIPLOMACY

Valentina Šoštarić (Zovko)

ABSTRACT

Emotions shouldn't be neglected, but rather taken seriously in order to understand better the complexity of political, and socio-cultural processes that they have generated. The study of emotions in the field of diplomacy is particularly promising, but requires precise definition of the term, explanation of the methodological approach and qualifications concerning the research possibilities that depend upon the nature of the archival sources. The goal of this article is to analyze how words used to signify emotions, which could be signified as negative, shaped practical decisions within certain socio-political and cultural contexts; in other words to demonstrate an active role of emotions in shaping and conducting practical diplomatic decisions. The study aims to underpin the reciprocal relations between emotions and actions illustrated by two case studies from the late medieval Ragusan history. The sources of an interest are preserved in the State archive in Dubrovnik, in the archival seria *Lettere di Levante*, which, among others, contains the instructions written by the city authorities to their envoys. Despite the fact that the instructions were a product of a long and sober-minded discussions, and therefore they aren't usually abundant with words used to express certain emotions in them, places where those expressions appear are quite significant and can tell us more about how emotions were used as a tool of cognitive processes.

KEYWORDS: Dubrovnik, diplomacy, emotions, 15th century, Ragusa.

Introduction

What are emotions and are they appropriate as an analytical tool in historiographical researches? While the answer to the former question remains ambiguous,¹ the latter is undoubtedly positive. People expressed their emotions in the past as we do today, and their effects had a significant role on shaping mutual relationships,² decisions and judgment-making processes.³ Since Lucien Febvre has raised interest in the study of emotion in 1941,⁴ serious development of the field has occurred around the 1970s and

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1980s with enhancement of cultural and social history.⁵ Around the same time, emotions became the topic of sociological,⁶ anthropological,⁷ and neuropsychological studies.⁸ Development in the field led to the interdisciplinary study of emotions that often combines different models, theories, and concepts from natural and cultural studies that mutually influence each other.⁹ The reputation of emotions as something irrational and private has been overcome.¹⁰ Moreover, the ranges of concepts, methodological approaches, and questions that have been raised in studies of emotions as a historiographical topic have grown so rapidly that nowadays many historians talk about „emotional turn“.

Despite the huge progress in handling of emotions in history, the concept still remains 'liminal phenomenon'. Gammerl pointed out possible contradictory dimensions in tackling the concept of emotions in academic studies. Firstly, the meaning of some words that express different feelings has varied across time and space. Secondly, it's hard to distinguish emotions that can be perceived as a product of mental and habitual attitudes from corporeal and spontaneous occurrences. And thirdly, emotions as a concept in the academic field are marked as thresholds that connect and separate „individual and social, inside and outside, the actor and her or his communicative partner, nature and culture, subjective and objective dimensions, norms and experiences, performances and discourses as well as between body and language“.¹¹

Emotions shouldn't be neglected, but rather taken seriously in order to understand better the complexity of political, and socio-cultural processes that they have generated. The study of emotions in the field of diplomacy is particularly promising, but requires precise definition of the term, explanation of the methodological approach and qualifications concerning the research possibilities that depend upon the nature of the archival sources.

The goal of this article is to analyze how words used to signify emotions, which could be signified as negative, shaped practical decisions within certain socio-political and cultural contexts; in other words to demonstrate an active role of emotions in shaping and conducting practical diplomatic decisions. The study aims to underpin the reciprocal relations between emotions and actions illustrated by two case studies from the late medieval Ragusan history. The sources of an interest are preserved in the State archive in Dubrovnik, in the archival seria *Lettere di Levante*, which, among others, contains the instructions written by the city authorities to their envoys. Despite the fact that the instructions were a product of a long and sober-minded discussions, and therefore they aren't usually abundant with words used to express certain emotions in them, places where those expressions appear are quite significant and can tell us more about how emotions were used as a tool of cognitive processes. Through many centuries self-control had a permanent place on the list of the most desirable virtues of the ambassadors. In other words, their behavior was supposed to be driven by cognitive decisions, not emotions.¹² Nevertheless, the latter could not be suppressed. In standard social psychology, behavior is product of cognitive and affective events.¹³

The important part of diplomatic negotiations is maximization of one's personal interest; in other words, persuasion based on verbal arguments. But as Crossley pointed out „communication is... more than exchange of symbols and ideas; that it is a process of

mutual affecting in which interlocutors make emotional as well as cognitive appeals.¹⁴ The psychological approach known as the 'appraisal theory of emotions' considered an emotion as an „objective piece of information that an observer can utilize to infer how somebody appraises a situation“.¹⁵ For the purposes of this study, of crucial importance is evaluation of 'performative function of emotions', with the same implications as 'performative function of language' as defined by Austin.¹⁶ In other words, an emotion will not be observed only as a „carrier of information“, but rather as an agent that has a possibility to do something.¹⁷ Words used to express emotions are perceived as a part of 'speech acts' that Ragusan ambassadors had to perform in front of their hosts. On some occasions, it is possible to reconstruct the emotional reactions of the persons with whom they were negotiating. Regardless the subject, it is more important to notice how emotions influenced people's thoughts and shaped real world actions.

Although for the post-structuralists an emotion expressed in language has no referent to a felt emotion, and therefore the study of their representations in word doesn't enable us to recover or represent individual or collective emotions of the past. Indeed, it isn't possible to claim with any certainty that expressed feelings preserved in the instructions to the Ragusan ambassadors were „real/felt emotions“. However, for the purposes of this study it seems more important to notice who is expressing a certain feeling, when and where, to whom, and why; and how those feelings affected mutual relationships and behaviors.

There are several different models of the emotions which explain how they are produced and used. For the study of emotions in diplomacy, a combination of cognitive and social constructivism seems the most suitable. While the first is orientated toward explanation that the emotions employed are dependent upon one's perception of whether they are good or harmful,¹⁸ the latter emphasize that emotions depend on language, expectations, values, cultural practices, moral beliefs (in one word, shared emotional display) and the rules behind the decoding of their meaning.¹⁹ The possibilities of what people felt and how they represented their emotions are broad. Emotions could be manipulated and controlled in their public expression to achieve a certain pragmatic goal. However, rather than their authenticity, questions regarding the power of emotions to influence the diplomatic actions should be raised.

My objective in this article is to demonstrate how the pervasive influence of emotions influences one's practical behavior. Two case studies from late medieval Ragusan history will be used. The former will investigate the way in which emotions such as discontent, envy, jealousy, and anger had a power to give rise to an open clash. The latter example is focused on demonstration of actions caused by guilt and embarrassment. Besides, the mutual permeations of emotions and actions are of special interest in the link between expressed emotions and one's status in the current hierarchy of power relations. While reading the written sources, the relationships between thoughts, emotions, and actions became clearly visible. However, the immensely complex question of their connection is far beyond the scope of this work, although some interesting directions for further study will be suggested in the conclusion.

Envy can lead to war

In 1430, the people of Dubrovnik were at war with the Bosnian duke Radoslav Pavlović over the territory of Konavle. The war was long-lasting, exceeded the local context, and had significant consequences.²⁰ Although this episode of Ragusan history has received significant attention in historiographical writings, the role of emotions has been neglected, both as a cause and a motivational force for the actions conducted during the war.

Possession of the Konavle region was an indispensable precondition for the further development and, bright future of the city.²¹ From the mid-14th century the city councils (*Maiores*, *Minores*, and *Rogatorum*) worked tirelessly to reach the desired territorial acquisitions. Various strategies have been employed, mostly in the field of diplomacy. Diplomatic actions were focused on the current owners of Konavle and all of those who enjoyed sufficient power to influence the final outcome of the Ragusan efforts.²² When, in 1391, the brothers Sankovići, owners of Konavle at the time, issued a charter in which they claimed Ragusan right to that region,²³ it seemed that the Ragusans had finally reached their imperative goal. However, the imminent socio-political fall of the Sankovići family was associated with the fact that their charter hadn't been confirmed by the Bosnian king and other prominent noblemen who claimed its sovereignty.²⁴ At the end of that year, influential magnate families from the Dubrovnik hinterland, Kosače and Pavlovići, used the opportunity of the Sankovići downfall to share the Konavle region among them.²⁵ Huge shifts in power relations and their consequences marked the beginning of a new phase in Ragusan attempts to expand the city borders over Konavle.

When, in 1419, Ragusans bought from the duke Sandalj Hranić his part of Konavle, it seemed that they would finally reach their long-lasting desire.²⁶ Moreover, the Bosnian king confirmed that the people of Dubrovnik had the legal right not just to the purchased part, but to Konavle as a whole, under the condition that the parameters of purchase from the family Pavlovići would be arranged later.²⁷ What seemed to be an easy task was complicated by the fact that the relationship between adjacent neighbors, the families Kosače and Pavlovići, was hostile most of the time. Esad Kurtović argues that the mutual sale of Konavle was perceived as a foundation for the normalization of their relationship in future.²⁸ A contract with the duke Radoslav was signed in 1426²⁹, but the Ragusan joy was short-lived. What seemed to be a mutually beneficial business deal ended up in blood and violence, extensively motivated by emotions.

The signs of problems became evident with the increasing discontent of the dukes Sandalj and Radoslav who thought that they were treated less respectfully in comparison with their rival. Sandalj tried to find out how much Radoslav was paid for his part of the Konavle region, but the city authorities avoid giving him a direct answer.³⁰ Eventually, the Ragusan strategy of keeping secret the details of the agreement achieved with Radoslav failed. The political leaders of the city were forced to present additional gifts to Sandalj and his wife in order to please them.³¹ That extra gift-giving was supposed to be conducted secretly, but in the end that decision triggered Radoslav's envy, and that particular feeling stimulated him to start the war against Dubrovnik.

According to the 'appraisal theory of emotion'³² the discontent of the Bosnian dukes Sandalj and Radoslav can be seen to be elicited through an external stimulus; namely, the material benefits given to their rival, which both perceived to be unpleasant. Their response to the changed realities was evaluated according to their personal values, social, and political norms. Consideration of their reaction might have included two possible scenarios: either that they would accept and adapt to the changes, or that they would express 'negative emotion', accompanied by adequate actions.

The eventual reaction to the external stimulus vastly depended on one's rank in the hierarchy of power. When Sandalj expressed his dissatisfaction, demanding more material benefits, he demonstrated that he enjoyed power that allowed him that behavior. The reaction of the city authorities to his inquiry offers a good insight into the balance of power among them. When the political leaders of the city expressed anger in their reply, they demonstrated that they considered themselves at least equal with the duke, if not above him.³³ Ragusan disapproval of the duke's behavior reached the culmination point when the ambassadors listed all the favors and services that Ragusans had provided to him recently.³⁴ The people of Dubrovnik even went one step further by suggesting to Sandalj an emotional pattern he should follow. They suggested that instead of being unhappy, he should share Dubrovnik's joy at the finalization of the sale of the Konavle region.³⁵

The reason behind the expectation of his happiness could lie in the fact that at many places in the sources, the people of Dubrovnik referred to the duke as their friend.³⁶ Although, one can observe a term 'friend' as a rhetorical form, on this place it is important to stress out that mentioned *topoi* was not an "empty form" but rather as a part of accepted ethical frame which includes emotional engagement with a specific purpose. According to Ragusans, their friendship ties indicated that their reciprocal actions were driven by *pure love and benevolence* ("puro amore et buona volontà"). The real value behind the concept was not an empty phrase; rather it was confirmed by concrete actions on a daily basis of mutual help and collaboration such as exchange of information, services, advice, and goods.³⁷ As first neighbors they were naturally oriented towards each other, but the motivation for their cooperation exceeded the expected favor in return. Therefore, when the Ragusan ambassador Federico de Gondula expressed condolence to Sandalj's successor and niece soon after the duke's death, he pointed out that the duke "loved, acted, and tried with all his acts and feelings" to work in Ragusan favor during his lifetime.³⁸ Although one should keep in mind the context in which those words were said, beyond any doubt the relationship of Dubrovnik and Sandalj was traditionally good and stable. Nevertheless, in some phases their friendship was fragile. For example, Sandalj sometimes expressed disturbance because the people of Dubrovnik failed to do something he expected them to do.³⁹ Even more, in 1414 the fury that he expressed was followed by the deliberate action of causing trade damage to the city.⁴⁰ However, those situations were quite rare. The good relationship of the duke Sandalj with the people of Dubrovnik resulted in the shared 'emotional capital' which could be revoked in critical moments. Therefore it's not surprising that the tense atmosphere just before the War of Konavle was going to emerge. The Ragusans tried to appease by advising the duke *not to jeopardize their friendship because of money*.⁴¹ Beyond any doubt, money was an important instrument

of creation the interpersonal bonds, a trigger of a wide range of emotions, and an important stimulant of actions.

The role of emotions was important not only before the open clash, but also during the war. Even more, the sources preserve examples that clearly demonstrate that emotions were provoked on purpose in order to achieve certain pragmatic goals. For example, Dubrovnik's political leaders tried to incite the hatred of others toward their enemy. For example, they compared the duke Radoslav with a serpent whose poison is not always visible but which could harm everyone.⁴² Such tactics were also used to provoke the fear of potential Ragusan allies. Hatred and fear were strategically used to fulfill one specific intention – the complete destruction of the duke. This wasn't the only context in which these two emotions emerged. For instance, the Ragusans evoked fear when they wanted to encourage their allies. They told them that the duke was in a great fear of the power of the Ragusans and their allies when they are united.⁴³ We see that the documented sources about the War of Konavle not only confirms the power of emotion to achieve goals, but also reveals manipulations and strategies behind their usage, which deserves more attention in separate paper.

Can guilt and shame have positive effects?

One of the consequences of the Konavle war was the establishment of official diplomatic contacts between Dubrovnik and the Ottoman Empire for the first time. While the other European countries managed to postpone sending their representatives to the Sublime Porte for more than a hundred years, Ragusan's decision was motivated by the fact that the duke Radoslav was at the same time the vassal of the Bosnian king and the Ottoman sultan. The latter occupied the role of the key-arbitrator in the conflict so the Ragusans felt it necessary to have their representatives at the Sublime Porte.⁴⁴ A few decades later, an action arising from this necessity led to Dubrovnik becoming an Ottoman tributary state. The new circumstances provoked emotions of shame, guilt, and embarrassment of the Ragusans since they belonged to *respublica christiana*.⁴⁵

The people of Dubrovnik were pragmatic and it does not surprise that they used the advantages of their geographical position at the threshold of the East and the West in order to preserve their vital interests, namely city's freedom and trade privileges. The city authorities played a dangerous game flirting with the Christians and the Muslims. Consequently, the Ragusans were faced with a numerous accusations, most often from the Venetians, their main economic rivals, while other Christian rulers, such as the pope or king of Naples, usually repeated what they've heard from the Ragusan ambassadors sent to their courts, since they've accepted the proclaimed propaganda.⁴⁶

Christian contacts with the Muslims had been perceived as a transgression since the ninth century when Pope John VIII shaped the doctrine of the "impious alliance".⁴⁷ While trade connections with the "infidels" were tolerated,⁴⁸ other means of cooperation became possible with the exclusion from the Catholic Church. Therefore, when in the mid-15th century Dubrovnik became an Ottoman tributary state, the city leaders found themselves in an embarrassing situation. The promise of annual tribute and fidelity to the sultan required explanation to the European Catholic rulers.⁴⁹ In that sense, it's interesting to observe the influence of emotions in shaping Ragusan diplomatic decisions. Lovro

Kunčević had convincingly demonstrated that at first the Ragusans tried to hide the nature of their relationship with the Sublime Porte, and that tactic lasted until the end of the 15th century. After a while, this deceit was exposed, bringing about a change of strategy. Now they were ready to admit the truth, but only that part which they supposed wouldn't cause any damage.⁵⁰ The described behavioral patterns fit the definition of shame. According to social psychologists, shame involves the imagery of rejection and disapproval of others.⁵¹ In order to avoid the negative consequences of the act that could seriously harm the Ragusan international position, political leaders have developed suitable alternatives, which made possible the transformation of the negative effects of shame and guilt into positive outcomes, namely a special treatment and understanding of the Christian states whose interests Ragusans are protecting.

When the truth could no longer be hidden or misinterpreted, the Ragusans employed a strategy of diplomatic self-presentation that was based on interpretation of the transgression as a necessary precondition for the survival of their city. Moreover, they promoted a perception according to which the fact that Dubrovnik had become tributary state was in interest of whole Christendom. The transgression was seen as something positive and thereby the effects of the negative emotions had been annulled. In other words, when the Ragusan ambassadors finally admitted "with tears in the eyes" that their city was a tributary state and that they even provided the Ottomans with various services,⁵² in utterances that followed they have emphasized two points: firstly that the Ragusans were forced to become a tributary state in order to preserve the freedom of their city; and secondly that their act was an unselfish sacrifice for the sake of all of Christendom whose interests they could serve better in that way.⁵³ Consequently, the Ragusans had neither admitted their guilt nor suffered the consequences of their act; rather they represented them as something positive.

Conclusion

Both case studies analyzed have received significant historiographical attention. Some of the studies have recognized the importance of emotions but they weren't analyzed as a central problem. In this article I have examined the possibilities of emotions to do things, as well as different strategies whose tendency was to provoke certain emotions of others, in order to bring about desired outcomes. With these two examples from late medieval Ragusan diplomatic history I have demonstrated that cognition, emotion and action were closely intertwined.

In the first case study the external stimulus increased animosity, jealousy, discontent, and envy. Those emotions led to the beginning of the war which could be perceived either as a correction of injustice or completely groundless, which in moral terms remains in the sphere of individual judgments. In other words, emotions didn't just provoke certain action but reflected one's values, beliefs, ideas, and attitudes shaped by medieval intellectual and political frames which were surrounding a system of dependency (so-called "feudal system") that featured various jurisdiction levels that were not set in stone. Institutionally recognized balances of power co-existed with numerous and overlapping informal relationships within the social and ideological context of the time, practiced on a daily base.

The second case study is a good example of different strategies that were employed in order to neutralize consequences of socio-political and moral transgression. Skilful Ragusan diplomacy was quite successful in attempting to utilize the negative emotions as shame, guilt, and embarrassment for their own pragmatic needs. Moreover, those emotions influenced the self-perception and presentation to others which could be seen as a part of identity features. However, that immensely complex question is far beyond the scope of this work. Many other questions remains open, which only proves that a lot of research is yet to be conducted in the study of interrelation between emotion and diplomacy.

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Notes

¹ See the debate on defining emotions in journal *Emotion Review*, October 2010 issue. There is still no consensus on questions what cause the emotions, and what is difference between emotions, feelings, and sentiments. See: Paul R. Kleinginna, Jr. and Anne M. Kleinginna, „A Categorized List of Emotion Definitions, with Suggestion for a Consensual Definition,“ *Motivation and Emotion*, 5 (1981); Jerome Kagan, *What Is Emotion? History, Measures, Cultural and Meanings* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2007); Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Generations of Feeling. A History of Emotions, 600-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 1-3; William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 3-62.

² Some scholars think that emotions are produced, shaped, and only emerges from relationships, Ian Burkitt, „Social Relations and Emotions,“ *Sociology* 31 (1) (1997): 37-55. On the other hand, pious emotions triggered by intimate personal state should not be neglected. For a general overview, different perspectives, and some examples see: John Corrigan (ed.), *The Oxford handbook of religion and emotion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); *Religious Emotions*: Willem Lemmens and Walter Van Herck (eds.), *Some Philosophical Explorations* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008); Ole Riis and Linda Woodhead, *A Sociology of Religious Emotion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2010); Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Feeling: Shaping the Religious Emotions in Early Modern Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

³ The emotions are not just perceived as a part of social processes but their role in politics has been emphasized as well. See: Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling*, 124, 128; William M. Reddy, „Against Constructionism: The Historical Ethnography of Emotions,“ *Current Anthropology* 38 (1997): 335.

⁴ Lucien Febvre „La sensibilité et l'histoire. Comment reconstituer la vie affective d'autrefois?,“ *Annales d'histoire sociale* 3 (1941): 5-20. In English as: „Sensibility and History: how to reconstitute the Emotional Life of the Past“, in ed. Peter Burke, trans. K. Folca, *A New Kind of History: From the Writings of Febvre* (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), 27-43.

⁵ It's worth to mention that a new field for history of emotions - „emotionology“ has been proclaimed by Peter and Carol Stearns, „Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards,“ *The American Historical Review* 90 (1985): 813-836.

⁶ Ian Craib, "Some Comments on the Sociology of the Emotions," *Sociology* 29 (1) (1995): 151-158; Theodore D. Kemper (ed.), *Research Agendas in the Sociology of Emotions* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990).

⁷ Although emotions have been avoided in anthropology for a long time, significant improvements are made since the work of Catherine Lutz and Geoffrey M. White, "The Anthropology of Emotions," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 15 (1986): 405-436.

⁸ Lisa Feldman Barrett and James A. Russell (eds.), *The Psychological Construction of Emotions* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2015).

⁹ About influence of cultural studies to natural and social sciences in study of emotions and vice versa, and how their models, theories, and concepts can be useful for historians see: Willemijn Ruberg, "Interdisciplinarity and the History of Emotions," *Cultural and Social History* 6 (4) (2009): 507-516.

¹⁰ Richard Ned Lebow, "Reason, Emotion and Cooperation," *International Politics* (42) 2005: 284.

¹¹ Benno Gammerl, "Emotional styles – concepts and challenges," *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice* 16 (2) (2012): 162.

¹² Harold Nicholson, *Diplomacy* (Washington DC: Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, Georgetown University, 1988), 117; François de Callières, *On the Manner of Negotiating with Princes* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1963), 108.

¹³ Icek Ajzen, "Attitudes, traits, and actions: Dispositional prediction of behavior in personality and social psychology," in L. Berkowitz (ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 1987), 1-63; Peter M. Gollwitzer, "Implementation intentions: Strong effects of simple plans," *American Psychologist* 54 (1999): 493-503. Although see: Werner Greve, "Traps and gaps in action explanation: Theoretical problems of a psychology of human action," *Psychological Review* 108 (2) (2001): 435-51.

¹⁴ Nick Crossley, "Emotion and communicative action: Habermas, linguistic philosophy and existentialism," in G. Bendelow and S. J. Williams (eds.), *Emotions in Social life: Critical Themes and Contemporary Issues* (London: Routledge, 1998), 17-18.

¹⁵ Seanon S. Wong, "Emotions and the communication of intentions in face-to-face diplomacy," *European Journal of International Relations* 22 (1) (2016): 146-147.

¹⁶ John L. Austin, *How to do things with words* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1962).

¹⁷ The performative nature of emotions is mostly studied by queer theorists: Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003). Also see: William M. Reddy, "The Logic of Action: Indeterminacy, Emotion, and Historical Narrative," *History and Theory* 40 (2001): 10-33.

¹⁸ Neta C. Crawford, "The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotions and Emotional Relationships," *International Security* 24 (4) (2000): 116-156.

¹⁹ Janice Bially Mattern, "A practice theory of emotion for International Relations", in E. Adler and V. Pouliot (eds.), *International Practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 63-86. For this concepts and literature see also: Barbara H. Rosenwien, "Worrying about Emotions in History," *The American Historical Review* 107 (3) (2002), 834-837.

²⁰ For the context of the war see: Ćiro Truhelka, "Konavoski rat (1430-1433)," *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Bosni i Hercegovini* 29 (1917): 145-211; Esad Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda bosanski Sandalj Hranić Kosača* (Sarajevo: Institut za istoriju, 2009), 295-325. More detailed overview of studies focused on medieval history of Konavle region can be found in: Esad Kurtović, "Noviji

radovi na proučavanju prošlosti Konavala pod bosanskom vlašću (1990.-2000.),“ *Hrvatska misao* 6 (22) (2002): 104-112.

²¹ A multiple importance of Konavle region for Dubrovnik is analyzed in: Bernard Stulli, “Dubrovačke odredbe o Konavlima”, in R. Bogišić et al. (eds.), *Konavoski zbornik*, (Dubrovnik: “Konavle”-društvo za znanstvene i kulturne djelatnosti, 1982), 29-43. See also: Niko Kapetanić, Nenad Vekarić, *Stanovništvo Konavala* (Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 1998), 26.

²² For the short overview of Ragusan attempts to acquire the Konavle region see: Valentina Zovko, „Pregovori o proširenju dubrovačkih granica kroz vizuru odnosa moći,“ *Hum* – journal of the Faculty of Philosophy University of Mostar 11 (2014), 206-234.

²³ Ljubo Stojanović (ed.), *Stare srpske povelje i pisma I/1* (Beograd: Srpska kraljevska akademija, 1929), 124. For an analysis of this document and its context, see: Siniša Mišić, “Povelja Beljaka i Radića Sankovića Dubrovniku,” *Stari srpski arhiv* 7 (2008): 113-127.

²⁴ For the context and consequences of the fall of the family Sankovići, see: Jovan Mijušković, „Humska vlasteoska porodica Sankovići,“ *Istorijski časopis* 11 (1961): 17-54.

²⁵ See: Sima Ćirković, *Istorija srednjovekovne bosanske države* (Beograd: Srpska književna zadruha, 1964), 174.

²⁶ For the context of that purchase see: Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda bosanski*, 221-244.

²⁷ Stojanović (ed.), *Stare srpske povelje i pisma I/1*, 559-561.

²⁸ Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda bosanski*, 233.

²⁹ Franc Miklošić (ed.), *Monumenta Serbica spectantia historiam Serbia, Bosniae, Ragusii* (Vienna: Apud Guilelmum Braumueller, 1858), 336-352.

³⁰ National archive in Dubrovnik (hereinafter: DAD), *Lettere di Levante* (hereinafter: *Lett. di Lev.*), ser. 27/1, vol. X, f. 5r, (13 Jan 1427)

³¹ DAD, *Acta Consilii Rogatorum* (hereinafter: *Cons. Rog.*), ser. 3, vol. IV, f. 113v (15 Jul 1429); Bariša Krekić, „Dva priloga bosanskoj istoriji prve polovine petnaestog vijeka,“ *Glasnik društva istoričara Bosne i Hercegovine* 37 (1986), 136.

³² More about appraisial theory of emotion see: Nico H. Frijda, *The Laws of Emotion* (Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc., 2007), 93-121.

³³ More about the medieval system of dependency (so-called "feudal system"), that co-existed with numerous and overlapping informal relationships on daily basis within the social and ideological context of the time, that has actively influenced the duke's relationship with Dubrovnik, see: Zovko, “Pregovori o proširenju”, 208-215.

³⁴ *Lett. di Lev.*, vol. X, f. 96v, (19 Jul 1428)

³⁵ “Magnifico voiuoda, perché la signoria di Ragusa è certissima che de ogni suo acrescimento et felicità a voi è singulare allegreca et piacere”, *Lett. di Lev.*, vol. X, f. 5r, (13 Jan 1427)

³⁶ *Lett. di Lev.*, vol. IX, f. 25r, (3 Mar 1424); *Ibid.*, vol. XI, (9 Feb 1431); *Ibid.*, f. 41v, (10 Mar 1431)

³⁷ *Lett. di Lev.*, vol. IV, f. 28v, (25 Jun 1403); *Ibid.*, vol. X, f. 180r, (14 Jul 1430.); *Ibid.*, f. 184v, (27 Jul 1430); *Cons. Rog.*, ser. 3, vol. IV, f. 212v, (8 Aug 1430)

³⁸ *Lett. di Lev.*, vol. XI, f. 228v (29 Mar 1435)

³⁹ “Tra le altre cose, ne scriuete come voiuoda è molto turbato che non li abbiamo mandato la pouegla”, *Lett. di Lev.*, vol. XI, f. 9r, (7 Nov 1430)

⁴⁰ *Lett. di Lev.*, vol. VII, f. 134r, (24 Aug 1415). For the context, see: Kurtović, *Veliki vojvoda bosanski*, 201.

⁴¹ “Che per denari lui tegna amistà con Ragusa casa sua, saluo con puro cuore et buono amore...”, *Lett. di Lev.*, vol. X, f. 96v, (19 Jul 1428)

⁴² *Lett. di Lev.*, vol. X, f. 112r, (30 Apr 1430)

⁴³ "A magior terrore d'esso nostro inemico... vedendo a ciò unita la potencia a saper eccellentissimo della corona di Bosna e della magnificencia sua et anche la potencia et saper nostro qualuncha se sia", *Lett. di Lev.*, vol. X, 133r, (13 May 1430)

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⁴⁵ See: Lovro Kunčević, *Mit o Dubrovniku: diskursi o identitetu renesansnoga Grada* (Zagreb-Dubrovnik: Hrvatska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, Zavod za povijesne znanosti u Dubrovniku, 2015).

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⁴⁸ For instance the member of ecclesiastical synod in Basel granted to Dubrovnik trade privileges in Muslim lands in 1433, Jovan Radonić (ed.), *Dubrovačka akta i povelje* (Beograd: Srpska kraljevska akademija, 1934), 430.

⁴⁹ In a similar position was a French king around 150 years later. He had to hire the whole team of experts in order to justify his alliance with the Ottomans, Géraud Poumarède, „Justifier l'injustifiable: l'alliance turque au miroir de la chrétienté (XVIe-XVIIe siècles),” *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* 3 (1997), 217-246.

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⁵¹ June Price Tangney, Patricia Wagner, Carey Fletcher, Richard Gramzow, “Shamed into Anger? The relation of shame and guilt to anger and self-reported aggression,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 62 (4) (1992), 669-75.

⁵² Kunčević, *Mit o Dubrovniku*, 165.

⁵³ For some examples, see: Kunčević, „Retorika granice kršćanstva”, 190–191.

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE IN EUROPEAN UNITY VISION OF ST. JOHN PAUL II THROUGH HERITAGE OF ST. CYRIL AND METHODIUS

Iryna Hnidyk

ABSTRACT

During the Soviet and post-Soviet period, countries of Central and Eastern Europe experienced difficult social transformation processes. At the same time, these states remained marginal in European integration projects. In this context, the European integration vision of Pope John Paul II became relevant. He emphasized the important role of Central and Eastern part of Europe, its identity, spiritual and cultural heritage in the context of the European unity concepts. St. Cyril and Methodius became the special symbols and the personification of identity of Central and Eastern Europe in Pope's vision. On the basis of analysis of researches, works and speeches the connection between the figures of St. Cyril and Methodius and the European vision of John Paul II is analysed. Particular attention is paid to his interpretation of actuality of St. Cyril and Methodius heritage for modern Europe in three important aspects: European integration, ecumenism, spiritual and cultural European identity.

KEYWORDS: Central and Eastern Europe, John Paul II, St. Cyril and Methodius, European integration, heritage.

Introduction

The Soviet and post-Soviet periods in the history of Central and Eastern Europe represent a wide range of social processes of different essence and direction of society. In every country they occurred with their specificity, ideological dogmas and depended on specific socio-political circumstances. In the Soviet period, two directions are clearly visible. The first is reflected in the ideology of Soviet power, through which the leaders tended to build society "at their own style". In order to realize this aim they have chosen different methods of influence at the public. The second direction is presented by the protest course of particular groups of society, which did not support dictated ideology (opposition, dissident movements). The representatives of these movements were united by social, economic, cultural and religious aspects of the development of society. In any

case, it was about finding the factors that can unite and mobilize the public to the action and desired changes.

Another important question in this context became discussions about concepts and visions of European unity and identity. Politicians, scientists and social activists have analyzed diverse criteria that could unite countries of the European area (R. Schuman, R. Kalergi, T. Masaryk, W. Churchill, K. Adenauer, Ch. de Gaulle, W. Brandt, D. Mitrany, J. Monnet, A. Spinelli, E. Haas, K. Doich etc.)¹. However, the aspect of identity and role of Central and Eastern Europe in the context of pan-European unity remained uninvestigated for a long time. Studies of this problem have intensified precisely in the post-Soviet period, but they continue to be very actual².

Main reason of this problematic situation was political and social division of Europe by Iron curtain. Also there were different types of crisis. In such position the problem of integration of Central, Eastern and Western Europe in common European civilization became very important. Also an aspect of common spiritual and cultural heritage in this process is significant. That's why such symbolic persons, especially spiritual patrons of Europe – St. Benedict, St. Cyril and Methodius represent peculiar signs of Western and Eastern Christian identity and bridge between different parts of European continent. Accordingly, major aim of this research is to analyze John Paul II's vision of European spiritual unity through the mediation of the legacy of St. Cyril and Methodius and actualization of significant role of Central and Eastern Europe in the aspect of concepts of unity.

In labyrinth of definitions

It is important to note that term “Central and Eastern Europe” and its identity are in active process of discussion in scientific environment³. But at the same time in modern research literature this definition is in general use⁴. These terms were also important in the geopolitical concepts. Especially, in this context is relevantly to refer to Halford Mackinder⁵. In the frame of his concept of “Heartland Theory” he considered Central and Eastern Europe as important axis of history. Also there are a lot of discussions in the research space regarding terms “Central Europe” and “Eastern Europe”⁶. For example, German definition “Mitteleuropa”⁷ or “Middle Europe” is known in same literature to indicate Central Europe.

Now “Central and Eastern Europe» is general term for a group of countries in Central, Southeast and Eastern Europe, usually means the former communist states. It is in use after the Iron Curtain collapse in 1989-1890. After decline of Soviet Union these countries began a new period of development. Important aspect in these tendencies is in the preparation for affiliation in European Union⁸. In this paper this definition is used to generally indicate previous socialist countries which were components of Soviet Union and were under its rule and strong political influence. That's why these states could not become an active part of Europe of that time meaning. They were disconnected not just by Iron curtain but also by deeper political and social different processes. The main point of this distinction was position of Soviet rulers, who had a great distorted desire to build something like own part of continent without connections with not-Soviet countries.

Christianity and European unity

Spiritual unity of Europe, united Christian European identity, ecumenical searches are important and actual themes today. European cultural heritage is especially connected with Christian tradition and is deeply rooted in it. In this aspect are important thoughts of Robert Schuman, ideologist of European unity. He accentuated the significant role of Christianity as an important source to finding a basement of this identity and real unity⁹.

Actualization of common spiritual and cultural roots with peculiarities of Catholic and Orthodox directions could really benefit to creation a new form of unity. In this aspect interesting source for research are activity, works and speeches of St. John Paul II (Karol Wojtyła, 1920-2005). He was born in Poland and his young years passed off in the period of World War II and totalitarian regimes – Nazi occupation of Poland and after that socialist rule under strong control of Soviet power¹⁰. As a young priest, then bishop, archbishop and cardinal in socialist country he had known peculiarities and threats of this political and social regime from inside. His important recollections in this context are in autobiographic works “Gift and Mystery: On the Fiftieth Anniversary of My Priestly Ordination” and “Rise, Let Us Be on Our Way”¹¹. Also researchers could find significant thoughts in John Paul II’s books “Crossing the Threshold of Hope” and “Memory and Identity”¹². As a first Slavic Pope in the difficult period of history, when Europe was really divided, he accentuated on the problematic state of countries of Central and Eastern Europe under the Soviet domination. In such situation he proclaimed St. Cyril and Methodius as European patrons with St. Benedict as a symbol of united European Christian identity.

In this context social activity of John Paul II deserves special attention. His pontificate (1978-2005) fell on both the Soviet and the post-Soviet periods in the history of Central and Eastern Europe. Since he lived in communist Poland, he understood the peculiarities of the Soviet ideology and its dangers. During his numerous visits to Eastern European countries, John Paul II touched on important social aspects, including the problem of the unity of Europe¹³. In fact, he emphasized the urgent need for the inclusion of Eastern Europe in the integration projects. Pope noted that true European essence is created by the identity and cultural heritage not only of Western Europe but also of its Eastern part¹⁴. However, his criterion of association was to return and actualize Christian spiritual and cultural values¹⁵.

Analytical research of John Paul II's activity regarding aspect of European unity gives contemporary investigators the reason to regard him as the author of one of actual concepts in this field¹⁶. Speeches in European socio-political organizations, apostolic letters, pastoral messages on the subject of European unity constitute an important component of Pope's social activity and are one of the key features of his pontificate¹⁷. At the time of his numerous trips to European countries, John Paul II did not miss the opportunity to emphasize the current need for unity. Unlike other political and economic integration concepts, the peculiarity of Pope's vision is the foundation of European unity based on the common Christian values and cultural heritage of Western and Eastern Europe.

In a particular way, the aspect of European unity in John Paul II's vision was expressed through the legacy of St. Cyril and Methodius. They were theologians, Christian preachers, missionaries, the first interpreters of liturgical services and books in Slavic language in IX century. The place of their birth was Thessalonica (now – Greece). That's why St. Cyril and Methodius are also called as Thessalonian brothers. In the literature saints are also mentioned as “Slavic apostles” or “enlighteners of Slavic nations”¹⁸. They actively developed the process of Christianization of the Slavs, especially in the Moravian Empire. One of their biggest achievements was creation of the Slavic alphabet (known as Glagolitic script). They laid the foundations of Slavic writing and literature. Therefore St. Cyril and Methodius made significant contribution on growth of Slavic culture¹⁹. It is important to note that these saints are canonized in Orthodox and Catholic Church²⁰. In result Thessalonian brothers became the emblematic figures of spiritual and cultural identity of Slavic nations, “personalities of national religious memory”²¹.

John Paul II found in the activities of St. Cyril and Methodius an actual significance for the modern age with its specific problems of social-political disunity and the spiritual and cultural crisis. In his interpretation figures of these saints became peculiar “sign of time”, a symbol of unity and mutual respect between the western and the eastern parts of Europe. Pope tried to consider the activities of Slavic apostles not only in the historical context, but also in connection with pressing issues of the present: ecumenism, the problem of European unity, spiritual and cultural heritage, returning to Christian values. John Paul II saw the symbol of Eastern European Christian identity in the image of the Thessalonian brothers. He accentuated that they are emblematic “connecting links or spiritual bridge between the Eastern and Western traditions (...) For us they are the champions and also the patrons of the ecumenical endeavor of the sister Churches of East and West”²². This vision became especially relevant taking into consideration that countries of Central and Eastern Europe after the emergence of the Berlin Wall and under the socio-ideological superiority of the Soviet Union remained unnoticed in the concepts of European unity. Moreover, in this societies state authority was propagandizing atheism and forbade activity of the Church. Many Christians were persecuted.

Karol Wojtyła's vision of Europe

In these conditions Karol Wojtyła long before becoming Pope, drew attention to the problem of the spiritual unity of Europe and its deep Christian roots²³. At that time, Europe was considered to be interpreted solely as a Western European identity. Accordingly, taking into consideration historical realities, Eastern European part didn't enter in the integration projects²⁴. The geopolitical situation after the Second World War influenced the formation of a social stereotype of Western Europeans that the border lays in the boundary of the Berlin Wall and even Berlin's membership in Europe was a rather controversial issue. So, they knew very little about the Central and Eastern Europe and were very little interested in it. In addition, the belief that this region is a kind of “domain” of Moscow has become rooted²⁵.

Karol Wojtyła, as inhabitant of socialistic Poland, from the "second half" of the European continent, understood very well the problem of the socio-political and ideological isolation of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Accordingly, he considered that interpretation of Europe only in its western dimension is incorrect²⁶. In 1978, his article "Where is the border of Europe?" was published in the Italian magazine "Vita e pensiero"²⁷. The author emphasized that "the tendency to talk and think of Europe in exclusively "Western" terms is characteristic of peoples and circles representing the western part of Europe"²⁸. K. Wojtyła underlined that borders of Europe are understood very differently and the most important boundary is in the people themselves. In contrast to this stereotype Polish cardinal highlighted the complementarity of the western and the eastern parts of Europe. In his vision, the historical formation of European nations took place simultaneously with their Christianization. K. Wojtyła defined the geographical European borders "from the Atlantic to the Urals"²⁹. Analysing history, he marked two varieties of Europeanism with their own separate centers – Rome and Constantinople. Byzantium became the center of Eastern version of European identity. At the same time, the existence of two separate centers does not testify only division, but also mutual complement on the basis of common sources³⁰.

Election of the first Pope from Eastern Europe

The election of K. Wojtyła as Pope especially alarmed the political elite of the countries of the socialist camp. At the very beginning of the pontificate John Paul II identified himself as Pope who came from another side of the "Iron Curtain" and therefore, in a very true sense, came from afar³¹. His inaugural speech "Do not be afraid! Open wide your doors for Jesus Christ" the researchers often interpret in the context of the special relevance of these words for the region of Central and Eastern Europe³². In this context the words of Archbishop Xavier Tuan are very relevant: "At that very moment, when Pope said "Do not be afraid! ", almost the whole world was red. Looking then at the map of Europe how could you not be afraid of ?"³³. Reflecting on this, Polish researcher Grzegorz Przebinda notes that the inauguration words of Pope were directed to everyone, including those who were in power at that time, especially to the leaders of the USSR, because fear was rooted in the psychology of people of the "socialist" countries³⁴.

John Paul II explained the connection of his inauguration words with the figures of St. Cyril and Methodius: "The voice that suddenly came out of my heart in that unforgettable day when, for the first time in the history of the Church, Pope of Slavic origin, the son of the crucified and eternally glorious Poland, began to go to the papal ministry, was nothing other, but an echo of the impulse of the saints Cyril and Methodius to assume the mission of evangelists"³⁵. At one time the Thessalonians brothers became evangelists for the territories of present-day Eastern Europe, which now was in difficult political and social situation and needed to be recognized as an important part of the European continent.

At the very beginning of the pontificate John Paul II took tent to the countries on the other side of the "Iron Curtain" in order to restore the unity of Europe. Pope understood that the division between the West and the East was artificial and carried out

for political and military purposes. The boundaries between two blocks were established without taking into consideration the history of the nations³⁶. In view of this, he saw the urgent need for the restoration of the spiritual unity of Christian Europe, as indicated on June 3, 1979 in Gniezno during his first papal visit to Poland. In this speech Pope emphasized: "Your fellow countryman, Pope comes to talk to the whole Church, Europe and the world about those often forgotten people. He comes to talk in a loud voice"³⁷. John Paul II recognized the will of God in recollecting about Slavic nations in the context of the important task of restoring European unity³⁸. The researchers of papal activity often quote and interpret the Gneznian speech, emphasizing its importance. In particular, A. Domoslavsky notes that John Paul II was the first authoritative personality who, in the last quarter of the twentieth century, drew attention to the people behind the Iron Curtain³⁹.

*New actuality of historical and spiritual heritage:
St. Cyril and Methodius and nations from other side of Iron Curtain*

Even then, in Gniezno, John Paul II addressed to the personalities of St. Cyril and Methodius in the context of European unity and the history of the Christianization of the Slavs⁴⁰. These saints became the special example and the symbol of Eastern European identity in the Pope's vision of the integration of Europe. According to G. Weigel, the idea of the reverence of these saints had ripened in John Paul II more than a year. Once in his conversation with the Czech cardinal Josef Tomko he was thinking about how to actualize the meaning of St. Cyril and Methodius' activity in the modern context. Finally, it was thought to proclaim them as the co-patrons of Europe. J. Tomko appreciated this intention as a "great idea" and the powerful symbol of the Church's desire to return the Slavic people their own authentic history and culture⁴¹.

The proclamation of holy patrons of Europe was very important for John Paul II in the context of the issue of European unity. Even in 1964, Pope Paul VI proclaimed St. Benedict, the founder of Western monasticism, as the European patron. Recalling this event, John Paul II expressed an opinion that this patronage towards whole Europe would be even more significant if to add the special activity of St. Cyril and Methodius to the great achievements of Saint Benedict. According to Pope, this act finds its rationale in various forms of historical and contemporary reality, in theological, church and cultural perspectives of European history. John Paul II thought that this decision corresponds to the signs of time especially in the context after the Second Vatican Council, when the question of unity became very relevant⁴².

On December 31, 1980, John Paul II proclaimed St. Cyril and Methodius as co-patrons of Europe in his apostolic letter "Egregiae virtutis" ("The Definitive Virtue"). This event was to become a significant symbolic sign of the unity of Western and Eastern Europe, as well as Catholic and Orthodox Christian traditions⁴³. St. Benedict is the patron of Western Europe and St. Cyril and Methodius became the patrons of its eastern part. During the national revival of the XIX century the names of the Thessalonian brothers became the symbolic sign of the struggle of the Slavic nations for their national rights⁴⁴. In a special way in the last decades of the XX century they became a symbol of the fact that Central and Eastern Europe with its Christian heritage is an integral part of

European unity. Such actualization and active position of John Paul II in the field of European integration drew the attention of the Western European public to the countries of Eastern Europe⁴⁵. The activity of Pope promoted the idea of the Eastern European identity as an inseparable part of a united Europe in ecumenical, cultural and spiritual aspect⁴⁶.

There are three interrelated significative parts of the actuality of St. Cyril and Methodius heritage in the letter of "Egregiae virtutis". Specifically there are arguments for the need of spiritual unity of Europe, ecumenism and cultural identity. Analysing the activities of Thessalonian brothers, John Paul II emphasized that Europe, in its geographical essence, is the result of the interaction of two trends of the Christian tradition and two different but simultaneously complementary forms of culture. The ecumenical aspect is based on the fact that these saints carried out their missionary activities in coordination with Constantinople and with Rome. Thus they became a peculiar symbol of the Church unity⁴⁷. Therefore, for John Paul, the example of St. Cyril and Methodius acquired a special ecumenical actuality.

In the religious and cultural plane Pope emphasized the common spiritual and cultural heritage of Europe, which was laid on the background of mutual cognition and the unity of various European nations during Christianization. He saw the significant merits in this process exactly in the activities of St. Cyril and Methodius, who are "not only Apostles of the Slavs, but also the fathers of their culture"⁴⁸.

The final note of the ecumenical aspect of the encyclical reveals the main objective of John Paul II in the cause of Christian and European unity: that the divisions of the Churches, mankind and peoples disappear, and to perceive the differences of traditions and cultures on the background of complementarity and enrichment of a common rich heritage with respect for the rights of each nation⁴⁹.

Pope often mentioned St. Cyril and Methodius in the context of the European unity. In particular, on November 6, 1981, during the international colloquium on the common Christian roots of European nations, he once again explained the reasons for the proclamation of the Thessalonian brothers as co-patrons of Europe. He emphasized that this action was realized with the aim to recognize the merits of St. Cyril and Methodius in the plane of history, culture, religion, in the cause of the evangelization of European nations and in the promoting the spiritual unity of Europe. In Pope's opinion these saints are examples of universalism that destroys barriers, erodes hatred and unites all in the love to Jesus Christ⁵⁰.

The current thoughts of John Paul II about Europe and its identity are reflected in the so-called "European Act", proclaimed by the Pope on November 9, 1982 in Santjago de Compostela (here is the pilgrimage center of St. Jacob). The purpose of this event was to call Europeans to unite and find their identity rooted in Christianity: "For this, I, John Paul II, the son of a Polish nation, which has always considered himself as European nation in view of his origins, traditions, culture ..., son of Slavic nation .. appeals to you, old Europe, a call, full of love: find yourself, be yourself, open your origin. (...) Rebuild your spiritual unity (...) Do not be discouraged by reducing your significance in the world or about the social and cultural crisis that affects you. You can still be the lantern of civilization and the stimulus of progress for the world. Other continents look at you and

expect from you the same answer as Saint Jacob gave to Christ: "I can"⁵¹. In this context Pope also drew attention to the saint patrons of the Europe – Benedict, Cyril and Methodius: "Since the early days of the pontificate I have never ceased to emphasize my concern for the life of Europe (...) To these three patrons of Europe [I] devoted my travels, papal documents and public acts of cult, praying for the custody of the continent and paying attention to new generations on their thoughts and examples"⁵².

Another opportunity to appeal to the heritage of St. Cyril and Methodius activity was in 1985, in 1100 anniversary of the death of St. Methodius. In Czechoslovakia, solemn celebrations of this event were being prepared. In February, 1984 the Czech Cardinal Franciszek Tomaszek invited John Paul II to visit the celebration in Velehrad – the city which is the embodiment of activity of these saints. Pope accepted the invitation, but then Czechoslovak authorities didn't grant a visa for his visit⁵³.

In spite of such course of events, John Paul II didn't stay away from the Czechoslovak celebrations. On March 19, 1985, he sent a special letter to Czechoslovak priests, emphasizing that St. Methodius, together with his brother Cyril, established the foundations of Slavic culture⁵⁴. In addition, Pope sent his delegate Agustino Casaroli to participate in Czechoslovak celebrations. In such occasion, John Paul II also initiated the celebration in Vatican⁵⁵.

In the context of the issue of St. Cyril and Methodius heritage it is very important so-called Slavic Encyclical of Pope "Slavorum apostoli" ("The Apostles of the Slavs"), issued on June 2, 1985⁵⁶. In the church-religious plane, this document belongs to the group of ecclesiological encyclicals, devoted to ecumenical question of the search for the unity of Christians⁵⁷. In this regard, Polish researcher G. Pschedinda notes that the "Apostles of the Slavs" is John Paul II's greatest contribution to the Catholic-Orthodox dialogue⁵⁸. The Encyclical confirms the ecumenical formula of unity in diversity, laid down by the Second Vatican Council, what means that spiritual and cultural Catholic or Orthodox tradition of the participants is not lost in the dialogue, but rather is considered as a source of mutual knowledge and bilateral enrichment.

St. Cyril and Methodius on the pages of the encyclical appear once again as one of the most important sources of unity and dialogue of Eastern and Western Christian traditions, the identification of the common Christian roots of culture and mutual influence and as an argument for the unity of Europe. This encyclical is very relevant in historical context of the second half of the 1980s, when ecumenical searches of Christian unity initiated by the decisions of the Second Vatican Council took place and there were still two Europes on the political European map separated by the "Iron Curtain". In this context, Thessalonian brothers in the vision of John Paul II embody spiritual power that can contribute to the search for unity and deep mutual respect for Eastern and Western Christian traditions. Pope perceived main merits of St. Cyril and Methodius activity in the declaration of the Gospel between Slavic people, in the cause of reconciliation, friendly coexistence, human development and respect for the essential dignity of each nation⁵⁹.

Conclusion

It should be noted that the main emphasis in Pope's vision of Europe was return to Christian values. He accentuated that it is necessary with the help of spirituality to overcome the influence of negative heritage of the past, namely the two world wars and destructive ideologies, which led to disastrous consequences. But the next danger was a global crisis, which finds its source in the crisis of culture, the destruction of values and ethical and religious principles. John Paul II noted that to exit this situation, Europe needs to develop spiritually, to rely on the Christian identity⁶⁰. Pope equated European history to the great river, into which the various streams flow. He saw a lot of potential in the diversity of traditions and cultures, which formed Europe. He explained the lack of spiritual unity in Europe because of the crisis of Christian identity⁶¹.

Consequently, in parallel with the Soviet period in the history of Central and Eastern Europe, ideas and concepts of integration were actively discussed in its western part. However, due to historical and political-ideological circumstances, Central and Eastern Europe was not considered as the important part of these projects. During the pontificate of John Paul II this unevenness and the proposals to overcome it were increasingly covered in public space. Pope emphasized that the true criterion for the integration of two parts of Europe is the common Christian identity, common cultural heritage and values not only in the spiritual but also in the social dimension. Such a concept of European integration attracts the attention of contemporary researchers more and more. It concerns to the aspects of social development, which were not given much importance in the process of European integration. Particularly relevant is that during the visits to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, which functioned in the sphere of direct action of Soviet ideology, John Paul II emphasized the spiritual and value aspect of social development and European integration.

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IDENTITIES ON THE GO: HOMELANDS AND LANGUAGES IN BALKAN AND TURKISH-CYPRIT LITERATURE

Anna-Marina Katsigianni

ABSTRACT

The present study focuses on tracing the depictions of the poetic subject in the light of lost homelands, linguistic foreignness and multilingualism, in poems about “political ethics”, which all too clearly converse with history—narratives that highlight the geographically and linguistically homeless poetic subject, in poems which are always written under the weight of a specific historical event, in other words articulated “under the heavy footsteps of history”. The transition from stability to instability, the feeling of physical and psychological loss through geographical and cultural change is vividly reflected in both Balkan and Turkish-Cypriot literature. In the present study, poems by Balkan poets are examined alongside poems by Turkish-Cypriot poet Mehmet Yaşin. Despite the self-evident cultural differences between Balkan and Turkish-Cypriot literature, there exist factors that warrant their co-examination; common narrative structures and similar themes—at least in part—require that they be systematically read together. The common historical past and the burden of memory—the construction or reconstruction through these texts of a collective point of reference and the transfer to common memorial sites; internal migration; the survival of common oral forms of poetry; divergent or ‘heretical’ writings; linguistic transitions; the processing of transitional identities: these are just some of the most obvious points of convergence. Balkan poems constitute a distinct category and, as will be shown below, are linked to Turkish-Cypriot ones primarily through their ideology. Some of the themes that persistently recur in Balkan poets’ and Yaşin’s work are: lost homelands, the reception of alterity, internal migration, shattered identities, the thematisation of orality and multilingualism. Yaşin’s poetry registers the multiple transitions of language and the coexistence of foreign languages, while also making use of the Karamanlidika dialect.

KEYWORDS: Turkish-Cypriot literature, lost homelands, linguistic foreignness, reception of alterity, internal migration, fragmented identity, thematisation of orality and multilingualism.

Already by 1935, Kostis Palamas was noting, in an essay, our incomplete knowledge as Greeks of the Balkan languages of our neighbours, as well as the more general lack of “Balkan knowledge” and substantial “Balkanophilia”, which he put down to the lack of teaching of the languages of great nations that “challenge our spirituality”. He went on to recommend notable Balkan fellow writers.¹ This invitation to delve deeper into the literatures of “smaller” countries and languages was the starting point for the present study, which attempts a comparative reading of Balkan and Turkish-Cypriot writing.

The ethnological mix of the Balkans remained impressively unaltered for centuries. However, historical-political conditions in the Balkans have been changing without halt over the past two centuries, creating in the process an improbable fragmentation, in tandem with the seemingly unavoidable “explosive” coexistence side-by-side of social groups with different national and cultural backgrounds. These groups do manage to coexist, with one of them usually dominating the others. Balkan and Cypriot literature include groups of writers with differing religious, linguistic and cultural backgrounds, some of whom became known in the West through their translation into the “dominant” languages first—for example Ishmael Kantaré, Tristan Tzara and others. What, though, is the exact content of terms such as “Balkan” and “Cypriot” literature? Specialised researchers, including Balkanologists and comparative philologists, deem that the definition by outsiders of terms such as “the Balkans” or “Balkan literature” is a tricky affair, since “always something gets left out,” to quote Aleka Ioannidou.² The present study makes use of the more appropriate terms “Balkan” and “Turkish-Cypriot” writing, given that their connotations are extra-geographical and do not necessarily presuppose a sense of identity.

The sense of national, according to Kristeva, amounts to “a historical identity with relative stability (tradition) and an always dominant instability, as well as a given localism (subject to continuous evolution)”.³ The transition from stability to instability, the feeling of physical and psychological loss through geographical and cultural change is vividly reflected in both Balkan and Turkish-Cypriot literature.

Working with Balkan literature, following the historic—by now—publication of the anthology of Balkan poetry *Aimos* (2008),⁴ which included poems translated by outstanding authors/translators, naturally led to my collecting a variety of poetic materials, which we can now accept as being an original creation in our own language, since the translations amounted to a complete remodeling of the original poems.⁵ This study focuses on tracing the depictions of the poetic subject in the light of lost homelands, linguistic foreignness and multilingualism, in poems about “political ethics”,⁶ which all too clearly converse with history—narratives that highlight the geographically and linguistically homeless poetic subject, in poems which are always written under the weight of a specific historical event, in other words articulated “under the heavy footsteps of history”.

In the present study, poems by Balkan poets are examined alongside Turkish-Cypriot poems by Mehmet Yaşin. The groundbreaking poet, theorist and academic Mehmet Yaşin thematises issues of linguistic and cultural identity,⁷ in both his much-translated poems and his theoretical texts. He reflects, in a deconstructionist vein, on concepts such as multilingualism, community, identity, diversity, Cypriotness, Greekness, Turkishness,

hybridity. His work, as he himself points out,⁸ cannot really be linked either to the lament and melancholy of contemporary Turkish poetry on the subject of the old, cosmopolitan Istanbul, or to the whole idea of long-lost Anatolia currently fashionable in Turkey.⁹ In addition, it does not have to do with the Cypriot poetry which straddles the divide between the two communities (Greek and Turkish), yearning for the days of peaceful cohabitation on the island. Such literary trends in Turkey, and, at least in part, in Cyprus, recall ideological stereotypes and reproduce some form or other of pre-determined nationalism. These are narratives that ignore the Other that belongs in different communities (Armenians, Maronites and Levantines), as well as the various hybrid cultural trends emerging in Turkey and Cyprus. His “corrosive”, subversive perspective deconstructs myths of heroism and religious dogma, going against division and monoglossia (i.e. the promotion of a single language). Mehmet Yaşın’s themes focus on cultural interaction, the human suffering that permeates the layers of time, the whisperings of the inner voice, the ghosts of history. He writes in Turkish, yet in many of his poems the Turkish language is written in Greek script, and ancient myth is reactivated through bold metaphors. The poetic subject, in his often dramatised compositions, “crosses the boundaries of the self”, feeling Turkish, Greek or Turkish-Cypriot in turn, but above all Cypriot—guardian of ghostly memories.

Contemporary Turkish-Cypriot writing, as it took shape mainly after the Turkish invasion (“The 1974 generation”), does not voice a desire for freedom, the way older national poets did, nor does it yearn for a unification with the motherland, which in fact it turns down. Instead, it records feelings of flux, linguistic and political instability, transition, rapprochement with the Other, and goes on to thematise the multiplicity of languages, deconstructing canonical views of the themes and linguistic forms appropriate for poetry. In this way, the contemporary diasporic poetry of the Turkish-Cypriot minority integrates itself into the international literary circuit and multi-system. Turkish-Cypriot writing is connected to the social and cultural experiences of Turkish-Cypriot authors who live or used to live outside Cyprus, and who write in Turkish, English and French (e.g. Taner Baybars). Theirs is a multilingual, multicultural and multi-geographic literary universe, which incorporates the centuries-old historical and cultural inheritance of the island (Phoenicians, the Lusignan, Venetians, Romans, Byzantines, the British); going beyond the nationalism of previous generations, contemporary Turkish-Cypriot writers turn to the sufferings of the “Other side” (i.e. the Greek-Cypriot community), with which they share similar feelings and experiences of loss.¹⁰

The traumatic partitioning of the island permeates in multiple ways all contemporary Cypriot (Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot) writing, which has increasingly come to resemble a fractured mirror that reflects the multiple transformations of memory, national-cultural consciousness and identity, with the passage of time. Division continues to be one of the main themes of Cypriot poetic rhetoric, given that the Cyprus issue hitherto remains unresolved, Nicosia being the only European city still divided by a wall.

The desire for the abolition of borders is of particular interest in the revolted, engaged poetry of indigenous Turkish Cypriots, often committed to a cause, who differentiate themselves from Turkish settlers, to articulate a poetry of testimony and guilt. The almost

“delirious” incorporation of historical experiences into the language defines this kind of writing, which records transitions, flux, entrapment and the subordination of emotions to geopolitical concerns, international relations and the politics of the two motherlands, Turkey and Greece. The diasporic character of Turkish-Cypriot writing, the multiplicity of languages, the appropriation of ancient myth, the focus on “Cypriotness” pose once more the question of national-cultural identity boundaries and hybridity, already much discussed in cultural criticism.¹¹ “Partition literature”, stemming from contexts such as German re-unification, India, Palestine, Ireland and others,¹² has become a distinct literary genre and object of interest within post-colonial studies, referring to the transformations of collective memory into various literary forms of representation and genres that defy classification, deconstructing normative schemes. The “looting” of history, the violence of division and its various narratives obviously require a multi-disciplinary comparative approach, as they involve geopolitical, sociological, historical and anthropological aspects.

Territorial division and its fall-out motivate us to reflect as we try to redefine notions of the national and the communitarian in a new multicultural, postcolonial context. The desire—at the level of the imaginary—for rapprochement, peace, social security and the creation of a unified community living in harmony is reflected in the narratives of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot writers alike, but also in the will of public opinion on either side, as both communities have experienced, in equal measure, a sense of overwhelming loss.¹³

In response to the justifiable question as to why at least some Greek-Cypriot poems have not been included in this study, it can be legitimately claimed that Greek-Cypriot poems converse more with Greek literature and the European literary canon and are thus not part of the schematic category of ‘minority literature’. Despite the self-evident cultural differences between Balkan and Turkish-Cypriot literature, there exist factors that warrant their co-examination; common narrative structures and similar themes—at least in part—require that they be systematically read together. The common historical past and the burden of memory—the construction or reconstruction through these texts of a collective reference and the transfer to common memorial sites; internal migration; the survival of common oral forms of poetry; divergent or ‘heretical’ writings; linguistic transitions; the processing of transitional identities: these are just some of the most obvious points of convergence.

All of the above issues, pertaining chiefly to matters of multiculturalism and identity in Balkan and Turkish-Cypriot writing, are reflected in literary texts. Balkan poems constitute a distinct category and, as will be shown below, are linked to Turkish-Cypriot ones primarily through their ideology.¹⁴ Poems which belong to different literary traditions are connected and linked, in a broader context, mainly through reference to the historical past and the social parameters of their composition. Such poetic narratives also indicate the establishment of ideological ties between the poets, as can be gleaned from the parallel reading of three poems on political ethics which converse with History: “Spring in the Cemetery” by the Bosnian Ilija Ladin, “Gift Silver Poem” by Odysseas Elytis, and the poem “Happy Barbarians” by Radovan Pavlovski.¹⁵ The emblematic poem “Spring in the Cemetery” (*Poems for the Cabin*, 1975), characterised by poetic austerity in

its rhetoric, expresses primordial truths, the image of human mortality, the death of countries and nations in history, and the unique faith in the eternity of nature. The poem by Odysseas Elytis “Gift Silver Poem”, from the collection *The Light-Tree and the Fourteenth Beauty* (1971), was written during the dictatorship—a reference is made to exile and the poet denounces the role of power. As far as the issue of language is concerned, the following verse is of interest: *Ξέρω πως είναι τίποτε όλ’ αυτά και πως η γλώσσα που μιλώ δεν έχει αλφάβητο* [I know that this is all nothing and that the language I speak has no alphabet]. In both poems, the homeland is defined as a palimpsest of nations and races, the only faith for Ladin being in the eternity of nature, the only truth for Elytis being the truth of poetry—faith in the universality of poetic expression, regardless of the national alphabet in which it is written. The internationally renowned poet from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Radovan Pavlovski, known as “the prince of the metaphor”, also highlights in his poem “Happy Barbarians” (*Sound Rider*, 1995) the concept of the homeland as an accretion of nations and races, and discusses the dispute over the name of the new country—can it call itself ‘Macedonia’ or not?—by looking back at times past, when there were no national claims or civil wars between barbarian tribes. The reference to “happy barbarians” is ironic and is probably an intertextual reference to Cavafy.

The depictions of history vary.¹⁶ The topo-geographical memory is an indisputable contact point. The sense of suffering is imprinted on the landscape, which becomes the recipient and bearer of common historical experiences. A good example of this is the poem by the well-known Bosnian poet Abdulah Sidran, who has written the screenplays for Kusturica’s films *Do you remember Dolly Bell?* and *When father was away on business*. His poetry expresses deep melancholy and anguish. He is known as “the sick man of Sarajevo”. He composed the grim poem “Μίλα Σαράγιεβο: Νησί είμαι, στην καρδιά του κόσμου [Speak Sarajevo: I am an island, at the heart of the world]”,¹⁷ which was written during the Bosnian War (1992-1995) and is included in the collection *Sarajevski tabut* (1994). The island evokes in us a feeling of exclusion from the rest of the world, a feeling of geographical isolation. The literal meaning of the word *tabut* is ‘bamboo basket’; only in Egyptian does it mean ‘cenotaph’. However, the compilers of the *Aimos* anthology prefer its interpretation as a board for the dead body of the city of Sarajevo. This could metaphorically mean that the text is a multi-layered mesh, like a bamboo mesh. Overall, the above-mentioned poems highlight the solitude of place, which reflects the feeling not only of geographical loss, but also of the internal migration of the poetic subject.

Historical memory, language and identity are inextricably linked as concepts. The reflective poems about the palimpsestic homeland and about the way in which history is written or constructed, echo the “conflicts of memory” or “the memories of conflict” of races and nations that shared the same historical fate in the face of expansionist Ottoman domination.

With the prospect of primarily tracing the connecting narrative links between the literatures in question, we can focus on the issue of orality, observing that it is thematised in different non-folk poems. For example, songs are the subject of at least three poets in the *Aimos* anthology: Kostis Palamas (“Anatoli”, *Yearnings of the Lagoon*, 1912), the Albanian Lasgush Poradeci (“Old song”, *The Complete Works*, 1990) and Ion Barbu (“Nasreddin Hodja in Isarlik”, 1922);¹⁸ one also observes quite often the incorporation of colloquial

‘expressions’ from the spoken language, and in actual fact from Turkish, as for example in the case of the Romanian poet Barbu.¹⁹

A basic type of linguistic self-consciousness in this poetry is presented by the underlying theme of multilingualism in the Bosnian poem “Baseskija” by Sidran (*Sarajevski tabut*).²⁰ In the poem “Baseskija”, Mullah Mustafa Baseskija, an 18th-century chronicler, is Sidran’s narrative persona, which the poet infuses with his querying and ironic ideological stance. This is an example of an authorial palimpsest, in which the persona is synchronized with the narrator in a first-person narrative. Baseskija wrote in Turkish and was translated into Serbo-Croatian. In the late 17th century, during a Habsburg raid against the Ottomans, Prince Eugene of Savoy captured Sarajevo and torched it, while the plague spread in the city.

“Baseskija”—probably with a touch of irony on Sidran’s part—makes a prophetic reference to the NATO intervention. The poem thematises multilingualism, implicitly focusing on the transfer of the chronicle from Turkish to Serbo-Croatian. Yet it also interesting in terms of genre, as it incorporates (through a *mise-en-abîme*) elements of memory from an even older chronicle, while at the same time it is expressed in the style of a confession, diary, conversation, prayer to God, reflection, apologia, or dialogue with history. It adopts a reflective rhetoric with touches of irony. The past historical narrative (e.g. the chronicle) as an intertext frequently translates modern historical events and cases of genocide in similar ways between the different Balkan languages.

Baseskija

Today, at daybreak, in the midst of summer, snow started coming down, heavy, wet and muddy. The orchards are lamenting, scared. I point this out, naturally, and then I fall silent, accustomed as I am to miracles. I see, through the window panes of the coffee-shop, troubled silent faces passing. How far will they go, dear God, Thou who knowest all? I am not given to blasphemy, this here solitude I’ve accepted as gift, not as chastisement, as boon I’ve accepted it, with every little thing as something repulsive. Some will come and go, dear God, my God, until the morning.

Tonight again someone was promised to death. My soul lies ready as the reed, and the empty paper before me. Thy silence and darkness. Whom, I wonder, did Thou seize tonight from the city? Whose name shall we be remembering every morning, as we smoke and drink our coffee, in the days ahead? We ought, no doubt, to prove wise, with the terror of anticipation not showing on our faces. Let me understand that time has proved long for me: this is the city where all disease is contagious. Like jaundice and cholera spreads love. Same with hate. Could it be that I’m alone too much? Sinful this, being so accustomed to loneliness. Is this the right way to think, my Lord? Much the same, in olden times (so say our chroniclers), deep red

the rain would drown the city, confusion and fear increasing,
 much like the parasites they are. But so few the city's healthy souls. And rightful
 this is. Whence the sickness, I have made clear,
 but whence, indeed, the health? The people around me, do they wonder
 (the people I take as all the same, knowing all too well that
 not two of them are the same
 neither before Thee, nor before mine eyes), about this, says I, do they wonder?
 Do they suspect I'm watching them? And how they'd tremble—would they?—
 in their heart of hearts at the mere reading of these lines of mine. Yet if
 I do not do them justice, am I still doing justice to myself?
 What, then, is the truth, and what is truthful? spake my Lord. Thy humble servant
 Mullah Mustafa invokes and calls Thee forth, thy servant who desires nothing more,
 save to live unnoticed and unnoticed to pass on, when his time
 shall come.

("Baseskija" by Sidran, translated by Orfeas Apergis)

After the war and the fall of the socialist democracies, the pressing need for an ideological redefinition of the meaning of Balkanism arose once more. As far as depictions of lost homelands and multilingualism are concerned, Bosnian poetry provides an eloquent example; Bosnia & Herzegovina presents a very particular cultural example compared to the other Balkan countries, as the 'Bosnians' are a multinational mix consisting of Bosnians, Serbs and Croats—three cities (Sarajevo, Belgrade, Zagreb), three countries, three borders, three religions, following the war and the division of the country. The capital of Bosnia is Sarajevo, which has inspired numerous poets.²¹ Izet Sarajlić, in his complex poem entitled "Sarajevo" (*Transit*, 1963),²² elaborates on the "experience" of space and place, expressing erotic feelings, passionate love for his city, solitude, and a sense of desolation that echoes through the poplar-covered landscape, which in turn expresses its sympathy. The setting of the poem is dominated by intertextual references to timeless poetic symbols and literary figures: two Russian poets and the French troubadour François Villon. The beloved and immortal ones, as he calls them in the first verse, who complement the setting of the poem, are the suicide victim Sergei Yesenin,²³ whom Mayakovsky also wrote about, and Yevgeny Yevtushenko, whom the poet emphatically places in Georgia. In addition, it is interesting to note how the poem draws a parallel between the political revolutionary Čabrinović—who took part in the assassination of the heir presumptive to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie, in Sarajevo, in 1914, an event which triggered World War I—and the poetical rebel and heretic, the ironic 'cursed' troubadour François Villon, as both were imprisoned. The poetic subject develops an eclectic ideological and reading relationship with these figures. At the same time, his ironic reference to Paris is both fascinating and provocative. Throughout the poem, the past is intertwined with modern space-time. At the end, the poet idealises his rainy city, while he nostalgically and tenderly links his erotic feelings to the Miljacka River that flows through Sarajevo. He

compares and contrasts the humble yet beloved Miljacka with the Guadalquivir, recalling Lorca, and with the Seine, referring to the great French writers.²⁴

There is no doubt that the crucial factor in shaping a common consciousness amongst Balkan peoples was the formation of a single perception of the Ottoman Empire and of “eastern despotism”. Understandably, the poetic depictions of the Ottoman “Other” have similar characteristics in the narratives of all Balkan people. Christianity and the common goal of shaking off Turkish domination provided, historically, an ideologically cohesive basis for the formation of a Balkan consciousness and identity.²⁵

In a similar way, the image of the Ottoman Empire provides a foundation for the narratives of Turkish-Cypriot poetry, especially that of the so-called generation of '74, linking—their natural differences notwithstanding—the Balkan poets with those of the Turkish-Cypriot minority. The latter, despite being Turcophone, as already mentioned, oppose the policy of Turkish settlers and turn to the pain of the opposite ‘Other’, with whom they share a feeling of loss, expressing their desire to draw closer. Many deeper community characteristics can be detected in the poetic discourse itself, which acts as a channel through which cultural features can be retrieved. Besides, not only at the level of the imaginary, but also at a social level, numerous unifying moves are known to be taking place in Cyprus, as well as in Bosnia. The palimpsestic strata of the island’s history, its linguistic diversity and multilingual environment, colonial policy and partitioning are all factors in the formation of a literature always ‘in revolt’. The Turkish-Cypriot poets ironically discuss the amorous coexistence of foreign languages and the duality or rather the fluidity of identity. A significant factor in determining the individuality of Turkish-Cypriot literature is its diasporic character; several Turkish-Cypriots write directly in English or French, combining nationality with cosmopolitanism. Their poetry frequently focuses on the memory of geographical place, with ancient Greek myth becoming boldly figurative, while prominence is also given to accentuating Cypriotness, with the ultimate aim of achieving unity with the Greek-Cypriots.²⁶

These are poems of political ethics, full of fault lines which highlight the geographically and linguistically vagrant poetic subject—heretical writing, which deviates from the canon of modern Turkish literature, subverting the stereotyped image of the Turk.

The most complex literary example is provided by the poetry of the much-translated Turkophone poet, prose writer and theoretician Mehmet Yaşın; lost homelands, the adoption of alterity, internal migration, shattered identities, the thematisation of orality and multilingualism, are just some of the themes that persistently recur in his work. Yaşın weaves his poems by extracting material from the diverse hybrid cultural trends emerging in Cyprus. What’s more, his origins are hybrid, as they combine the Turkish, Greek and Levantine cultures of the Mediterranean.²⁷ In his sometimes dramatic narrative poetry, he uses Turkish, with references to various historical and geographical/dialectal forms of the language. He incorporates Greek and English words, creating a verbal amalgam that depicts the dual identity of the poetic subject, which “writes in Turkish but dreams in Greek”.²⁸ His poetry ironically documents the multiple transitions of language and the coexistence of foreign languages. He writes in Turkish, yet often in his poems, the Turkish language is communicated using the Greek alphabet (Karamanlidika dialect). The

use of Karamanlidika clearly implies a denouncement of the communicative and political impasse, as this language cannot be understood either by a Greek or a Turk, or for that matter by anyone. The Turk that understands it when he hears it, cannot read it; the Greek who can read it, does not understand it. The structure of the language in these fiction narratives echoes the ‘doubleness’, the ‘twoness’²⁹, of the identity of the poetic subject, the ‘other’ that is always inside. The dialectical interaction between ‘us’ and ‘you’ echoes the identification with the ‘Other’, through a common cultural heritage, syncretism and the multiplicity of human nature.

Several of Yaşin’s political poems focus on oral folk myths, while some of his other narratives deal with multilingualism: “Καιρός πολέμου [Wartime]”, “Θεο-λογία [Theology]”, “Η αίτηση [The application]”, and so on.³⁰ The literature of the city—“lost Nicosia, lost Istanbul, lost Thessaloniki”—frequently recurs in the poetry of Yaşin, who deviates from the canon of his contemporary Turkish literature, dividing his time between British cities, Cyprus and Athens; a stepmother homeland, a stepmother tongue—the only refuge, the only true homeland was poetry.³¹ The narrator converses with the Greek literary tradition, mainly the poetry of Cavafy and, with deconstructionist intent, often transforms himself into a ghost, becoming the guardian of memory:³²

A Ghost

Phoenician inscribers of epitaphs were killed
by warriors who were Phoenicians themselves,
because they advocated an end to the war
with the Greeks, and those who remained,
continued to live like ghosts under threat of death.
– *From a tombstone in Idalion, Cyprus, 8c BC*
Only as a ghost can I now return to my own home,
emerging from blurred mirrors. I haven’t much time.
I throw the windows open, in pitch dark, starlight
floods the rooms. I shake the dust off the curtains,
off the linen draped over bookshelves. I must also clean
with moist breath the family pictures in frames.
The avenging angels of this polyglot house, now silenced,
make every one who enters it, promise to write
against wars, against everything jingoist, even tongues.
Sprinkle the ant killer around like enchanted words,
the mothballs. I’ve wiped the floors clean. I lock the doors,
and I’m off again, no one has even seen me.
I’m a phantom... they can’t have me killed.

Wartime

I used to talk within myself so that no one could hear me,
and they all suspected wisdom in my silence!
Turkish was dangerous, must not be spoken,

and Greek was absolutely forbidden...
 My elders who wanted to save me, were waiting,
 each one trigger-ready before a machine-gun.
 Anyway, everyone was then a willing soldier.
 English remained right in the middle,
 a slender paper-knife for cutting schoolbooks,
 a tongue to be spoken at certain times
 especially with the Greeks!
 I was often unsure in which language to shed tears,
 the life I lived wasn't foreign, but one of translation –
 my mother-tongue one thing, my motherland another,
 and I, again, altogether different...
 Even in those days of blackouts it became obvious
 I could never be the poet of any country,
 because I belonged to a minority. And 'Freedom's still
 a little word uneasy in any nation's lexicon...
 Then in my poems, the three languages got into a wild tangle:
 Neither the Turks nor the Greeks
 could hear my inner voice, nor the Others...
 But I don't blame them, it was wartime.

Aunt-ology

*In memory of my great aunt Süreyya Yashin
 who brought me up
 i Home-Life. Auntie-tongue*
 Alas! her life was acknowledged in her death
 when home-life stopped with the dear old woman's heart
 – none of us would admit his confusion –
 But reader! Every poem is a confession.

ii Antie-tongue Carved on Her Headstone
In the English era, the widow lady teacher
was Süreyya at home and Judith to all others,
Flax-haired Lâmia to her friends.
Times have changed,
even her Greek neighbours have changed;
at Sarayönü no family mansion now remains,
nor the house with a garden at Neapolis
– it was war and war and war –
no stone stood on stone any longer...
And then, the Turks came.
She was now Judith at home and Süreyya outside.

Falls for a Carnation

It fell to her to lick the men of our family into shape,
 to rub our backs with Vick and knit us vests,
 grandfather, father, me and stillborn nephews.
 Spring cleaning preparations fell to her,
 the tree to be pruned, the leaky roof,
 and the endless cleaning of fairy-tale cabins.
 The ruins of our heritage to her, mortgage repayments, dowry,
 to arrange lodgings for teachers, sheds for refugees,
 transporting the living from one war zone to another;
 her lot to keep our local guards awake,
 her duty to read the Koran in Arabic for the dead;
 to make olive-magic in Latin,
 correct my Turkish in red,
 and decide on the proper place for the carnation.

Our Cat's Tale

When I was a child I used to wonder
 if our Greek neighbour's cat
 was also Greek.
 One day I asked my mum
 and she said cats were Turkish
 dogs were Greek
 and dogs attacked the kittens.
 Much later one day
 what should I see?
 Our cat was eating
 her own kitten.

(*Poems 1977–1997*, translated by Taner Baybars)

In his polyphonic synthesis entitled *Η συνάντηση της Σαπφούς με τον Ρουμί* [*The encounter between Sappho and Rumi*],³³ where an attempt is made to combine two genres, the poem and the essay, the ancient poet Sappho meets the 13th-century Persian poet, philosopher and thinker Rumi. Amidst an atmosphere of erotic pantheism, the narrator thematises the revealing power of love and writing, the universal dimension of poetry and the assumption of alterity, undermining nationalist, religious and sexual orthodoxies. The removal of national, linguistic, religious and erotic boundaries, the coupling and osmosis between the Eastern and the Western world constitute yet another representation of the 'twoness' or hybrid identity of the poetic subject. Rumi, as a poetic persona, presents many analogies with the poet himself, as he cultivated various genres (poetry, prose, essay) and his art overcame national borders, having been translated into many languages; he was hailed as the most popular poet in the United States. He taught at Konya, where he

died. Rumi's funeral was attended by people from five different religions. The night of his burial was established as the Night of the Union. Rumi engenders not only the authorial but also, on a metaphorical level, the socio-political ideal of union, espoused by Yaşın. The vindication of this 'osmotic identity' is arguably the fact that Yaşın was recently anthologised as a non-Greek-speaking Greek poet, in the anthology of modern Greek poetry published by Karen van Dyck (as he "voluntarily defines himself" as a Turk, a Greek or a Cypriot poet, avoiding the categorisation of a single national identity).³⁴ Elements of Rumi can also be detected in the poetic persona of the contemplative Sappho, as the former partook of a Greek education and is therefore culturally linked to the popular poet of antiquity. The multilingual Rumi composed odes which are linguistically mixed (a blend of Persian with Turkish and Greek).³⁵ The mingling of Greek and Eastern identities helped establish the reputation of the poet, who, like Sappho, inspired important poets of the Western canon.³⁶

So, is universality, the 'esprit général' put forward by Yaşın in this intercultural poetic composition, with its merging of cultural identities, the extension of a utopia? Be that as it may, his poetry does present, in an ever-changing manner, a mythologised version of the multiplicity of hybrid identities and language transitions. Yaşın's theoretical background supplies him with the necessary tools to give poetic shape to his sentiment of being "in-between borders".³⁷

I hope it has become clear on this brief 'tour' of the poetic landscape that poetic discourse is a diachronic mirror of the formation of (national and hybrid) identities, while the concept of Balkanism and Cypriotness appears as unstable, diverse and plural—an eclectic mix of fiction narratives from literatures on the go.³⁸

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Notes

¹ Kostis Palamas, *Collected Works* (Biris edition), vol. V, 500-593, XIV, 127 & 360-362, XVI, 482 & 589-590.

² Aleka Ioannidou, "Balkan literature", *Diavazo* 463 (May 2006): 102. Dimitris Kargiotis cites such views and takes a well-aimed swipe at the "antiseptic", or perhaps "sanitised" term "Southeastern Europe", which was used by the Third Reich in the service of its geopolitical ambitions, while it also denotes, to this day, the backwardness of this European region: "What can Balkan literature mean?", *Geographies of Translation: Places, Rules, Ideologies, Views* (Athens: Kapa, 2017), 43-59, 50-51.

³ Julia Kristeva, *Έθνη χωρίς εθνικισμό* [*Nations without Nationalism*], Giorgos Karabelias (ed.), trans. prologue Kostas Geormas (Athens: Enallaktikes ekdoseis, 1997), 90. On the strategy of nation formation and the rhetoric of the nation narrative, see Anna Tzouma, *Εκατό χρόνια νοσταλγίας. Το αυτοβιογραφικό αφήγημα Έθνος* [*One Hundred Years of Nostalgia: The Autobiographical Nation*

Narrative] (Athens: Metechmio, 2007). Compare Stathis Gourgouris, *Έθνος – όνειρο: Διαφωτισμός και θέσμιση της σύγχρονης Ελλάδας [Dream Nation: Enlightenment and the Institution of Modern Greece]*, trans. Athanasios Katsikeros (Athens: Kritiki, 2007).

⁴ Anna Katsigianni, “Βαλκανικές γραφές: Αίμος. Ανθολογία Βαλκανικής Ποίησης. Μυθιστορία και κοινό ‘φορτίο μνήμης’ [Balkan literature: Aimos. Anthology of Balkan Poetry. Fiction and the shared ‘burden of memory’]”, *Νεοελληνική λογοτεχνία και κριτική από τον διαφωτισμό έως σήμερα [Modern Greek literature and Criticism from the Enlightenment to the Present Day]*. Proceedings of the 13th International Academic Meeting. In memory of Pan. Moullas (Thessaloniki: Sokoli-Kouledaki Publications, 2014), 735-749.

⁵ These poems were translated by eminent Greek poets, who, in addition to the originals, also had recourse to translations into other languages, such as French, Russian etc. For example, the Bosnian poems, on which the present study primarily focuses, have been translated by Ilias Lagios and Dimitris Kosmopoulos, both of them well-established poets.

⁶ Term used by D. N. Maronitis. *Ποιητική και πολιτική ηθική. Πρώτη μεταπολεμική γενιά: Αλεξάνδρου – Αναγνωστάκης – Πατρίκιος [Poetic and Political Ethics. First post-war generation: Alexandrou – Anagnostakis – Patrikios]* (Athens: Kedros, 1976).

⁷ Suzan Yilmaz (ed.), *Poetry*, The Series of Modern Turkish Cypriot Literature, vol. 1. (Kyrenia: Freebirds Press, 2009). The series is run by poet Mehmet Yaşin. An anthology of the latter’s verse was recently published in Greek, under the title *Άγγελοι εκδικητές [Avenging Angels]*, introduction-trans.-notes Z. D. Ainalis (Vaxkikon.gr, 2015).

⁸ Mehmet Yaşin, “Introducing step-mothertongue”, in Mehmet Yaşin (ed.), *Step-mothertongue, from Nationalism to Multiculturalism: Literatures of Cyprus, Greece and Turkey* (London: Middlesex University Press, 2000). Cf. *Constantinople n’attend plus personne*; trans. Alain Mascarou. (Bleu autour, 2008).

⁹ Aristotelis Mitraras, *Ανθολογία της νέας τουρκικής λογοτεχνίας: Ποίηση [Anthology of New Turkish Literature: Poetry]* (Athens: Papazissis, 2015).

¹⁰ Mehmet Yaşin and Jenan Selçuk, *Poetry*, Suzan Yilmaz (ed.), 15, 34-37.

¹¹ See, for example, Peter Burke, *Cultural Hybridity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009), which discusses the views of Homi Bhabha, Stuart Hall, Gayatri Spivak, Edward Said, Paul Gilroy, among others.

¹² Anna Bernard, “Forms of Memory: Partition as a Literary Paradigm”, *Journal of Comparative Poetics* 30 (2010): 9-33; Bhalla Alok, *Partition Dialogues: Memories of a Lost Home* (Oxford and New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006); John Calame and Esther Charlesworth, *Divided Cities: Beirut, Belfast, Jerusalem, Mostar and Nicosia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 121-142.

¹³ Alexandre Lapierre, *Les dynamiques du rapprochement communautaire à Chypre depuis 1974*, Thèse: Histoire, Sociétés et Territoire du Monde (Paris: INALCO, 2015).

¹⁴ In such ‘small’ countries and languages, the proximity of literature to politics is inevitable. See, in this respect, Max Brod, *Franz Kafka: Souvenirs et documents*, trans. H. Zylberberg (Paris: Gallimard, 1945), 175. Compare Pascale Casanova, *Η παγκόσμια πολιτεία των γραμμάτων [The World Republic of Letters]*, trans. Efi Giannopoulou (Athens: Patakis, 2011), 253-255.

¹⁵ *Αίμος. Ανθολογία Βαλκανικής Ποίησης [Aimos: Anthology of Balkan Poetry]*. (Athens: Friends of the periodical *Anti*, 2008), 90, 218, 394.

¹⁶ See also “L’Image de la période ottomane dans les littératures balkaniques”, *Cahiers Balkaniques* 36-37 (2007-2008), sous la direction de Frosa Pejoska-Bouchereau, (Paris: INALCO, 2010); “Conflits et mémoires dans les Balkans”, *Cahiers balkaniques* 38-39, Publications Langues O’ – 2011 (co-direction avec Joëlle Dalègre et Faruk Bilici) <http://www.sudoc.fr/039433153>

¹⁷ *Aimos*, 231-232.

¹⁸ *Aimos*, 53-54, 128-129, 437-440.

¹⁹ Similarly, in modern Turkish-Cypriot writing, orality (e.g. the Karamanlidika dialect) and multilingualism are thematised by the poets conveying the issue of identity through the manner in which they write. See, for example, Mehmet Yaşın, *Avenging Angels*, 129.

²⁰ *Aimos*, 233-234.

²¹ The poems about Sarajevo anthologised in *Aimos* could be the topic of a separate paper in their own right. The ‘literature of the birthplace’, the famous ‘Heimatliteratur’, as it became known in the language of comparative studies, as well as the manner in which “the birthplace opens up in space and time”, is discussed in the study by Ioanna Naoum. “Η ποίηση του Μάρκου Μέσκου: το θρόισμα της γλώσσας ενός μεθόριου τόπου [The Poetry of Markos Meskos: The Whisper of a Border Language]”, which makes reference to the poem by the Bosnian Ilija Ladin “Spring in the Cemetery”, whose theme focuses on the “stratification” and the “sediment of the history of the place”, *Emvolimon, Tribute to Markos Meskos 67-68* (Winter 2012 - Spring 2013): 88-95; 92-95.

²² *Aimos*, 223-224.

²³ A reference to Yesenin is also made in the poem “Patient women” by Mehmet Yaşın, *Avenging angels*, 104. The rhetorical devices and the other threads linking minority poets is a subject worth exploring further.

²⁴ See Lizzy Tsirimokou, “Μυθολόγηση της ιθαγένειας [Mythologising Nationality]”, *Εσωτερική ταχύτητα [Internal Speed]* (Athens: Agra, 2000), 331-341.

²⁵ Anna Katsigianni, “Balkan literature: *Aimos*”, 742.

²⁶ On the Turkish Cypriot script, see the study Anna Katsigianni, “Η ανάδυση μιας υβριδικής πολιτισμικής ταυτότητας: η τουρκοκυπριακή γραφή [The emergence of a hybrid cultural identity: Turkish Cypriot script]”, *Comparison* 24 (2014): 75-84; “L’émergence d’une identité culturelle hybride: L’écriture turco-chypriote”, *Cahiers Balkaniques* 42. Grèce-Roumanie. *Héritages communs, regards croisés* (Paris: INALCO, 2013-2014): 329-346; Düriye Gökçebağ (trans.), “Kıbrıslı Türklerin bilinmeyen şiiiri”, *Eurensel Kültür* 288 (Aralık 2015): 80-81. “Χωρίς να κοιτάς το χάρτη. Γεωγραφίες της μνήμης και η ρητορική της διχοτόμησης στην τουρκοκυπριακή ποίηση, *Αφιέρωμα στην Κύπρο. Ιστορία, Λογοτεχνία, Τέχνη*, [Without looking on the map. Geographies of Memory and the rhetoric of division in Turkish Cypriot script]”. *Tribute to Cyprus. History, Literature, Art, Nea Estia* 1871 (December 2016): 781-786.

²⁷ His mother’s culture was Greek. His daughter is half-Jewish. He writes in Turkish, but in his mind he translates from the Greek. Anthi Karra, “Το πολυεδρικό πρίσμα της ταυτότητας [The Multifaceted Prism of Identity]” (2003) academia.edu.gr; Andreas Paraschos, “Ο ποιητής Μεχμέτ Γιασίν ‘οικειοθελώς αθέατος’ [The Poet Mehmet Yaşın ‘voluntarily invisible’]”, *Kathimerini* (3.1.2016); Katerina Prifti, “Συνομιλώντας με τον τουρκοκύπριο ποιητή, Μεχμέτ Γιασίν. Το Κυπριακό, οι μνήμες, η ‘ταυτότητα’, η γλώσσα, το ιδανικό της συνύπαρξης [Talking with the Turkish-Cypriot Poet Mehmet Yaşın: The Cyprus Issue, Memories, ‘Identity’, Language, the Ideal of Coexistence]”, *EEST*, interview (15.10.2016).

²⁸ “Καμιά φορά ονειρεύομαι στα ελληνικά [Sometimes I dream in Greek]”, *Proskinio* (1.10.2016). See his article entitled: “I don’t trust literary theories and approaches, but dreams.”

²⁹ Term used by Du Bois. See Keri E. Lyall Smith, “Hybrid Identities: Theoretical Examinations”, in Keri E. Lyall Smith and Patricia Leavy (eds.), *Hybrid Identities: Theoretical and Empirical Examinations* (Chicago and Illinois: Haymarket Books, 2009), 3-11; Judith R. Blau and Eric S. Brown, “Du Bois and Diasporic Identity: The Veil and the Unveiling Project”, in *Hybrid Identities: Theoretical and Empirical Examinations*, 41-61.

³⁰ Mehmet Yaşin's mix of "venomous" writing is fascinating: old Ottoman, Turkish, words of Persian or Arabic origin, Cypriot, Greek, Latin, English. See *Avenging Angels*, 39, 55-70, 73, 96-97, 122, 126-131, and so on.

³¹ Mehmet Yaşin, "Introducing Step-mothertongue", 1-21. Compare "Writing from a Mediterranean Island: Between Languages and Literary Spaces".

³² Birgit Neumann, "The Literary Representation of Memory", in Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (eds.), *A Companion to Cultural Memory Studies* (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 2010), 333-343. On the poetry of Mehmet Yaşin, see Lefteres Papaleontiou, "Ένας σημαντικός Κύπριος ποιητής [An Important Cypriot Poet]", *Diorama* 8 (Sept.-Oct. 2016): 36-37; Giannis I. Ioannou, "Μεχμέτ Γιασίν, Άγγελοι Εκδικητές: Ανθολόγιο Ποιημάτων. Μετάφραση Ζ.Δ. Αϊναλής, εκδόσεις www.vakxikon.gr, Αθήνα 2015 [Mehmet Yaşin, *Avenging Angels: Anthology of Poems*. Translated by Z. D. Ainalis, published by www.vakxikon.gr, Athens 2015]", *Cadences* (2016): 91-95; Giorgos Frangos, "Κυπροκεντρισμός και υπερβατικότητα στην ποίηση του Μεχμέτ Γιασίν [Cyprocentrism and Transcendence in the Poetry of Mehmet Yaşin]", *Nea Epochi* 329 (2016): 68-71.

³³ *La rencontre de Sapho et Rûmî*; traduit du turc par Asli Aktug et Alain Mascarou (Marseille: 'Le Refuge'), 2014.

³⁴ Karen van Dyck, "Border Zones: Poets between Cultures and Languages", in Karen van Dyck (ed.), *Austerity Measures: The New Greek Poetry* (London: Penguin Books, 2016), 331, 403-407.

³⁵ Mehmet Yaşin, "Le plurilinguisme poétique franchissant le temps et les espaces", in *La rencontre de Sapho et Rûmî*, 44-45.

³⁶ The way in which Asian mysticism invaded the Greek 'world' and the tempering of Asian passion through the newly fledged laws of Greek lyrical art were discussed as early as 1937, on the occasion of the publication of A. Puech's *Αλκαίος και Σαπφώ [Alcaeus and Sappho]* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres), by K. T. Dimaras, who focused on Sappho's eastern lyricism, *Elefthero Vima* (8.11.1937). Mehmet Yaşin also detects imperceptible echoes of Rumi's poetry (in addition to Sapphic traces) in Elytis, "Le plurilinguisme", 47. See also Mehmet Yaşin, "Μεταμορφώσεις της ταυτότητας στην ποίηση, το παράδειγμα του Καβάφη και του Σεφέρη [Transformations of Identity in Poetry: The Example of Cavafy and Seferis]", *Synchrone Themata* 68-69-70 (March-July 1998); trans. Anthi Karra. Mehmet Yaşin, "Essais: Retour sur l'identité en poésie: l'exemple de Cavafy et de Seferis", in *Constantinople n'attend plus personne*; traduction du turc Alain Mascarou en collaboration avec Elif Deniz, François Graveline et Pierre Vincent. (Bleu autour, 2008), 99-106; "και ο σταυρός, κι η ημισέληνος/αυτά τα τουρκεμένα πνεύματα/ ρουμί, τα εξελληνισμένα... [both cross and crescent moon /these turkified spirits / rumi, the hellenised ones]", he writes in his poem "Ο άρχοντας των δαφνών [The Lord of Laurels]". *Avenging Angels*. 127.

³⁷ On the promotion of a third, intermediate space (hybrid or diasporic) by our modern comparative literature studies, which are evolving into "comparative studies of exile, heterotopia and interculturalism", see the work of Dimitris Tziouvas, "Συγκριτισμός και διαπολιτισμικότητα [Comparativism and interculturalism]", *Koultoura kai Logotechnia [Culture and Literature]* (Athens: Polis), 94-110.

³⁸ See, for example, V. Calotychos (ed.), *Cyprus and Its People: Nation, Identity and Experience in an Unimaginable Community (1955-1997)* (Boulder: West-view Press, 1998), 336; V. Calotychos, "From Arta to NATO: Building and Bombing Bridges in the Balkans", in Roilos and D. Yatromanolakis (eds.), *Ritual Poetics in Greek Culture*, Center for Hellenic Studies, Washington, and Foundation for Hellenic World (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); "Bridging Divides or Divisive Bridges? Balkan Critical Obsessions and Their Political Effects", in T. Aleksic (ed.), *Mythistory and Narratives of the Nation in the Balkans* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2007), 195-210;

The Balkan Prospect: Identity, Culture and Politics in Greece After 1989, Studies in European Culture and History Series. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 522.

ASPECTS OF ROMANIAN CONSULAR DIPLOMACY IN TWO SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES IN THE FIRST DECADES OF THE COMMUNIST RULE

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to analyse the activity of Romanian Consulates in two Scandinavian countries, Denmark and Norway, with particular focus on the first decades of the post-war period. Thus, the objective of this paper is to identify the main problems encountered by Romanian Consulates in Copenhagen and Oslo, as well as the solutions found to overcome them. The article is based on the analysis of the work plans and the annual reports preserved in The Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Romania on the activity of the consular offices, both during the rule of Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej, as well as at the beginning of Ceausescu's rule. The openness of the Romanian authorities after 1965 towards the West offers new perspectives for the analysis of the Romanian consular services in the two Scandinavian countries, which can anticipate the evolution of the Romanian consular diplomacy, its difficulties as well as its achievements.

KEYWORDS: Scandinavia, diplomacy, Romania, communism, consulates.

Introduction

Communism, whether global, European or national, is a favoured piece in the universal history puzzle, given that research studies, syntheses and document collections that were published especially after 1989 on this topic offer various possibilities of exploring the recent history. The history of the Romanian communism was also under scrutiny by the Romanian Presidency. The interest shown, for example, by president Bănescu has led to him commissioning a report written by Vladimir Tismăneanu and a team of scholars, who coordinated a specialised committee. The final outcome of this committee's work was a synthesis that caused indeed a lot of controversy and was presented in the Romanian Parliament on the 18th of December 2006.

Thus, regardless of the subject – domestic or foreign policy, the resistance movement, political reprisal, aspects of the public or private family life of Dej, Ceaușescu or those living in Cartierul Primăverii – the history of the Romanian left-wing totalitarianism is

paid special attention to not only by the historians but also by the general public. This paper will focus specifically on the consular activities in the Scandinavian countries in the first decades of the communist rule. The study aims to analyse how Romanian consulates managed to be accommodated in the Scandinavian countries taking into account the international historical context of the Western traditional democracies. Considering the context of the Soviet subservience and subsequently the de-stalinization of Romania, the main question to be raised is what kind of relations were there between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Romanian consulates that were parts of the Legations in Copenhagen and Oslo? How did the Romanian consular diplomatic mechanism work in Scandinavian countries, especially for a state that only knew democracy in a theoretical framework, while, in practice, the regime of the "popular democracy" imposed restrictions and changed the initial implications of the word freedom?

Primary Sources: The Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Since consular diplomacy is a subject that is rarely approached in the specialised literature, this study does not by any means claim to be an exhaustive one. In the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs there are several documents regarding the structure and functioning of the Romanian consulates in the Scandinavian countries during the communist period. However, researching these documents proves to be a laborious process, because of the lack of organisation in the framing of the documents during the covered period of time. Thus, the period 1880-1945 consists of the Fond Problem 75, regarding the Romanian consuls in the Scandinavian countries; for the period 1945-1989 the documents are divided into the Subfond Denmark and Subfond Norway (1945-1970) but for Sweden the list is yet to be provided. This is the reason why this study focuses on the Romanian consular activity in the two Scandinavian states chosen. However, researching the documents available for Denmark and Norway remains a difficult task, especially because of the barriers in the diplomatic relations with these states in the period of reference. After the Second World War, they were part of the democratic countries, while Romania was under Soviet influence.

Romania's fairly weak relations with Western Europe followed the lead of the Soviet Union until the mid-1950s when under Gheorghiu-Dej the regime developed a policy of autonomy. The activity reports of the Romanian Legation until the 1960s are rare and often cover only a few months of one year. The situation changes for the decade 1970-1980, for which the documents are arranged on years and countries. The annual reports of the diplomatic offices in Copenhagen and Oslo are better and always refer to the consular activities, even if they are incomplete and repetitive to a certain extent. It is also true that the information often covers issues related to inbound-outbound visas, tourism activity, docking of the Romanian ships in the Scandinavian countries, overflight or citizenship. Moreover, since the language is specific to the communist period, the linguistic pattern implies a certain precaution when analysing the historic discourse. Thus, the consular diplomacy is restricted to the daily activity of the Romanian Legation and the Embassies of the Socialist Republic of Romania in the Scandinavian countries.

Legislative Aspects of the Romanian Consular Diplomacy

In regards to the legislation which guides the activity of both career and honorary consuls, there are several difficulties in identifying the laws observed by the Romanian diplomats. Between 1878 and 1945 the activity of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is carefully structured, while after the communist take-over, all the institutions are reorganized. The "Consular Regulations" introduced on the 12th of June 1880 were replaced with the ones legitimized by Royal Decree No. 3549 from the 24th of October 1937. Subsequently, the Law dated 8th April 1944, drafted under Mihai Anotnescu's guidance, was one of the most exhaustive normative acts that organised the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Despite this, it did not enjoy a long existence especially due to the historical context at the moment of its endorsement. The 229 articles of Law No. 215 from April 1944 suggest that both the Legations and the Consulates were foreign administration structures of the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

According to Article III¹, it was compulsory for each Legation to have a consular department as well as a political, diplomatic, economic, cultural, press, propaganda and information department. Whether it is the Consular Regulations from 1937, the Law establishing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 1939 or Law No. 215 from April 1944, the consulates were ruled by the same authority represented by the director of the respective diplomatic mission. Thus, a quick analysis of the legislation prior to the communist regime, proves that the consular assistance was subordinated to the diplomatic one and by no means depended on the other members of the office. In the case of no Legation being available in a country, both career and honorary consulates were subordinated to a diplomatic office in a neighbour country, appointed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This practice was kept during the communist regime, which explains the necessity of examining the activity reports of the Legations from the Scandinavian countries and their mail in order to find out information about the way in which the consular activity was conducted.

*Romanian Consular Diplomacy in Norway
in the First Decades of the Communist Regime*

According to the annotation No. 03/01939 written by the head of the Directorate III Relations on the 8th of February 1970, regarding the status of the Romanian-Norwegian relations, it can be observed that, starting with 1917 Romanian and Norwegian diplomatic relations were conducted at the level of Legations. During the Second World War and in its aftermath, between February 1941 and March 1946, the affairs of the two countries were represented by Sweden because the political and diplomatic relations had been suspended. During the whole post-war period, the relations between Romania and Norway were maintained through Romanian missions in Helsinki and Stockholm and Norwegian missions in Warsaw, Belgrad and Prague². This situation is explained by the fact that after the war, Norway adhered to N.A.T.O., which limited the scope of the political and diplomatic relations.

An interesting aspect is the fact that in the autumn of 1948, the Legation of the Socialist Republic of Romania in Oslo was not even sure if the relations with Norway had been broken off during the Second World War. Thus, on the 29th of October 1948 the Romanian Legation in Oslo sent document No. 490 to the Treaty Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bucharest, which mentioned that Norway had not broken off the diplomatic relations with Romania, but the information was not confirmed, not having been provided directly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Norway³.

On the 10th of November 1948 a reply was sent to Barbu Solomon, the envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of the Socialist Republic of Romania in Oslo. In this, the issue of the diplomatic relations between the two states was so important that the recommendation was made to check up with the "Times" and the official newspapers belonging to the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of Norway, England and United States of America. A. Joja, the Secretary-General of the Treaty Office that signed the reply even recommended confidentiality in this matter. Moreover, the same note read: "Any fact is interesting, as is any detail that would imply maintaining relations between Norway and Romania under any circumstances"⁴.

Gradually, from the beginning of the year 1948, the communists managed to consolidate their power by removing all their political opponents who participated in the act on the 23rd of August 1944. However, the political and diplomatic relations with the states across "The Iron Curtain" were still maintained. This is also proven by the consular activity report between the 1st of July and 1st of October 1948. The document reveals that Nicolae Mușatescu was the chargé d'affaires of the consular activities, while he was also the Secretary of the Romanian Legation from Oslo. The activity of the Legation took place according to the requirements of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bucharest. Thus, the main purpose of the Decrees No. 238 and No. 239 from 1948, was to register the Romanian citizens from outside the borders at the diplomatic offices. Although the information was spread also in the Norwegian mass-media, between the 1st of June and the 1st of October no citizen was registered at the Romanian Legation in Oslo, no passports were renewed and no repatriation certificates were issued.

According to document No. 482/27th October 1948, the report of the consular activity started on the 1st of July 1948, while the analysis of the events began on the 1st of June 1948. In what concerns the economic activity of the consular office in Oslo, the workload was very low, almost non-existent. Only one "certificate of origin" was issued for Norwegian products about to be exported to Romania, a situation which confirms that not even the commerce between the two countries had a privileged status.

Alternatively, the report proves that the financial situation of the consulate only improved with 24 Norwegian kroner in half a year, because at the beginning of the period there were 175,77 Norwegian kroner while at the end of it the balance was 199,77 kroner⁵. At that moment the exchange rate at the National Bank of Romania was 30,83 lei for a Norwegian krone, which implies that there should have been 6156,91 lei in the bank account, but the report was mentioning that the balance was 6162,91 lei⁶ and that no money were used from the consular resources. By comparing the tax duties charged by the office in Oslo, one notices that economic affairs were charged much more than the daily

consular services. Thus, the tax duty for a petition was 34 lei⁷ which is worth slightly more than a Norwegian kroner, while people paid 680 lei for the goods' certificate of origin, which was 24 kroner⁸. Simple arithmetic demonstrates that the moment the goods' certificate of origin was issued, the exchange rate of the National Bank for a Norwegian kroner was 28,33 lei, which by comparison is lower than it was when the report was written, as the rate was 30,82 lei. Thus, these fairly big fluctuations in the lei exchange rate over a short period of time offer valuable information for the analysis of the two types of economy: centralised in Romania and market economy in Norway. The activity report was signed by Barbu Solomon, the minister of Romania in Oslo, and by Nicolae Muşatescu, the chargé d'affaires with consular issues. To conclude, the Romanian consular diplomacy was obviously part of the diplomacy of the Legation.

A second report, this time covering the period 1st January – 31st March 1949, signed by the same important figures of the diplomatic office, indicate that these documents were written according to a pattern. Regarding the registration of the Romanian citizens in Norway, passport issuance and repatriation certificates, the situation was mostly unchanged. However, the workload of the consular department of the Romanian Legation in Oslo had considerably increased. Thus, in the above mentioned period there were two visa applications for entering the Socialist Republic of Romania. One of them belonged to an important figure of the scientific Norwegian life, professor dr. Johs Bøe, general secretary of the International Union for Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences. The second one belonged to Ana Evensen, most probably an ordinary citizen. Despite the fact that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Romania was informed about the applications, from the beginning of the year to the end of March 1949 there had not been any reply. The Ministry was informed via two reports sent on the 13th of January and the 24th of January 1949.

Another application came from Fisher Mauritiu and his wife, this time for an extension of the validity of a passport. The application was sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the 24th of January 1949 but, just as in the previous case, it did not get any response from the authorities. However, the requests sent by Barbu Solomon, Nicolae Muşatescu and their wives were quickly solved.

According to the same report from the 31st of March 1949, unlike the previous period, two goods certificates of origin were legalised and the Norwegian companies such as "O. Mustad & Søn" and "L.A. Tangewald et Co" benefited from this consular service. After charging the consular stamp duty necessary for the services, the account of the diplomatic office was 272,27 Norwegian kroner, which is worth 8391,36 lei, at the same exchange rate of the Romanian National Bank: 30,82 lei for a Norwegian kroner⁹. Thus, the mail between the Romanian Legation in Oslo and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bucharest offers information about the situation of the Romanian consular service in Norway and the intentions of the Scandinavian government to establish consulates in Romania. The correspondence took place between 1948 and 1949 and was identified in the archives. For example, this desire was clearly expressed during a meeting between Barbu Solomon and Mr. Skylstad, the General Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This meeting took place on the 21st of December 1948 at the initiative of the Norwegian authorities.

In the document number 574/21st of December 1948, sent to the Consular Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bucharest, it can be noticed that the Norwegian state took into consideration several options. Ideally, one consulate would be established in Constanța and one in Galați, one vice consulate in Brăila, one in Sulina and one General Consulate in Bucharest. This project had an obvious purpose: commerce development and shipping traffic by Gurile Dunării and the Black Sea. However, these were impossible to achieve because the limited Norwegian budget could not afford career consuls¹⁰. Thus, the solution would be the honorary consulate "the way it was before the war"¹¹. The optimistic alternative included the establishment of two consulates, one in Bucharest and one in Constanța but both of them would be honorary and a safer option included only one honorary consul in Constanța.

The response of the Romanian authorities from the 4th of January 1949 was firm: the communist government from Bucharest had abolished all the honorary consulates outside the borders and closed those in the country. As a result, the request of the Norwegian government could not be met¹². The reply was addressed to Barbu Solomon and was signed by Mircea Bălănescu, chief of the Directorate III Relations and by Hortensia Roman, deputy director of the Consular Division. Subsequently, on the 16th of February 1949, a new reply was sent from the Royal Ministry to the Romanian Legation in Oslo, which drew attention to the fact that the commercial relations between the two countries as well as the navigation system would be severely affected, the latter being basically abolished¹³.

The years 1950-1953 brought the Korean war to the attention of the international public opinion and authorities. This fact might explain the lack of activity reports in regards to consular matters as well as the fact that those that existed did not touch on this major international conflict of the moment. This is also the case of the activity report that analyzes the period January-July 1950 written by Nicolae Mușatescu. The report introduces Romanian authorities to Norway's attitude towards the conflict. Thus, even after 1953 and up until 1960, the consular service of the Legation of the Socialist Republic of Romania in Norway was not a priority of the Romanian diplomats. For instance, the documents found in the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bucharest offer information about the domestic and foreign policy of the Scandinavian state. They also included information about Norway in general such as area, number of islands, population and most importantly cities, climate etc.

Towards the end of the 1950s, the specific consular duties have come again to the attention of Norwegian diplomats. Sometimes, problems of a consular nature were solved through the direct intervention from the former Norwegian prime-minister. For instance, on the 3rd of April 1959 Dag R. Bryn demanded an audience with Nicolae Gonda, the director of the Directorate IV Relations, part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On this occasion, he intervened in favour of obtaining the outbound visa for Kapralik couple, both Romanian citizens. The discussions that he had with Gonda show that Bryn was aware that legally speaking he was not allowed to intervene but he considered it a humanitarian case. Mrs Kapralik-Olstad wanted to travel to Norway as soon as possible to see her mother who was very old¹⁴. Gonda showed kindness and informed the

Norwegian ambassador that the applications had already been approved by the Romanian authorities and the next step was to inform the Kapralik couple.

Taking advantage of the fact that he was in Romania, Bryn had an audience with Clara Ardeleanu from the Directorate III with the purpose of establishing direct relations with the Romanian authorities and to solve different consular issues. Hence, they touched on the situation of the Norwegian sailor Oyvind Lanli who died in Constanța in June 1958. His family wanted his exhumation before the two-year legal term. The Ministry of Health had approved him being transported to Norway and according to an audience report, they waited for the family to decide whether he would be incinerated or not and how he would be transported. Dag Bryn sought counsel on the matter from the captain of the ship the sailor had worked on, who stayed in touch with the family. It was believed that he would probably be incinerated in Bucharest because there was no crematory in Constanța. The collaboration with the Romanian authorities was highly appreciated by the Norwegian ministry, which suggested a change of attitude. Finally, Dag Bryn decided to come back to Bucharest in autumn but specified that he would return to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs if there were any consular issues until then¹⁵.

On the 14th of November 1964, Norway proposed that the diplomatic relations with Romania be raised to Embassy level¹⁶. Hence, as far as the consular relations are concerned, after 1964 there was a continuous improvement between the two states. On the one hand, this was due to the agreement between Romania and Norway signed in 1968, which would waive visas. On the other hand, this was a result of the productive collaboration of the Central Agency "Carpați" with the tourism agencies from the Scandinavian state. As a result, while in 1968 Romania had been visited by 933 tourists, in 1969 the number doubled, with 1897 tourists visiting it¹⁷. In the case of Norway, the growth is significantly higher, from 31 tourists in 1968 to 280¹⁸ only one year later. Despite this fact, the diplomatic mission had not been reopened yet in 1970 but it was set as an objective for the year 1971¹⁹.

Romanian Consular Diplomacy in Denmark during the First Decades of the Communist Regime

Back in 1948, the government of the Socialist Republic of Romania decided to dissolve the honorary consulate from outside the country's borders, which also affected the consular relations with Denmark. As far as this matter is concerned, Romania and Denmark have a better tradition compared to Norway. This tradition dates back at the end of the 19th century, when the first Romanian honorary consulate was established in Copenhagen. From 1892 until 1947, there was a certain stability of the leaders, because most of the consuls had Danish citizenship and almost all of them were also successful entrepreneurs in their country. Olaf Kongsted was the last consul in charge of the diplomatic office in Copenhagen between 1924 and 1947.

On the 15th of October 1940, during the Second World War, Romania had to close its Legation in Copenhagen due to the fact that Germany had invaded Denmark but the diplomatic relations were not broken off.²⁰ After the conflict was solved, the two states would enter different spheres of influence, which also had an effect on the diplomatic

relations. This is also revealed by the documents I researched at the The Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Thus, for the period 1945-1955 the Danish sources (1945-1970) do not include entries regarding consular services. The first pieces of information about the Legation of the Socialist Republic of Romania in Copenhagen appear from 1956-1957. They cover mainly aspects such as: activity reports, but with a focus on culture and press, diplomatic correspondence between the Romanian Legation and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark or with other diplomatic offices authorized in Copenhagen and the list with the diplomatic and administrative staff.

However, in a lot of cases these entries included only one person who was in charge of the Legation, as shown, for example, in a report of the attaché in the Romanian Legation who dealt with all affairs for 10 months, from October 1955.²¹ The document states that in 1955, the Legation of the Socialist Republic of Romania in Copenhagen was at the beginning of its activity, which made the diplomatic relations with other offices more troublesome. The main causes which were objectively identified by the attaché were: the lack of training in how to manage the Legation and the difficulties of communicating in English.²²

In fact, the analysis of the document reveals that he was not the head of the Legation, but a substitute until the arrival of Bădulescu Lucian. Chirilă Alexandru helped him for a short period of time but “he did not come back”²³ from October 1955. Although the activity only focused on culture and press, the workload was exceptionally high, a situation which made the Romanian diplomat emphasize the necessity of new employees in the Legation. Thus, apart from the coordination of the consular activities, he claimed the Legation was in need of two more employees between whom the tasks would be divided based on the two fields of activity. At the same time, it is also highly recommended that a person should learn Danish “for gathering information in the local language”²⁴. Despite all the difficulties, the diplomat appreciated the pleasant working atmosphere of the diplomatic office, although there were several insignificant arguments between the “female comrades”²⁵. This comment proves the existence of female staff in the Legation but unfortunately it does not mention either their role or their number. All we know is that Dumitrache Maria is “stubborn and idle”²⁶, which creates a wave of disapproval coming from other female employees. As it can be noticed, there is no comment regarding the presence of a person in charge with consular issues or any type of activities regarding this matter. Furthermore, the signature is indecipherable and as a result we do not know the person’s name.

In what regards the evolution of the cultural relations between Denmark and Romania, the report is very detailed in exhibiting the most important events. Thus, the Romanians are constantly involved in international folk art and photography exhibitions. An example is the Herler exhibition, which was probably held in 1957 (the year is not mentioned in the report, but the diplomat analyses the period January-September 1957). Out of the 36 exhibition stands, the Exhibition Committee appraised the Romanian one as being one of the best, which was also proven by the 12.000 guests.

In point of cultural events and Romanian authors promoted in Denmark, Zaharia Stancu might be the favourite one. Thus, the novel “Barefoot” is introduced to the

audience through the artist Hans Henrik Krause who read several excerpts during several radio shows. At the same time, a series of meetings were held in order to discuss the publication of the novel in the newspaper "Land og Folk"²⁷. For October 1957 it was even envisaged that Zaharia Stancu might visit Denmark. Another author who was expected to contribute to spreading the Romanian culture in Denmark was Caragiale whose "Lost Letter" was played at the Danish Royal Theater. Other cultural events proposed to be organized with the aim of promoting the image of the country abroad were two exhibitions - a carpet exhibition and a graphic design one. Once the total costs were estimated, it was agreed that the best decision was to organize the carpet exhibition, especially because it could take place in several cities.

The achievements of the Romanians were presented in Denmark through press releases. The number of published articles was considerably high, 10 in total, which proves the increasing enthusiasm shown towards Romania. Thus, newspapers such as "Demokraten" and "Land og Folk" published articles signed by Ehrling Stensgaard, Verner Thiery, Willy Karlssum and Dags Petersen²⁸, talking about the beauty of the country and introducing it to the Danish audience. Most of the articles were positive in tone and presented the outcome of scientific research, such as those of C.I. Parhon, the Romanian Academy and the achievements in the film industry, with a high demand in documentaries on the Danube Delta or the mountains in Romania. There was even a bi-monthly newsletter of the Legation, published with a fairly high circulation. In 1956 around 1400-1520 copies were published, some of them even being disseminated to other countries, such as Hungary²⁹. Even if there were multiple issues related to the publication of the newsletter (the translation into Danish was rather poor and the newspapers had no photos because of the high costs involved) the press continued to serve the purposes of the Romanian state.

This was also the main purpose of the Romanian diplomats in the Legation in Copenhagen, who facilitated the visits of several important figures in Denmark. For example, at the end of October 1957, Professor Alexandru Rosetti, rector of the University of Bucharest, was invited by Lonis Hjelmslev, the head of the Linguistic Institute, to hold a conference. On 30th of October 1957 the Legation arranged an interview with Alexandru Rosetti, conducted by Professor Hjelmslev and published in the most important Danish newspapers.³⁰ The informative note of V. Pogăceanu, the chargé d'affaires ad interim in Denmark, signed on 31st of October 1957, shows that the Romanian Legation carefully analyzed professor Rosetti's interview and the way he promoted the image of his country. Thus, the analysis of the document displays the discontent of the diplomat towards the interview of the Romanian professor, who only talked about his conference and was hesitant in stressing the positive aspects and the achievements of the Romanian regime³¹. Despite the fact that some newspaper headlines were considered insinuating, such as the article of Dagens Nyheder, "Where students must know Karl Marx"³², it seems that the Danish press showed Rosetti's interview in the right manner, as reported in the informative note.

Sometimes, the visits of the significant figures in the two countries were arranged in a less formal framework. For instance, at a cocktail held on the 30th of October 1957, at the

Legation in Copenhagen, the press attaché I. Dobrinoiu and J. Madelung the head of secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture were considering a visit of Minister Skytte in Romania³³. Some of the reports of the diplomatic office criticized the way the invitations were addressed, the guests not being properly informed beforehand. Moreover, they did not receive a fair treatment, since some of the guests received an invitation both for them and their spouses, while others did not. There were also cases of invitations addressed to ordinary office clerks of the institutions of the two states, which means that the selection of the guests had not rigorously been made. This reflected as a disadvantage for the Romanian state.

The first important report regarding the work of the Consular Department in the Legation of the Socialist Republic of Romania in Copenhagen was signed in 1963. Thus, on the 10th of April 1963 Haralambie Clim started working "specifically on a consular line of work"³⁴. Previously, this aspect of the Romanian diplomacy on the Danish territory was led by Vasile Stoian, who was actually taking care of two lines of work: culture and press. As a result, it was clearly mentioned that until the first half of 1963, the scheme had included no "diplomatic comrade that would manage only consular issues"³⁵. This is also the reason why "there was no separate work plan regarding consular work"³⁶. Although Vasile Stoian controlled both departments, he also managed to fulfill his duty as a representative of the consular diplomacy but without being actually in charge. In the documents analysing his activity, sent by the Romanian authorities to the Legation in Copenhagen, he was praised for the way he did his job.

In only one month, Haralambie Clim managed to familiarize himself with the consular office and took over his duties based on a handover report. This report could not be identified in the documents I studied, although there are several references to it. However, we notice the concern and care in regards to the consular protocol. Several authorities were commonly visited, which Clim did really soon. After taking over his duties, his main objective was to maintain the consular relations with Denmark. The first target was to collaborate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice and Danish police in order to speed up the urgent visa and passport issuance.³⁷

Another objective of the Romanian diplomat was to be acquainted with the consular issues and keeping the Ministry of Foreign Affairs updated in regards to the Danish legislation, visa, passports, consular agreements between Denmark and other states and different aspects of the consular procedures. On the 15th of June 1963, document No. 290 was sent to the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs together with 13 other laws³⁸. Some of them were as follows: the Consular Convention from the 12th of July 1957 between Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden and the Consular Agreement from the 21st of May 1957 signed by Denmark, Sweden and Norway on the one side and Austria, Switzerland, France and German Federal Republic on the other. Denmark and England had already signed a bilateral consular agreement which H. Clim was aware of but could not see it yet. Some of the laws were sent to the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Danish, while others were translated into English. The documents include general rules about the functioning of the consulates as applied in different countries, the rights of the general consuls, vice-consuls and consular agents from Denmark.

Regarding the visa and passport issuance during the period mentioned in the report, the Romanian Consular Department in Denmark issued 352 visas to Danish and foreign citizens.³⁹ From the statistical data, we notice that there are different categories of people asking for an inbound-outbound visa. Most of them were issued for tourists (253), while the lowest number involved citizens travelling for cultural experiences (2). Most of the visas were issued in March and June (117 and 95 respectively), and the lowest number in April (12). Among those asking for inbound-outbound visas in order to visit their relatives in Romania, we mention: Mengel Soren, Christian Brand and Foris Olga. Moreover, Cimpu Ioan, Sorensen Janete and K. H. Jorgensen also asked for visas for their relatives in the Socialist Republic of Romania so that they could visit them in Denmark.

The Romanian consulat in Copenhagen supported Danish citizens when they needed visas from other embassies. Thus, for the same period of time, 46 visas were issued by the Norwegian, Japanese, Swedish and American embassies⁴⁰. Most visas (26) were issued by the Embassy of Norway, one by the Embassy of England, Belgium and the Netherlands. As for the visas issued to foreign citizens by the consular department of the Socialist Republic of Romania in Denmark, a stamp duty worth 2558, 27 kronor⁴¹, was deposited every month at the diplomatic office and declared to the Counting House.

As far as passports are concerned, we notice that beginning with the 1st of April 1963, new passports were used⁴². They are described in detail in a document of the Romanian Legation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate IV Relations. The font text, number of pages, the appearance of the paper and text arrangement of the new passports resemble the old ones. The main difference is the stamp which was used for the old passports, while the new ones included an embossing stamp on the photos⁴³.

With respect to passport controls, the Romanian consulate in Copenhagen informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Socialist Republic of Romania about the fact that on the 20th of May 1963, a press release mentioned the way this process took place at the border points of the Nordic countries. Moreover, two articles published in the newspapers "Kristeligt Dagblad" and "Aktuelt" were selected and sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Romania, in order to inform them about the same issue⁴⁴. These included the list of the countries that Denmark signed an agreement with in order to mutually abolish visas, as in the case of the members from the "Nordic Passport Union", which included Sweden, Norway, Finland and Denmark. The agreement was signed on the 12th of July 1957 and had a series of positive consequences, allowing free movement of persons as well as workforce. In document No. 666 from the 2nd of August 1963, it was mentioned that Romanian diplomats of the Economic Agency in Denmark were also included. They travelled to Sweden, Helsingør, where they could take the ferry and were surprised that they did not have their papers checked.

The Romanian Legation in Copenhagen dealt with several issues, the most distinctive of which being those regarding the Romanian citizenship. An example is Hansen Virginia, who asked to renounce her Romanian citizenship from 1962⁴⁵. Discussions took place because they had hopes of her reconsidering the decision. Although they noticed that she was attracted to Romania, as it is stated in the documents, the advantages of getting Danish citizenship were also appealing.

A particular case was by far the most difficult that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Consular Department of the Socialist Republic of Romania had to deal with. It was the case of one of the clerks who worked for the Danish Legation in Bucharest. Her name was Ellen Petersen⁴⁶ and she was a Danish citizen living in Romania. She was born on the 4th of January 1912 in Bucharest and became a Romanian citizen by marriage. In 1939 she started working for the Danish Legation in Bucharest, receiving an identity card issued for the clerks of the diplomatic office and renewed every year. She regained her Danish citizenship in 1945. Ten years later, in 1955 she got promoted, becoming an archivist secretary; thus, she asked for the issuance of a diplomatic identity card. The request was rejected because she was not recognized as a diplomat.

In 1960 the Legation made a new attempt of obtaining a diplomatic visa for her because she was about to be sent as diplomatic courier. In 1962, Ellen Petersen received a diplomatic visa for Austria, which she did not use. Subsequently, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs revoked her clerk identity card. In March 1963, the ad interim chargé d'affaires of Denmark had four audiences at the Consular Department⁴⁷ in Bucharest, in order to address this issue. Thus, he had two meetings with I. Bălței, followed by two others with V. Huțanu. Both of them agreed that Petersen had to respect the law of the country since she was granted resident status. As a result, in order for her to get the permission of leaving the Socialist Republic of Romania, she had to refer this issue to the Romanian authorities, regardless of the purpose of the trip.

The request of her leaving the country was approved on the 18th of June 1963 but she received an ordinary visa on the resident passport. For this reason, Petersen could not take advantage of the immunity granted to a diplomatic courier. Moreover, she did not come to personally collect her passport from the Militia but she sent the chauffeur of the Legation. According to the Romanian legislation, the passport is an official document and cannot be collected by someone else. Petersen's attitude towards the Romanian authorities was considered improper, especially because after returning to the country she had the obligation of registering at the Militia, at the immigration control, "which she avoided doing"⁴⁸ until the 9th of July 1963.

The country could suffer unpleasant consequences as it was anticipated in a document dated the 19th of June 1963 and addressed to Corneliu Mănescu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs. For this reason, the Directorate IV Relations from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs considered that Schmidt's audience request had to be solved favourably⁴⁹. Even if the Danish diplomat was extremely assertive, the Romanian authorities did not show any tolerance towards Petersen, insisting on her respecting the law. The first problems appeared when the Danish authorities issued visas which also had a negative impact on the consular activity of the Romanian diplomats in this country. From that moment on, the reasons and the duration of the journey were closely analyzed on a case-by-case basis. When talking about exchange trade businesses, the delegates were additionally checked although they had filled in a questionnaire where all the details were mentioned⁵⁰. Thus Petersen's case would often be mentioned by the Consular Department of the Legation in Denmark and the Consular Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bucharest. However, the Romanian authorities did not reconsider the

situation. According to them, Petersen's case was solved, yet the Danish authorities did not agree⁵¹.

Conclusions

In closing, by comparing Denmark to Norway, from a political and diplomatic perspective, Romania's relation with the latter started fairly late and was rather hesitant. This collaboration was not really visible for the most part of the Dej regime. This also had an impact on the plan regarding consular relations. The consular activity of the Romanian diplomats in Denmark is defined by tradition, experience, continuity and flexibility but in the case of Norway it was about looking for solutions to avoid being consigned to oblivion and be recognised even if this happened especially after transforming the Legation into an Embassy. Thus, the consular relations between Norway and Romania had constantly improved between 1965 and 1970, even if most of the time they were still intermediated by the Romanian office in Stockholm. Despite the difficulties generated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, suffocated by problems caused by the servitude towards a totalitarian regime, the Romanian diplomats who took care of consular issues managed however to contribute to promoting a favourable image of the country on international level. Several visits took place at the headquarters of the diplomatic offices of the socialist countries from the Scandinavian countries, and the Romanian diplomats learnt about the practice of good relations in consular matters as they served the interests of the Romanian citizens and the Romanian state.

It appears that the consular activity of the Legation in Denmark in the 1960s was considered satisfactory by the communist authorities. Both positive and negative aspects were emphasised and several clear recommendations were made in order to improve the consular activity. In the response notes of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bucharest the consular activity is always analyzed from the perspective of the two existing stages: before and after Clim⁵². This leads to the idea that he was a real model for the Romanian consular diplomacy in the Scandinavian countries in the first decades of the communist regime. However, during both periods, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Romania considered that mistakes had been made and recommended to always revise the instructions in order to avoid repeating them in the future.

Until the end of the 1960s, the consular workload had gradually and greatly increased as it can be noticed in the documents analyzed. This fact is also proved by the work plans conceived by the Consular Department. The informing activity started by Clim will continue and will represent the main objective of these projects. Nonetheless, these work plans always mentioned the necessary measures and the deadlines. From the first work plan of the Consular Department in Copenhagen written on the 15th of June 1963 and up until the beginning of the 70s, the objectives are similar. H. Clim was responsible with making sure that the targets are met and for this he was checked by the director of the office, as mentioned at the end of the document. This fact undoubtedly shows a shortage of personnel. Subsequently the situation drastically changed because after 1970 there were no interruptions in the activity reports and work plans, and for each objective there was a person in charge. Besides, until the 1980s, the Romanian Embassies in Norway and

Denmark showed visible concern when writing the activity reports, which in turn confirms that the communist regime was in a new stage of its evolution.

The Romanian consulates in Denmark and Norway, after the Second World War, had an important role given that they were a permanent source of information for the communist rule in Bucharest. The annual activity reports highlight numerous aspects pertaining to Scandinavian democracy, the legislation based on which it functions, as well as the attitude of the two states towards the issues of international politics. At the same time, Romanian consulates from Copenhagen and Oslo have made great efforts to enrich Romania in terms of strengthening the bilateral relations with Scandinavian Countries, from economical, cultural and especially diplomatic point of view.

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CONFRONTING RECENT HISTORY: MEDIA IN SERBIA DURING ALEKSANDAR VUČIĆ'S MINISTRY OF INFORMATION IN THE MILOŠEVIĆ ERA (1998–1999)

Srdan Mladenov Jovanović

ABSTRACT

Since the end of the Yugoslav wars of the nineties, Serbia seems to have fallen out of the spotlight in scholarly research. Attempting to counter this, in this article, we tackle the media suppression by the 1998-99 Ministry of Information led by Aleksandar Vučić, nowadays serving as Serbia's President. Repositioning the spotlight from Slobodan Milošević to Aleksandar Vučić, we confront the numerous attempts of media suppression and censorship in the late nineties.

KEYWORDS: Serbia, censorship, Aleksandar Vučić, media, Milošević era

Introduction: the relevance of recent history

The saying that the Balkans produce more history than they can consume was famously attributed to Winston Churchill; to many, the end of the twentieth century and the wars of the Yugoslav secession seemed to have confirmed the thought. The bloody breakup of Yugoslavia, including the societies and politics of all of the involved states, has been tackled in scholarship aplenty, from myriad disciplines and on myriad topics.¹ Some of the scholarly production has indeed tackled the question of the media in relation to the socio-political,² but not the key political figures with clear relation to the media; by this I do not have in mind Slobodan Milošević, on whom a slew of works has been produced, but important figures that have been shaped by the era, only to shape coming eras, as they continued to rise to new heights in the decades to come. I am primarily talking about Aleksandar Vučić, who became the Minister of Information in 1998, nowadays to serve as Serbia's president after his tenure as the state's Prime Minister.

The figure of Aleksandar Vučić should be of special interest to historians, due to his impact on the political scene and a quarter of a century of activity. However, due to the waning of interest in the Western Balkans since the wars of the nineties and the secession of Kosovo,³ coupled with the recent nature of the late 1990s, Vučić still has not seen his name in historians' work. This is unfortunate, as the nature of the historian's craft is of rather beneficial in cases studying the autocrat's rise to power. It is an autocrat's proclivity to rewrite history (his own included), to paint different pictures of his own

past. Is it not the historian who should be the first to challenge his dominant narratives? Or his very own past? Or at least the slew of his misgivings? The problem with this case is that the majority of primary sources, for historians without the knowledge of Serbo-Croatian, is problematic, so they tend to rely on “a mountain of secondary work, much of it in English”,⁴ which we shall circumvent by delving into sources written in Serbo-Croatian.

Tackling the late nineties can be said to fall under the somewhat elusive category of contemporary history, within which “the challenge for historians is how to employ the distinctive analytical tools of our discipline to evaluate the basically ahistorical body of work on a current event”,⁵ arguing that, due to the fairly recent properties of events that have transpired, there are difficulties stemming from “distortions” that “play on a nation’s fears, myths, and prejudices”.⁶ Yet these are the same issues that the historian faces in contemporary, modern, or ancient history, which is why Ranke “believed that detachment from present-day concerns was a condition of understanding the past”.⁷ It could perhaps be said, with a grain of salt, historians dealing with recent – in other words, contemporary – history, are fairly rare,⁸ even though some historians have noticed that we can follow the interest in contemporary history ever since Thucydides.⁹ It is most certainly true when it comes to Yugoslavia-cum-Serbia, though when it comes to *modern* history, the discipline fairs somewhat better. When Barraclough wrote his seminal *Introduction to Contemporary History*, he drew a distinction between modern and contemporary history, drawing upon the lack of perceived necessity of following clear continuities between the modern and contemporary; in his view, these need not necessarily exist.¹⁰ The term *modern history*, though, differs from *contemporary history* more in the sense that *modernity* is seen to have begun with the twentieth century, and we are talking about the end of it. In summa, “contemporary history should be considered as a distinct period of time, with characteristics of its own which mark it off from the preceding period, in much the same way as what we call ‘medieval history’ is marked off – at any rate for most historians – from modern history”.¹¹ Similarly, the Milošević era (Serbia/Yugoslavia in the 1990s) had its set of distinct features by which it differed from Communist Yugoslavia, and it is in this time that we shall position this research. One of the definitions of the timeframe covered in contemporary history – one that is adopted by this article, in any case – is simply in that it covers living memory.¹² Drawing upon that, Catterall has argued that one of the primary values of the “historian of the contemporary” is to challenge “mythmaking” while it is *still happening*.¹³ We can broaden the mythmaking node to include social and political instances of relevance that need to be tackled either while they are happening, or immediately afterwards; in this case, two decades into the past. Contemporary history, “in the process, thus plays a key role in locating our societies and, in particular, in explaining their dynamics”,¹⁴ or, in other words, “contemporary history begins when the problems which are actual in the world today first take visible shape”.¹⁵ This is of high importance in tackling the Ministry of Information of Aleksandar Vučić in 1998/99, as it shaped him as a politician, and, with his subsequent rise to almost absolute power, shaped the majority (broadly speaking) of political and societal problems that are in the present actual in Serbia, most of them related to the diminishing freedom of the press and increasing censorship. Being that we

are tackling a rather specific instance within his Ministry's affairs – the stifling of the freedom of speech and press, as well as censorship – we can base this research in Catterall's claim that “the historian can provide a satisfying account in accordance with the necessarily fragmentary observations drawn on, which are found embedded in the evidence”.¹⁶

Scope of application: literature, theoretical perspectives and source selection

The abovementioned fragmentary observations will consequently stem from the documents on his tenure as Minister available; in this case, primarily the reports on the freedom of the press from that time of the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), including journalists' personal accounts of censorship within the given timeframe, such as the Radio Index censorship case, documented by the NIN (*Nedeljne informativne novine*, the Weekly Information Paper), as well as other related press and critical documents. In other words, this paper will tackle the question of how Aleksandar Vučić used his restrictive media law to impose censorship and the diminishing of the freedom of the press in late nineties Serbia based on the recorded events relating to it. We see the relevance of the article in the confronting and representing an important issue in Serbia's recent history, especially in the day and age when Aleksandar Vučić, as the architect of Europe's most restrictive media law by the end of the 20th century, has in the meantime risen to the position of the President of the country.

From a theoretical standpoint, we are aware of the notable lack of theory and methodology in the discipline of history, the problem of which has already been tackled by well-regarded historians.¹⁷ Having in mind the concentration on the impact of a single individual onto the wider society utilized in this work, it could be argued that a somewhat Namierian approach has been used, yet only to the extent that the study of “people who mattered” (with absolutely no ethical consideration or positive implication in the use of the term “to matter”) does not entail what Richard Evans dubbed Namier's “snobbish and elitist attitude”.¹⁸ Being aware of said restrictions, we approach the subject from the point of view given by Marwick, wherein it is recognized that “very many historians reject the notion of one over-arching theoretical approach ... some develop a theory of their own of the kind which is usually described as a ‘thesis’, as in Mahan's thesis about the influence of sea power, or Turner's frontier thesis, or the Pirenne thesis”.¹⁹ Borrowing somewhat from the concept of elite theory in political science, wherein the elites are scrutinized for their impact onto society, and having in mind the vast influence of the elite onto the media,²⁰ we shall approach this subject concentrating on the figure of Aleksandar Vučić and his impact onto Serbia's media landscape in the late 20th century, putting forth the thesis that he was the crucial figure in the shaping of turn-of-the century media policies, countering Milošević-centered narratives that are found aplenty.

Literature on the relation between the media and politics is found in copious amounts, and has so far informed us about the resilient connection between the two, be it in the realm of promoting government agendas,²¹ the “manipulating the flow of information to the masses”,²² the mobilizing role of the media in governmental military policy,²³ the shaping of the perception of populist leaders by the media,²⁴ or the impact of the media in the “Otherizing” of current political opponents.²⁵ When it comes to the

narrower topic of Serbia, similar issues have been found to be plenteous in contemporary scholarship. Scholars have already noted that media freedoms have deteriorated during Milošević's (and by proxy, Vučić's) Serbia, and that the tendency has continued afterwards.²⁶ Some authors have noticed a row of structural problems in regards to journalism in Serbia,²⁷ including exposés on government control of the media during the 1990s.²⁸ The vast literature on the topic further stresses the need to tackle the questions of the relationship and impact of authoritarians onto the media system.

The late nineties

From the nineties, it has been noticed the reinforced “tendency for governments to take control of national networks and to use them as a support for nationalist parties and leaders”.²⁹ In 1998, during the reign of Slobodan Milošević and the coalition comprising the SPS (*Socijalistička partija Srbije* – the Socialist Party of Serbia), the SRS (*Srpska radikalna stranka*, the Radical Party of Serbia), and the JUL (*Jugoslovenska levica*, the Yugoslav Left), in March, Aleksandar Vučić was (s)elected to the position of the Ministry of Information; the better name for the portfolio, however, would be the Ministry of Propaganda, as we shall soon see. The report on the new Law on public information (*Zakon o javnom informisanju*) of 20 October 1998, given by Branka Kaljević of the opposition weekly, *Vreme*, described the period as that in which “anybody could be sued for anything”.³⁰ Before the law was confirmed, it had been kept in secrecy, and consequently saw lightning-fast embodiment when it came into power. The plaintiff did not need to prove the misdeed, whilst the accused had a staggering 24 hours to submit proof of their innocence to the judiciary, making the basic maxim of the law – innocent until proven guilty – stand on its head, as the accused was guilty until proven innocent. Those who failed were ordered to pay anywhere from 50,000 to 800,000 dinars (an impressive sum for the late nineties), including the appropriation of their property, prison sentencing, as well as a prohibition of work.

The first to come under attack was Index Radio. Its editor-in-chief, Nenad Cekić, spoke in detail about the goings-on when the Government stifled them.³¹ It began with an alleged inventory list conducted within the premises of Index Radio, where the employees were told it had been but a formality. The day after, a “control” of the receiver was conducted, during which, for half an hour, a different radio station could be heard at their frequency of 88.9 MHz. The following day, there was a meeting on the media in the Government, which included the then Minister of Information, Aleksandar Vučić. A member of the Yugoslav Left, Ivan Marković, was laughing at Cekić, making threatening gestures by shaking his finger at him. When it was announced that censorship was about to take place, it was justified by invoking the “defense of the country”. One day afterwards, a Radio Index journalist was prohibited from entering the building where the offices were located. Members of the Intelligence Agency were seen threatening the journalists. The crew of the Index Radio took their equipment and moved it to a different location, in the *Beograđanka* building. The stifling of the Index Radio was arguably of high relevance to the government, as it did not succumb to governmental pressure to conform to the propaganda of the regime; similar issues will be found in plentitude in the months to come.

What followed is the Radio Television of Serbia (RTS) blocking their frequency; silence ensued on the 88.9 MHz frequency. They switched to 99.8, but received reports from listeners that their broadcast is being interfered with, as the single frequency now broadcasted the Bum Radio from Studio B; investigation into Studio B ended up in the radio crew getting information that they know nothing about it. Radio Index then changed their broadcast frequency yet again, this time to 101.1 MHz. Another bout of interference occurred before police came into their offices, giving them a decision of the prohibition to emit. The next course of action was to sign a contract with Studio B in order to emit at their frequency of 107.2 MHz. A police inspection then arrived at the Studio B radio and television, saying that the contract was not valid, not giving any explanation of the alleged invalidity of the contract. The final report by Cekić mentions that the police has entered the offices of the daily *Danas*, as well as of the daily *Dnevni Telegraph*.

After the Index Radio, an increased number of reports about journalists being molested was seen in numerous places. As the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) wrote, “on January 18, a municipal court in Niš sentenced Nikola Đurić, the owner of the independent radio station City Radio, to a two-month suspended prison sentence and one year of probation for operating an unlicensed radio station under Article 219, Paragraph 1, of the Serbian criminal code, which stipulates a punishment of up to one year's imprisonment for such offenses”.³² City Radio was denied license and promptly closed. This was followed by the 8 March 1999 arrests and sentencing of three journalists of the *Dnevni Telegraph*, Slavko Ćuruvija, Srđan Janković, and Zoran Luković, to five months of imprisonment, with the charge of spreading false information; the sentence was carried by Judge Krsto Bobot.

But a week later, the Kosovo-based *Koha Ditore* saw its offices shut down; one security guard was reported being killed in the ransacking. *Koha Ditore* was consequently fined for \$26,800, while their editor, Venton Suroi, had to pay \$7,200. But one day afterwards, on 23 March, Studio B saw a fine of approximately \$10,000 (to be paid by the editor), due to the violation of Article 69 of the new law. On the very following day, 24 March, the B92 television saw the intrusion of ten police officers with orders to shut B92 down; “the policemen ordered all staff present to turn off their computers and refrain from answering the telephones. According to an official note that was presented to the staff, B92 was shut down under Article 192, Paragraph 1 of the Law on General Administrative Procedures, as well as Article 1, Paragraph 1, Point 2 of the Law on the Systems of Connections. ‘Appeal does not suspend the enforcement of the ruling’, the note read”.³³ The editor-in-chief, Veran Matić, was arrested and detained for eight hours, without being allowed to contact his family, and without having heard charges against him. B92 issued a press conference, during which the following was stated:

“The arrest of Veran Matić and the disruption of Radio B92's broadcasts are part of an increasingly radical suppression of independent media, creating unrest and fear in the people of Yugoslavia. They are also a direct message to the international community that the Serbian regime is prepared to resort to such measures against its citizens as part of its confrontation with the rest of the

world. Radio B92 and ANEM have warned that this can only exacerbate division, fear, and unrest in the society”.³⁴

Writing about the period for the Index on Censorship, Milena Knežević mentioned the B92 television and its tribulations, saying that

“B92 bravely covered a turbulent time – from the war in Bosnia, to the NATO bombing of Serbia, to the protest movement that eventually saw Milošević ousted. For this, it was continuously hounded by the government. At one point in 1999 authorities commandeered its offices and radio frequency, forcing the station off air, before it could resume broadcasting from a different studio and frequency, under the name B2-92”.³⁵

From local to foreign media

24 March was eventful, as on the same day, Minister Aleksandar Vučić called for a meeting of all Belgrade’s editors, at which he “announced that henceforth only officially authorized terminology could be used to describe certain events. For example, NATO was to be described as the ‘aggressor’ and the air strikes were to be characterized as ‘aggression’ against the Yugoslav state. After the meeting, print media were ordered to submit all copy to Vučić and his deputy Radmila Visić for approval. Newspapers were allowed to publish only official statements and information taken from Yugoslavia’s news wires, which either are controlled by the state or practice radical self-censorship”.³⁶ But a day after, Aleksandar Vučić ordered all NATO countries journalists to leave the country, after which reports of foreign journalists being threatened, detained, or forced to flee, such as R. Jeffrey Smith of the Washington Post, David Holely of the Los Angeles Times, Lori Montgomery and Mark Milstein of Knight Ridder.

On April 2, 1999, the Vojvodinian Radio Senta was shut down (a Hungarian language-based radio), including Radio Velika Kikinda, which broadcasted in Serbo-Croatian; their equipment was confiscated. On the same day, Television Čačak was shut down as well, including the harassment of three foreign journalists operating in Kosovo, Jon Sistiaga Escudero and Bernabe Dominguez Lopez of Telecino, and Arie Kievit from Algemene Dagblad; they were detained while crossing into Kosovo, with intentions on reporting on the stream of refugees coming from the then Serbian province into Central Serbia. Reports on such misgivings would paint a negative picture of the Serbian regime, and were arguably dubbed as unwelcome by the government.

As we have presented in the paragraphs above, the stifling of the freedom of the press began with so-called “domestic traitors” – locals who have failed to conform to the increasing regulation of speech and media by the government, thus often earning the said designation of “turncoat”. As the application of the new media law continued, an increase in censoring foreign journalists was seen as well. While “domestic traitors” were of interest to the regime due to their ability to spread viable information about the government’s misgivings to the electorate, foreign journalists were reporting to the international community. This was correctly identified by Vučić and Milošević as detrimental to their regime, as the international community – that initially supported

Milošević – turned its back on him once it was clear that they were dealing with a dictator. In other words, should we for a moment adopt the tenets of rational choice theory, these moves were to be expected as cogent authoritarian response to the opposition to authoritarianism.

April 9 saw the shutting down of Radio Novi Sad, “on the grounds that the station had allegedly failed to pay its frequency tax in February”,³⁷ whilst Radio Soko was banned for broadcasting foreign programs. Radio Novi Sad, together with Radio Senta, Radio Velika Kikinda, Radio Soko, and the Čačak Television, were part of the ANEM, the Association of Independent Electronic Media (*Asocijacija nezavisnih elektronskih medija*), which, not only nominally, but also practically, describes the media policies of Aleksandar Vučić: it was the *independent* media that needed to be shut down. Government-run or -controlled media – those that reported in a blinkered fashion – were supported and free to run their business whilst operating under the new media regulation.

The assassination of Slavko Ćuruvija

So far, we have witnessed shutting down of independent radio and television offices, including the harassment of reporters; 9 April 1999 was the day where the gravity of the situation went a step further. Slavko Ćuruvija, the editor-in-chief of the *Dnevni Telegraph* and the publisher of the *Evropljanin* weekly, was gunned down in a planned assassination in broad daylight. As the CPJ reported, he

“was murdered at 4:40 p.m. as he and his wife, Branka Prpa, were returning to their home in central Belgrade after a walk. Two men wearing dark clothing and black face masks approached the couple, pistol-whipped Prpa, and shot Ćuruvija in the head. *Dnevni Telegraph*, the first private daily in Serbia, was sharply critical of President Slobodan Milošević's regime. Since the passage of the Serbian Information Law on October 20, 1998, authorities had fined *Dnevni Telegraph* and *Evropljanin* a total of more than US\$100,000 for alleged violations of the law”³⁸

This came but four weeks after Aleksandar Vučić himself, in the publication *Argument*, spoke that he would “wreak vengeance on Slavko Ćuruvija eventually, for the things he wrote about me”.³⁹ Slaviša Lekić of the *Danas* daily wrote that while he was Minister of Information, Vučić claimed that Ćuruvija was murdered by the Montenegrin mafia; the investigation of the murder was opened a full fifteen years after the assassination, and has not seen resolution since. Ćuruvija's wife, the historian Branka Prpa, spoke in 2005 about the atmosphere, calling the country a “mafia state”:

“...I realized that there was a parallel world. It is not an Orwellian world, it is much worse. So, there is a parallel world of which you know nothing, as it is impossible for you to enter Kolarac in Knez Mihajlova street, and then see in the Intelligence Office's reports that you are being recorded. So, there is a camera, you are being taped while having lunch, whilst nine agents are dealing with you

at the same time ... Slavko Ćuruvija ... was not killed by the mafia, but by the state”.⁴⁰

Since the beginning of the investigation into the assassination of Slavko Ćuruvija in 2015, Aleksandar Vučić has not been called to testify.⁴¹ The Belgrade-based historian, Dubravka Stojanović, in her analysis of the period of the past two centuries, came to the conclusion that political murders in Serbia have long been established as the common way of dealing with political enemies.⁴² She saw what she dubbed a *continuity* in political assassinations, from Karadorđe in the early 19th century, via Ćuruvija, to the 2003 assassination of the Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić. The 2017 assassination of the Kosovo-based politician, Oliver Ivanović, can now be added to the list. Another specificity was seen in the fact that “those who conducted such deeds remained political factors in the country, and, after having finished the ‘job’, kept destabilizing the country”.⁴³ As Splichal noted, “indeed, in a number of countries, such as Yugoslavia, Ukraine or Belarus, the old élites continue to control the media”.⁴⁴ The archives of the *Vreme* weekly from 17 April 1999 divulge the information that the Ministry of Internal Affairs made the statement within which it had been claimed that he had been “deprived of his life from a firearm, by unknown assailants, and that the workers of the Secretariat in Belgrade are working intensively for the perpetrators of this criminal deed”. The same source mentions he was shot by two slugs, one in the head, and one in the heart, indicating a planned assassination.⁴⁵ Florian Bieber of Graz University spoke in 2015 how the attacks on the media follow a “regional pattern of authoritarian temptation”⁴⁶ that has been following Serbia since the nineties.

Why is the assassination relevant in regard to the conduct of the Ministry of Information led by Aleksandar Vučić? Many have argued that the repressive media law has led to, for lack of better words, an “open hunting season” on journalists who refuse to desist. Gordana Suša, the long-time journalist, stressed that Ćuruvija was murdered exactly during the enforcing of the new law.⁴⁷ Furthermore, in 1999, as we have mentioned, Vučić opined that Ćuruvija was murdered by Montenegrin mafia, claiming years later, in 2017, that the *state* was involved in his assassination.⁴⁸ Most damning were Vučić’s own words from 1999, several weeks before the assassination, when he spoke that he would “wreak vengeance upon Ćuruvija” for writing about him in a negative fashion.⁴⁹ This connection, however, is left to the judiciary, as we can, as scholars, only speculate whether Vučić was directly involved.

The continuation of harassment

Going back to 1999, after the assassination of Slavko Ćuruvija, the harassment continued. Germany’s correspondent for Southeastern Europe for SAT-1, Hans-Peter Schnitzler “was reported missing by his colleagues in Germany. His editors said they lost contact with the 56-year-old Schnitzler on April 16, after he left Belgrade for the Croatian border. Schnitzler decided to leave Yugoslavia after his car and equipment were confiscated by Serbian authorities. During that attack, Schnitzler was held at gunpoint and forced to turn over his cell phone”. Very soon afterwards, “On April 20, NATO voiced concerns about Schnitzler’s disappearance. Serbian authorities told the Japanese

consul in Belgrade, who was then representing Germany's interests in Yugoslavia, that Schnitzler was in good condition, but they refused to disclose where or why he was being held ... Schnitzler later claimed to have been severely beaten during his first week in detention".⁵⁰ He had been charged with espionage, which was denounced by Germany as "ridiculous allegations". He was then released, driven to the Croatian border, and told to leave the country by foot. The eventful month of April continued by regular harassment of foreign journalists. Italy's Lucia Annunziata was detained, after which she had been "strip-searched, handcuffed, and beaten, then taken back to Belgrade, where she was questioned for nearly eight hours about Italy's role in the NATO air strikes. She was then expelled from Yugoslavia".⁵¹ Eric Vaillant of France's *Fr* was charged with espionage and kept in prison for three weeks. Antun Masle of *Global Action* was, during the same month, arrested for espionage, but managed to escape into Croatia. Three BBC journalists, Brian Barron, Simon Wilson, and John Bonny, were arrested and interrogated for espionage in Podgorica, and consequently set free.

The Studio B television, constantly a thorn in the government's side, received a military censor who was officially put there to "ensure" that no "uncensored information" about the Serb army was mentioned in the broadcast. Following that, on 7 May, Vyacheslav Grunsky of Russia's independent NTV network was expelled from the country; "Grunsky's employers at NTV said that he was expelled in retaliation for NTV's recent reports on human-rights violations by Serbian forces in Kosovo. While most Russian media supported Serbia in the Kosovo conflict, in April NTV became the first network to broadcast interviews with ethnic Albanian deportees from Kosovo in the refugee camps of Albania and Macedonia".⁵²

This is in lieu with the liberal theory of censorship, which sees censorship as "external, coercive, and repressive. Censors are authoritative social actors, extrinsic to the communicative process, who deploy coercive force to intervene in the free exchange of ideas to repressive effect";⁵³ in the particular case of Vučić's 1998/1999 Yugoslavia, him being the external, authoritative social actor (with the full force of Milošević's government behind him). Accordingly, in balance theory on censorship, "the act of censorship implies to the individual the position that the censor holds on the issue", with the goal of changing viewers' attitudes.⁵⁴ The attitudes in need of change were towards the international community, which was supposed to be presented as vile and monstrous. The view of censorship as an attitude-changing process has been well-established in scholarship.⁵⁵ Research has already shown that the Yugoslav/Serbian media of the late nineties were under severe repression of the state, and that foreign media had been seen as "foreign elements" and "spies".⁵⁶ Not only in the realm of the media and journalism, western intervention – especially after the NATO bombing in 1999 – was understood as highly negative.⁵⁷

Three journalists have, on 13 June 1999, been killed in Kosovo – Volker Kraemer and Gabriel Gruener from Germany's *Stern*, and Senol Alit from Macedonia, by sniper fire. *Stern*'s deputy editor, Oliver Hergessel, stated that the details of the murders were not clear; the fact that they were killed by sniper fire, though, indicate that they have been targets, as sniper fire *per se* operates with clear, identifiable targets. They were gunned

down while being inside a vehicle, the access to which was then denied to German soldiers in the vicinity, further indicating the involvement of the Serbian government.

Christophe Wyatt and Simon Houston of the Daily Record, together with their Albanian interpreter, Xherdet Shabani, were attacked on 16 June, when an unknown assailant fired shots at their car in the south of Kosovo. All three men survived. The Daily Record editor, Gordon Hay, said that “the journalists spent the day of June 16 in Prizren talking with fighters from the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) but expressed doubt that their attacker was affiliated with the KLA. They told Hay that neither the gunman nor his companions wore uniforms of any kind. The journalists were driving a rental car with Macedonian plates, which could have attracted the gunman's attention, Hay said. But their car had no press markings, and the journalists were not wearing flak jackets or helmets”.⁵⁸

The days of 29 and 30 September 1999 was another eventful one, where a minimum of reported eight journalists were attacked by the Belgrade police while reporting on the anti-government protests in Belgrade: Aleksandra Ranković of the Beta News Agency, Slaviša Lekić of the Reporter, Imre Sabo of Danas, Milo Radivojiša of Video Nedeljnik, Goran Tomašević of Reuters, and Zoran Vujović of Studio B. Furthermore, “An eyewitness from the Beta News Agency in Belgrade also reported seeing police break the lens of a camera belonging to Sabo, a photographer with the local daily *Danas*, while Belgrade's independent TV Studio B announced that police smashed Vujović's TV camera and confiscated equipment belonging to a local radio station”.⁵⁹ The daily *Danas* saw legal action against its publisher, Dan Graf, which was ordered to pay close to \$24,000 as fines for “taking advantage of press freedom”. In more detail,

“the case was filed by Vojislav Šešelj, vice president of the Serbian government and leader of the ultra-nationalist Serbian Radical Party. Šešelj's complaint was based on an October 19 *Danas* interview with Novak Kilibarda, vice prime minister of Montenegro. In the interview, Kilibarda stated that he overheard Šešelj threatening to expel Montenegrins from Serbia or force them to wear identity bands”.⁶⁰

In December, the same happened to ABC Grafika, a publisher of a row of independent media, when this legal entity was forced to pay over \$80,000 for 21 alleged violations of the law. In November, the *Reporter* magazine was banned, with their issue copies confiscated. Yet this was not the end, as December saw a slew of journalists and media being fined:

“*Blic* was fined 180,000 dinars (US\$15,600). The paper's editor, Veselin Simonovic, and director, Miodrag Đuričić, were fined 80,000 dinars (US\$6,950) and 50,000 dinars (US\$4,350), respectively. *Danas* was fined 200,000 dinars (US\$14,000). The paper's director, Dušan Mitrović, and editor, Veseljko Koprivica, were each fined 8,000 dinars (US\$6,950). Studio B was fined 200,000 dinars (US\$17,400). Its editor and director, Dragan Kojadinović, was fined an additional 100,000 dinars (US\$8,700)”⁶¹

It would be wise to mention that Aleksandar Vučić, together with other ministers from the Serbian Radical Party, submitted his resignation on 14 June 1999, but remained conducting his affairs within the portfolio of the Ministry of Information afterwards, justifying it with national interests. Even after his tenure as the Minister of Information, the whole of the year of 1999 was riddled with journalist harassment, murder, and the shutting down of exclusively independent media.

Conclusion

The Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia (HCHRS) compiled the financial penalties imposed upon the media under Vučić's law by the end of 1999 that amount to 18,026,500 dinars (~US\$170,000); an impressive amount for the media struggling in a failing economy.⁶² Some have called Vučić's law and its consequent enforcement the "most restrictive media law" in existence.⁶³

Today's rule of *president* Vučić is similarly riddled with censorship and the stifling of the freedom of the press. Increasing reports tell about the mistreatment of journalists and the almost complete control of the media, with the notable exceptions of the N1 television (dubbed in Vučić's discourse, like in 1998/99, an "American television"), the daily *Danas*, and a few weeklies, such as *Vreme*, *NIN*, or *Novi Magazin*. Due to the advent of the World Wide Web, however, a larger number of online portals are still not in control of the government. Though outside of the scope and topic of this particular article, it would be wise to note at this point that Vučić's *modus operandi* regarding the media can be said to have remained rather similar (in a 21st century context) during his reign over Serbia since 2012. The main difference is that instead of attempting to punish the "misbehaving" media in a pecuniary fashion, he resorts to control of most of the media landscape,⁶⁴ with public shaming and blaming of those who go against the grain.⁶⁵

In this article, we have given an account of the conduct of the Ministry of Information in 1998/99, led by Aleksandar Vučić, with a plea to more research into Serbia's recent history. While most of the scholarship tackling media freedoms in Milošević's Serbia saw Vučić as a simple byproduct of the age, this article centered him and the enforcing of his media law, putting them in the spotlight of inquiry. With his recent rise to power in Serbia, various avenues of further research into his figure, both in the past and the present, can be said to have opened.

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BOOK REVIEWS

SEBASTIAN-DRAGOȘ BUNGHEZ, *Parlamentul și politica externă a României (1899–1914)*, Mega Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2018, 458 p., ISBN 978-606-543-937-5, 55 lei.

The book written by Sebastian-Dragoș Bunghez, entitled *Parlamentul și politica externă a României (1899–1914)* “The Parliament and Foreign Policy of Romania (1899–1914)”, is a new contribution to the history of Romania's parliamentary life over the centuries, dealing with problems of foreign policy in terms of the debates lead in the Romanian legislative bodies in the period of 1899 – 1914, during which preparations were undergoing for the great union that would occur on December 1st, 1918.

As stated by the author in the introductory part, which represents his PhD thesis submitted and defended at the University of Iași, the intention to analyze a longer period, beginning with the year of obtaining the state independence (1878), was modified when the abundance of documentary sources came to light, which would have required a much wider research project. The author finally decided to present a shorter period of time from 1899 until the outbreak of the first world conflagration, analyzing the parliamentary activities related to Romania's foreign policy in an era full of moments which were of primary importance for the fate of mankind.

After the introductory part referring to the documentary sources he researched and used in the elaboration of this valuable work (where we, first of all, point out the original sources from the Central National Historical Archives - Royal House Fund, and from the Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania - Fund *Problema*21 and Fund 71), as well as the scientific papers used, the author goes on to the first chapter entitled “Foreign Policy Coordinates of Romania (1878–1914)”, in which he provides a general overview of Romania's foreign policy from the time of independence until the beginning of the Great War, which is necessary for a better apprehension and understanding of the circumstances in which Romania's parliamentary life took place; according to the author, the reason for this being that “a foreign policy analysis of only the years for which the parliamentary debates were presented would not have allowed for it to be properly judged”. The second chapter presents the period 1899 – 1908, where attention is paid to Romanians outside the Old Kingdom, especially to those from Transylvania, but also to the Romanian-speaking Balkan communities during the Ottoman Empire crisis. The orientation of the Romanian foreign policy in this first phase as presented in the book is that of maintaining a close relations with Austria-Hungary, despite discussions on aspects such as the taxes imposed by the Austro-Hungary at the Iron Gates, the Romanian schools in Brașov, or relations with the Ottoman Empire, taking into account the problem of the Aromanians in the Balkan Peninsula and maintaining the status quo based on equilibrium in the Southeastern Europe.

The year 1908 is recognized as a year when Romania's foreign policy was at a crossroads, marked by several events with a strong impact on international relations, such as the "Young Turk Revolution", the proclamation of Bulgaria's independence, but especially the "Bosnian crisis", known in Serbian historiography under the name of "Annexation Crisis" (*aneksiona kriza*). The rise of Austro-Hungarian influence in the Balkans was a reason for Romania to pay more attention to the situation in Austria-Hungary regarding the position of Romanians in this state, which will also appear in the parliamentary debates presented by Sebastian-Dragoş Bunghez as a reason for rethinking Romania's foreign policy, especially with regards to its relations with the dualist monarchy. In the next chapter, entitled "The Crises in Southeastern Europe in the Parliamentary Debates (1908-1912)", the period beginning with exactly this event and ending with the outbreak of the Balkan Wars is addressed, with a clear attempt by members of parliament to propose some new venues of foreign policy, in which the Romanian Kingdom had an interest in pursuing a more independent policy towards the powerful neighboring state, questioning "the traditional orientation of the Romanian foreign policy until then", demanding the replacement of this policy of supporting Austria-Hungary with a more independent policy, which would allow Romania to choose its own allies if the interests countries require a change in this respect. In some situations, Sebastian-Dragoş Bunghez notes, especially when the unity of all political forces in parliament regarding the international relations issues was needed, political parties, or individuals within their ranks, point fingers at each other, obviously not in order to solve the problems on the agenda, but to attract the attention of voters, or even for personal goals. One of the issues to which the author attempts to provide as accurately as possible an answer regarding the foreign policy of Romania and the role of the parliament in making the decisions related to it, is the influence that the chambers had on the official foreign policy of the Romanian state. Sometimes, they were not even informed of certain secret treaties signed by members of the government that had not been subject to ratification by the country's Parliament.

Finally, the fourth chapter deals with parliamentary debates during the outbreak of military conflicts in the Balkans - the First and Second Balkan Wars, in which Romania will try to shape its foreign policy in such a way that it does not miss the opportunity to remain an important diplomatic and military factor in Southeastern Europe. Another issues addressed in this chapter refers to the reforms proposed by liberals and their implications on Romania's ability to successfully fulfill its international responsibility. The outbreak of the First World War in mid-1914, following the Sarajevo attack, created conditions for major transformations in international relations, a precursor to the realization of the national ideal of all Romanians.

The author's approach to Romania's foreign policy issues in terms of parliamentary debates in the decades preceding the Great War brings new and novel content to the history of Romania, especially regarding the role of the parliament, its political parties and of some members of parliament who distinguished themselves by their speeches and their influence in the creation of Romania's foreign policy. That is why we consider Sebastian-Dragoş Bunghez's book an important scientific work, an interesting

contribution to the history of the parliamentary life and foreign policy of Romania, which we recommend to all those interested in reading about this subject.

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