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## **JEUNESSES MUSICALES OF YUGOSLAVIA (1954–1991) ACITIVITIES IN THE COUNTRIES OF EASTERN BLOC THROUGH THE PRISM OF SOCIALIST YUGOSLAVIA CULTURAL DIPLOMACY<sup>1</sup>**

**Abstract:** In this paper we focused on the collaboration of the *Jeunesses Musicales* of Yugoslavia (JMY) with similar organisations of the Eastern Bloc countries. Besides pointing to the various activities that the JMY carried out from the early 1960s to the late 1980s, certain general tendencies in the process of cultural exchange were also

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underlined. The aim is to consider whether the JMY's cooperation with Eastern Bloc organisations followed Yugoslav foreign policies in the cultural sphere at the time.

**Keywords:** SFR Yugoslavia, Eastern Bloc, cultural exchange, cultural diplomacy, *Jeunesse Musicales* of Yugoslavia

## Introduction

The strained political and diplomatic relations of socialist Yugoslavia with the Eastern Bloc countries as a consequence of the adoption of the Cominform Resolution (June 1948) entered a new, more 'relaxed' stage in 1953.<sup>2</sup> After Stalin passed away in March that year and Soviet party officials started to question his internal and foreign policies, a gradual rapprochement between Yugoslavia and the states of the socialist lager came about. Despite the marked reserve and doubt on the Yugoslav side, crucial steps towards improvement of their political, along with economic and cultural relations took place in 1955 and 1956. The signing of the Belgrade and Moscow Declarations (May 1955, June 1956) between Yugoslavia and the USSR represented a historical turning point considering not only their mutual relations, but the state of affairs within the Eastern Bloc and the European East as well.<sup>3</sup> The changing atmosphere after 1953, and especially since 1955, stimulated the opening up of issues of cultural cooperation, exchange and propaganda between Yugoslavia and each country of the Eastern Bloc. As it turned out, there was no uniformity of cul-

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<sup>2</sup> Regarding Yugoslav relations with Eastern Bloc countries after the Second World War see Čedomir Štrbac, *Jugoslavija i odnosi između socijalističkih zemalja: sukob KPJ i Informbiroa*, Beograd: Prosveta, 1984; Đoko Tripković, *Jugoslavija–SSSR 1956–1971*, Beograd, Institut za savremenu istoriju, 2012; Vladimir Lj. Cvetković, *Jugoslovenska politika prema zemljama narodne demokratije u susedstvu 1953–1958. godina*, unpublished PhD diss., Beograd, Filozofski fakultet Univerziteta u Beogradu, 2012; Ljubodrag Dimić (ed.), *Velike sile i male države u Hladnom ratu: slučaj Jugoslavije*, Beograd, London: Filozofski fakultet Beograd, Katedra za istoriju Jugoslavije, Arhiv Srbije i Crne Gore, Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, Centar za istraživanja hladnog rata LST, 2005; Spyridon Sfetas, "The Bulgarian–Yugoslav Dispute over the Macedonian Question as a Reflection of the Soviet–Yugoslav Controversy (1968–1980)", *Balkanica*, XLIII, 2012, 241–272; Ethem Çeku, "The Kosovo Issue and Albano–Yugoslav Relations, 1961–1981", *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 26, 2015, 229–248; Nemanja Mitrović, "Međunarodni problemi posmatrani kroz razgovore Nikolae Čaušeskua i Josipa Broza Tita 1968. godine", *Istorija 20. veka*, I/2020, 129–146.

<sup>3</sup> See Đoko Tripković, *op. cit.*, 14–17, 19–41; Vladimir Lj. Cvetković, *op. cit.*, 59–89, 176–434.

tural policies regarding the states of the Bloc, and the circumstances in the domain of cultural cooperation and exchange were determined by various factors: 1. overall political stability between the blocs (Western and Eastern), 2. overall stability in the relations between the Eastern Bloc and Yugoslavia, and 3. the political situation concerning Yugoslavia and each separate Eastern Bloc country.

Generally speaking, since the early 1960s the cultural exchange of Yugoslavia and the Eastern Bloc grew substantially, and the significant level of the transfer of 'cultural goods', knowledge and values was typical until the late 1980s. As we shall discuss in the following sections, there was a disparity in the intensity of the exchange regarding particular Eastern Bloc countries that one could explain with various reasons. Diverse cultural actors including state cultural institutions, associations, organisations and individuals took part in the cultural exchange and their number was constantly rising from the early 1960s onwards.

The *Jeunesses Musicales* of Yugoslavia founded in 1954, became one of the regular contributors to Yugoslav cultural actions abroad from the mid-1960s. Because of its specific focus on the cultural emancipation of Yugoslav youth, and the supporting of young music artists, the JMY developed extensive cooperation with both West and East countries and their respective youth music organisations that led to the exchange of concert tours of soloists and music ensembles, as well as to the various types of interaction between talented musicians, composers and music specialists from different parts of the world. In order to consider Yugoslav cultural policies regarding the Eastern Bloc countries, we decided to focus on the example of the JMY. Exploring in detail its activities initiated from the early 1960s until the late 1980s that served to promote young artists and enrich the Yugoslav art music scene at the time, we will point out, on the one hand, the similarities and distinctions considering the state cultural policies towards the Eastern Bloc in that period and the JMY approach, and, on the other, the observable tendencies in the cultural cooperation and exchange initiated by the JMY. Apart from that, our aim is to open up a broader debate concerning the cultural diplomacy of socialist Yugoslavia and, more specifically, its Eastern Bloc policies.

The data and findings presented in this article are, to a large extent, the result of an extensive research of the functioning of the JMY that started in 2019 and included the thorough exploration of its abundant archival materials. It is expected that the further investigation of the cultural exchange of JMY will clarify its role in the socialist Yugoslavia foreign cultural policies,

and help the understanding of general tendencies as regards the country's cultural relations with various "blocs" – Western, Eastern, Non-Aligned etc.<sup>4</sup>

### **General characteristics of the Yugoslav cultural exchange with the Eastern bloc (1950s–1980s)**

The first initiatives regarding cultural exchange in the post-Stalin period came from the countries of the Eastern bloc.<sup>5</sup> As soon as June 1953, the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs suggested cultural cooperation with Yugoslavia, pointing to the great interest of Bulgarian artists in that context.<sup>6</sup> Soon after, other countries of the bloc, including Hungary and Romania came forward with similar ideas.<sup>7</sup> Still, it was not until the appearance of the Belgrade and Moscow Declaration that more formal steps were taken concerning the solving of various cultural issues. As the political rapprochement between Yugoslavia, the USSR and the Eastern bloc occurred, the interest for creating a firm basis for the purpose of intensifying the transfer of artists, specialists, artworks, etc. was increasing among certain countries of the Bloc. Accordingly, several bilateral agreements were signed between Yugoslavia and certain countries of the socialist lager in 1956 and 1957, starting with Poland (July 1956), Romania (October 1956), Bulgaria (December 1956) and Czechoslovakia (January 1957). Although the appearance of such documents did not correspond to the actual scope of the bilateral cultural exchange in the case of the mentioned countries, it pointed to the general stability of their political relations with Yugoslavia, as well as to the interest of cultural actors of both sides in the cultural production and research of the others. The absence of those conditions, as was typical for the Peoples' Socialist Republic of Albania, and to a certain extent the German Democratic Republic and Hungary before the 1960s,<sup>8</sup> resulted both in the absence of formal agreements and the scarcity of cultural contacts.

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<sup>4</sup> Large part of it is already in the process of actualization thanks to researchers gathered in the aforementioned research project.

<sup>5</sup> See Vladimir Lj. Cvetković, *op. cit.*, 176–183.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 176.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 181–182.

<sup>8</sup> The Cultural Convention between the governments of the SFRY and the GDR was signed in July 1962, two years after both sides exchanged its preliminary versions. See Stefan Stanković, *Jugoslavija–DR Nemačka (1957–1961)*, unpublished graduate thesis, Beograd, Filozofski fakultet Univerziteta u Beogradu, Odeljenje za istoriju, 2019, 44. The government of the Peoples Republic of Hungary signed The Convention on Scientific, Educational and Cultural Cooperation with Yugoslav government a year later, in October 1963.

After the formal framework for cultural exchange was adopted between the majority of Eastern bloc countries and Yugoslavia in the late 1950s and early 1960s, various forms of transfer of cultural products and actors took place. Considering the two- or three-year bilateral programmes of cultural cooperation that were signed from the 1960s until the 1980s several important insights can be inferred.<sup>9</sup> Firstly, the intensity of the transfer between each Eastern bloc country and Yugoslavia varied during that period with a tendency to encompass more diverse actors, institutions and manifestations as the 1980s approached. Such a tendency mostly resulted from the expansion of cultural production and distribution in every individual country, but was also the product of the establishment of regular communication and strong ties between the national organisations and institutions. Secondly, it seems that the extent of bilateral cultural cooperation depended on the state of affairs in the field of cultural production and education in particular countries, including the quantity and quality of international art and music festivals, international performing arts competitions, art schools and specialists, professional and amateur ensembles. Finally, there was an observable disparity of interests regarding the bilateral cultural exchange of particular Eastern Bloc countries – some countries were more focused on the specialisation of artists and art experts through study trips or attendance of festivals and competitions, and post-graduate programmes while others gave primacy to the exchange of professional or amateur ensembles and soloists, cooperation of art institutions and associations, etc. and some countries favored the exchange

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<sup>9</sup> For the period 1960s and 1970s we considered various excerpts from bilateral programmes between Yugoslavia and Eastern Bloc countries found in the JMY fond of the Archives of Yugoslavia (Cf. for instance Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 47, “Komisija za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom /06-13, Beograd, 2. 3. 1966/. Poziv za sednicu Odbora za muziku i Odbora za dramsku umetnost 10. marta 1966. Prilog: Odredbe programa kulturne saradnje za 1966. godinu koje se odnose na muzičko-scensku saradnju, Socijalističke zemlje”). Concerning the period of 1980s, complete texts of bilateral programs for the period between 1980–1982, 1981–1983, 1983–1985 were explored (Yugoslavia–USSR /1980–1982/: Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 70; Yugoslavia–Bulgaria /1980–1982, 1983–1985/: Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 69, 75; Yugoslavia–Czechoslovakia /1980–1982/: Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 67; Yugoslavia–Poland /1980–1982/: Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 67; Yugoslavia–Hungary /1980–1982/: Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 68; Yugoslavia–German Democratic Republic /1980–1982/: Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 68; Yugoslavia–Romania /1981–1983/: Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 72).

of first rate theatre ensembles and philharmonic orchestras, while others also considered artists from provincial areas.

The proportion of cultural cooperation of socialist Yugoslavia and Eastern Bloc countries reached a relatively high level in the mid-1960s according to certain indicators. One of them was the extent of exchange of large art and folk ensembles between the countries. For example, from 1961 to 1965 the tours and guest performances of Yugoslav large ensembles – opera, drama and ballet ensembles of certain national theatres, philharmonic orchestras, folk music and dance ensembles, choirs, radio and television popular ensembles, throughout the Eastern bloc countries slightly outnumbered tours and performances in the Western European, Latin American and Asian–African countries (see Table 1).<sup>10</sup> The distinction was even more emphasised regarding the participation of ensembles from abroad on the Yugoslav music and art scene in that period. Actually, almost ninety percent of guest performances and tours of foreign large ensembles belonged to the Eastern bloc countries.<sup>11</sup> That there was an imbalance in the exchange between Yugoslavia and the countries of the Eastern and Western Blocs at the time was confirmed in the public debates dedicated to the in-depth analysis of Yugoslav international policies in the domain of culture. According to one of them initiated by the Socialist League of Working Peoples of Yugoslavia [*Socijalistički savez radnog naroda Jugoslavije*], Eastern European (Eastern bloc) countries were much favored in the Yugoslav cultural exchange which was stated in a critical manner.<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, such a conclusion was not followed by any explanation concerning the possible causes or consequences of the observed ‘favouring’.

Apart from the exchange of large ensembles that certainly carried great prestige in the shaping of cultural-diplomatic bilateral activities, other forms of collaboration also attracted attention of Yugoslav and Eastern Bloc countries foreign policy officials and stimulated their support. Judging by the bilateral programmes, there was a well-established communication between the national (federal) associations of Yugoslav, Polish, East German and Sovi-

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<sup>10</sup> According to Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 47, “Komisija za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom /06-13, Beograd, 2. 3. 1966/. Poziv za sednicu Odbora za muziku i Odbora za dramsku umetnost 10. marta 1966. Prilog: Razmena većih ansambala posredstvom ili uz participaciju Komisije za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom.”

<sup>11</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>12</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 50, “Savezna konferencija SSR-NJ, Sekcija za kulturu, br. 02-13/1, Beograd, 24. 3. 1969. Pregled razgovora i stavovi i ocene o međunarodnoj kulturnoj saradnji”, 4.

Table 1. Guest performances and tours of Yugoslav ensembles in foreign countries, 1961–1965.\*

1961	Opera and Ballet of the Croatian National Theater (Paris, France); Opera and Ballet of the National Theater in Belgrade (Cairo, Egypt); Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra (Italy); Choir and Orchestra of the Radio-Television Zagreb (Italy); Chamber Ensemble of the RTV Zagreb (Czechoslovak tour); Popular Ensemble of the Radio-Television Belgrade (USSR tour)
1962	Opera and Ballet of the Croatian National Theater (Eastern Berlin, GDR); Ballet of the Croatian National Theater (Athens, Greece); Ballet of the National Theater in Belgrade (Cairo, Egypt); Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra (Bulgaria); Ensemble 'Lado' (USSR; Latin America); Beogradski madrigalisti choir (Italy, UK)
1963	Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra (USSR tour); Ballet of the Sarajevo National Theater (Italy); Yugoslav popular ensemble (USSR); KUD Njegoš and KUD S. Dragojević (Czechoslovak and Polish tour);
1964	Opera and Ballet of the National Theater in Belgrade (Athens, Greece); Opera and Ballet of the Croatian National Theater (Amsterdam, The Netherlands); Opera of the Slovenian National Theater in Ljubljana (USSR tour); Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra (FR Germany tour); Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra (FR Germany tour); Macedonian Philharmonic Orchestra (Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, GDR, Denmark, Switzerland); Chamber Orchestra of the RTV Zagreb (USSR); Choir of the Radio-Television Belgrade (Romania); Ensemble 'Kolo' (Sweden, Denmark); KUD Branko Krsmanović (Indonesia, Latin America); KUD Ivo Lola Ribar (Africa); KUD Branko Krsmanović (Sweden); KUD Svetozar Marković (Novi Sad) (Belgium); Emil Adamič Teachers' Singing Choir (Belgium, The Netherlands, FR Germany, UK); Partisan Invalids' Singing Choir (Ljubljana) (GDR); KUD S. Dragojević (Titograd) (Czechoslovakia)
1965	Children's Choir of the Radio-Television Zagreb (Bulgaria); Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra (UK); Opera of the National Theater in Belgrade (GDR)

\* According to the Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 47, "Komisija za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom /06-13, Beograd, 2. 3. 1966/. Poziv za sednicu..."

et composers, writers, architects, music and film artists in the mid-1960s that led to the exchange of information on artworks, artists, national productions and cultural institutions and served as a basis for organising various artistic events along with study trips. For instance, due to the cordial relations between the Soviet and Yugoslav Associations of Composers, the Yugoslav side planned to prepare concerts dedicated to the celebration of the anniversary of the October Revolution during 1967 based on the works of Soviet authors. On the other hand, the Soviet Association intended to organise concerts of Yugoslav music in Yerevan (1966) and Moscow (1967).<sup>13</sup> Besides, certain Yugoslav national theatres either developed or planned to develop more intense cooperation with the theatres from Hungary and Poland. Consequently, a great deal of importance was attached to the strengthening of bonds between the Opera of the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb and the State Opera in Poznan, the Opera of the National Theatre in Skopje and the State Opera in Łódź, together with the national theatres of Belgrade and Budapest, Osijek and Pécs, Subotica and Széged, and in the planning of bilateral exchange.<sup>14</sup>

Of great significance for each country at the time was to promote its international art manifestations, particularly certain festivals and competitions that not only had the purpose of gathering aspiring artists and ensembles, but also art specialists, cultural policy makers and others and such motive was clearly reflected in the bilateral programmes. Festivals and competitions were meant to attract participants, jurors and observers from as many politically and culturally relevant countries as possible. From the Yugoslav perspective, a special place belonged to the Dubrovnik Summer Festival (f. 1950), the *Sterijino pozorje* festival in Novi Sad (f. 1956) and the Music Biennale in Zagreb (f. 1962) that were planned to host smaller and larger ensembles from Czechoslovakia (Dubrovnik), as well as the delegates from Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania in the role of observers. At the same time, on the basis of reciprocity, Yugoslav musicians and theatre artists had the possibility of participating either as performers or delegates in the art festivals and competitions in Czechoslovakia (Prague Spring), Hungary (Budapest Music Weeks, Széged

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<sup>13</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 47, "Komisija za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom /06-13, Beograd, 2. 3. 1966/. Poziv za sednicu Odbora za muziku i Odbora za dramsku umetnost 10. marta 1966. Prilog: Odredbe programa kulturne saradnje za 1966. godinu koje se odnose na muzičko-scensku saradnju, Socijalističke zemlje", pp. 11.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 5, 7.

Summer Festival, Liszt-Bàrtok Competition), the German Democratic Republic (Robert Schumann Competition), Poland (Festival of the Old Masters of Central and Eastern Europe in Bidgoszcz, the H. Wienawsky Competition), etc.

Cultural exchange in the following decades was embedded in the majority of the activities that were regarded crucial in the 1960s including guest performances and tours of large ensembles, direct collaboration of theatres, opera and ballet houses and orchestras, artistic associations, concert agencies, and study trips for artists and art specialists, visits by foreign delegates to important cultural manifestations, transfer of compositions, artworks, art literature and art journals, organisation of events dedicated to the promotion of foreign cultures etc. The distinction was manifest in the diversity and quantity of cultural actors that were meant to participate in this process. The broadening of the scope of cultural cooperation was largely influenced by the rising complexity of the cultural production and distribution on the national levels. In the case of Yugoslavia, besides the expansion of art and traditional folk music festivals and cultural events of a local, regional, national or international character since the late 1960s, the restructuring of the sphere of culture based on policies of 'decentralisation' and 'self-management' that was initiated in the 1960s, further strengthened by the 1974 Constitution, also played an important role.

The widening of the exchange between Yugoslavia and the Eastern Bloc countries in the course of time was striking, considering the plans for direct institutional cooperation along with visits by artists and specialists to art festivals, competitions and manifestations, and for the purpose of study outlined in the early 1980s. For instance, in the Programme of Cultural Cooperation between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria (1980–1982), ten Yugoslav theatres were supported to collaborate with Bulgarian partner institutions,<sup>15</sup> while the Yugoslav–Hungarian Programme gave encouragement to six Yugoslav and five partner Hungarian theatres: Opera of the Croatian National Theatre and State Opera in Budapest, Opera and Ballet of the Serbian National Theatre in Novi Sad and Opera of the National Theatre in Pécs, Opera and Ballet of the National Theatre in Belgrade and Opera of the National Theatre in Szégéd,

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<sup>15</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 69, "Savezni zavod za međunarodnu naučnu, prosvetno-kulturnu i tehničku saradnju, Program kulturne saradnje između Vlade SFR Jugoslavije i Vlade NR Bugarske za 1980–1982. godinu potpisan u Beogradu 16. maja 1980", article 30, pp. 11, 12.

Opera of the Croatian National Theatre in Osijek and Opera of the National Theatre in Pécs.<sup>16</sup> Regarding the exchange of ensembles and soloists for festivals and manifestations, Yugoslavia invited Romanian artists and ensembles for the following cultural events: the Bitef festival in Belgrade, the Balkan Festival of Folk Songs and Dances in Ohrid, the May Operatic Nights in Skopje, The Joy of Europe [*Radost Evrope*] in Belgrade, the Dubrovnik Summer Festival, the Yugoslav Choral Manifestations in Niš, Osijek's Annals, the Children's Festival in Šibenik, the Folklore Festival in Ljubljana, the Youth Choral Festival in Celje and the Festival of Traditional Folk Music of the Danube Countries in Novi Sad,<sup>17</sup> while Hungarian artists and ensembles were welcomed at the Children's Festival in Šibenik, the Youth Choral Festival in Celje, the Festival of Traditional Folk Music of the Danube Countries in Novi Sad, the Balkan Festival of Folk Songs and Dances in Ohrid, The Joy of Europe, the Festival of Small and Experimental Theatres in Sarajevo and the 'Đendeš bokreta' Festival in Vojvodina.<sup>18</sup>

Attention was also given to visits of artists and art specialists of a different kind, and among the most ambitious in that context was the Yugoslav-USSR Programme (1980–1982).<sup>19</sup> For the purpose of attending cultural manifestations, 10 individuals from both countries were planned to be invited for up to 100 days, while the same number of artists and specialists were to be hosted on study visits for up to 95 days.<sup>20</sup> Besides, the Soviets were willing to patronage the specialisation of two Yugoslav violinists, one violoncellist, three folk

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<sup>16</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 69, "Savezni zavod za međunarodnu naučnu, prosvetno-kulturnu i tehničku saradnju, Program saradnje između Vlade SFR Jugoslavije i Vlade NR Mađarske u oblasti nauke, obrazovanja i kulture za 1980–1982. godinu potpisan u Budimpešti 7. marta 1980", article 26, pp. 15, 16.

<sup>17</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 72, "Savezni zavod za međunarodnu naučnu, prosvetno-kulturnu i tehničku saradnju, Program saradnje između SIV Skupštine SFR Jugoslavije i Vlade NR Rumunije u oblasti nauke, obrazovanja i kulture za 1981–1983. godinu potpisan u Bukureštu 9. maja 1981", article 25, pp. 8, 9.

<sup>18</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 69, "Savezni zavod za međunarodnu naučnu, prosvetno-kulturnu i tehničku saradnju, Program saradnje između Vlade SFR Jugoslavije i Vlade NR Mađarske...", article 31, pp. 17, 18.

<sup>19</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 69, "Savezni zavod za međunarodnu naučnu, prosvetno-kulturnu i tehničku saradnju, Program kulturne saradnje između Vlade SFR Jugoslavije i Vlade SSSR za 1980–1982. godinu potpisan u Beogradu 9. oktobra 1980".

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, articles 38 and 39, pp. 18.

music instrumentalists and two ballet dancers, and to send ballet, theatrical and musical pedagogues every year to work in Yugoslav ensembles, theatres and musical academies.<sup>21</sup> They also supported the collaboration of art academies (the University of Arts in Belgrade, the Faculty of Music in Belgrade, the Faculty of Drama in Belgrade and the Academy of Novi Sad on the Yugoslav side), as well as the exchange of academy lecturers and short visits by student groups.<sup>22</sup>

Although the extent of cultural collaboration between Yugoslavia and the Eastern Bloc during the 1970s and 1980s cannot be fully estimated without a thorough systematic research that would include comparisons with Western, Latin American, and Asian-African countries at various levels, even a reduced perspective from the small sample of sources suggests that it was very fruitful and left a strong imprint especially in the domain of artwork distribution (theatrical and music performances). With the broader exploration of programming of Yugoslav festivals and manifestations, the reception of Eastern bloc artists by the Yugoslav professional and general public, as well as contacts of art specialists, more detailed insights with regard to transfers of knowledge, experience and values in the cultural spheres of both sides could be expected.

### **The *Jeunesses Musicales* of Yugoslavia collaboration with similar organisations of the Eastern Bloc countries**

Soon after the JMY became a member of the International Federation of the *Jeunesses Musicales* [IFJM] in 1962,<sup>23</sup> a very broad and dynamic collaboration was initiated with the same or similar type of organisations outside Yugoslavia. As soon as the mid-1960s the JMY developed regular communication with colleagues from Canada, as well as the numerous Western and Eastern European countries and carried out a number of exchange projects focused on young and promising artists and ensembles. Owing to its international initiatives, the JMY became recognised not only among Yugoslav professional music organisations and associations, particularly the Association of Music Performing Artists of Yugoslavia [*Savez muzičkih umetnika Jugoslavije*,

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., articles 42 and 35, pp. 19, 17.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., article 48b), pp. 23.

<sup>23</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 46, "Socijalistički Savez FNJR, Komisija za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom, 3. 5. 1962".

SMUJ] and the Association of Composers of Yugoslavia, but also among the country's creators of foreign cultural policies such as the (Federal) Commission for International Cultural Relations [(*Savezna*) *Komisija za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom*], and by the end of the decade its activities started to be integrated in the bilateral programmes for cultural cooperation.<sup>24</sup>

Considering the JMY's undertakings from the early 1960s until the dissolution of Yugoslavia in 1991, some important phenomena should be emphasised. There is an evident contrast between the early and later stages of the JMY's international collaboration that stemmed from the initiation of its two most important international projects: the International Cultural Centre of the *Jeunesses Musicales* in Grožnjan, in 1969 and the *Jeunesses Musicales* International Competition in Belgrade, in 1971. Although the realisation of these projects did not interrupt the other JMY activities, they were given a central position both in the communication with foreign organisations and the shaping of Yugoslav international cultural policies in the 1970s and 1980s. Besides, it seems that the extent of the collaboration with foreign JMs or similar organisations primarily depended on the level of their functioning in the national and international framework. The more developed and prolific the organisation was, and more integrated in the local musical spheres, its offer of projects for international collaboration was usually broader. These conditions seemed to bear more weight for the JMY's international activities in comparison with the positioning of partner organisations in diverse cultural 'blocs' at the time – Eastern, Western, Asian–African, etc.

The fact that except Hungary and Poland, other Eastern Bloc countries either did not have their national JM organisations (USSR, Romania, GDR), or founded them much later than Yugoslavia (Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria), determined to a certain degree the JMY's functioning in this part of the world. Although the JMY did develop the most fruitful exchange with Hungarian and Polish organisations, its officials maintained regular contact with the organisations from the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Romania and, to a much lesser extent, from the GDR, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s, trying to involve them in the number of cooperative projects and activities. Regarding the collaboration between the JMY and organisations of the Eastern Bloc

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 50, "Savezna komisija za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom, br. 69, 1–19, Beograd, 19. sept. 1969, Prepis tačkaka iz Programa kulturne saradnje sa Mađarskom za 1967–1968. godinu koje se odnose na Muzičku omladinu Jugoslavije".

countries, certain activities were of particular prominence – the exchange of information about international competitions, summer school campuses, seminars, and conferences, the exchange of tours of young artists and ensembles, as well as delegates for congresses, competitions, and conferences, the exchange of young musicians for music campuses, the organisation of multi-lateral meetings and study visits, etc.

The idea to start collaboration with Eastern bloc organisations appeared in 1964, during preparations of the first JMY Congress in Zagreb. The JMY leadership intended to invite for this special occasion guests from the USSR, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary, including the Secretary Generals of the Polish and Hungarian JM organisations, with the support of the Federal Commission for International Cultural Relations.<sup>25</sup> A year later, 1965, communication with the Hungarians became very fertile, leading to numerous plans of exchange, organised concert tours and visits. The member of the Secretariat of the JMY, Branko Molan, visited Budapest in February 1965 in order to become better acquainted with the functioning of the Hungarian JM organisation, the participation of youth in musical life and the position of music in the curricula of elementary schools.<sup>26</sup> Soon after, Hungarian students were invited at the Dubrovnik Summer Festival (1965),<sup>27</sup> while Yugoslav young musicians started to attend the International Youth Music Course in Pécs (1968).<sup>28</sup> Both organisations aspired to use the possibilities created by the official bilateral cultural agreements and programmes in order to organise concert tours of youth orchestras, chamber ensembles and soloists. As a result, the Yugoslav side was preparing the ground for the tour of the Chamber Orchestra of the Franz Liszt Music Academy in Budapest in October 1965, while the Hungarians planned to host the Chamber Orchestra of the JMY led by Dušan Skovran in January 1968. Since 1967, both organisations sent their mutual plans to official bodies, expecting them to be incorporated in the bi-annual bilateral programmes of cultural exchange.<sup>29</sup> After the Hungarian JM

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<sup>25</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 10, “Komisija za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom, br. 64-32/61-64, Beograd, 16. april 1964, Muzičkoj omladini Jugoslavije”.

<sup>26</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 10, “Informacija o boravku našeg predstavnika u Mađarskoj”.

<sup>27</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 10, “Glavni odbor, 23/65”.

<sup>28</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 12, “Miodrag Pavlović, le Mai 23 1968”.

<sup>29</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, 476, register 50, “Savezna komisija za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom, br. 69, 1–19, Beograd, 19. sept. 1969, Prepis tačaka...”.

decided to host the IFJM Congress in Budapest in 1969, the Yugoslavs offered to give support for the preparation of its artistic and official part.<sup>30</sup>

Similar cordial relations were established with the Polish organisation from 1968, and after its president Elsbietta Artyzys visited Belgrade in May that year, the JMY's Secretary General, Miodrag Pavlović, together with one young Yugoslav musician attended the 10th National and International Musical Camp in Olsztyn.<sup>31</sup> The Yugoslav tour of the Polish *Madrygaliści* choir and the *Pro Musica* chamber orchestra were suggested for 1968, but the crisis that followed the Warsaw Pact intervention in Czechoslovakia in August that year probably contributed to its cancellation. Still, in 1969 the Chamber Orchestra of the JMY took part in the Polish tour, while the Polish choir *I Musici Cantanti* was planned to perform throughout Yugoslavia.<sup>32</sup>

While the collaboration with Hungarian and Polish organisations thrived, JMY officials were trying to bring about closer relations with the Czechoslovaks whose organisation was in the process of constitution during 1967 and 1968, as well as the Soviets and Romanians. As for the Czechoslovaks and Romanians, the Yugoslav organisation offered to host their delegate for a study visit in order to introduce him/her to the functioning of the JMY.<sup>33</sup> In the case of the Soviets, the JMY intended to carry out an ambitious plan of collaboration for the period of 1967–1969, which included the 'tour of one youth Yugoslav ensemble in the USSR in March 1968', 'the concert tour of the Chamber Orchestra of the Moscow Conservatory and one renowned children's choir in 1968 and 1969, as well as the tour of two similar Yugoslav ensembles', 'the exchange of one group of music pedagogues and students in 1968 and 1969' and 'the preparation of the first Soviet–Yugoslav Youth Music Festival in the second half of the 1968 or the first half of 1969'.<sup>34</sup> The Yugoslavs were also very eager to celebrate the anniversary of the October Revolu-

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<sup>30</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 12, "Miodrag Pavlović to Magda Szavai, without date [1968]".

<sup>31</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 12, "Monsieur Miodrag Pavlović, Varsovie, le 1. VI 1968".

<sup>32</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 15, "Technical questions concerning the tour of 'I Musici Cantanti'".

<sup>33</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 48, "Komisiji za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom, br. 37/67, 20. 2. 1967".

<sup>34</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 14, "To the Committee for the Aesthetic Education of Association of Composers of the USSR and Central Committee of the VLKSM, 14 July 1967".

tion in 1967 with a series of concerts and manifestations.<sup>35</sup> For that occasion they negotiated with the Soviet Association of Composers, and requested the tour of a certain Soviet youth ensemble. The Soviets first suggested the folk amateur ensemble 'Shkolnie godi' that was meant to perform in Belgrade, Zagreb, Sarajevo and some smaller towns.<sup>36</sup> Despite the willingness of both sides, the second Soviet suggestion, the Children's Choir with the conductor Sokolov could not follow the recommended schedule. According to JMY officials, there were problems in communication with the Soviets because either they did not respond to the latter's suggestions on time, or did not respond at all, and they also insisted on a 'unilateral' approach instead of reciprocity.<sup>37</sup>

One of the important steps in the process of bringing the JMY and Eastern bloc organisations closer was the preparation of the conference entitled 'Music and Youth' in October 1969, that was planned to assemble delegates from Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia, as well as Belgium and the Federal Republic of Germany.<sup>38</sup> The event was meant to take place during the BEMUS festival that was its co-organiser, and the participants were scheduled to discuss the following topics: the mass music education and Kodály method (Belgium and Hungary), music concerts in school (Czechoslovakia), the modern in music (JMY), etc. The conference represented, in a certain way, the heralding of two of the JMY's most important international projects, which were shaped and partly initiated in the late 1960s – the International Cultural Centre in Grožnjan, and the International Competition in Belgrade. The Grožnjan project was given the support of the IFJM during the Congress in Budapest in 1969,<sup>39</sup> and from then the Yugoslav organisation made efforts to ensure its continuity, the quality of the programme and the diversity of the participants and lecturers. Almost at the same time, the JMY officials, in coordination with the BEMUS Festival's committees and the representatives of the Association of Music Performing Artists of Yugoslavia, paved the way

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<sup>35</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 48, "Komisija za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom, br. 120/67".

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>37</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 48, "Neka objašnjenja o teškoćama koje su nastale u saradnji sa SSSR-om, 28. 10. 1967".

<sup>38</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 50, no. 223/69, 11. September 1969.

<sup>39</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 79, "Bilten, 1969, br. 26, Izveštaj o učešću MOJ na 23. kongresu Međunarodne federacije održanom u Budimpešti od 16. do 23. VII 1969. godine", pp. 6.

for the annual International competition of JM that started in 1971.<sup>40</sup> Both projects were given a central role in the process of international collaboration of the JMY, and as soon as 1969 they were planned to be inserted in the bilateral programmes for cultural cooperation with a number of countries. For instance, JMY officials suggested to the Federal Commission for International Cultural Relations in November 1969, to include the following paragraph in the bilateral programmes with France, Norway, Belgium, Sweden, FR Germany, Hungary, Poland, the USSR, the German Democratic Republic, and others: ‘Two countries will support the International Competition of the JMY that will take place every year from October 1 to 7, as a part of the BEMUS Festival. The JMY will provide accommodation and adequate conditions for competition for the participants who qualify for the final stages. Travel expenses will be covered by the country that sends the participants.’<sup>41</sup>

In the following decades, articles concerning support for the JMY Competition and Grožnjan Cultural Centre became a regular part of the bilateral programmes as JMY officials were trying to attract attention for these projects of as many countries and their JM or other organisations as possible. For that purpose, as well as the general strengthening of relations, the JMY in this period developed regular contacts with the Czechoslovaks, Bulgarians, Soviets and Romanians, expecting them to contribute to both projects by sending their specialists, young and talented musicians, literature, various materials etc. The Soviets showed great interest in the JMY projects, expressing it openly, particularly during the visits of the Yugoslav delegation to Moscow in 1975 and in 1987. During the first visit, the JMY representatives had talks with the high officials of various Soviet institutions including the Ministry of Culture of the USSR. At the meeting with the Commissioner for National International Competitions and a Secretary of the Central Committee of the Komсомol, the Soviets suggested a more extensive exchange between the International Competition in Belgrade and the Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow and bilateral collaboration concerning Grožnjan.<sup>42</sup> The Belgrade Competi-

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<sup>40</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 50, “Zaključak Glavnog odbora MOJ od 15. i 16. novembra [1969]. Internacionalno takmičenje Muzičke omladine (Aleksandar Pavlović)”.

<sup>41</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 50, “Savezna komisija za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom, 20. novembar 1969, br. 261”.

<sup>42</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 60, “Miodrag Pavlović, Izveštaj o boravku delegacije Savezne konferencije MOJ u Moskvi”, pp. 3, 4.

tion was also discussed in the second visit, but the emphasis was placed on the preparation of bilateral festivals of youth creative work.<sup>43</sup>

Although these projects gained a dominant position in the process of collaboration, interest was also shown in other activities such as the exchange of concert tours of young soloists, chamber orchestras, choirs and chamber ensembles, the exchange of delegates and music specialists for various manifestations and the exchange of young musicians for summer music schools and specialisation. In that context, the JMY continued very fruitful collaboration with the Hungarian and Polish JM organisations. Polish officials were invited as delegates to the Yugoslav festivals (the Music Days in Budva and Sveti Stefan, the Yugoslav Music Forum in Opatija and BEMUS)<sup>44</sup> as well as the International Competition in Belgrade, while young Polish musicians were given scholarships for the Grožnjan seminars and master classes. Yugoslav delegates and musicians were invited to the International Music Camp in Olsztyn, the Warsaw Autumn festival and various conferences and seminars. On the other hand, the Hungarian organisation was a keen supporter of the Grožnjan Centre, regularly sending its delegates, specialists and musicians. A manifest display of strong ties, particularly with the Polish organisation, was, among other things, the initiative to prepare the Yugoslav-Polish Choral Weeks in Sjedlce (Poland).<sup>45</sup> The idea was to host a Choir of the Music School from Bihać at that event after which the tour of a Polish choir throughout Yugoslavia would follow in 1977.<sup>46</sup>

## **Conclusion**

JMY officials demonstrated an interest in collaborating with organisations from the Eastern Bloc soon after joining the IFJM in the early 1960s, and their position was not reconsidered in the decades that followed. Particularly prominent for them was the communication with the Hungarian and the

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<sup>43</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 5, "Impresije i zaključci sa susreta delegacije MOJ-CK VLKM, 29. 8. 1987".

<sup>44</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 15, "Jeunesses Musicales of Poland, Beograd, 4. 9. 1970".

<sup>45</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 61, "MO SR BiH, Predsjedništvo, 210-02-76, 1. april 1976".

<sup>46</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 23, "Mr. Miodrag Pavlović, 184/76, 15. 07. 76".

Polish JM that resulted in various exchange activities. Contact with organisations of other Eastern Bloc countries was determined to a great extent by the circumstances regarding the functioning of the sphere of youth art production and promotion. The presence of the JM type of organisation and its overall capacities seems to have had a crucial impact on the quality and scope of international collaboration. This was probably the main reason behind the relatively poor communication with the Soviets. As some of the JMY officials observed ‘our collaboration consists mainly of bilateral, informative meetings’, although ‘there is a great enthusiasm on our side for more concrete action based on the forms that reflect our real needs and potentials for collaboration.’<sup>47</sup> Despite the fact that there were certain objective barriers such as the circumstance that the USSR did not have an organisation analogous to the JMY, and the type of socio-political organising, typical of the socialist Yugoslavia, based on self-managing communities of interest, cooperative work etc., JMY officials thought it was possible to find viable solutions by including the Yugoslav League of Youth as an intermediary.<sup>48</sup> Still, there were no signs of a change of direction before the dissolution of the Eastern Bloc in 1989.

The scarcity of exchange between the JMY and the USSR represented the most significant disparity in comparison with Yugoslav foreign cultural policies. Another distinction was the lower extent of collaboration with Eastern Bloc countries compared to Western countries according to preliminary findings.<sup>49</sup> The observable dominance of Western over Eastern countries could be attributed partly to their better financial standing, and, even more, to their well-established organisational networking within the national framework. The fact that the majority of them functioned according to the JM principles, and that they saw the JMY as a relevant partner played an important role.

The JMY’s two international projects that draw most of its organisational capacities and resources since the late 1960s inspired its officials to use as many opportunities for international collaboration as were available. Owing mainly to these projects, the JMY managed to incorporate the majority of Eastern Bloc countries into its international activities. Whether the mentioned projects, along with other JMY actions abroad, actually helped in

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<sup>47</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 69, “Izveštaj o poseti delegacije CK VKSLM-SSSR Muzičkoj omladini Jugoslavije, 26. 8. 1980”.

<sup>48</sup> Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond of the JMY, register 5, “Impresije i zaključci...”, pp. 2.

<sup>49</sup> The exact proportions of exchange among different blocs will be determined after the completion of ongoing research.

making Yugoslavia more recognisable in the East (and West), remains to be explored.

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## **Summary**

Socialist Yugoslavia's approach to Eastern Bloc countries was revised in the post-Stalin era, leading to the gradual strengthening of political, economic and cultural relations. Since the 1960s, cultural exchange with the majority of Eastern Bloc countries, particularly the USSR, became extensive, and such circumstances continued until the dissolution of the bloc. As the JMY initiated international collaboration in the 1960s, the need to establish contacts with the countries of the socialist lager became more pronounced. The most fruitful communication developed with the JM organisations of Hungary and Poland in the second half of the 1960s leading to the exchange of young artists, concert tours and study visits. At the time, contacts were also made with the Czechoslovak and Soviet organisations, and in the next decade with the Romanian and Bulgarian, mostly regarding the support and participation in two international JMY projects – the International Cultural Centre in Grožnjan, and the International Competition of JM in Belgrade. Cultural exchange with the Eastern Bloc during the 1970s and 1980s was marked by these projects, although other activities such as concert tours and study visits of young artists, ensembles, and music specialists continued. In general, the JMY's collaboration with the Eastern Bloc differed from the Yugoslav exchange with this bloc in several ways. The contacts of the JMY with the Soviets were not fruitful, unlike the situation in the Yugoslav cultural sphere at the time. Also, the exchange with the East was, in the case of the JMY, modest in comparison with the West. The reasons for that were not in the JMY's policies towards the Eastern Bloc since they followed the Yugoslav lead. The differences in the organisational capacities between the Western and Eastern JM organisations probably played the most important role in that context.