



CULTURAL ELITES AS SELFLESS ETHNIC ENTREPRENEURS IN THE FALL OF YUGOSLAVIA?

Kulturne elite kao nesebični etnički preduzetnici pri raspadu Jugoslavije?

ABSTRACT: *In socialist Yugoslavia, cultural elites were structurally related to the communist ruling elite/s, but the relationship was not simple. Cultural elites were always constituted at the national (republic) level, whereas the political elite was initially a single Yugoslav one, but later, it fractured along the same lines. National cultural elites soon ceased to be anything like transmissions of the ruling one, nor were they unconditionally subjugated to it/them. All cultural elites had a proclivity to view issues as unfavourable towards their own nationhood. The Croat, Serb, and Slovene viewed the Yugoslav arrangement as somehow suppressing, exploiting, or restricting their respective nationhood. This sprang up in literary works, in intellectual production, in the issue of whether Serbo-Croat was a single language. These issues were brought about disputes, which grew from intellectual ones into inter-ethnic ones. These disputes contributed significantly to the disintegration of firstly, the weak Yugoslav cultural nucleus, and secondly of trust among nationhoods and finally they brought about a comprehension of an impossibility of a joint state. Most of these actions could be designated as ethnic entrepreneurship.*

KEY WORDS: *Ethnic entrepreneurship, Cultural elites, Yugoslavia, Writers, Language.*

АПСТРАКТ: *У социјалистичкој Југославији културне елиџе биле су њовезане са владајућом/им комунистичком/им елиџиом/ама, али однос није био једносџаван. Културне елиџе су се увек усџосџављале на реџубличком, националном нивоу, док је џолиџичка елиџа најџре била јединсџивена, јџословенска, али је касније џукла дуж исџтих линиџа. Националне културне елиџе усџоро су џресџвале да буду налик на џрансмисџу владајуће елиџе. Све културне елиџе имале су склоносџи да џосмаџрају сџварносџи као неџаџивну за соџсџивене наџије, да их даџи услови џриџисџају, ексџлоаџиџу и оџраничавају.*

1 sflere6@gmail.com

То је избијало у књижевним радовима, у интелектуалној продукцији и у ишћању да ли је српскохрватски један језик. Та су ишћања доводила до спорова, који су расли од интелектуалних у етничке. Ти спорови значајно су допринели распаду иначе слабо југословенској културној језира, поверења међу нацијама и, на крају, схваћању о немоћности заједничке државе. Први такав сукоб био је између Словенца Пирјевца и Србина Ћосића 1961–2. године, али већина спорова је била српско-хрватска. Други спорови су били мање значаја. Већина тих деловања може се означити као етничко предузетничтво.

КЉУЧНЕ РЕЧИ: Етничко предузетничтво, Културна елића, Југославија, Књижевници, Језик.

Introduction

This cultural texture of states is very important as glue, although it is not necessary to take the view of ethnosymbolism on eternal cultural nuclei (Smith, 1998). Gellner also upholds culture's necessity for modern states. Smith and Gellner only differ on the fabrication of modern state's culture, but both agree on its contemporary functional relevance. Gellner ends his seminal work stating it is "a shared high culture which defines a 'nation'" (1983: 142).

In the tumultuous landscapes during the mid-20th century, a particular paradox unfolded beneath the surface of seeming unyielding Yugoslav unity. While the official narrative projected an image of a harmonious multi-national federation, based on a full parity of nationhoods, an intricate web of nationalist conflicts simmered among cultural elites – literary figures, linguists, historians, intellectuals of various profiles – which found their task to be protecting and defending each nation's identity. The year 1967 marked a pivotal turning point in the region's history. In the decades following World War II, the country was an experiment in multi-ethnic socialism, comprising various ethnic groups, including Serbs, Bosniaks (officially acknowledged in 1971), Slovenes, Macedonians, Montenegrins and others. Among the last, there were national minorities (titled "nationalities" (*narodnosti*)). Albanians were the most numerous and most important.

Beneath the veneer of "brotherhood and unity", voices of these diverse ethnic communities began to assert themselves, challenging the official narrative of Yugoslav unity. Even intellectual endeavors seminally aimed at strengthening unity, like the *Encyclopedia of Yugoslavia* and the Serbo-Croat Dictionary unintentionally fanned flames of ethnic discord.

The focus will be on the intricate tapestry of these conflicts among cultural elites, dissecting the ideological fault lines that emerged within the broader Yugoslav tapestry. By examining pivotal moments and individuals, it sheds light on how the very people entrusted with promoting Yugoslav unity contributed, sometimes unwittingly, to its gradual unravelling. Here, the fractures and tensions that lay just beneath the surface of Yugoslavia's 'brotherhood and unity'

come into sharp relief, highlighting the complexities and contradictions that defined this tumultuous era.

Here, the subject will not be on efforts to build a united culture under the first, Royal Yugoslavia (1918–1941), which were unsuccessful (Wachtel, 1998). Importantly, there was a radical rupture between the first and the second, communist/socialist Yugoslavia being the subject of our interest. The common cultural core of the second Yugoslavia had to do with the narrative of how communists and “the peoples of Yugoslavia” “forged” unity during and after World War II, in their parlance, the National Liberation War (Wachtel, 1998: 131–133; Pavasović, 2018). This was usually expressed as “brotherhood and unity”, which was a covenantal motto on the peoples of Yugoslavia having constructed Yugoslavia from scratch and laid sound fundamentals for a lasting union. It contained a prohibition to belittle and denigrate other nationhoods and did not allow for doubt on its success. Wachtel, observing the myth analytically, finds brotherhood means “closeness and separateness” in contrast to “unity” which denotes unification, possibly also doing away with any differences. But from the very beginning, brotherhood and unity were directed towards cultural pluralism, the efflorescence of national cultures, with culture and education being within republic jurisdiction. Only the most ideological issues were decided upon at the federal level.

The Yugoslav cultural production was, at the very beginning, designed to promote the new way of socialist life, under the mold of “socialist realism”, which failed to produce remarkable results (Wachtel, 125–6). The exception were some novels on the Partisans, the communist-led force in World War II, which were well read (Wachtel, 1998). But already in 1952, at the Yugoslav Writers’ Congress, the unity of literary canon was abandoned in favor of “socialist larpourlatism”, allowing for writers to establish stylistic groups and even to separate regarding world views and especially regarding the meaning of nationhood. For example, in Belgrade they were divided into traditionalists (“realists”) and modernists already in the 1950s, the former clinging to traditional Serb values (Peković, 2009: 11–20).

In Tito’s Yugoslavia, there was greater leeway in cultural production than in politics, where the communist dogma was enforced (although here republican political elites also asserted themselves).

To understand what eventuated later in cultural production in the context which is our focus, it is helpful to consider the notion of ethnic entrepreneurship. Lal defines the concept of ethnic identity by “...entrepreneurs invoking this essentialized identity and group membership to justify a claim to, or, monopolization of, scarce resources and entitlements by way of a process of social closure” (1997: 385).

Rogers Brubaker popularized the concept. Brubaker went to the limits in expressing the creative role of ethnic entrepreneurs in the national constitution. In 2004 he wrote explicitly:

“Reifying [national] groups is precisely what ethno-political entrepreneurs are in the business of doing. When they are successful, the political fiction of the unified [national] group can be momentarily yet powerfully realized in practice” (2004: 44).

But, whereas some authors consider ethnic entrepreneurs the main actors “in stirring up ethnic sentiment”, leading to ethnic conflict and national reification, Horowitz, a classic in the study of these issues, is very skeptical about the value of the concept, posing the point that ethnic entrepreneurs “may themselves be primordialists” (1985: 80). Horowitz means ethnic entrepreneurs may eternally spring up due to the very nature of ethnic groups and their relations. Having such a situation at hand in the theory of nationalism, we may study the Yugoslav case.

In this paper, after reviewing briefly the historical context, the most important disputes among cultural elites will be presented, following which the importance of (some of the disputes) for the political elite(s) and for the dissolution of Yugoslavia will be dealt with. In this paper it will be studied how cultural elites of constituent national groups acted in promoting their ethnicities’ lot, while disseminating ethnic mistrust and in fact acted as ethnic entrepreneurs. These activities sprang in both specific cultural production and in other activities. Finally, it will be pointed out how cultural elites were able to impose their understanding of identity issues upon political elites, at least in decisive instances, and thus bring about the downfall of Yugoslavia. In this paper, content analysis of relevant sources, including novels, archival material and newspapers from various parts of the former country, was applied.

The rise of animosities

The Yugoslav communist/socialist system (1945–1991) very much transpired from a distinct and important ideology. This was not just about the distant final goal of communism, but also about everyday life. When soon, a rift with the Moscow leadership came about in 1948, ideology was again in the forefront, as it was needed to prove that Yugoslav communism was true, or even more true than Moscow’s one. By being ideocreative, ideology and culture were important.

But, as Malešević observed, this ideology was not only to do with abstract issues of the distant communist future, but also with how to go about everyday issues of a mostly backward and underdeveloped country. Hence, there was another parallel ideology, operational ideology. In the Yugoslav case, the latter dealt with issues like inter-ethnic relations (tolerance in this respect, a parity of nationhoods), legitimizing the distribution of goods, legitimizing the one-party system etc. The latter “gives enormous attention to the particular histories of Serbs, Croats, Slovenes and other Yugoslav nationalities” (Malešević, 2002: 145).

In this context cultural elites were important. On the one hand, their role was to bring about legitimacy to the system, by expanding education, legitimizing political power and ethnic relations, depicting various features of social life in the new society as favorable, interpreting the clash between the old, traditional

and the modern. On the other hand, cultural elites and professionals were there to fill the many cultural institutions, which spread under the principle of parity of nationhoods. For example, immediately after the establishment of socialist Yugoslavia, there were only three universities and three academies of sciences in Yugoslavia, but Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia soon caught up, Montenegro somewhat later, and Vojvodina and Kosovo latest, by the 1970s. There were other important humanities national institutions like institutes of history and linguistics in every republic/province. These institutes promoted the national efflorescence, but at this task that they were not to collide with endeavors of other republics i.e. nationhoods.

So cultural professionals and elites soon arose everywhere. In the Yugoslav system, they were national cultural professionals and elites, as cultures were considered to be national cultures, regarded as mutually fraternal (brotherhood and unity principles), but distinct. Particularly, Slovene propagandists disallowed any speech of Yugoslav culture (Kardelj, 1957).

Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes had more developed elites and professional groups at the start, whereas the others had some catching up to do. The elites considered themselves as promoters and vanguards of their own nations, with an inherent duty to speak up for them.

The break up of Yugoslavia (approximately 1991) is usually viewed as a predominantly political phenomenon (for example, Jović, 2009; Pavković and Radan, 2008), as it had to do with a transfer of sovereign power from the Yugoslav state to the constituents (republics). But this was not a process rendered in a single step, as Montenegro opted for independence only in 2006. Furthermore, even at present, we are not sure how many states have been »hatched«, as the status of Kosovo is contested (late 2024). Pavković and Radan are right that there were short-term secession movements that were successful. But, one must also observe the in-depth processes in a longer term, where the texture of the Yugoslav state and society was slowly destroyed and decayed at the cultural level.

In the next section, the focus will be on the major maneuvers by cultural producers and elites, who may not have been aware of the last consequences of their deeds. This will be followed by a discussion on the interaction of the two elites. These acts by cultural producers constituted incidents in interethnic relations, meaning events that corroded the frail Yugoslav cultural texture. Owing to at least some nations being already constituted at the beginning (1945) and a recent history of various conflicts during World War II, cultural unity was frail from the beginning.

Cultural elites at work

Incidents outside cultural activities: Already in 1945, before the definite end of the War, in the Partisan Command, the elderly and well-known Croat poet *Vladimir Nazor*, elected president of the Croat Anti-Fascist Council, a communist-led provisional political body, protested vehemently that Partisan news bulletins (and radio broadcasts), by the already established news agency

TANJUG, were published “in the language of the Belgrade bazaar,” thus “insulting Croats.” He particularly noted that this came about while the Partisan command was situated in the Croat territory. Finally, he protested regarding the composition of the personnel preparing the bulletin, where “Serbs have infiltrated, as usual.” The propaganda officer Prvoslav Vasiljević reported on this to top leaders. It was taken seriously, as Djilas noted on his copy, that it should be found “who instigated Nazor” (report dated September, 27, 1944, *Dedijer*, 1981, 2: 842–843).

In the Spring of 1946, when the governmental structure was not yet fully established, the president of the Serbian Academy of Sciences, *Aleksandar Belić*, protested against the purportedly disproportionately large number of Slovenes and Croats in newly established federal agencies. These officials were to have been provided “to promote financing of production in Croatia and Bosnia” (Archives of Yugoslavia, 507, CK KPJ, 1945: 44). This indicated the coming of disputes over economic distribution. The issue of national over- and under-representation will also be expressed throughout Tito’s Yugoslavia existence, coming from many sides, including within the communist elite, receiving a crescendo by Miko Tripalo with respect to military officers’ composition in 1970, when it will also become “official” to follow this issue ethnic and republic officialdom composition (Tripalo, 1990).

A biting attack upon the advance of a wished Yugoslav cultural unity came from the foremost personality in Yugoslav culture of all, the famed Croat writer *Miroslav Krleža*. Upon walking past the main Belgrade cemetery in 1946, immediately after the War, when the cemetery could not have recuperated after the War devastation, he deriding the statues, including some personalities of import for Serbian history (Krleža, 1952: 1). He was displeased by its Orthodox monuments, also availing himself of the adjective “miserable.” He particularly pointed out the “stupid looking beard” of the Serb and Yugoslav prime minister Nikola Pašić and the “cannibalist pose” of General Miloš Vasić, another Serb historical figure. He was immediately attacked in *Borba*, then official newspaper, for “ridiculing” Serb history, by an anonymous Levantine (“Odgovor Levantinca”, Peković, 2009: 21–31).

Krleža was also attacked by a retired school inspector in 1954 for his alleged anti-Serbian statements, particularly disrespect for Serbian history. In 1954 this was done by dissemination of letters in Belgrade. The inspector reminded Krleža of “Ustaša Croat atrocities” during World War II and threatened Krleža’s insult would not be forgotten by the Serb people (Todorović, [1954]/2012.) Krleža retained his position of officially honored progressive writer and Tito’s friend.

In 1961 and 1962 there was a polemic between Serbian writer *Dobrica Ćosić*, later considered ‘father of Serbia’ and Slovene intellectual, literary theoretician *Dušan Pirjevec* on the role of republics and nationhoods in Yugoslavia. They had both previously served on the Ideological Services (AGITPROP) of their respective Communist Party central committees (Serbia and Slovenia).

Ćosić firstly cast doubt on the very need for the existence of republics and asserted “Socialist Yugoslavism” to be a superior form of integration (1961)

than the one based on ethnic nations. Pirjevec opposed by claiming nations and their republics, particularly smaller ones, yet need “to experience confirmation of themselves”, holding also that national belonging on part of the individual is “constitutes a free individual” (Pirjevec, 1961: 1116). Ćosić was tacit on the cultural profile of “socialist Yugoslavism”, but he didn’t express any reservation toward larger culture swallowing smaller ones. This polemic had a strong echo and Lazar Koliševski, the leader of Macedonian Communists told the federal Party Politburo, the ruling body, in March, 1962, that members of the Macedonian Central Committee had split in siding with Ćosić’s and Pirjevec’s position (Zečević, 1998: 223–4).

These were two vistas that arose when the threat of possibly fatal Soviet intervention vanished, i.e. when foreign annihilation threat to Yugoslavia ceased. But this was also a sign of disputes which would arise and become ever more acute. They were presented by two literary figures in literary magazines, dealing with seemingly politically irrelevant issues. However, they hit the core of what the core problem of Yugoslavia was – the national question.

In 1968 the issue of Serbian rule in Kosovo was set on the political agenda by writer *Dobrica Ćosić* and historian *Jovan Marjanović*. Namely, at the time Kosovo Albanian majority was gaining some autonomy and bearers of previous repression of Albanians had been dismissed and were critiqued. Ćosić and Marjanović intervened on the Serbian Central Committee to “improve the position of the Serbs in Kosovo” and stop their moving out of Serbs from Kosovo, whereby their minority became even smaller. In fact, they were seeking repression of Albanians.

Ćosić stated that “two types of statehood, Yugoslav and Albanian cannot coexist in Kosovo” (2002: 17), which was coded for denying Kosovo substantive autonomy (as autonomy was allegedly to have had a state like nature and truly in Yugoslavia after 1969, constituents had major authority and the federal government depended on their consents, the federal government was derivative in nature out of the constituents). Ćosić also told the Serbian Central Committee stated that the solution for the Kosovo issue was to be found in national parity achieved in “social relations without state forms and state attributes” (22). These relations seem to be without any institutions, which was a fad under the influence of then then fashionable Praxis philosophy (to identify social relations and thus do away with state and market). But Ćosić meant for Kosovo that it was not to be granted autonomy or a republic, that relations between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo were to be arranged within the Republic of Serbia, which was not mentioned explicitly, but certainly meant. Although publicly dismissed and critiqued in 1968 (Ćosić lost his position on the Central Committee), in the 1980s this narrative gained official status within Serbian politics: not to grant constitutionally guaranteed autonomy or republic.

As of 1969, a circle of Belgrade intellectuals existed around Dobrica Ćosić (publishing association *Srpska književna zadruga*), dedicated to the idea of establishing a state encompassing all Serbs (Bešlin, 2008: 55). Mihailo Djurić, professor at the Belgrade Faculty of Law was its member and his daring 1971 speech would not have been without them as a group supporting him.

In 1971 when another set of constitutional amendments, extending greater power to republics, were being discussed, before adoption, a Belgrade Faculty of Law professor *Mihailo Djurić* denounced the constitutional draft as dismantling Yugoslavia, claiming that only classical federal arrangement could be operative. He underscored “Serbs in Croatia not enjoying special constitutional rights... the Serbian nation being not equal to others...” (Djurić, 1971: 232) and that the borders of the Serbian Republic were neither historical nor ethnical. Serbs were to have had less rights than other nationhoods. Some of the other professors also made such biting comments. Professor Djurić received a short prison sentence and was ousted from the University, as were some others.

In the long run, the Belgrade professors were right on the fate of Yugoslavia, although the amendments were conceived to save Yugoslavia by giving more room to constituents. At the time the remarks very much challenged the regime.

At the same time, the Croatian journal *Hrvatski Tjednik* published proposals on draft constitutional amendments. It proposed formulations on “Croatian sovereignty being indivisible”... “Croatia (should) not be a republic of Croats and Serbs” (“Hrvatski ustav: Hrvatski suverenitet je nedjeljiv”, 21, September 10, 1971) this was to mean Serbs were to lose their co-constitutive status in Croatia, which was constitutionally guaranteed).

Yugoslav economic science was Marxist, inviting the question of whether exploitation exists in Yugoslavia and whether it exists in a systematic manner. During Croatian Spring (1969–1971), a number of Croat economists promoted the idea that there were various mechanisms by way of which the Croatian economy was “exploited”. The major mechanism was to have been investments of the Croat pet project at the time – tourism, where Belgrade banks purportedly imposed huge, exploitative interest upon loans. This was put forward many times (*Hrvoje Šošić*, “Istina o hrvatskom gospodarstvu, *Hrvatski Tjednik*, 2, 23 March, 1971; *Šime Đodan*, “Gospodarsko politički uzroci emigracije iz Hrvatske”, *Hrvatski tjednik*. 2, 23 March 1971). It called for “restitution of alienated [Croat] capital”. Soon Đodan, professor at the Zagreb University would write that “Belgrade is the centre extracting surplus value from the entire Yugoslav economy”, in particular Belgrade situated banks imposed unfavorable loans on economic enterprises, particularly those in tourism (Croatia). Belgrade was also to have enjoyed a thriving federal bureaucracy “which cost double the Zagreb city administration” (“Jedinstveno tržište, razvijenost republika i kompenzacije”, *Hrvatski Tjednik* no. 5, 4–5, 14 May, 1971). This weekly continuously, until the cessation of its publishing at the end of 1971, wrote on the “privileges” of Belgrade banks and of “re-exporting” companies. They made no note of the high inflation and other circumstances of operations why loans may have been such for other reasons.

The above examples illustrate that cultural elite members made nonchalant, but biting comments on how Yugoslavia was constituted and operated at various points in time.

Incidents in scholarship: In the beginning, communists pondered on a joint historical narrative for the Yugoslav peoples. *Milovan Djilas*, the main ideologue

at the time, wrote an instructive article about teaching history, but he could not point to many points of joint historical endeavor, with the exception of the Slovenian-Croat peasant uprisings in the 16th century, and of course the joint communist-led movement in World War II (Djilas, 1949).

A joint “history of the Yugoslav peoples” was planned. The most serious historians from the republics were tasked. The volumes until the end of the 18th century were produced during the early years of enthusiasm (Grafenauer et al., 1953; Grafenauer et al., 1960). However, for modern times no common denominator for a joint history could be established, due to divergent views on nationhood (whether it transpired from language or religion), historical roles, the nature of the first Yugoslavia.... Even a history of the Yugoslav Communist Party was barely completed in 1986, considering many issues of general nature were reflected there. The editors mentioned they could not properly complete it, but it was “of limited extent... due to reasons objective in nature” the editors stated dryly (Morača and Stojanović 1985, xii).

Contentions among historians would appear more about recent than about distant events. One can say Serb historians were the ones who were on the offensive. The first was Viktor Novak who opened the issue of atrocities committed against Serbs during World War II in Croatia, flatly claiming guilt of the Catholic Church in Croatia. His book was reprinted many times and it seems Croat historians did not dare oppose it directly. Another issue was the military defeat of the royal Yugoslavia in 1941, regarding which *Velimir Terzić*, a Montenegrin military associate of Tito squarely put guilt in front of Croats (1961). He claimed troops manned by Croats performed worst in a war no one performed well (the surrender was almost immediate). The Croat historian *Vaso Bogdanov* responded by designating works not comprehensive of Serbian hegemony as “chauvinistic”, although he does not name the author (1961). Bogdanov’s lengthy essay dealt with the entire history of Serb-Croat relations through modern history. He and other Croat historians underscored “Serbian hegemony” in the first Yugoslav state as the cause of all ensuing troubles, which was the favorite line of Croat historians in general, when dealing with recent history. Without much reservation he closed: “[Among Croats] general anti-Ustaša disposition unstoppably grew into an organized, resolute and consistent active resistance against the Occupier-Ustaša rule...Traitors were afflicted by hardest hits...Ustaša bloodthirsty bands were expelled from many locations..” (91) At that time it was more politically opportune to distance the Croat people as a whole from the Ustaša than to downplay their atrocities. This was later to change, particularly in the works of Franjo Tuđman, when Croat historians would take a more offensive posture against Serbs (1970). However, it remains unclear why this very long article was directed at “chauvinistic theses” in 1961. Bogdanov did not dare identify them directly.

Beside denying each others’ assertions, historians would impute “bad intentions” to the other side (Boban, 1985: 123–5). Boban also writes Terzić wrote on the basis of a “devised plan” to condemn the Croat peasant Party, without a basis in facts, which Šušović subsequently denied (1985). Both sides also always find some cherry picking by the other.

The Serbian position received a crescendo in the work of Vasilije Krestić, who claimed a three century old Croat intolerance of Serbs “transformed into genocide in World War II” and that Croats did not take part in the struggle against the Axis forces (Krestić, 1986, Bertolino, 2017: 480–5).

In that period Serb-Albanian quasi-historic disputes gained major public attention, Albanians always opening the issue of who were “the oldest” inhabitants of Kosovo (implying these would be ‘owners’ in comparison to ‘newcomers’ in later centuries). Albanians claimed to be the oldest inhabitants of the Balkans, of Illyrian and Dardanian descent (Peković, 2009: 140–141). At then end of the 1980s, there were a number of round tables among writers of different ethnic groups. One such was in April 1988, a rare occasion where Serb and Albanian Kosovar writers could exchange their views. Both groups of writers presented themselves as consciences of their respective nations, musing about their respective histories. Ibrahim Rugova and Rexhep Qosja, on the Albanian side, insisted that contemporary Albanians being direct descendants of ancient Balkan Illyrians. Qosja even claimed Serb scholars reneged on their previous concession to Albanians being descendants of Illyrians. The Serb novelist Milan Komnenić was so inflamed he said not to believe anything Albanians were telling and even declaring Serbs and Albanians were at “at war”. (“Srbi i Albanci, u Jugoslaviji, danas” 1988).

The Serbian economist *Kosta Mihailović* published a book prior to the Yugoslav break-up, (the results of which were to have been known to his friends two decades earlier (1990: 77), i.e. at the same time as the Croat Spring. His “friends” were among the Serbian intellectual elite, as he was a university professor and a member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences. He claimed that via informal mechanisms, i.e. by holding the top positions in the Party (Tito and Kardelj), Croatia and Slovenia were favored in economic policy and benefited, which indicated highest rises in economic growth. These rates were truly highest, but reflected a general trend of continuation and radicalization of economic disparities in Yugoslavia existing prior to World War II. When he was confronted by a datum that did not fit into his assertions, as economic growth of Serbia was in the period 1966–1988 above the Yugoslav average, he would not accept it as relevant. He held the indicators “standing 1972 prices” were not appropriate (see also Grđić, 2015).

True, investments were a top issue of contest in the leadership, and Slovene Kardelj, second to Tito, complained of Serbia appropriating all federal investments funds after the dismissal of Ranković, head of police (to prove Ranković downfall was not an anti-Serbian event) (Bilandžić, 2006). But politicians usually did not go public with inflammatory accounts, in contrast to a few economists.

In this way, economists by their less than scholarly analyses acted as true ethnic entrepreneurs already in the 1970s, manipulating with partial data and suggesting their republic was exploited. Both Serb Mihailović and Croat Djodan held Bosnia and Herzegovina, a less developed republic, was also to have been exploited. This was so because they both considered the republic as within their ambit. Madžar later proved the volume of inter-republic trade was so small no

transfer of surplus would pass that way and added many other reasons why exploitation among republics was out of consideration. (1995,192).

This led to solutions in the 1974 Constitution and legislation where those earning hard currency would become their owners and could dispose with them as goods on the market, to the great dissatisfaction of Serb politicians (*Jugoslovensko rodoljublje II*, 1985, 45–54).

Incidents in linguistics. The truly major conflict, involving major Croat and Serb institutions, came about in 1967 over linguistic issues.

The 1946 Constitution recognized Croat, Macedonian, Serb and Slovene as official languages, but in 1954, within endeavours to create a Yugoslav culture, a major step was taken to bring Serb and Croat into a single language. An agreement was entered into by Serbian and Croat linguistic scholars and writers on the Serbo-Croat language being a single language with two “variants” and two alphabets. This was a sort of a follow up to an agreement of Serb and Croat men of letters in 1850 to constitute and codify a joint literary language based on the štokavian speech spoken in Herzegovina and Dubrovnik (see Alexander, 2006; Greenberg, 2004; Čanadanović, 2022). Croats abandoned their čakavian and kajkavian dialects, their Glagolitic and Cyrillic (“Bosnian”) alphabets, whereas Serbs abandoned Slaveno-Serbian, an antiquated codified language promulgated by their Church and holding semi-official status in Vojvodina, but hardly spoken in general circles (Pederin 1971; Ivić, 1982). Thus, they both identified with the Herzegovinian-Dubrovnik dialect, which Vuk Karadžić, the Serbian language reformer, used as the model for modern Serb language codification. In 1954, and before, there was significant linguistic common ground to form a single Serbo-Croat language. However, some linguistic differences were allowed in 1954: ekavian and jekavian speech (the former exclusively Serbian, the latter present among all Croats and some Serbs) both scripts (Latin among Croats, both Cyrillic and Latin among both groups retained official status). But more important than remaining linguistic distinctions, which could have been tolerated and watered out, the two nationhoods had gone a long way to establish separate entities as nations and there is no doubt they were constituted nationhoods at the time. But the endeavour to establish Yugoslav unity had also gone a long way and Tito, exactly at that time Tito claimed a single Yugoslav nation was practically achieved, talking to foreign newspapermen on New Year’s Eve 1955 (*Duga*, 02 January, 1955), although he was quick to reiterate, that it “would be wrong to do away with nationalities”.

For the foreign reader, it may be useful to repeat the more fundamental assertion by Kordić “The criterion of mutual understandability demonstrates...it is a single standard language” (2010, 101).

The 1954 agreement was to have been implemented by production of a joint dictionary. Upon publication of the first two volumes, in 1967 the Yugoslav public was baffled by a joint statement by *Croat cultural and linguistic institutions* claiming a separate Croatian language, by implication that Serbo-Croatian was not a single language. The document was directed at an allegedly incorrect implementation of the Novi Sad Agreement, but even more to a purported

factual domination of the Serbian variant in public life. Serbian was to have been creeping as official language, by the practice of the federal administration and armed forces (Matica Hrvatska, *Kolo* 1971). One of the signatories of the 1954 Agreement was Miroslav Krleža, writer and old friend of Tito from times before the War. Possibly the most significant outcome of the entire affair was that Krleža visited Tito and where Tito requested the other to revoke his signature and Krleža flatly denied to (Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, n.d.).

On the other hand, Serbian nationalist writers received the Declaration with a satisfaction and consented to it, while demanding linguistic rights for Serbs in Croatia. It was commented by Belgradese that “Croats had done the job for us”, implying Serbs did not want a joint language either. This comment was noted among the signatories of the Serb Proposal for Consideration, a response to the Croat Declaration (Čanadanović, 2022, 48). At the meeting of the Writers’ Association *Dušan Radović*, a writer, claimed the Party may no longer govern interethnic relations (Selinić, 2017: 132). Nor were Serbian writers willing for a Serbian Central Committee member (Milojko Drulović) speak at the meeting (*ibidem*).

The two republican central committees of the Communist Party held long talks with the signatories of the two documents, but most of them would not budge. Some of them received Party reprimands or were even expelled, but it was discernible for the first time that the Party was not master of the game. Čanadanović comments: “There was resolve to fight unwaveringly” (52) which may be held for both elites. Cultural disunity, decision to go separate ways, dismemberment was in the hands of cultural mandarins. Mistrust was also affirmed as was factual separation. Republics would govern their official languages by their constitutions, as of 1971 and the federal constitution as of 1974 confirmed it.

When the dispute broke out, Serb participants usually underscored the mutual comprehensibility of the two language variants officially composing the Serbo-Croat/Croato-Serb language, which had a common sense plausibility (e.g. Ivić, 1968). Not being able to invoke some basic linguistic differences, Croat participants relied on arguments which also could not easily be dismissed: that each nationhood has a right to the name of its language (which is lost in the term Serbo-Croat), that Belgrade is the seat of the federal government, from where communications flow in the Serbian variant (to a large extent due to middle level personnel being recruited locally, but also due to Serbs being the most numerous group, see Burg, 1988: 112–119). Babić, a Croat linguist wrote in 1968 asking Serbs to imagine how they would react if Zagreb were the capital and if Croats were the most numerous group imposing its idiom and alphabet (1968: 136–140). Thus, the discussions were not very substantive, always clouded in the alleged bad intentions of the adversary.

One of the rhetoric fulminations of the linguistic conflict was reached in the writing of Croat journalist Smiljana Rendić. She complained of how Serbian idiom was imposed upon Croats. She not only claimed the situation was “tragic” for Croats, but also that they were in a “genitive position” which would become

a motto for partitioning Croat language from Serbo-Croat. Namely, the “genitive position” had to do with titling institutions, including republican institutions (for example, the Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Croatia”. Croat nationalists asserted this to be an linguistically “alien” and “imposed” (1971).

And the masses of ordinary people? Some demanded both groups of intellectuals be criminally punished (Selinić, 2017: 245–256). Intolerant reactions pervaded: publicly, people called for punishment: even in Zagreb workers in enterprises demanded “signatories be disallowed to educate young people...”requesting criminal prosecution” One may hold they were bearers of authoritarian consciousness, but they were certainly not following nationalists of their own group. Statements on linguistic issues were meaningful to small elite groups.

Again, bad intentions were imputed to the other side (for example, Babić, 1968; Čanadanović, 2022.)

In 1969, Croatian linguists would withdraw from the production of the joint dictionary.

The so called Croatian Spring followed in 1971, when the Croatian Party leaders presided over a nationalist mobilization (Alexander, 385). Linguists continued with their claims for a pure Croatian language, although they were politically marginalized. But even more thrust was on the “exploitation of Croatia”, purportedly an unjust system of distribution economic goods in Yugoslavia. By November 1971, the student movement within the Croatian Spring was calling for independence of Croatia, Tito suppressed the Croat Spring political movement and purged its proponents. But linguists went on with their work, but Kordić concluded decades later “linguistic activists were mostly nationalists” (2010, 18).

The linguistic dispute and the Croat Spring following it had a critical role in the dismantling Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia could not be mended again. Tito was aware and at dismissing the Croat leadership he told his wife “Yugoslavia is of the past” (Flere and Klanjšek, 2019: 133).

Incidents within literary life: Writers were considered and considered themselves the main bearers and defenders of nationhood. As of 1960s literary works appeared, where other nations were presented in negative light. Some of these novels were important ones, they had a large readership.

Possibly such novels appeared first by Croat writers, especially by *Petar Šegedin*. In a recitation of complaints, Croats were to have been despised, their language was marginalized and some of its forms suppressed, they were unjustly identified with the Ustaše, World War II Croatian military force, guilty of many war crimes. He considered the current situation “was a requiem for old Croatia,” etc. (Šegedin 1969). The novel ended by the main character grasping that he was a “traitor” of true Croathood. Šegedin published another story in dialogue form, where it was claimed Serbs in Croatia had two homelands, that they viewed Croats as “helpless beings” (1971: 238), that Serbs cannot understand Yugoslavism as Croats, Slovenes and Macedonians do, that Croats declaring themselves to be Yugoslavs do it out of intent not to ingratiate themselves with

the most numerous nationhood, whereas the only solution for Serbs in Croatia would be to melt themselves into Croats.

On the Serbian side, however, Dobrica Ćosić and Danko Popović were the main movers. Ćosić, an established and known Serbian writer, wrote a long novel *Time of Death* about World War I. In it, fictional and historical characters ponder on the wisdom of creating a Yugoslav state. Vojvoda (highest rank in Serbian Army) Mišić speaks against Yugoslavia, because Serbs were a free people and Croats a subject people in Austria-Hungary. So although speaking the same linguistic language, they will not be able to speak the same language politically. They fought on opposite sides in World War I. The character professor Zarija, a symbol of wisdom, comments World War I “[i]n Baćinac [Battle of Kolubara, 1915] we perished in the hands of our Croat brothers, giving our lives for their freedom” (Ćosić, 1972: 145). The general idea promoted was: “...a litany of complaints [about]...Serbia’s alleged tendencies to sacrifice its own interests for others and the ungratefulness [of the latter] after these sacrifices were made” (Wachtel 1988: 104). Danko Popović wrote a novel setting records in printed editions. In *Book of Milutin* (1985), a peasant recollects his life, mostly about his sacrifices for Yugoslavia, ending in Communist prison after World War II. The book is short and not very complicated, but putting well the message of selfless and unanswered Serbian sacrifice for Yugoslavia, in contrast to ungratefulness of the others.

Probably the worst verbiage was to be found in a novel manuscript by *Miodrag Bulatović*, a Montenegrin who went as Serb. In Belgrade, the text was rejected for publication: too obscene words were used to depict Croats: they were “dogs”, “swines”, “beasts” and similar. Bertolino, a Belgrade editor of Croat descent rejected it (2017: 417). Bulatović defended his designations of Croats by invoking Ustaša atrocities in World War II (421). The book, treating life of Yugoslav emigrés in interaction with Yugoslav police *abroad*, was later published with offensive terms omitted (Bulatović, 1975).

All these and other novels were focused on low- and middle-brow readership (the elites were already nationally mobilized).

Croatian novelists were not very active after 1971, cautious not to be imposed penalties, but their previous writing and actions had a lasting impact. Structurally, to dissolve Yugoslavia, it was now strategic to do away with the faith and trust of Serbs in Yugoslavia, which the novels promoted. So Wachtel could conclude: “Yugoslav culture led, rather than followed political developments...of fission” (209).

A further apple of discord was the republic-province attribution of literary figures for school purposes. There were many figures who transcended one federal unit. The issue became acute in 1979, when “joint cores” for the study of literature in secondary schools were attempted to be agreed upon at the level of entire Yugoslavia.

The Serbian Writers’ Union in 1981 did not consent to a draft proposing oral epic songs transcending republic borders (Peković, 2009: 123). But there were other objections as well: Bosnian poetess Mubera Mujagić claimed that Njegoš’s major

opus *Mountain Wreath* disseminated “ethnic intolerance,” in fact depicting ethnic cleansing of Muslims by Christians in late 18th century Montenegro. Slovene writers came out with a flat veto, claiming a huge disproportion in the representation of Serbo-Croat literary figures (Slovenes considered Serbo-Croat a single entity) in comparison to Slovene ones (Flere and Klanjšek, 2019: 148). Objections were not only many, but also afflicting various levels of the proposed idea.

Again, educational tasks were controlled by writers’ associations, guardians of nationhoods.

Incidents in religious life: Religious activity in communist Yugoslavia was plentiful (Flere and Klanjšek, 2014), but it was restricted, particularly as to inciting political and ethnic discord. Thus, true ethnic entrepreneurship in this area, was to be found only in the 1980s.

The most interesting, also the most productive incident was the case of apparitions of the Blessed Mary begun in 1981 in an out of reach pastoral region of Herzegovina. This was upon Franciscan friars complaining in the Vatican, of a crisis in faith in the region at time of Tito’s death. They were advised of the importance of Marian miracles. Upon return to Herzegovina, whole regiment of activities was set in motion: prayers, fasting, confession, atonement and the recitation of the Rosary while everyone was waiting for the sign. The great expectation was fulfilled: six children were alleged to have repeatedly communicated with the Virgin Mary. The prophecy was fulfilled (Skrbiš, 2005: 452). The Virgin announced herself to the children, in Croatian, dressed in white. Apparitions continued. There were hints of prayers for peace, interpreted subsequently to avoid war. Later, in 1992, Croatian men from the Herzegovina region started going to war were fitted with rosaries and images of Mary. The entire affair had a divisive and inflammatory effect in Herzegovina, a multi-confessional region.

In the beginning of 1980s, the Serbian Orthodox Church started promoting the cause of Kosovo Serbs in attempt to catch light on the public scene. In 1988, the remains of Prince Lazar, a medieval Serbian potentate who was to have led a decisive battle with the Ottomans and fell there in 1389, were taken in a procession through “Serb” lands, including multi-confessional and multi-ethnic Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. This was accompanied by speeches of nationalist and symbolic content. The poet Matija Bećković raised the pathetic tone to “the grave being our farthest and most persisting place of faith. We are still paying allegiance to bones and graves, because we have no steadier pillars, better remedies, nor more powerful convictions.” This invocation of predecessors with whom there is a covenant to maintain Serbianhood was repeated many a time and ethnic sentiment was inflamed (quoted in Velikonja, 2003, 217–218). Milan Komnenić, another enthused Serbian writer stated: “If Lazar were to rise, his reach of Serbia would be visible. But he would not see Serb frontiers, as the relics did not visit Serb Slavonia, Lika, Dalmatia and particularly not Serb Montenegro and Serb Macedonia, speaking sufficiently of the situation in the Serb house today” (Bertolino, 2017: 496). At this time, the Serb communist leader Milošević, although possibly not aware of the true consequences of his deeds, (assisting

to dismantle Yugoslavia), started using the Kosovo political theme. Hence, the Orthodox prelates were contributing to the nationalist mobilization of Serbs, politicians in power in Serbia following.

What was illustrated above confirms the virulence of events in cultural life as to Yugoslavia's very existence. The varied writers, linguists, priests and other members of cultural elites may not have been aware of the consequences or nature of their action. In fact, attempts to better one's position culturally, from the primitive mimeographed prints in the 1950s to the final Catholic and Orthodox assaults upon Yugoslavia 1980s, they most probably believed their identity groups were in an unjustly belittled position and may have believed they themselves were only attempting to rectify this, for example by reasserting the Croat and Serb name of language and script. However, they were undoing the cultural texture of Yugoslavia, a weak one at best. They were also setting the stage for the final political blows of secessions, political break up. The awareness of the cultural production echoed among the ordinary folk and ever more took traction.

So, the Yugoslav case, with all its "variety" and opulence of cultural actors and actions in various fields, their audaciousness and extremism at times, lends more support to Horowitz than to those who opine ethnic entrepreneurs are "sovereign" producers of nationalism, who produce it out of "nothing", let alone that they act only instrumentally or out of bare self-interest. Acts bearing the likeness of ethnic entrepreneurship, in the Yugoslav case were well rooted in history, the history of national constitution of Croats, Serbs and Slovenes in the 19th century (Malešević, 2002; Uzelac, 2006), which were followed by the nationhoods which matured in the Yugoslavia as sort-of-hatchery for the others who were on the way to be constituted. To a significant extent Yugoslavia operated so, with the institutionalization of Montenegrins, Bosnian Muslims/Bosniaks, Macedonians and Kosovo Albanians, territorializing ethnicity, giving each group a homeland with the trappings on cultural and political nationhood (national theatres, national museums, institutes of historiography, of language etc. On the other hand, it is hard to imagine it could have been otherwise, that Yugoslavia could have emerged after World War II as an hegemony by a single nationhood or even less as an ethnically unified state. The state of nationhoods was more mature than after World War I, even though some still needed time to mature fully.

Once national political elites were separate (1962–1971) they needed support from other segments of national societies. In the initial period, although during Tito's life they still concentrated their attention on ingratiating themselves with him (Jović, 2009), but after his passing away the situation became quite different. One may use the year of 1986 as the one which was the critical juncture for the Serbian and Slovenian political elite. The Slovenian one started taking cues from the cultural elite demanding political pluralism and parliamentary democracy, whereas the Serbian one started to mobilize regarding Kosovo – neither were situations that could be basically changed thereupon. Reasserting power in Kosovo became the topic which began to unify the Serbian cultural

and the political elite, although the narratives of the two may not have been the same. It is about Kosovo that Serbian and Slovenian political elites political disputed the most (Mužević, 2022), particularly behind closed doors, using different vocabularies in their speech. Slovenian politicians started toying with a diluted liberalism, whereas the Serbian ones used ever more a populist narrative. Speaking, for example at the Federal Central Committee Presidency, they needed to think how they will be assessed home, particularly by the cultural elites, who were most vociferous and thus not only impacting, but also leading public opinion. Kosovo was an identity issue over which a bread-and-butter solution or even a human rights solutions was not possible.

Hence, cultural elites initially undertook technical tasks and infrequently but importantly translated normative ideology into an operational one, in Malešević's sense. But soon they changed the tune, at least the vocal members did so and started playing nationalist tones, according to which reality is never sufficiently "national". In fact, members of the cultural elites of Yugoslavia referred in events considered, acted often as ethnic entrepreneurs, as Lal defined them. Ethnic identity was essentialized, trumping all other identification, slowly also controlling ethnic group members. We do not go as to claim such behavior immanent and without exception "ethnic entrepreneurs being primordialists" (Horowitz, 2004: 80), but the "instrumental" moment is missing for most such actors. The Yugoslav situation made such an action likely and meaningful, because of the entrenched nationalism of the major triad of ethnicities and other groups followed suit.

Although this could not have been an exhaustive chronicle, it transpires cultural incidents were continuous as of the 60s and that they were blows to the cultural texture, but also to the state. The failure of opposition to nationalist stands is also telling. For example, at the discussion on constitutional changes in Belgrade 1971 referred, Miroslav Pečujlić – a member of the of the federal Party ruling body, also a professor of the Faculty where the discussion was held – was present, but he did not dare oppose the dominant nationalist narrative, instead speaking of generalities.

Conclusion: the relationship between the cultural and the political elite(s)

The problem of relationship is a difficult one to treat, as both elite groups were complex and changed through time. Particularly, the Yugoslav communist political elite dissolved between 1971 and 1981 and they became a coalition of republican/provincial elites, although in permanent conflict over rare goods, initially economic ones (Flere and Rutar, 2021).

The political elites at the time can be understood according to Flere and Rutar, as incumbents of the highest political positions, who in the period 1962–1972 separated into republican-provincial elites (2021: 1), whereas cultural elites can be defined even with less precision as those who had an impact on public opinion via identity production, primarily writers and members of academies of

sciences and arts who undertook such activities in their respective republics and provinces. In the 1970s they may have been temporarily ostracized from public appearances, but continued to have public weight.

Basically, the story of the relationship between the political and the cultural elites was one of emancipation on part of the latter, at least beginning as of 1967.

Immediately after the War, cultural elites were subjugated to the political one and writers, for example, were not allowed to publish quite as they pleased. Of course, there were writers who wrote on subjects which were more or less politically irrelevant, as Ivo Andrić. But many writing on modern times needed to observe, not exactly the realistic socialist cannon, but at least how to write about modern times. And war novels like Ćosić's *Far away is the Sun* (1962) among these enjoyed popularity, although there were only a few such cases.

But already by the beginning of 1950s writers' freedom was acknowledged and practiced and soon it was so also so in the visual arts. Until 1967, with rare exceptions like *Mihajlo Mihajlov*, cultural elites did not intervene in politics. After 1967, they ever more began to pass judgments on inter-ethnic affairs. Politicians lost control of them and Tito's talk to Krleža was symbolic. Tito, the undisputed political leader who would still oust many politicians in 1971–72, could not tame the writer and encyclopedist Krleža in 1967.

In the same year some members of the cultural elites were subject of political sanctions as "party penalties" or were even forbidden to appear in the media. But they could not be made docile. Sporadically, but ever more, cultural actors intervened in ethnic relations. By 1980, they not only became untouchable, but some of their members had a strong impact on public opinion. No politician dared to tame them, but soon the issue of who would instrumentalize whom in a crisis situation arose. The content of much cultural elite activity was toxic to the existence of Yugoslavia, by maneuvering for the home nationhood and presenting themselves as monopolistic interpreter of its needs, identity, and future, fitting Lal's definition (identity monopolization, scarce resources entitlement on the basis of identity). Identity was hailed, presented as a single and mandatory option for all nationhood members.

Interventions by members of the cultural elites considered were mostly ethnic entrepreneurial in nature, particularly in the 1980s, although the fate of Yugoslavia by then was sealed. The series of crises and conflicts were brewing and some of them were such that no resolution could be expected. The most virulent such dispute was the one over Kosovo, not only as to dispute between Serbs and Albanians, but Slovenes also were involved, proposing other solutions than the one applied. The Serbian recipe was the one they applied during 20th century history: more repression, but now it would be repression in which all other republics take part and politically consent to, as repression by federal bodies. Whereas Ćosić designated Kosovo Albanians as "social and moral refuse of the Balkans" (2011: 211), Miodrag Jovičić, another member of the Serbian Academy, pleaded "Albanians should be shepherded to civilisation" (*Danas*, August 16, 1988). Slovenes ever more would not take part at policing Kosovo,

and finally they pulled out their police contingent, while also claiming the entire policy in towards Kosovo was erroneous (Mužević, 2022: 334). Slovenes favored a democratic dialogue and collaboration with moderate Albanian politicians such as Azem Vllasi and Kachushe Jashari. This road was blocked by Vllasi's jailing and by doing away with the provinces' constitutional position by Milošević. The dispute was public, but writers were particularly vocal in it. Slovene communists, under public scrutiny already, could but follow the publicly endorsed policy of condemning repression.

By 1986 the political fighting was intensive, also concerning the organization of Yugoslavia. Milošević favored a more centralized federation, in which Serbs would hold a relative majority and a constitutional text to the effect was quietly drafted (Ribarič, 2015; Mužević, 2022: 438). Slovenian politicians ever more distanced themselves from Yugoslavia.

Although one cannot say that cultural elites were in the 80s giving orders to political ones, the power of the former was great and certainly every trace of political elites instrumentalizing cultural ones disappeared. One could say cultural ones generally had the upper hand.

Why did cultural elites play such an active part in the Yugoslav end game and not for example the military, whom Slovene nationalists, and not only nationalists, feared the most in the 1980s (Mužević, 2022: 208–210), which certainly existed in Yugoslavia. However, the answer is not so complicated as it may seem. In Yugoslavia, all political actions and every step were interpreted as relating to identity, particularly ethnic, national identity. Whether Serbia should dominate the provinces, what status should Kosovo enjoy, by whom should it be dominated, if at all, all the way to petty issues such as who were literary luminaries meriting being studied in all schools of the land or even how should foreign currency be treated, i.e. issues of economic arrangement – all these and many other became national identity issues. Cultural producers and elites offered answers, as shown in many novels, in direct statements by writers, members of the many academies of sciences, university professors who would speak up such issues Serbs being exploited in Yugoslavia, and were generally to have been the underdogs. In some instances cultural production on these issues was expressed visually (painters Mića Mihailović, Milić Stanković). Although there were major instances of Slovene writers' interventions, the most vocal individual in Yugoslav terms was Dobrica Ćosić. He intervened also as to Montenegrins being Serbs, claiming they were afflicted hardest because they were, under Tito, denationalized from their true Serb identification and an artificial Montenegrin identity was imposed upon them (2002: 266).

These interventions echoed well both in the intellectual and general public opinion – within nationhoods, mostly but not entirely coinciding with republics (and one province). The deviant province in this respect, Vojvodina, composed of a slight a Serbian majority at the time, was a slightly different story. After some turmoil and intervention by Milošević, it would not declare an independent state, but soon became part of Serbia, not differing much from the other parts (Flere, 2023).

The cultural elites (beside the Slovene, Serb and Albanian one) were mainly tacit during the 80s: Croats were still recuperating from the Croatian Spring and its repressive aftermath, in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Montenegro these issues and identity production were nascent. Macedonians were not well heard on the Yugoslav level, but they were embroiled with their Albanian minority, thus supporting Serbia until almost the very end (Mužević, 2022).

Unlike the other republics, which were led to independence by new political elites, Slovenia and Serbia were led by complex groups, including communists, although not ones who were Tito's apostles.

So Milošević would tell the federal communist leadership early in 1989: "Solutions shall be brought by a policy supported by the majority of people of the country, in institutional an extra-institutional manner, in statutory and unstatutory manner"... being it articulate that "[the policy] would be about a socialist Yugoslavia" (Mužević, 2022: 324) He started speaking populistically, but substantively like Čosić and Djurić. The "majority" he had in mind would comprise primarily by the relative majority of Serbs, and their cause would be promoted by the Serb cultural elite. It would mean a decrease in the influence of the smaller republics. Kučan would respond also in a coded narrative: "Yugoslavia can exist only if it establishes itself as a democratic society" (324), where "democratic" meant not only a parliamentary form of government democratic primarily meant the consociation of republics and provinces.

Milan Kučan's speeches, which were usually full of lofty invocation of principles, communist and constitutional ones, on July 26, 1988, as president of Slovene Communist League, told the federal Communist League Presidency, "his language, its parity and the parity of the Slovene nationhood have been violated", when a military tribunal conducted a trial in Serbo-Croat in Ljubljana, echoing the writers' continued insistence on the most precious nature of the Slovene language for Slovenes (*Slovenski narod in slovenska kultura*, 1985). One may say it was regarded as *the* national cultural nucleus. Thus, he acquiesced to the nationalists', the cultural elites' claim Slovenia was treated unfairly by Yugoslavia and by implication that Yugoslavia was not worthy of Slovenes. A typical cultural nationalistic position: preserving and promoting one's unique culture. In contrast to civil rights.

The Serbian leader Slobodan Milošević had even earlier, on April 4, 1987 told Kosovo Serbs "they would lose righteousness in facing ancestors and posterity would not forgive them [if they moved out of Kosovo]", using a seamless understanding of nation typical of nationalists, also a cultural nationalist position. He was also echoing Serbian nationalists' favored theme of Serbs being under pressure to leave Kosovo and on the necessity of undertaking repressive steps against this, repressive measures against ethnic Albanians. In linking ancestors, posterity and present generation he implied the romanticist notion of nation as a perfect organic community.

Populist Milošević told his peers in the federal communist leadership he would avail himself of all political instruments to achieve his objectives (Mužević, 2022: 324), the major difference to other Yugoslav leaders of the time.

One of the major steps in which he succeeded was to diminish substantively Kosovo's constitutional autonomy, combining this with "special measures", by federal police (otherwise only local, republic-province police was of competence to deal with the public – Serb police initially intervened via the federal channel). But his plan was implemented only in curtailing Kosovo autonomy, but not in changing the social nature of Kosovo. Nor did he succeed in changing the Yugoslav federation in manner to assert Serbian domination.

The continuous practice of ethnic entrepreneurship by the cultural elites, before the break-up, makes plausible Horowitz's position on ethnic entrepreneurs' intrinsic nature. They need not have undertaken such action for direct personal gain, but of a feeling of national duty. In the later period of Yugoslavia (after 1967), in no national community did we encounter anything but splinter groups opposing the march of nationalism headed by the cultural elites. Certainly, ethnic entrepreneurship fed on each other, but more than that, the Yugoslav case suggests their activity need not be directly instrumental in promoting the entrepreneurs' lot, nor the nationhoods' lot, as the nationhoods of Yugoslavia were awaiting a bitter war with suffering, the traces of which are still present. The entrepreneurs had a feeling of doing justice for "their" people, their nationhood, which was a personal benefit on its own, in radical discrepancy to the ultimate effects on the social scale.

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