



Kosovo in the Yugoslav 1980s

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Sub-Yugoslav Identity Building in the *Enciklopedija Jugoslavije* (1955–1990): The Case of the Albanian Question

<https://doi.org/10.1515/soeu-2021-0037>

Abstract: The Encyclopedia of Yugoslavia (*Enciklopedija Jugoslavije*, EJ) was the flagship project of socialist Yugoslav nation-building in the fields of culture and academic knowledge. The first edition of the EJ was published in one Serbo-Croatian version (1955–1971), but the unfinished second edition of the EJ (1980–90) appeared in Slovenian, Serbo-Croatian in Latin and in Cyrillic script, Macedonian, Hungarian, and Albanian versions. The EJ was transformed from a staunchly federalist Yugoslav cultural platform of the 1950s, which supported Yugoslav unitarism, to one that strongly affirmed the nation-building(s) of the republics and autonomous provinces, thereby reflecting the decentralist remodeling of Yugoslavia from the late 1960s onwards. Using the examples of the two articles on “Albanians” and “Albanian-Yugoslav relations” in the EJ in their 1955, 1980, and 1983 versions, the authors elaborate on the political struggles within the Yugoslav ruling elite and within academia.

Keywords: Kosovo, Yugoslavia, Albanians, knowledge production, intellectual history

Introduction

Socialist Yugoslavia (1945–1990) understood the production of general interest encyclopedias, especially its national *Enciklopedija Jugoslavije* (EJ), to be one of its most important cultural projects. This ambitious undertaking was complicated by the multiethnic, multicultural, and multilingual nature of the Yugoslav federation, and also by its ruling authoritarianism. Tensions boiled

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under the surface. The task of creating and maintaining the encyclopedia was given to the Yugoslav Lexicographic Institute (YLI) in Zagreb—one of the few federal institutions with an address outside Belgrade. The YLI was launched in 1950 as the Lexicographic Institute of the Federative People’s Republic of Yugoslavia, with Croatian writer Miroslav Krleža (1893–1981) at its head. From 1962 to 1984 it was known as the YLI, thereafter as the YLI Miroslav Krleža.

Krleža, an inquisitive and cultured writer, was the most acknowledged Yugoslav intellectual of the socialist period and could rely on the patronage of Josip Broz Tito. He was able to balance his independence of opinion, his work with associates from non-communist backgrounds, and his affirmation of progressive and internationalist aspects of the South Slavic historical and cultural legacy with a role that served the interests of the Yugoslav socialist state ideology and the country’s communist elite (Lasić 1982; Visković 1993; Mujadžević 2021). Krleža and his collaborators embarked upon a series of multi-volume encyclopedia projects, one-volume *lexica*, dictionaries, atlases, and maps framing the Yugoslav peoples according to what they saw as the needs of the new system. The YLI’s flagship project was the EJ, with two editions published with Krleža as editor-in-chief. This project attempted to create a single Yugoslav interpretative frame. By creating a unified knowledge canon, the EJ set to forge a sense of Yugoslav community even as the composite nature of the project was emphasized. Organized and produced collaboratively, the EJ thus reflected Yugoslavia’s federal structure: the central editorial board in Zagreb was complemented by editorial boards for each republic (and later for the autonomous provinces) and additional editorial boards for the League of Communists and military matters. Generally, the EJ favored historical and cultural information. Additionally, all the “civilizational” achievements of Yugoslavs—from forestry and industry to oral poetry and architecture—were presented historically. As expressed in his interviews, Krleža was skeptical that the EJ, especially the first edition published beginning in 1955 (¹EJ), could achieve these goals in the face of political pressures and the residue of ethnic particularisms (Čengić 1986, 75–8).

The ¹EJ was published in one Serbo-Croatian/Croato-Serbian version (8 volumes, 1955–1971, 5455 pages, in print runs of 30,000 per volume) using “Eastern” or “Western” variants of the language depending on the origin of the author. The ²EJ, initiated in 1980, was unfinished when it was discontinued in 1991. In contrast to the first edition, parallel multiple-language and/or script versions were planned for ²EJ. Each version, to be published in 10 volumes (plus an *addendum* volume) containing 22,000 encyclopedic entries, ultimately reached different degrees of completeness: two versions in Croato-Serbian/Serbo-Croatian (with articles edited according to the official linguistic norms constitutionally defined in the republics and autonomous provinces that used this language), i.e. one using a Latin alphabet (6 volumes, 1980–1990, 4548 pages) the other

Cyrillic (2 volumes, 1983–1985); Slovenian (4 volumes, 1983–1989); Macedonian (2 volumes, 1983–1985); Albanian (2 volumes, 1984–1987); and Hungarian (2 volumes, 1985–1988) (Klobučar Srbić 2012). For each volume, 55,000 copies were printed.

The emergence of ethnic nationalisms around the country and the weakening of Yugoslav cohesion in the 1970 and 1980s caused the project to stall and ultimately led to its cessation. The lack of common ground and the absence of interculturalism among the Yugoslav academic and political elites were nowhere clearer than in the debates surrounding the representation of Albanian culture and history in the ²EJ, marked by the clash of divergent views held by Kosovo Albanian and Serbian elites. The ²EJ became a cultural battlefield of sorts, but it also suffered from overcomplicated decentralized production processes and financial shortfalls and was vulnerable to local political developments. The pressures caused by the Serbian nationalist revival of the 1980s—whose eminent intellectual representatives publicly accused the ²EJ of alleged unfair treatment of Serbs and Serbia—eventually led the Serbian-Cyrillic version of the EJ's second edition to be discontinued early, and the Albanian and Hungarian versions also ground to a halt after Slobodan Milošević rose to power in 1987. In 1991, all Yugoslavia-wide projects of the YLI, most prominently the ²EJ, were abandoned. The YLI changed its name, first to the Croatian Lexicographic Institute Miroslav Krleža and later the Lexicographic Institute Miroslav Krleža. In the 1990s the institute's new management, seeing little use for around 40,000 unsold copies of the EJ, had them pulped (Mržnja prema knjizi, *Peščanik*, 12 Jul 2012).

Several authors have investigated, usually within the framework of thematically broader analyses, the role of academia and culture in nation-building in socialist Yugoslavia, but the role of encyclopedias has received only limited attention. In socialist Yugoslavia, the dominant discourse on the nation moved from that of a unitarist and federalist Yugoslavism to one that adopted a decentralist notion positing a cultural amalgam of related but distinct ethnic groups (Banac 1992). In the 1950s, the Yugoslav communists attempted to create a “national Yugoslavism” and encouraged work on this concept's cultural aspects. Several federal historiographic projects started around that time, including the EJ, with the majority of historians supporting the new, integrative concept of Yugoslavism. However, by the early 1960s the communist leadership had abandoned the idea of a Yugoslav nation (Grandits 2008). Indeed, most Yugoslav historians of the time, if they had not already begun to do so, turned to work lying within the spheres of their ethnonational cultures (Brunnbauer 2012). When it came to cultural policy, Tito's Yugoslavia oscillated between two grand projects: the synthetic and the multicultural (Wachtel 1998).

Despite the YLI's huge effort and investment in the production of *lexica*, especially the EJ, and their sizeable impact on cultural life in Yugoslavia, only a

relatively small body of work exists on encyclopedic lexicography in Yugoslavia, both before and after 1990. A rare example of research on the EJ's content is Igor Gostl's investigation, while the project was still in its first phases, of the socio-linguistic aspects of the multilingual ²EJ, especially the measures taken to establish equality among languages (and their scripts) of peoples and nationalities (1980–1981). Most of the limited scholarly interest in the EJ has focused on the role and vision of Miroslav Krleža. Velimir Visković stresses that Krleža, at the project's outset, vowed to give in to neither ethnonationalist nor Yugoslav unitarist "romantic illusions" of "bourgeois historiography." Instead, Krleža wanted the EJ to emphasize the internationally relevant cultural achievements of Yugoslav history through the application of "exact expertise" addressing "historical reality." Visković notes that many outside of Croatia—especially certain Serbian intellectuals—saw Krleža's work in the EJ to be an attempt to assert Croatian cultural supremacy within Yugoslavia but also feared the space this project gave to identities and cultures once seen as integral or subordinated to Serbian identity and culture (1993). Drago Roksandić, in his analysis of Krleža's programmatic speeches at the first two plenary sessions of the EJ's main editorial board, argues that Krleža advocated an approach to history that would differ from the Soviets' minimization of history as something anachronistic in their encyclopedic works. Instead, historical knowledge was to occupy a central place in the EJ. Indeed, Krleža regarded historical knowledge as the most sensitive area of knowledge to be covered in the encyclopedia (Roksandić 2014). The ²EJ in the 1970s and 1980s was confronted with the project's increasing politicization. Having this in mind, Sava Dautović has analyzed Krleža's views on Albanians and has pointed out that the articles on "Albanians" and "Albanian-Yugoslav relations" in the ²EJ were attempts to promote the status of Kosovo as a republic (2000).

Our research on the political positions taken in the EJ's articles is based on a combination of qualitative discourse analysis and political ideology critique. Our approach is based on a critical reading of the 19- and 20th-century European popular encyclopedias from the interdisciplinary perspective that largely criticized previous approaches, most notably Reinhart Koselleck's. Whereas Koselleck believed that the general-interest encyclopedias contained the "knowledge and self-understanding of a generation" (1972) and were thus an important source for the history of political and social speech in the modern age, several scholars, mainly in German-speaking academia, have pointed to the instrumentalization of encyclopedias in the service of 19th- and 20th-century nation-building projects (Spree 2000; Tomkowiak 2002; Stammen 2004; Michel, Paul, Herren, Madeleine, and Rüesch 2007; Haß 2012; Donato and Lüsebrink 2018). They were critical of what they perceived as Koselleck's uncritical attitude toward the integrity of

encyclopedias as sources. Behind the production of these encyclopedias, they asserted, one finds a network of actors, economic interests, and political ambitions. Utz Haltern stressed the politicization and nationalization of popular encyclopedias in the 19th century as educational tools for the German bourgeoisie (1976). Ines Prodöhl, primarily thinking of self-declared universal encyclopedic initiatives such as the German *Brockhaus* and *Meyers* projects as well as the British *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, argued that these publications worked to construct national identities under the guise of universal knowledge and education. They appealed to the rising middle class by celebrating modernity within the national context (Prodöhl 2011). Adopting this approach, we look primarily into the signature elements of language in the selected articles, such as rhetorical devices, keywords, idioms and clichés, stereotypes, metaphors and symbolism, argumentation strategies, logic, composition, and source references, as well as the themes that were taken up in the EJ. Additionally, we address the background of the EJ's production via biographical analysis. Here our focus moves from the EJ's texts to their creators, mostly drawn from academia outside the YLI. We analyze the intellectual biographies of the authors of the EJ content related to the representation of Albanians, with emphases on the correlation of their contributions with their academic work outside the EJ, as well as on their backgrounds and their political positions and beliefs, personal and institutional alike.

Our study illuminates a major aspect of the history of the EJ's production, content, background, and impact: namely, the transfer of encyclopedic knowledge as a function of identity building on the sub-Yugoslav level. In the first part of this article, we examine identity production—both of nation-building around the republics and the autonomous provinces as quasi-state actors and of the Yugoslav nations and nationalities—through the authority of an encyclopedia as a state-sponsored instrument of knowledge transfer. In the second part we discuss this phenomenon specifically in the case of the Albanians, the largest ethnic minority in Yugoslavia, in both editions of the EJ.

Identity Building and the Encyclopedia of Yugoslavia

The identity-building element of modern encyclopedias is related to the notion that they serve as tools of knowledge control, i.e. control of its accessibility and possession. In his book on the history of knowledge from the 18th to the 21st centuries, Peter Burke stresses the role of actors who engage in knowledge transfer as knowledge gatekeepers and “epistemic brokers,” filtering knowledge before

they transmit it to its end-users. Burke refers to, among other works, the *Encyclopédie* of Diderot and d'Alembert to illustrate his point. Generally, the knowledge gatekeepers have very often used their power for nation-building purposes since the eighteenth century. Their role as intermediaries between the world of academic knowledge (as well as of knowledge produced by the political elite) and the general public has included efforts to construct national identities (Burke 2012).

As shown by case studies on so-called national encyclopedias (as opposed to their “universal” or thematic counterparts), knowledge canons mediated through encyclopedias came to play a crucial nation-building and ethnic identity building role in the 20th century in situations where political elites set out to create a sense of collective belonging in newly designed countries, such as in Australia in the 1920s, or *in statu nascendi*, such as Israel in the 1920s and 1930s (Kavanagh 2009; Engelhardt 2014). We argue that socialist Yugoslavia (1945–90) found itself in a similar situation. It had not only to build but also to define the commonality of interests, goals, and preferences of its population. Therefore, the elite gave the Yugoslav national encyclopedia project the corresponding formative role that, in addition to other ideological tasks, included nation-building and ethnic identity building. Indeed, as late as 1980 the preface of the ²EJ stated that the encyclopedia’s mandate was “both informational and formative, based on the idea of a member of a socialist self-management society” (Centralna redakcija Enciklopedije Jugoslavije 1980).

The country faced difficult nation-building challenges that greatly complicated an encyclopedic systematization of national knowledge. These difficulties were also reflected in terminological problems. On the one hand, socialist Yugoslavia was a multiethnic and multilingual federal state that vowed to safeguard the identities and self-rule rights of its composite parts. The constituent peoples and republics (and later, the nationalities and autonomous provinces) were encouraged to build and strengthen a sense of collective belonging in their ranks, at least to some extent. Yugoslav political parlance since the 1950s features occasional references to both peoples and republics as “nations” (Dulović 2009). On the other hand, ongoing Yugoslav cohesion required the forging of a collective Yugoslav identity that was never officially described as a nation. The label of the “Yugoslav nation” was explicitly rejected by the program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia in 1958, during the period usually described as the heyday of attempts to establish a common Yugoslav identity. Instead, the terms “Yugoslav socialist patriotism” and “Yugoslav socialist consciousness” were suggested (Rusinow 1995, 319–20). Hence the Yugoslav communist elite was caught up in the paradoxical situation of having to uphold several potentially contradictory layers of identity building. In addition to (re-)producing a shared Yugoslav identity, it supported nation-building on the

level of the sub-Yugoslav quasi-state entities (republics and autonomous provinces) and the building of transboundary ethnonational identities for both the constituent peoples and the nationalities, such as the Albanians. Moreover, the multiethnic composition of Yugoslavia meant that the republics and autonomous provinces themselves were exposed to contradictions between their nation-building efforts and the building of ethnic identities. Major examples of this conundrum were the three peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Serbs in Croatia, and the Albanians in Macedonia. The situation was further complicated as the top party echelon changed the structure of the dominant practices regarding the “national question” more than once along the way. Initially, in the 1950s, the focus was on creating a protonational “Yugoslav socialist patriotism.” After this strategy was abandoned in the early 1960s, the emphasis was on nation-building on the sub-Yugoslav level. Simultaneously, opposition to the hegemonic discourses persisted within and beyond the Party elite, contributing to confusion about the appropriate nation-building strategies. Communicative ambivalences were sometimes created on purpose (Grandits 2009).

Therefore, the EJ was instrumental in Yugoslavia’s attempt to create a common and authoritative knowledge repository that could be used for its complex, multi-layered, and fluctuating nation-building purposes. Both editions of the EJ were to abide by the current prevailing nation-building priorities, and to walk the fine line between fostering collective Yugoslav belonging on the one hand, and affirming the identity of its constituent peoples and republics as well as, later, its nationalities and autonomous provinces on the other.

The Anti-Centralist Agenda in the EJ

The EJ was the main intellectual platform providing knowledge infrastructure for the Yugoslav anti-centralist discourses and their associated nation-building and ethnic identity building agendas. Such discourses, initially associated mainly with the Croatian and Slovenian communist elites, gained support from the late 1960s onwards in Bosnia, Montenegro, Macedonia, and the autonomous provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo—that is, all parts of Yugoslavia that profited from the decentralization drive. According to the vision of Krleža and his collaborators, the Yugoslav anti-centralist knowledge canon was conceived to emphasize historical and cultural information that stressed what were deemed to be the high civilizational achievements of the South Slavs and their minorities; this was the foundation around which a polycentric Yugoslav identity, as well as sub-Yugoslav identities, could be forged. The anti-centralist positions in the EJ initially supported the federalist notion of Yugoslav state organization and culture(s) but later

became increasingly supportive of the decentralist or confederalist model. For example, several authors note a certain Croatocentrism and a subtle subversion of centralist Yugoslavism in the EJ (Visković 1993; Pech 1964; Banac 1993). As early as the 1950s, the ¹EJ had adhered to the message of a cohesive but staunchly federalist Yugoslavism. While asserting the interconnection of the Yugoslav peoples, the ¹EJ's editorial policy artfully resisted and subverted the powerful centralizing orientation that around that time aimed to reduce cultural differences between Yugoslav peoples so as to pave the way for an eventual single Yugoslav national identity. The editorial structure of the EJ, established around 1950, was federal and remained so until 1990.

Generally, it seems that the ¹EJ's editors used the above-mentioned ambivalence of the official discourses on the "national question" to uphold the federal interpretation of Yugoslav identity/identities within the relatively highly centralized and ideologically rigid Yugoslav state system of the 1950s and early 1960s. Furthermore, the ¹EJ, at least until the late 1960s, focused more on the affirmation of collective belonging on the level of the Yugoslav *peoples* than on the nation-building of the *republics*. The status of the republics at that time did not allow them sufficient maneuvering space to become centers of nation-building. This approach did include controversial decisions at the time. In 1951, the YLI's management decided to treat Bosnian Muslims, a group with a contested status, as a separate ethnic group from Serbs and Croats, two of the established Yugoslav constituent peoples, in the ¹EJ and other lexicographic projects (Bogišić 2016). Bosnian Muslims were thus granted cultural recognition long before they were officially acknowledged as a constituent people in the period 1968–1971. Nevertheless, the cultural legacy of the Bosnian Muslims was largely ignored in the ¹EJ; genuine acknowledgment had to wait until the ²EJ (Mujadžević 2021).

As the deep transformation of power structures in the 1960s led to the victory of the decentralists around Edvard Kardelj and Vladimir Bakarić, the EJ became the main knowledge authority for a decentralist remodeling of the country under the aegis of self-management reforms. The editors of the EJ adopted this new orientation on the basis of their previous anti-centralist inclinations. The final volumes of the ¹EJ, and especially the entire ²EJ, became instrumental in providing arguments and legitimation for the far-reaching decentralization of Yugoslavia that moved it closer to the confederal model. Krleža's 1980 preface to the ²EJ stressed that the new edition provided content that had not been, "due to circumstances," present in the ¹EJ: self-management (the ideological pretext of the decentralization and *Ersatzideologie* for the "Yugoslav socialist patriotism" of the 1950s) and newly constitutionally sanctioned inter-republican and inter-ethnic relations. After the mid-1960s the notion of Yugoslavia in the EJ remained

vital, albeit with reduced importance: it was now conceived as a common territorial container for the related but largely self-governing Yugoslav republics and autonomous provinces. As a result, Yugoslavism was largely deprived of any cultural dimension. However, the nation-building of the sub-Yugoslav quasi-state entities—including, controversially, the autonomous provinces—became central to the EJ project, now taking precedence over the identity building of the peoples and nationalities. This is visible, for example, in the presentation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the ²EJ—as a single historical and cultural unit, rather than as a mere conglomerate of the cultures and histories of its three peoples. Nevertheless, the decentralist paradigm introduced into the EJ project in the late 1960s was not universally accepted. Its emphasis on the territory-focused nation-building of republics and autonomous provinces meant that transboundary ethnic identities remained a problem in the complex Yugoslav mosaic of peoples and nationalities, which opened up space not only for various types of nationalist backlashes and political instrumentalizations but also contributed to general societal confusion. Also, the stressing of nation-building on the republican and provincial level left little space for those willing to associate themselves with Yugoslav identity itself.

Due to these circumstances, knowledge transfer in the ²EJ emerged as decentralized and even more complex, mirroring the post-1974 Yugoslav state(s): after 1980, the encyclopedia was published in six parallel language versions that shared articles but followed different ordering due to the use of different scripts. Moreover, both the Croatian (Latin) and Serbian (Cyrillic) versions had articles in four variants of the Serbo-Croatian/Croato-Serbian language (Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin, Serbian), depending on which republic the article came from. In contrast to the ¹EJ, around half of the content was reserved for the voluminous monograph-like articles on each of the republics, autonomous provinces, constituent nations, and nationalities. The central editorial board gave up some of its influence over content from the republics and autonomous provinces.

The EJ and the Yugoslav Periphery

The EJ played a pioneering role in the nation-building and building of ethnic identities in the republics beyond Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia. While present earlier, especially in the case of Macedonia, national orientations became very strong here from the late 1960s onwards. In turn, the EJ's editorial policies found fertile ground in these parts of Yugoslavia and were enthusiastically supported by their decentralist political and academic elites. A senior collaborator from Vojvodina claimed that the ²EJ had even exaggerated the importance of certain

events or personalities from the periphery in order to frame them as equal to their Slovene, Croatian, or Serbian counterparts (Ketig 1991).

The EJ, especially the ²EJ, became a beacon of advocacy, affirmation, and orientation via history and culture for previously contested and/or marginalized statehoods and associated ethnonational identities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Vojvodina, and Kosovo. The project more readily took on such a significance here due to the underdevelopment of their cultural infrastructure and the lack of visibility and legitimation not only in relation to the Yugoslav public, especially in Belgrade, but also on the international stage. For example, Stanley Pech notes that for Macedonians the ¹EJ had already become “something of a landmark,” as it consolidated their position as an ethnic group and created public awareness of their nationality: “With the prominence given them by the *Enciklopedija Jugoslavije* they are being thrust forward onto a new level of recognition” (Pech 1964). Additionally, in the 1980s the ²EJ’s republican/provincial editorial boards in Montenegro and Vojvodina became the nuclei of the lexicographic projects, eventually aborted, that were created to culturally assert these sub-Yugoslav entities.

Among Serbian nationalist political and intellectual circles, the EJ’s support for the “cultural renaissance” of the non-Serbian “Yugoslav south” and Vojvodina was a threat to the engrained, traditional perceptions of the territorial spread of the Serb culture and ethnic identity, as well as Serbia’s territorial integrity and its position as the Yugoslav center. In this respect, a couple of examples are telling. The macropedic article in the EJ on Bosnia, which affirmed Bosnia as a single cultural unit with state-like characteristics while promoting the status of a constituent people for Muslims, was published in 1984 on the occasion of the Winter Olympics in Sarajevo as a separate book, in the Bosnian variant of Serbo-Croatian and in English versions (Filipović 1984). This book, seemingly considered to be nothing less than late-socialist Bosnia’s declaration of itself as an independent cultural identity, attracted public attacks from Serbian intellectuals who claimed it whitewashed Bosnian Serb history. The Bosnian communist leadership publicly defended the publication and organized an academic conference intending to rally support (Kamberović 2013, 28–30). In Montenegro, the publication of the 1984 ²EJ article on the Orthodox Metropolitanate of Montenegro and the Littoral (*Crnogorsko-primorska mitropolija*) led to a series of polemical attacks in Serbian and Montenegrin print media against the notion that Montenegro possessed a historical cultural and religious independence (Radojević 1984, 147–50). This EJ article is credited with introducing the question of historical Montenegrin church autonomy to the general public and even with starting a movement to create a Montenegrin Orthodox Church as a separate entity from the Serbian church (Danilo Radojević – Enciklopedijska

jedinica, Portal Montenegrina, 6 Nov 2013). In the second part of our study, the developments concerning the representations of Albanians in the ²EJ will be discussed in detail.

Representations of Albanianess in the EJ 1955, 1980, and 1983/1984: The Team of Authors and the Contentious Issues in the Articles on Albanians

In what follows, we will demonstrate the potential for conflict via the examples of the EJ's two articles on "Albanians" and "Albanian-Yugoslav Relations," compared in three Serbo-Croatian versions. In the first edition of 1955, in Latin script, the two articles were titled "Arbanasi" and "Arbanasko-Južnoslovenski odnosi." We add the second edition from 1980, in Latin script, along with a new version of the article from 1983 in Cyrillic script, which also appeared, as an insert, in 1984 in the third volume of the Latin edition. All quotes refer to three texts of these two Albanian articles, namely ²EJ, vol. 1, published in Zagreb in 1955 (152–66); ²EJ, vol. 1, published in Zagreb in 1980 (72–98); the revised version of ²EJ in Cyrillic script, vol. 1, published in Zagreb in 1983 (67–97), and the identical version, as an insert, of ²EJ in Latin script, published in Zagreb in 1984 (1–14). As we illustrate, the nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia were not capable of creating a common vision of their history in the EJ.

The compositions of the team of authors in the 1950s and in the 1980s mirror the horizons of education and worldviews possessed by two generations. The authors of the 1955 article were linguistic, and especially Indo-Germanic, experts, with middle-class and Western European backgrounds. Due to his bond of trust with Tito, Krleža could take the liberty of integrating Kruno Krstić and the Indo-Germanist Petar Skok into the team. Krstić (1905–1987) had studied psychology, linguistics, and philosophy in Zagreb and Paris. With Petar Guberina, he was the author of the well-known dictionary of the differences between the Croatian and the Serbian literary languages published in 1940 (Guberina and Krstić 1940). Krstić was marginalized after 1945 due to accusation of collaboration. Skok (1881–1956) received his PhD with Wilhelm Meyer-Lübke in Vienna and was thus part of a distinguished Romance and Indo-Germanic school. The professors of history Đorđe S. Radojčić (1905–1970), from Novi Sad, and Vojislav J. Vučković (1911–1964), from Belgrade, were also co-authors, as was Henrik Barić (1888–1957), a Serb Catholic linguist and Albanologist and, among others, a founder of the Sarajevo Balkan Institute.

The authors of the 1980 articles, for their part, represented the founding generation of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo and the University of Pristina. They were grouped around the EJ's chief editor in Kosovo, Esad Mekuli (1916–1993). Mekuli was the best-known Kosovo-Albanian poet and literary critic at the time and was, with along Ramiz Sadiku, an icon symbolizing Kosovo-Albanian integration into socialist Yugoslavia: Sadiku (1915–1943) had been assassinated alongside his Serbian friend Boro Vukmirović in 1943 by soldiers of the Italian occupying force, and the monument dedicated to the two friends, “Boro and Ramiz,” unveiled in Landovica near Prizren in 1963, became the most important Yugoslav *lieu de mémoire* in Kosovo. Sadiku and Mekuli were connected via their similar biographies: Both had belonged to the handful of Albanians who came to Belgrade in the 1930s for their studies, and both had enthusiastically involved themselves in the communist movement (Mekuli even went to fight in the Spanish Civil War). By engaging Ali Hadri (1928–1970), the first director of the Institute for the History of Kosovo, and Idriz Ajeti (1917–2019), an Albanologist who served as rector of the University of Pristina and during 1979–1981 and 1996–1999 as chairman of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo, Mekuli, as the leader of the EJ's Kosovar editorial office, made sure to have enlisted two notable Kosovar scholars and members of the Academy.

The debate on the Albanian question, and its spreading beyond the scholarly community, that followed the EJ's publication in 1980 was entwined with Tito's death in May 1980, the protests in Kosovo of March and April 1981, and Krleža's withdrawal from his position as chief editor. In Serbia, heated protests erupted against the articles and the encyclopedia more generally. Protesters directly linked the sub-Yugoslav nation-building efforts that the encyclopedia was engaging in, which had awarded prestige and dignity to Albanian history, with the cries for Kosovo as the seventh Yugoslav republic during the protests of 1981. Finally, a Solomonic compromise was reached, disconnecting each of the articles from the other. The first, on “Albanians,” remained within the editorial office in Pristina and was signed by the editorial office (instead of the usual author abbreviation) and Idriz Ajeti, an expert. The second, on “Albanian-Yugoslav relations” was referred to Serbian authors, who “defused” its neuralgic items.

What was so explosive in the depiction of Albanian history? As we show in the following, the representation of the Kosovars' Albanianess found itself squarely within a key contemporary context, namely that of the Yugoslav constitution of 1974 and thus Kosovo's status as an autonomous province within the Republic of Serbia, while Albanians simultaneously retained their status as a “nationality” (*narodnost*) and not a “nation” (*narod*) with a right of self-determination, as had been granted to the Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Montenegrins,

Macedonians, and Bosnian Muslims. Consequently, the Serbian view was that Albanian culture and history should be presented “below” the status of nation, and hence attributes such as national history or language were to be refused. What Cvetković-Sander calls the “controversies about the domiciliary right” (*Kontroversen um das Hausrecht*) in Kosovo was fueled by the Albanian claim to autochtony, a concept that competed with Serbian claims of medieval statehood and Kosovo as the “spiritual heartland“ of Serbdom (2011, 310–5). The Illyrian theory implies that Albanians were present in the southern Balkans many centuries before the Slavs. This point became neuralgic: The Albanian leadership underpinned their political isolationism with historical myths casting the Illyrians as a defensible, autochthonous people who had defied foreign powers. Georg Kastrioti (1405–68), called Skanderbeg, the Albanian feudal lord and military commander who led a rebellion against the Ottoman Empire and successfully resisted Ottoman attacks for a quarter-century, was appropriated for this narrative: Skanderbeg’s rebellion was styled as a shining example of the Albanians’ defense skills and their heroic warrior mentality (Schmitt 2009).

The EJ of 1955: Ethnic Mimicry

As mentioned, not a single Albanian native speaker was available to contribute as an author for the EJ’s first edition, a result of Yugoslavia’s interwar educational policy. Krleža resorted to asking the above-mentioned Skok, Krstić, Barić, Radojčić and Vučković, all outstanding experts, to write the two entries. Totalling 16 pages, the articles feature several sub-chapters that were assigned to individual authors. Krstić was the author of the article on the “Arbanas,” divided further into the subsections “History” and “Language and Folklore.” The entry “Arbanas-Yugoslav relations” was subdivided into “Political relations between the Arbanas and the South Slavs (Radojčić, Vučković), “Cultural and literary relations of South Slavs and Arbanas” (Skok, Krstić), “Linguistic relations between South Slavs and Arbanas” (Skok), “Bosnian Cyrillic script (*bosančica*) among the Arbanas” (Barić), and “Yugoslav scholarship about the Arbanas” (Barić). As was normal practice at the time (and in the second edition as well), the authors wrote in their own linguistic variety of Serbo-Croatian, mirroring Yugoslavia’s decentral-pluricentric approach. The Serbian authors wrote in Ekavian; the Croatian, Bosnian, and the Montenegrin authors joining later wrote in Ijekavian. This pattern was maintained in the 1983 Cyrillic edition for Serbia, too, which did not originate from a Serbian-speaking editorial office but rather was transliterated and contained both Ijekavian and Ekavian varieties, just like the Latin texts.

In 1955, the positions on Albanian issues that might cause conflict—ultimately identical to those of 1980—were circumvented by a technique that, centuries before, had allowed the publishers of the first *Encyclopédie*, Diderot and d’Alembert, to outwit the absolutist censorship of their time. The French Enlightenment thinkers had been able to publish their criticism of religion using an indirect reference system (Blom 2004). The Yugoslav thinkers did something similar: The 1955 article was called “Arbanasi,” not “Albanians.” The Arbanasi are a small, post-migration Albanian-speaking enclave around the Dalmatian city of Zadar. The article negotiated Albanianness clearly beneath the level of nationality, and even beneath the level of ethnicity—namely as a local historical phenomenon. To readers, however, the semantic ambivalence of “Arbanasi” was apparent, as the word was also used as a synonym for *albanci*, “Albanians.” The article on Arbanasi-Yugoslav relations adopted, then, in fact, an undeclared and uncensored perspective of the entire Balkans.

On closer inspection, the anti-centralist attitude of the publishers crystallizes in the first two sentences of the article, which refers to the Illyrian and Thracian theory of the Albanians’ origin: “Descendants of old Illyrians and Thracians [...]. Their language [...] is Illyrian or Thracian with certain Illyrian elements. [...] The Arbanas settled in their present region before the Slavs or maybe together with them” (EJ 1955, 153). In 1955, such a positioning towards the presumed Illyrian or Thracian origin of the Albanian language did not conflict with the theory of autochthony fixated on antiquity as developed in Enver Hoxha’s Albania from the 1960s onwards. It was but one part of a linguistic and in some sense a late Indo-Germanic debate among scholars, centred on works by late 19th- and early 20th-century scholars such as Norbert Jokl, Gustav Weigand, and Franz Miklosich (Jokl 1911, 1923; Miklosich 2007).

The regionalization of Albanianness as Arbanas allowed a compromise between the recognition of their ethnogenesis as potentially rooted in antiquity and their local historical reduction, whereby the explosive question—concerning settlement continuity and demography in Kosovo—was avoided. Albanian settlements at the beginning of the 20th century were named “Arbanas minorities in Serbia and Montenegro” (EJ 1955, 158). Hence, no differentiation was made between the ethnonym *albanski* and the minority enclave *arbanaski*. Importantly, politics in the spirit of a Greater Serbia—in the wake of the publication of Ilija Garašanin’s *Načertanije*—are mentioned in the article. Garašanin (1812–1874) was a Serbian statesman who served as prime minister in 1852 and 1853 and from 1861 to 1867. His *Načertanije*, written in 1844 but published only in 1906, claimed that lands inhabited by Bulgarians, Macedonians, Albanians, Montenegrins, Bosnians, Hungarians, and Croats were part of Greater Serbia (Vukićević 1906). The EJ also mentioned Serbian war crimes in the Balkan Wars of 1912/13 committed in the

conflict about newly founded Albania's eastern border, especially in the area of Debar/Dibra: "With the advance [of the Serbian army] they acted in some cases with extreme brutality against the local population. [...] In Serbia, the politics of conquering at the expense of Albanians was condemned by the socialdemocratic party" (¹EJ 1955, 158).

The ²EJ's Edition of 1980: Promoting National Albanianess

A cursory comparison of the 1955 and 1980 editions reveals that the EJ's second edition corresponded to the prevalent conception of an "edited reprint": The cores especially of shorter articles remained identical, and new texts often emerged as topical updates. For example, the editorial office moved on to composing overview articles on newly politically relevant issues, such as "African-Yugoslav relations" and "Arabic-Yugoslav relations," which mirrored Yugoslav foreign policy within the Non-Aligned Movement. However, one also encounters a tendency to consider Yugoslavia's smaller nations and nationalities, especially via short biographical articles on Bosnians, Macedonians, and Montenegrins, and also on Hungarians and Albanians.

After Aleksandar Ranković's dismissal as interior minister in 1966, Kosovo experienced an enormous liberation and revaluation, not least through the founding of the bilingual University of Pristina in 1970, the Kosovo Academy of Sciences and Arts in 1975, the symbolically important construction of the Palace of Youth and Sports in 1977, and the 1982 reconstruction of the National Library of Kosovo, whose steel-covered domes were an architectural expression of repressed Albanianess. Two publications are paradigmatic of the *zeitgeist*: the Serbian-Albanian anthology *Kosovo—Then and Now* (1973), which included a future-looking perspective on "Kosovo in the year 2000" (Maletić and Berisha 1973, 613–22), and the anniversary anthology *Rilindja 1945–1985. Texts for a monograph*, on the Albanian-language Rilindja (Rebirth) publishing house and the daily newspaper of the same name, the moniker feeding into a sense of national awakening since the late 19th century (Sutaj 1985). However, such active support for Albanian-language education on the secondary and tertiary levels also included direct influence from the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, which provided both teaching personnel and literature. Enver Hoxha's national communism, condemning Yugoslavia and the Warsaw Pact nations as "re-visionists," spread, especially among adolescents. This issue ignited Serbian criticism of the second edition (Hetemi 2020, 171–98).

The articles of 1980 ostentatiously and repeatedly commented on the Albanian ethnogenesis derived from the Illyrian and the Thracian theories. The first sentence reads: “The Albanians trace their descent back to the Illyrians” (2EJ 1980, 72). On the following page: “Science has proved that Albanians inhabit exactly the areas of the southern Balkans where the Illyrians lived“ (2EJ 1980, 73). This question of settlement continuity is regarded more complexly today, as linguistic studies have shown (Matzinger 2009). However, in the EJ the discussion adhered to a highly scientific standard, touching on questions such as toponymy, onomastics, and dialect borders. The drawbacks that occurred in the first Yugoslavia during the interwar period were addressed: “The Kingdom of Yugoslavia was a real dungeon for national minorities. The Albanian minority [...] was exposed to continuous terror (arrests, maltreatment, murder) and denationalization” (2EJ 1980, 77). Given its compliance with the socialist, class-based point of view, monarchist Serbia could be criticized: “The progressive forces in the Serbian people, especially the social democratic party, condemned the terror of the Serbian bourgeoisie against the Albanian population in Kosovo during the Balkan Wars” (2EJ 1980, 87).

Especially in view of the criticism of the Albanian articles from Belgrade, it needs stressing that the 1955 and 1980 articles strongly highlighted Yugoslavia’s integrative side. They pointed to Serbs and Albanians being common victims of Ottoman rule, for example at the Battle of Kosovo in 1389 and during the 17th-century emigration wave. They addressed the development of the labour movement, the Communist Party, and the equality of Kosovo-Albanians in Tito’s Yugoslavia. Although the 1955 (1EJ) and 1980 (2EJ) versions were written by different authors, the texts’ treatment of the Albanian question do not significantly differ, except for the “Arbanas camouflage” in 1955 described above.

1981: The Scandalization of the Articles on Albanians in Serbian Media

In the wake of the demonstrations in Kosovo in 1981, Serbian media critically addressed the representation of Albanians in the encyclopedia. In 2000, the head of the newspaper *Politika*, Sava Dautović, summarized the debate of those years in a book (2000). It was he who took the academic discussion into the public sphere and created a direct causal connection to the Kosovo protests of spring 1981. The debate revealed a Serbian discourse of self-victimization in the course of the 1980s, which then became mainstream. This discourse presented the Albanian articles as a closed worldview of an anti-Serbian, “ustašoid” conspiracy. The EJ as a whole was perceived as additional proof that a Croat-Kosovar alliance against the Serbs

had emerged. Negative ethnic stereotypes from World War II were reactivated, and Krleža as well as the Albanians in Kosovo were blamed for being “anti-Yugoslav.” The main reproach articulated in two articles published in *Politika* in 1981 consisted of an “uncritical glorification” of Albanians, “megalomaniac all-Albanian representation,” and an “integralistic conception” of Albanianess (Dautović 2000, 10–1, 17; Odogovornost nauke, *Politika*, 30 May 1981; Ugrožena istina, *Politika*, 6 Jun 1981).

On the one hand, this argumentation undermined the Albanians’ reference to basic elements of their national history; on the other, we find here evoked a loyal Yugoslav and socialist point of view which bemoaned that the EJ’s articles on Albania had too little to say about the Albanians as citizens and beneficiaries of the Yugoslav state. Both strands converged in the reproach that these ²EJ texts were rooted in a bourgeois, pre-Tito tradition and were thus not justified.

The second part of Dautović’s book bore the explicit title “The discrimination of Serbian encyclopedists”, and here the tone became more aggressive. Dautović, quoting an article from *NIN* published on 20 August 1989, answered his own question—“Is this the work of Ustaša-scholars?!”—in the affirmative. The *Leksikografski Zavod* in Zagreb was discredited as fascist via the following paranoid scenario: the EJ’s first edition had not included an entry on Alojzije Stepinac, the archbishop of Zagreb whom the Yugoslav regime had condemned as a collaborator and had charged with high treason and war crimes (Dautović 2000, 81–3). At the same time, Krleža’s historical novel *The Flags*, published 1962–1976, was used to “unmask” critical passages concerning a Serbian “liberation” of Kosovo during the Balkan Wars as fundamentally anti-Serbian and anti-Yugoslav (Krležologija kosovske nezavisnosti, *Dnevni list Danas*, 16 Aug 2010). This discussion within Serbia on the content of the EJ is highly indicative of the rise and expansion of nationalist discourses during the 1980s. Jasna Dragović-Soso summed up the debate about possible encyclopedic entries for the autonomous provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo, which, however, never materialized (Dragović-Soso 2002, 74–7).

The “Improved” Article for the Cyrillic Edition of 1983: The Party Line Patronizing the Albanians

As mentioned, the article on “Yugoslav-Albanian relations” was given to a group of Serbian authors, which was agreed upon at the 38th meeting of the EJ’s central editorial office in Zagreb in November 1981, according to the minutes of the meeting; the “Albanian” article remained with the editorial office in Pristina and

was signed by Idriz Ajeti (Dautović 2000). Ajeti's words were clearly stripped down ("The Albanians are one of the oldest peoples in the Balkans") (EJ insert 1984, 1) and he formulated his sentiments euphemistically, especially when it came to the Balkan Wars of 1912/13. The article on Albanian-Yugoslav relations was written by Živko Avramovski, a scholar at the Department of Modern History at Belgrade University, for the period up to 1941, and by Stanislav Stojanović, an official of the Communist Party, for the period after 1941. Both carried a strikingly different political message that emphasized the entangled history of Southern Slavs and Albanians. The subheadings conveyed a consistently positive ("Battle of Kosovo 1389," "Exodus 1689," "Ilinden Uprising 1903") if clearly hierarchical relationship, especially during the 1940s. Among the extremely positively connoted keywords to be found in the column titles, all showcasing ethnic hybridity and coexistence: *isti* (same/identical), *rodbinske veze* (genetic ties), *izmešani* (mixed), *zblježavanje* (rapprochement), *pomoći* (help), *podržava* (support), *uz pomoć* (for help), *pakt* (pact), *priznati* (recognize), *priznanja* (appreciation).

The new text of 1983/1984 was also full of undifferentiated oppositions that contrasted a deep inner Balkan solidarity with the "evil European great powers" during the 19th and 20th centuries, to which was added, as a new and current element, direct recriminations leveled at Enver Hoxha's Albania. Besides Hoxha's anti-Yugoslav speeches in 1960 and 1975, it was especially the address he delivered in November 1981 at the Eighth Congress of Albania's Worker's Party, demanding that Kosovo be granted the status of a republic, that was criticized as unacceptable interference in the interior affairs of Yugoslavia. The rough coincidence of the article on Albanians in 1980 and the riots in Pristina in 1981 thus formed the starting point of such Serbian argumentation, which was instrumentalized with regard to revisionist discussions about Kosovo's status.

That the author of the section concerning the period since 1941, Stojanović, was vice chairman of the Commission for the History of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, a body established by the Party's Central Office Presidium, revealed how the encyclopedic moral high ground had moved from renowned scholars to political objectors—a rather scandalous case of ideological and at the same time nationalist censorship. In this final version of the article on Albanians in the EJ, the aspects of coexistence and solidarity of Albanian–South Slavic history were monopolized in a one-sided, artificial way, and thus found their way into the Yugoslav "culture of lies"—and here we allude not only to Dubravka Ugrešić's novel of the same name but also to the cultural studies approach that has referred to "unsuccessful cultural lies" in nation-building processes (Zorić 2005, 33–83).

The following graphic synopsis visualizes a topical comparison of the three different versions of the articles on Albanians. Both editions (1955 and 1980) were

similarly supportive of a national version of Albanianness. The revised article of 1983/1984 adopted a tone of benevolent paternalism focused on South Slavic superiority, while being conditioned by ideological standpoints as well as open hostility to Enver Hoxha's Albania.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
EJ1: 1955	+	+	-	-	+	-	+	-
EJ2: 1980	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	-
EJ2: 1983	+/-	+/-	+	+	-	+	-	+

1. Acceptance of Illyrian descent theory
2. Dignity/prestige of Albanian language and culture
3. Superiority of South Slavs: Patronization of Albanians (Middle Ages and 19–20th centuries)
4. Stressing of the League of Communists' party line (strong focus on the history of communism)
5. Denouncing Serbian violence during the Balkan Wars 1912/13
6. Identification of Enver Hoxha's Albania as enemy
7. Ethnic mimicry (ethnic/national Albanianness disguised as local "Arbanas" identity)
8. Anti-Western discourse

Conclusion

The EJ aimed to give the Yugoslav peoples and nationalities a sense of a common identity based on culture and history. It was simultaneously tasked with the sometimes contradictory goal of nation-building at the level of the sub-Yugoslav federal units, as well as the building of identities of all six constituent peoples and larger nationalities. Evolving from a staunchly federalist Yugoslav cultural platform in the 1950s, which supported Yugoslav unitarism, to one that strongly affirmed the nation-building(s) of the republics and autonomous provinces, its transformation reflected the decentralist remodeling of Yugoslavia from the late 1960s onwards.

While the EJ's first edition clearly favored the already established cultures of the Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs, the second edition played a pioneering role in the nation-building of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Macedonia, as well

as of both autonomous provinces, Vojvodina and Kosovo. The treatment of Albanianess, the largest Yugoslav minority identity, corresponded to this development, but it also reflected the backlash, as is shown by the comparative analysis of articles on “Albanians” and “Albanian-Yugoslav relations” in the EJ’s three versions of 1955, 1980, and 1983/1984.

The earliest edition of the EJ was published in the centralist political climate of interior minister Aleksandar Ranković and did not feature a separate article on Yugoslavia’s Albanian minority. However, the editors and authors of this first edition subverted this marginalization of Albanians. They hid their affirmative discussion of Albanian culture and history behind the label *Arbanasi*, which denotes a small Albanian enclave in Croatia.

The second edition of the EJ, published in 1980, contained a full affirmation of Albanian culture—which led, however, to fierce criticism from Serbian intellectual and media circles, objecting to what they saw as Albanian nationalist excesses within the EJ. Such overreach, to their minds, had been allowed by the Zagreb-based Yugoslav Lexicographic Institute in order to support the decentralization processes in Kosovo and to weaken Serbia. Under Serbian pressure, and in the wake of the Albanian nationalist demonstrations in Kosovo in spring 1981, some parts of the encyclopedic material was rewritten and published in revised form. These new texts from 1983/1984 presented Albanian history and culture as subdominant and as politically dependent on South Slavic history and culture. The EJ, as a political and cultural force in Yugoslavia, thus not only reflected but also contributed to the rising tensions caused by the emergence of ethnic nationalism during the 1980s.

Acknowledgments: Part I of this article was written by Dino Mujadžević, Part II by Christian Voß. The research for the article was conducted by both authors during the DFG International Initiation of Collaboration Fellowship (VO 884/23-1), in which they took part, as well as by Dino Mujadžević, as part of his Gerda Henkel research fellowship “Islam in the Encyclopedia of Yugoslavia: Reassessing Marxist Orientalism (1955–1990)” (24/V/20).

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