

<論 文>

Romani Movements in Socialist Yugoslavia: An Analysis of Intellectuals' Perspectives

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This paper examines the processes and contents of Romani movements in Socialist Yugoslavia focusing on perspectives of intellectuals. Roma people have long been targets of persecution and problematization in European history. Romani national movements began at the end of the 19th century, to resist those policies by majority society and change social situations of Roma people live. One of the countries where Romani movements got activated was Socialist Yugoslavia which opened a large room for national activism.

Romani movements in Socialist Yugoslavia were primarily conducted by a new age of intellectuals, but never to achieve mass mobilization. Slobodan Berberski, one of the earliest leader of Romani movements, was well aware of significance to adapt their goals for modernization processes and the dominant ideology of Socialist Yugoslavia. Their actions were enabled within the contemporary Yugoslav political and social contexts, though struggled with limitations of the contexts for further development.

Keywords : Roma, Socialist Yugoslavia, national movement, intellectual, Slobodan Berberski

Introduction

At the early of the 21st century, the world presents an appearance of intensifying contradiction between processes of globalization centered on the economy and reconstruction of political entities through inward-focusing nationalism. That view is fully applied to situations in post-socialist countries where neoliberal reform of economy and society has been proceeded by transitions at the end of 20th century and EU accession process after. Reforms have resulted in expanding income disparities and massive rise of

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the unemployment rate, which somehow affects to spread of support for extreme-right factions. This situation poses bad influence on another implied task through the accession process, Roma integration.

"Roma" is a name for people who have been persecuted or problematized as "Gypsies" or "Cigani" by majority societies and authorities in European history. Modern European societies have placed "Gypsies" and "Cigani" as inadapted to the usual way of life and stigmatized them with stereotypes of "wanderer", "thief", "ill-educated" or "lurdan" who are out of modern social norms. Roma integration policies in Europe after the 1990s are partly an extension of those stereotypes and problematization. However, there also were efforts by Roma people themselves to adapt and raise their status in societies. Roma began to provide their own movements and organizing attempts for constructing a national identity of Roma by the end of the 19th century (Klímová-Alexander, 2005, 158-159). Current Roma integration policies focus on improvement of socio-economic situations and fight against discrimination. Both of them also have been assignments for Romani nationalism. Romani nationalism began to take shape in international level in the 1970s when the World Romani Congress was started, and the International Romani Union obtained roster observer status in ECOSOC (Klímová-Alexander, 2017, 66-68). Among the participating Romani activists, significant roles were played by intellectuals from Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia / Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (after this Socialist Yugoslavia).

Some scholars refer that Socialist Yugoslavia took a large room for the development of Romani activism which was an exception among the socialist countries. It is widely said that Roma in Eastern European countries were faced against the strong pressure of assimilation because Roma people mostly were seen as a class, not an ethnicity (Barany, 2002, 117-122). Socialist countries more or less adopted multi-national political and social systems, but authorities had strictly limited ethnic movements and organizations in most cases. Thus, Romani movements in eastern European countries were not flourished, while Socialist Yugoslavia has kept relatively free situation concerning with social activities. Cultural organizations of specific ethnicities were not just allowed but rather encouraged except for periods of the 1950s (Shoup, 1968, 122-123, 193-197, 207-208). The reason of loose regulation on ethnicities might be derived from the fact that Yugoslavia adopted Self-management socialist system opposing Soviet-style centralized system after the expulsion from ComInform in 1948, with an emphasis on multi-national values contrary to the former Kingdom of Yugoslavia and axis regimes in the time of the WWII.

How did Romani nationalism in Socialist Yugoslavia occurred, and what did Romani

activists set goals for their movements? This paper will explore answers to these questions by mainly focusing on activities and arguments by Romani intellectuals. It will give indications to the root of current Roma integration policies, and more, to the interaction between socio-economic situations and identity building. First, the paper begins by reviewing previous researches on political movements of Roma people in Socialist Yugoslavia, and by proposing that the emergence of Romani intellectuals in the context of modernization processes. Next, it will be discussed the preconditions of Romani movements in Socialist Yugoslavia by considering the emergence of the early activities for the emancipation of Roma people in the interwar period, and general situations of the Romani population after the end of the WWII. In the third chapter, it will be analyzed how the activities and arguments of Romani intellectuals formed directions of movements since the end of the 1960s.

I. How Romani movements emerged?

Modernization Processes and the Role of Intellectuals

Until present, researchers have not primarily studied Romani political movements in Socialist Yugoslavia. When Socialist Yugoslavia existed, researchers on Roma issues tended to focus on anthropological aspects and socio-economic situation of Roma people. For example, anthropologist Tatomir Vukanović researched habits and customs of Roma communities mainly within the area of Serbia, and describes their festivals and community gathering ways, while did not refer political organizations and activities (Вукановић [Vukanović], 1983). After Yugoslavia was dispersed, research interests have been concentrated on the social situation and policies against Roma people in successor states while cases in Socialist Yugoslavia era has been mostly dropped (Radović, 2000; Станковић и Новаковић [Stanković and Novaković], 2016).

Some articles which were written about Romani movements partially mentioned political efforts by Romani activists under the Yugoslav regime (Barany, 2002, 143-151; Crowe, 2007, 222-231; Klímová-Alexander, 2007, 644-645). However, these articles do not explore deeply about processes and events of Yugoslav Romani movements. Among the above listed, David Crowe describes most in detail about the situation of Roma in Socialist Yugoslavia and refers that multi-national policies strengthened Romani national identity and movements, but still many of Roma suffered by poverty and social marginalization through the period (Crowe, 2007, 226-227). Although Crowe's study reasonably describes

political structures in which Romani population situated, it does not analyze purposes and ideologies of Romani movements. On the other hand, several explanations by Romani activists themselves has been made. Dragoljub Acković, a journalist who has worked as a Romani activist in the field of media, has published many works which describe and explore the history of Romani movements (Acković, 1994; 1996; 1997; 2009). His works picked up a series of organizing and advertising attempts of Romani movements in Yugoslavia, and very much helpful to understand when and what kind of tries were made by activists. However, the problem is that those works are mostly prosy and not logically explored. Aside from the fact the writer himself has been a Romani activist, his works still have not explored the structure of Yugoslav Romani movement enough.

In summary, previously written articles about Yugoslav Roma people did not combine the transitional modernization processes in which Roma people situated, and specific activities, goals, and ideologies of Romani movements, instead they reviewed part of each point separately. The point here is that the Romani movements in the 19th and the 20th century apparently within the context of modernization processes which brought political norms of national states and radical changes in the economic and social lives.

The first point is that according to those changes of economic and social systems, new ideologies and entities concerning with political systems and communities had formed. Those are state-building and nation-building processes through modernization. Anthony D. Smith discusses that the modern system of state developed through the three forms of revolutions: the revolution of economic (capitalism) systems, the revolution of administrative systems, and the revolution of cultural-educative systems (Smith, 1986, 131-134). Each revolution interactively proceeds centralization of political systems and creation of culturally homogeneous political communities. In the steps of achieving dissolution and reconstruction of political and social systems, governors and political activists try to shape the new basis of political entities, which is the "nation".

Smith defines a nation as a political and institutionalized community which is based on ethnic components. He discusses the modern nation has its rooted communities, which he named as *ethnie*. Smith describes *ethnie* as a community model which could be a root of a nation having cultural affiliation such as myth, historical memories, homelands, or everyday cultural habits which subjectively interpreted and work as resources of shared identity (*Ibid.*, 22-31). Political community of national state or nation-state is not rootless, but always have a historical background and subjective interpretation on that root. Smith tries to point out why modern political community which is founded on rational rules and

systems takes a specific ethnic, or irrational, form in reality. In the nation-building processes, not every *ethnie* equally participates in the processes, but rather the dominant *ethnie* take advantages and defines the forms and contents of the political and social system of the new entity. Besides the dominant *ethnie* confirm their (often consecutive) governing positions, members of other *ethnie* have to face against some pressures for their existence. Those pressures take forms of assimilation, marginalization, and exclusion. People who belong to non-dominant *ethnie* are pushed to be assimilated to dominant culture and nationalism to a certain extent for joining newly formed national state system. If not, they remain in marginal positions or sometimes are physically expelled from the territory. In other words, people belong to non-dominant *ethnie* were situated in a position of minority (*Ibid.*, 144-152).

This theory may be too much group-oriented, but indeed points out a dynamism of making minority category within a modern political system. Roma people were in many cases seen as having different ethnic cultures, and Romani activists essentially emphasized Roma's distinct, indelible root and history (Guy, 2001, 21). Romani movements could be watched in the scope of political dynamism in modern nation-building processes that people resisted to be assimilated or marginalized within specific national-state depends on their (subjectively interpreted) historical roots.

On the other hand, modernization processes changed social systems drastically. As this paper does not have enough room for comprehensive discussion on the social modernization process, it will limit to changes related to the emergence of Romani movements. One significant change was the economic transformation which was related to the shape of Romani movements' goals. Some researchers discuss that the process of modernization brought Roma fatal changes which endanger their existence as distinct groups. However, Becky Taylor points out that Roma people had kept been exposed to brutal persecution through ages before, and modern era perhaps might be rather easier time to alive than former ones, with economic transformation and newly produced opportunities for livelihoods (Taylor, 2014, 113). This argument resonated with Judith Okely's position, as she denies a simplified explanation of "modernization accounts" which claims that "Gypsies" were threatened by industrialization and urbanization (Okely, 1983, 231). These researchers claimed that newly spread capitalist economy had effects to change lifestyles either as itinerants or as craft workers, but Roma people often took advantage of changing economies for fulfilling gaps between mass productive supply systems and individual demands.

Meanwhile, the economic transformation was accompanied by changes in the methods and intensity of administrative regulations. Modern states govern its area by border operation and census. People who had roamed country to country pursuing necessities for their lives came to be strictly controlled on the free movement and to become a "good citizens" who are productive and well governed by authority. This refortification of administrative regulations fixed a category of unwanted citizens, outsiders as "Gypsies" or "Cigani". Specific methods of regulation on these categories were diverted from forceful assimilation by Maria Teresia and Joseph II in Austria=Hungary Empire to systematic mass execution by the Nazi regime in the times of WWII (Matras, 2015, 187-189, 213-224). Although it is possible to say not every aspect of modernization processes was negative for Romani people's lives, certainly the emergence of the world of national states and capitalist economies provided a modern version of an untouchable category of "Gypsies/Cigani", and led to an extremely harsh condition of existence against Romani people. That has been the situation when Romani movements occurred through the 19th and the 20th centuries.

In short, modernization processes put Roma people in the position of minorities both the meaning of politically marginalized communities and socio-economically out-regulated people. More precisely, from within those who were marginalized by modernizing political entities, some people stood up to resist against existent structures which embed discriminative categorization of them as "Gypsies/Cigani", with the identification of themselves as "Roma". These political and socio-economical marginalizations framed their incentives and specific directions for movements. Romani movements have set their goals mainly around two fields; preservation of their specific cultural background, and improvements of their socio-economic situations. As to the former purpose, there provided a view that modernization changed their original way of life which might oppose the references as mentioned above of Taylor and Okely. Whether it is true or not for all "Gypsies" that they shared same cultural behaviors, some aspects of Romani movements have been supported by a motivation to preserve their endangered culture from the pressure of assimilation derived from the modern socio-economical system (Mayall, 2004, 219).

The other purpose of Romani movements projects on improvements in socio-economic circumstances in which the majority of Roma people seemed to be suffered by poverty, unemployment, lack of health care, and poor residential condition. Roma people have been very often seen as people who are excluded from mainstream socio-economic activities. This aspect of problematization is also seen in contemporary European Roma integration

policies which have been developed in the 1990s after transitions of socialist states (Friedman, 2014, 11-14). These two purposes have been focused and pursued within various Romani activities in parallel, and often in contradicting ways.

Romani movements were not just emerged from the dynamism of modernization but also shaped their goals along with their changing social statuses as minorities. Then, Romani movements reflect specific situations of societies which are differed by times and places. In other words, Yugoslav Romani movements went different processes from Romani movements in other areas and set their goals along with specific modernization processes in Yugoslavia.

How could we discuss the specific processes and purposes of Yugoslav Romani movements, from which aspects and focuses? Though modern political movements inevitably need mass mobilization for providing political powers along with the framework of national states, the emergence of modern national movements often was initiated by a small number of leading individuals who tried to reinterpret and deal with contemporary political and social problems. They primarily included intelligentsias such as poets, novelists, artists, and historians, often with educated professionals as doctors, lawyers, journalists, and schoolteachers who were emerged by the introduction of the modern compulsory education system (Smith 1979, 158).

Significant groups of modern Romani intellectuals and professionals were developed in the 20th century, though Romani organizing attempts and movements had already emerged in the latter of the 19th century. Many of “Gypsy” leaders who initiated activities in early times were traditional chiefs of small communities who had managed exchanges with authorities and represented their communities, and officially admitted and institutionalized as supervisors of groups. Additionally, there were organizing attempts of professional guilds, and occasionally these organizations stand for the interests of local fellow people (Klímová-Alexander, 2004, 619-620). This trend changed in the 20th century, particularly after the end of the WWII, when emerging Romani intellectuals took the initiative in movements. In Socialist Yugoslavia, cultural organizations were established after the end of the WWII, and literary persons and artists took roles of social movement leaders. (Klímová-Alexander, 2006, 605; Bašić, 2011, 33-34).

Then, what kind of motivations draw intellectuals to start and develop national movements? Intellectuals from minority communities are often confronted dilemma between a universalist view and an individualist value. They are themselves in some part children of modernization because they had been educated in modern compulsory

educational systems which assure opportunities to obtain literacy and arithmetic for every child regardless of their class or ethnicity. Educational opportunities give minority members possibilities to become constituents of society equal as majority members.

However, they confront obstacles which prevent them from entering the societies with equal treatment. They experience incapability in majority society which most stiffly appeared as discrimination in political and social lives. Minority intellectuals stand on universal and rational values which primarily guaranteed by ownership of citizenship but are denied their social inclusion by specific (irrational) values of specific societies. This negation would be momentum to let minority intellectual start national movement demanding both equal treatment as citizens and specific recognition as ethnic groups (Smith, 1981, 90-107).

John Hutchinson defined two types of nationalism; political nationalism and cultural nationalism. On the one hand, a type of national activist's motivation is to protest "failed democracy" which could or would not include minorities who are staged at outside of specific national frameworks, nevertheless holds principles of non-discrimination and equal political participation based on common citizenship. The motivation will bring national movement an aspect of universal values of equality or fairness, which shapes a goal to achieve a legitimate political system with all members within a framework. On the other hand, a type of national movement stands on a belief that specific history, culture, and even nature would be bases of community existence. This belief gives the national movement an individualist and traditionalist value, which aims at the moral regeneration of specific and distinctive community (Hutchinson, 1994, 39-54).

Hutchinson refers that these two types of ideologies are an expression of responding to changes brought by modernization processes, both complementary and competing. Cultural nationalism is recurring ideology while political movement is often short-handed in its development and goals. The former tends to last long-term with some alterations and led by a small number of intellectuals, while the latter tends to focus on a specific political campaign with mass mobilization and cooperation of various forces (*Ibid.*, 54-57).

Romani national movements have developed ideologies which contain both the universal sense of equality and an individual affiliation of culture, but more or less failed to mobilize a large number of people (Klímová-Alexander, 2017, 19-27). Only a limited number of activists tried to raise up social status of Roma people with conjuncture of adaptation and resistance to surrounding society. The reactions to modernization processes were different and complicated among most Roma people and some activists. Thus, it is crucial to explore

the complexity of the contexts and contents of that reaction for understanding the meaning of Romani movements.

That is why this paper will focus on the Romani intellectuals' activities and arguments which were constructed in parallel with the modernization processes of the surrounding society. Roma people have often been seen as "itinerant" or "archaic". At least in academic arguments, these stereotypes have been criticized, and more empirical and constructive analyses were provided to explore how Roma people adapted to modern societies (Surdu and Kovats, 2015, 7-8). However, it is not discussed enough how individual Romani activists set specific Romani political goals and ideologies for adaptation to changing societies, especially in the case of Socialist Yugoslavia. The paper will reveal the universalist-individualist dilemma and suggested solutions by Yugoslav Romani intellectuals, along with the context of Yugoslav politics and societies.

Before the analysis of intellectuals' arguments, it is necessary to overview preconditions and prehistory of Yugoslav Romani movement. In the next chapter, background history and social situations in Socialist Yugoslavia which enabled Romani intellectuals to make national movements will be described.

II. Historical and Socio-Economic Backgrounds of Yugoslav Romani Movements

First attempts to organize Roma people in Yugoslavia were seen in the early of the 20th century. In 1927, people established Serbian Gypsy Community (*Srpsko-Ciganska Zadruga*) in Belgrade as a mutual aid organization whose missions included assistance for ill people and orphans. The organization also put a goal to set up a library in which community members can use (Acković, 1994, 43-44). This goal implies that the founders of the organization intended to provide opportunities for education and enlightenment for community members.

Another organization was also formed in Belgrade whose name was St. "Bibi" Belgrade Gypsy Society (*Udruženja Beogradskih Cigana Svečara "Bibije"*). The organization was also designed for a mutual aid in daily lives, though with more concrete contributions. There were enough financial resources to buy a piece of land and construct a church and a monument for WWI victims (Crowe, 2007, 212-214, Klímová-Alexander, 2005, 168). Bibi was the legendary character in Roma communities around Belgrade, who symbolized as protectors from epidemic diseases such as pest or cholera. There had been a festival with the name of Bibi once in a year for praying health of children. Alexander Petrović thought

that the first opening of the festival was at Belgrade in 1888, and the festival itself still has been opened in today (Petrović 1937, 124). The society was built in 1930 (officially in 1935), and the primary task was in organizing the festival. The festival also contains elements of a commemoration of WWI victims. It seems that the organizations were necessary after WWI with a radical change of social situation including Romani society, lots of people lose their relatives, children lost their parents, and people had to help each other. These organizations seemed to be established for survival in changing world.

The statutes of the “Bibi” society contains an article which said that the society “will not be guided by any political or other party views” (Acković, 1994, 46). Then, the society was not intended to be political organizations, but only for cultural activities and mutual aids. Petrović claimed that the “Bibi” festival was “clearly manifested tendency of the Gypsies to prove to the whole world that they also can arrange a feast and entertain guests” (Petrović 1937, 124). He thought that the festival was a kind of demonstration for Romani people to non-Romani society. At least, these social activities created significant connections and collective identity among Roma communities around Belgrade and might induce a seed to larger Romani movements. Also, it might be significant to be helped by non-Romani intellectuals for movements at that time. Yugoslav Romani activism in the interwar period provided a periodical journal for the emancipation of Roma. *Romano lil* was edited by a Romani activist Svetozar Simić with support by Petrović. This periodical published only three issues with 1,500 copies for the first two issues and 1,000 for the last issue, but didn't have good attention by Roma people (Acković, 2009, 205-216; Jopson, 1936, 86-87).

As far as confirmed by documents, concrete Romani organizations in interwar Yugoslavia concentrated in central Serbia, but mostly marginal. There was not a movement with mass mobilization, but rather some cooperative organizations for mutual support in daily lives among Roma communities. However, those organizations raised enlightening aspects such as the construction of library or sociocultural institutions. Including the publication of *Romano lil*, the interwar period had some indication of Romani ethnic revival which had not fully developed as national movement or fundamental reconstruction among the relationship between “Cigani” and mainstream society.

These modest attempts were overwhelmed by massive violence in the WWII time, under axis rules and genocidal policies. In the area of former Yugoslav kingdom, *Ustaša* regime of Independent State of Croatia (ISC) used the most brutal method to “solve” “Gypsy Problem” mainly imitated Nazi's way of domination. ISC defined “Cigani” (as same as Serbs and Jews) as a threatening population for Croatian, and provided discriminative

laws which suppressed social participation, soon after the establishment of *Ustaša* regime. After that, systematic execution of Roma in concentration camp started in 1942, and the majority of the deported were killed within half a year (Biondich, 2002, 38-39).

This radical persecution was not just physically fatal for Roma people, but also provided substantial pressure to express their identity as Roma or “Cigani”. Additionally, to avoid showing their own identity was one of the methods for survival. As Alexander Korb referred, “[w]hat constituted a “Gypsy” - despite the fact that Gypsies were subject to racial laws - had never been defined, in contrast to a more specific definition of the “Jew”. Precisely this vagueness saved many Gypsies’ lives” (Korb, 2013, 79). While “Cigani” were stigmatized as disturbing factors for Croatian ethnic purity, who those people really were was decided by local authorities on cases. Even the methods to keep “Cigani” out from Croatian society were various from assimilation by forced conversion to mass killings in concentration camps (*Ibid.*, 75-77). Some people used that vagueness in saving their lives. These war-time situations created undoubtedly harmful conditions for Romani organizing activities and identity expressions.

Attitudes to express their Romani identity had been radically changed after 1945 which was seen in statistics. The number of Romani population in Socialist Yugoslavia was not stable from 1948 to 1981. This is because ethnic affiliation was not objectively defined but subjectively chosen by respondents, social and national atmosphere toward Roma must have an influence on statistical results. Increasing population from 1948 to 1981 and radical decreasing in 1961 showed both actual rise or fall in numbers and changes in attitudes for identity expression of Roma people (Table 1).

Table 1: Roma populations in Socialist Yugoslavia

	1948	1953	1961	1971	1981
Total	72,736	84,713	31,674	78,485	168,098
Serbia	52,181	58,800	9,826	49,894	110,959
(Kosovo)	11,230	11,904	3,202	14,593	34,126
(Vojvodina)	7,585	11,525	3,312	7,760	19,693
Macedonia	19,500	20,462	20,606	24,505	43,125
Bosnia and Hercegovina	442	2,297	588	1,456	7,251
Croatia	405	1,261	313	1,257	3,857
Montenegro	162	230	183	396	1,471
Slovenia	46	1,663	158	977	1,435

(Прокић [Prokić], 1992, 98)

Probably, distrust of Roma people against authorities reached a peak in the period of WWII. In this context, postwar Romani movements confronted a dilemma between unforgettable memories of genocide and right claim challenges within mainstream societies. Although many of Roma people folded huge distrust against non-Romani people and hoped to avoid them, it was necessary to face with and enter into mainstream societies to claim their rightful presence.

Meanwhile, shortly after the end of the axis rules and the building of Socialist Yugoslavia, some attempts to reactivate Romani movements already began. In the latter of the 1940s, a cultural institution "Phralipe" was established in Skopje of Macedonia. This organization had an important theatre sector which produced public performance abroad. Additionally, with the help of "Phralipe", literary association by Romani writers was established (Crowe, 2007, 222). Roma people in Belgrade of Serbia also organized some cultural and educational organizations soon after 1945 (Acković, 2009, 301). These two countries had the biggest number of people who were identified as Roma or "Cigani" in the censuses since 1948 (Table 1). This implied that the population of Roma in Yugoslavia was concentrated in those areas, and people there felt relative ease to express their identity as either Roma or "Cigani". As a result, Romani activists to improve their national status and social lives were mostly from those two republics.

Eventually, led by these cultural and enlightening activities, political elements began to appear in Romani movements. As to Roma in politics, a Romani politician Abdi Faik was elected as a member of the city council of Skopje already in 1948 (Crowe, 2007, 222). However, partly confined by the social status of most of Roma population, only limited number of Roma participated in political scenes. In 1967, Romani activists in Belgrade began to challenge the whole situation of the socio-political field, by starting the movement of "Roma under the sun (*Romi pod Suncem*)". The beginning of the campaign resulted in spreading tide of organizing institutions. One of the key achievement of Yugoslav/Serbian Romani movements, which was often mentioned by researchers, was the establishment of "Society 'ROM' (*Društva "ROM"*)" in June 1969 in Belgrade (Acković, 2009, 306). The society was often seen as the following organization to "Bibi" society, characterized as a socio-political organization whose focuses were on education, science, culture and social issues (*Ibid.*; Klímová-Alexander, 2007, 645). This time, the society was founded not just in Belgrade and surrounding area, but in larger places of Serbia, and from twenty to forty organizations were active at a time (Acković, 1994, 113-114; Kenrick, 2001, 406; Puxon, 1976, 462). Establishment of Romani organizations and networks went with a project of pursuing

official status of Roma as recognized national group.

A significant political condition which enabled Romani people to make political movement was Yugoslav multi-ethnic policy. Socialist Yugoslavia adopted a multi-ethnic system in every political, administrative and social organization, such as the distribution of posts of League of Socialists or Socialist Alliance of Working People. A symbolical multi-ethnicity can be seen in the denial of the official project of creating "Yugoslavian" nationality. Marxist political leaders believed that recognition of sovereignty for each nation and republic was inevitable for maintaining and developing the society of Yugoslavia (Shoup, 1968, 207-208).

The system, particularly after the establishment of the 1974 constitutions, classified each ethnicity in three categories; *narod* (nation), *narodnost* (nationality), and *etnička grupa* (ethnic group). Although specific classification of ethnicities varied according to constitutions of republics and provinces, basically the South-Slav nations (Serbian, Croatian, Slovenian, Muslim, Macedonian, Montenegrin) who were supposed to have affiliate republics were classified as *narod*, and other nations notably Albanians and Hungarians who were considered to have affiliate autonomous provinces were classified as *narodnost* (Helfant Budding, 2008, 102). The distinction between *narodnost* and *etnička grupa* was unclear, because every constitution referred specific names of *narod* and *narodnost* within the border, while *etnička grupa* was only cited in articles which affirm the equality of them and *narod/narodnost* without special mentions on ethnicities or rights (Acković, 1992, 17-23). It seems to be contradictory that every *narod*, *narodnost*, and *etnička grupa* were assured to be equal on the one hand, while that hierarchical definition existed and "sovereignty" was only confirmed for *narod* and *narodnost* on the other. At least political systems of Yugoslav entities were explicitly consisted along with named *narod* and *narodnost* for distribution of representatives or financial resources, being admitted as *narodnost* or pushed in other *etnička grupa* was a big difference (Memedova, 2005, 6).

While the political status of Roma began to a point for Romani activists at the end of the 1960s, social conditions of Roma people had been a point in question far before that time. In Socialist Yugoslavia, as same as previous times and nowadays Europe, Roma were seen to live in deplorable social conditions. Poverties of Roma tended to be visualized most likely through the issues of unemployment and lack of education in those times. According to the 1981 census, the unemployment rate of active Roma population was 18.7%, three times larger than the rest of the population (6.2%) (Прокић, 1992, 106). As to the education, 67.1% of Romani labor people were not finished elementary school, though the rate highly

improved comparing former years, while the rate dropped to 35.4% for the remaining population. Additionally, the illiteracy rate reached 34.8% of the total of Romani population, despite it was improved from the rate in 1948 (51.5%) (*Ibid.*, 105). These statistics legitimated integrative social policies toward Roma population.

At the same time, changing social structure also caused Roma integration discourse. According to the statistic of distribution of working population in 1948 census, almost 3 out of 4 people engaged in agriculture (Table 2). The distribution radically changed in 1981 that only 1 out of 4 people worked as a farmer while more people committed mining, and 20% of people worked as professionals such as civil servants, managers, and specialists (Table 2). On the other hand, Roma people in 1948 had worked mostly as non-professional workers, while the rate of farming was not high as the rest of population (Table 1). More importantly, the situation was not radically changed as the whole of Yugoslavian people after thirty years. In 1981 census, distributions of workers of Roma population were more or less kept from the 1948 census. The highest proportion of the workers was miners as same as other population. Although categories of worker's classification are different between 1948 and 1981 tables and it is unclear which categories can be compared with, it is supposed that "workmen and apprentice" in 1948 included "miners" category. Professionals as specialists or managers of Roma population were fewer than the rest of population in 1981 and not radically changed from the situation before (Table 3).

Table 2: Professions of actively working population in Yugoslavia in 1948

	All		Roma	
Total	9,783,567	100.00%	33,847	100.00%
Workmen and apprentices	1,365,512	13.96%	19,063	56.32%
Active officials and employees	736,539	7.53%	466	1.38%
Free professions	6,162	0.06%	95	0.28%
Farmers	7,148,480	73.07%	8,113	23.97%
Fishermen	5,604	0.06%	4	0.01%
Craftsmen	142,604	1.46%	3,067	9.06%
Trademen	37,561	0.38%	136	0.40%
Privates	65,728	0.67%	2,313	6.83%
Pensioned officials, employees, and workmen	111,396	1.14%	48	0.14%
Persons dependent on state	163,151	1.67%	538	1.59%
occupation unknown	830	0.01%	4	0.01%

(Federativna Narodna Republika Jugolsavija Savezni Zavod za Statistiku, 1954, xliii, 2, 7)

Table 3: Professions of actively working population in Yugoslavia in 1981

	All		Roma	
Total	9,351,671	100.0%	42,938	100.0%
Farmers	2,517,981	26.9%	7,199	16.8%
Miners	2,947,884	31.5%	14,514	33.8%
Merchants	476,918	5.1%	1,193	2.8%
Service providers	529,393	5.7%	4,884	11.4%
Public Security services (police, hospital, etc.)	159,628	1.7%	359	0.8%
Lawyers and public officials	890,691	9.5%	558	1.3%
Managers	153,745	1.6%	17	0.0%
Specialists and artists	922,081	9.9%	1,529	3.6%
Other professions	11,700	0.1%	9	0.0%
Non-professional laborers	162,658	1.7%	4,656	10.8%
Unemployed	578,992	6.2%	8,020	18.7%

(Прокић [Prokić], 1992, 105)

This structural change of entire occupation and relatively unchanging situation of Romani workers implied not just the necessity of social integration policies on Roma, but also a limitation of cultural resources for Romani movements. In the census of 1981, compared with the average in Yugoslavia, Romani populations were apparently under the average rate of the proportion of people working as civil servants, managers, specialists, artists, and professionals, while exceeded the proportions of general service providers, non-professional laborers, and unemployed. This implies that the number of intellectuals and professionals who had Romani identity was both relatively and absolutely small, that the Romani activism was faced with a limitation of law potentiality as to cultural nationalism. Additionally, Klímová-Alexander refers that Romani intellectuals tended to apart themselves from communities of origins. Because educated intellectuals have enough connection with non-Roma communities, traditional leaders of Roma communities tended to consider intellectuals “polluted” by non-Roma cultures, or even accused them as agents of authorities (Klímová-Alexander, 2006, 603-604). Highly educated people were often seen to obtain something different from traditional Romani behavior, while educated Roma people sometimes criticized old unreasonable customs. As a result, active Romani intellectuals often failed to have much impact on mainstream society and even in their communities. If that was true for Yugoslav Romani movements, it is understandable that the Romani movement by intellectuals faced with the difficulty of mass mobilization. In other words, Romani cultural nationalism did not have much potential in the meaning of human resources both of its core activities to revive and preserve distinctive identities of

Roma or development to political movements which need the support of a large number of Romani population.

Then, how were Romani movements able to emerge in Socialist Yugoslavia? There are two points that may contribute to the emergence of Romani movement, which can be read in the prehistory and circumstances of Socialist Yugoslavia described above. The first one is organizational experiences of the interwar period. After the end of the WWI, probably for dealing with difficulties brought by that war, several organizations were formed in outskirts of Belgrade. The organizing attempts provided places where diverse Romani communities in the area gathered and have communication for managing festivals. These attempts were mainly for people's daily lives and feasts, not included political activities, but certainly contributed to produce a sense of co-belonging and Roma identity with everyday and cultural activities. As Society "ROM" placed itself as the successive organization of "Bibi" society, pre-war Romani activism was somehow connected to the movements in Socialist era and provided a concrete basis for the latter.

The second point which contributed to preparing Romani movements was the development of multi-ethnic systems and norms in Socialist Yugoslav political and social institutions. As noted above, Socialist Yugoslavia developed a hierarchic multi-ethnic systems of *narod*, *narodnost* and *etnička grupa*, which was in line with decentralization processes of federative system and various national revival movements in the 1960s. After the fall of leading centralist Aleksandar Ranković in Communist leadership, the movement of decentralization promoted, which connected to rise of various national movements. Although Marxists did not admit ultimate values of ethnic differences, they utilized national affiliation into the system of federation, the Communist party, and social councils for the development of socialism. Multi-ethnic systems of politics and society allowed national activists to show their affiliation and claim to preserve their own identities and cultures. That is why some new national movements were occurred at the end of the 1960s, which were represented by Albanian national riots in Kosovo, request for recognition as *narod* by Muslims, and "Croatian spring". That atmosphere was a precondition that Romani intellectuals and politicians emerged as Romani representatives, and direct their effort for the interests of Roma people. The system helped Romani activists to raise their sense of nationality and made them put a target on the achievement of national emancipation along with (and limited within) Yugoslav Socialism.

Though Socialist Yugoslavia opened a room for Romani activism, the regime also contained a limitation for its free development. That was an assimilationist tendency to

merge ethnic diversities into the context of class struggle and to converge the status of Roma into a problem of social marginalization which is shown in the tables above. Therefore, Romani movements faced against two challenges; a challenge to claim the collective national status of Roma, and a challenge to advocate the improvement of social situations of Roma without pulling in the assimilationist view. Those challenges were which Yugoslav Romani intellectuals dedicated in after the 1960s.

III. Romani intellectuals and Self-Management Socialism: Focusing on Arguments by Slobodan Berberski

In Socialist Yugoslavia, intellectuals and professionals such as literates, linguists, artists, musicians established social or cultural organizations and began attempts to change the relationship between majority society and Roma people. Some of the most active intellectuals and politicians were from Serbia, Slobodan Berberski (1919-1989), Žarko Jovanović (1925-1985), Sait Balić (1932-1998), Rajko Đurić (1947-), Dragoljub Acković (1952-), and from Macedonia, Abdi Faik (1937-2016) and Šaip Jusuf (1933-2010). Among these people, one of the earliest activists who started a political and social movement in Socialist Yugoslavia was Berberski.

Berberski was one of the pioneers of both Yugoslav and international Romani movements. He finished high school before the occurrence of war, and started university education in law faculty, but was arrested as a member of League of Communist Youth of Yugoslavia in 1941. After the end of the war, he worked in Communist organizations for a short period before he started activities as a poet (Đurić i Kajtazi, 2011, 89). Besides publishing many works as a poet, he also worked as a member of Yugoslav communist party in the newly established Socialist regime.

His dedication to Romani movements began to bear fruit at the end of the 1960s. The very first initiative was “Roma under the sun” movement in 1967 which seemed to set the start of Romani political movements in Serbia, and eventually fructified to establish Society “ROM” Belgrade in 1969. Founding members included 17 Romani activists who were appointed to the steering committee and the supervisory committee. Berberski was elected as the first president of the society (Acković, 2009, 303-306; Društva “ROM”, 1969, 103; Đurić, 1987, 83).

With 200 Romani delegates who joined the founding assembly of Society “ROM”, the steering committee was established and fundamental policies and goals were set. Though

the society itself was a local initiative, activists had held meetings with Romani leaders in other republics and provinces for provoking actions to further development of movements (Društva "ROM", 1969, 46). They planned to formulate branches at broad settlements where it was prepared for organizing themselves already. The aim of spreading a network of similar organizations partly succeeded and various cultural societies were established in the same year that Acković estimated over 20 organizations shoot up like mushrooms after a rain (Acković, 1994, 113). The society was officially recognized in the framework of Socialist Alliance of Working People in Serbia.

What were the goals for Romani movement of this time? One of the central focuses was on the emancipation of Roma people combining with general socio-economic situations. Among the resolutions adopted in the founding assembly of Society "ROM", several mentions about the issue. As to the matter of education and employment, active efforts by the committee for raising literacy rate, encouraging to proceed to secondary school, making employees obtaining qualification were urged, but without specific indication and planning. Also, the committee recommended research and special analysis for possibilities of planned, gradual, and systematic employment. For that purpose, contact with related organizations is suggested. As the Society "ROM" implied its task on the fields of education, science, culture and social problem (Acković, 2009, 306), the primary goal of the society was the emancipation of Roma from various aspects.

That was also confirmed by the then arguments of leaders of the movement. In his article "problems of Roma are problems of the society" which was published in the Romani journal *Glas Roma*, Berberski emphasized the necessity to deal with matters of socio-economic circumstances Roma lived. He listed problems such as unsanitary conditions in which Roma people resided, illiteracy of 80% of the Romani population, and the fact that the majority of employees were engaged in non-qualified jobs.

Romani organizations, within the framework of Socialist Alliance, are necessary and valid to be driving force by concentrating all force on tasks of literacy, schooling, qualification, employment, manifestation of preserving and creating necessary climate for the further development of national culture and the politicization of mass, which are today already exist. Or simply says, if its possible to say in such a way, these are works of leading mass in Socialist Alliance. (Berberski, 1973, 5)

This goal was placed in the context of self-management ideology of Socialist Yugoslavia,

specifically connected to the resolution 7 of the nearest 9th Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. The resolution stated as;

Real liberty, sovereignty, and equality of nations are founded on economic and social situations of workers, and vice versa, social situations of workers cannot obtain socialist contents without achieving liberty and sovereignty of nations... (Berberski, 1973, 5)

Hence, Romani movements stood on the assumption that improvement of socio-economic situations was a basis of the existence of nations. Conversely, this framework of problematization drew the logic which demanded the status of a recognized nation, in this case, *narodnost*, for fulfilling condition to achieve real social development of Roma people. Berberski wrote that “Romani organizations would never have the ambition to be political organizations, but have visions of political-ideological aspects” (Berberski, 1973, 5). That is why recognition of Roma as *narodnost* became another targeted goal of activists after federal, republic, and provincial constitutions provided provisions which confirmed categories of *narod*, *narodnost*, and *etnička grupa*. In every constitution, Roma was not nominated as *narod* nor *narodnost*. In the founding assembly of the Society “ROM”, members passed resolutions to show political support for Romani representatives who worked in constitutional commission in Kosovo to regulate clarified legal status of Roma, and to obligate the steering committee to submit a proposal to the constitutional commission of the Socialist Republic of Serbia for regulation of status of Roma as *narodnost* (Acković, 2009, 307-308). Romani politicians and activists showed eager stance for national recognition in other entities too. One of the first crystalized attempts was in Macedonia, where Faik, the first Romani member in Macedonian parliament, succeeded in the parliament to earn recognition of Roma in 1971, but only as *etnička grupa* (Puxon, 1976, 130). Also, Berberski sent a mail to the president of the executive council of Bosnia and Hercegovina in 1974 for clarification of the constitutional status of Roma there, and obtain a confirmation that Roma was a *narodnost* (Đurić, 1987, 78-79). The recognition for the status of *narodnost* was crucial because collective rights for nationalities differed among the three categories. The distribution of constituent member of social organizations or party systems was basically assured only for *narod* and *narodnost*, while the status of *etnička grupa* was varied according to constitutions and laws of republics, as Serbian constitution guaranteed rights for establishing own organizations, but constitutions of

Vojvodina and Kosovo didn't (Đurić, 1987, 77).

Here, Romani activists set the goals of Romani movements according to the framework of self-management socialism. It is emphasized that the resolution of poverty and marginalization of Roma people was crucial for the success of Romani movements which would establish collective national identity. Berberski clarified a gap between manifestations of Romani activists or politicians and the real conditions in which Roma people living, and suggest both administrators and Romani activists focus on improvement of daily life situations (Berberski, 1973, 5). Simultaneously, it was necessary for them to attain recognition as a collective national entity to actualize and legitimate the social development clear way. Both goals of social development and national recognition were interdependent along with Yugoslav socialism. That was the fundamental direction of the mainstream Romani movement in Socialist Yugoslavia after the end of the 1960s.

Additionally, socio-economic development was connected to the cultivation of identity as Roma. Education of Roma youth meant not just the acquaintance of required skills to participate in majority society, but also the reaffirmation of their root and ethnicity through the learning of Romani culture. Among the various desirable cultural elements, language was the most significant to be taught for their identity building. However, Romani languages were (and have been until present) diverse by areas, groups, and clans. Even within the area of Socialist Yugoslavia, several different languages were spoken by various groups of Roma. Therefore, activists set standardization of Romani language as a goal of movements. One of the achievements was the first Romani grammar book in Yugoslavia which was edited by Macedonian Romani linguist Šaip Jusuf with Macedonian linguist Krume Kepeski in 1980. Jusuf was a part of Romani activism in Macedonia and Yugoslavia and focused on an assignment of constructing the cultural identity of Roma people. For that purpose, Jusuf emphasized significance for Roma children to be taught in school by Romani language. The idea took form at the end of the 1970s when a commission for standardization of Romani language was formed under the official communist party framework (Demir 2017, 69-71). Radio programs and journals by Romani language eventually began to be provided, several classes to teach students in Romani language were made at elementary schools in Macedonia and Kosovo in the 1980s (Poulton, 1993, 89). However, these attempts of founding cultural resources for Romani population lasted only short period and not spread to larger areas before interrupted by the chaos of transition and breakup of the federation (Friedman, 2003, 107-116).

While the construction of cultural identity proceeded, the denial of "false tradition" as

represented by the image of nomadism which was embedded in stereotypes of majority society also became a focus of the movement. Berberski referred that at maximum only 5% of Roma in Yugoslavia live in an itinerant way, and denied a perspective to see nomadism as common Romani culture. He criticized Romani activism in the western European countries exemplified a movement in the United Kingdom led by a journalist Grattan Puxon which he supposed to strengthen stereotypes by administrations that Roma was fundamentally nomad. Berberski claimed that Puxon's movement was an expression of romantic nationalism but the Romani movement should focus on socio-economic problems (Berberski, 1974, 12). In this perspective, Berberski intended to deconstruct the image of Roma as nomad besides kept socio-economic shortages as the primary focus.

Therefore, Yugoslav Romani activists retained their goals within the framework of socialist discourses. The discourse also set a framework on the shape of Romani identity. One of the reason was that officially admitted social organizations had to limit its activities along with the line which Socialist organizations and League of Communists allowed. As it was seen in the Berberski's articles and the resolution of Society "ROM", development of Romani identity and activities were pegged in larger arguments of Socialist's entities. The socio-economic situations of the entire Roma people were relatively underdeveloped as seen in the tables of the previous chapter. Romani intellectuals picked those situations up for growing consciousness and collective activities of Roma, which was appropriate for multinational political systems of Socialist Yugoslavia. Additionally, Berberski himself had been a member of communist organizations, though he dedicated his profession to writing poems. It was likely that his personal belief affected the direction of Yugoslav Romani movements as its pace coordinating with the development of socialism.

Romani movement in the 1960s had a characteristic of cultural nationalism which aimed a development of its own distinctive identity, while the entire discourse of national movement was framed along with socialist beliefs. Whether it was a strategy or a truly dedicated belief, it placed Roma in a Yugoslav discourse of modernization. In this context, situations in which Roma was living and developments of identity were combined and provided the Yugoslav type of socialist Romani nationalism.

Conclusion

Romani movements in Socialist Yugoslavia emerged within contexts of governance by the socialist regime and social changes by modernization processes after the WWII. Multi-

ethnic political and social systems allowed developments of national movements to a certain extent, and transformation of lifestyles in the whole society opened a logic for problematization of underdeveloped living standards of Roma people. Founded on those backgrounds, Romani activists started movements which fitted with the time, continued to the former experiences of social organizing activities and fears of the massacre. Romani movements were expressions to accommodate to newly created political situations and survive with extreme disbelief against majority societies and authorities.

That was why their goals stayed correspondent to the central ideology of Yugoslavia. Berberski was an outstanding Romani poet in the time and well-keen to consolidate Romani distinctive culture and identity, but never to step off the logic of self-management socialism. Poverty and illiteracy of the Romani population were interpreted as problems of the whole society, while socio-economic development interdependently connected to the establishment of Romani national identity. As his stance showed, Yugoslav Romani movements tried to explore distinct Romani identity through the universalism of socio-national development.

In the end, Romani movements in Socialist Yugoslavia which strengthened after the 1960s had never developed serious movements with mass support especially from the side of ordinary Roma people. After the breakup of Socialist Yugoslavia, Romani movements were also divided along with separate republics. However, the transition was not necessarily negative for Romani movements, as the liberalization of political activities allowed the emergence of Romani parties in several countries. Also, international Romani movements came into the different stage and resonated Roma integration policies in Europe. Transitions of international Romani movements were not unrelated to Yugoslav one, because Yugoslav Romani activists played vital roles in the activities of international Romani movement after the 1970s, as Berberski was elected as the president of the first World Romani Congress in London. Advancing research on roles of Yugoslav Romani activists in the international Romani movements, and how their domestic goals can be compared with international one, would contribute to a better understanding of entire picture of Romani movements in that era.

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