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A History of Macedonian Sociology

In Quest for Identity

Naum Trajanovski

palgrave
macmillan

Sociology Transformed

Series Editors

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Nottingham, UK

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Naum Trajanovski

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Naum Trajanovski
University of Warsaw
Warsaw, Poland

ISSN 2947-5023

Sociology Transformed

ISBN 978-3-031-48868-9

<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-48869-6>

ISSN 2947-5031 (electronic)

ISBN 978-3-031-48869-6 (eBook)

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I dedicate this book to my grandma, Elena, who spent her professional career administering for some of the names appearing the most in the text. Her work and commitment, as well as that of her colleagues, is most certainly embedded in the achievements of Macedonian sociology.

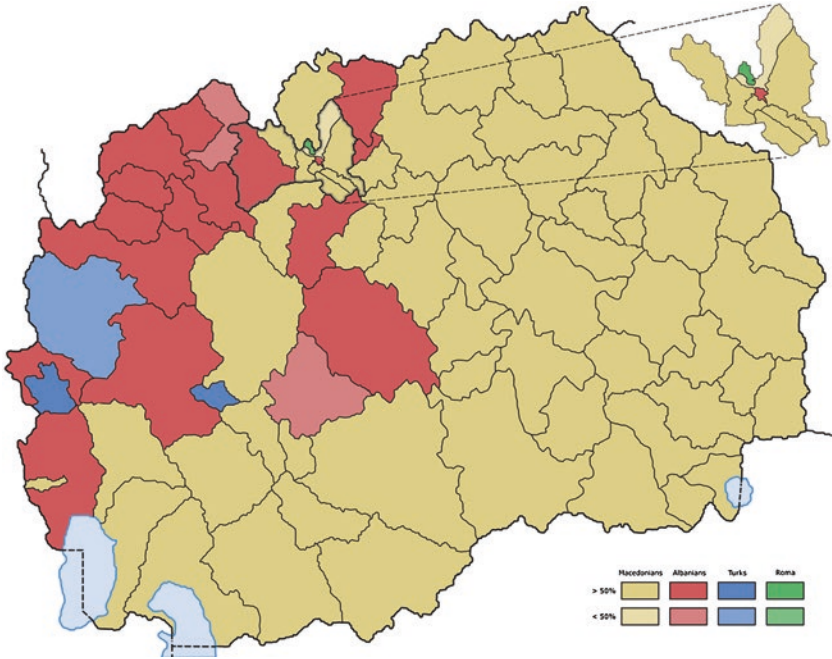
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Map 1 The Balkan Peninsula in 1914



Map 2 Macedonia in socialist Yugoslavia, 1945–1991



Map 3 Ethnic Map of North Macedonia, 2021 census

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank Professor Marta Bucholc for her inspiration to write this text and her incredible support all the way to its completion. I am very much indebted to Professors Ivana Spasić, Marian Niezgoda, and Ljupčo S. Risteski who provided me with information and feedback of paramount importance. The final version would not be the same without the insights of Professors Karolina Bielenin-Lenczowska and Jolanta Sujecka, as well as the comments of Wiktor Marzec, Darko Leitner-Stojanov, and Petar Todorov. To all of them, I am beyond grateful.

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to a number of experts and professors—Anna Engelking, Lidija Georgieva, Mirjana Maleska, Mimoza Nestorova-Tomić, Emilija Simoska, Vlado Kambovski, Konstantin Minoski, Ali Pajaziti, Ilo Trajkovski, and Stefan Troebst—from whom I learned much about various episodes of the history of the Macedonian sociology during the past several years. Indeed, as a postgraduate sociology student in Budapest and Warsaw coming from North Macedonia, I was very interested in certain episodes of Macedonian intellectual history, including sociology and sociologists, before the idea of compiling a more comprehensive review grew on me. One such episode which kept me academically busy for two years was the first large-scale social study conducted in post-earthquake Skopje in the mid-1960s by a team of Polish and Macedonian experts, for which I received a generous research grant from the Polish National Science Centre in 2019 (2019/33/N/HS3/02209).

A large portion of the materials for this text was gathered during the past few years, especially in the course of the duration of the above research grant. Here, I would like to acknowledge the help of the librarians and

archivists in North Macedonia—most notably at the Skopje-based Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, the Institute of Sociology, the Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research, the Institute of History, the Institute of Geography, the Faculty of Law “Iustinianus Primus,” and the National and University Library “St Clement of Ohrid”—the Vera and Donald Blinken Open Society Archives in Budapest, the Library of the Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe in Leipzig, the Jagiellonian Library in Kraków, the Library of the Łódź University, and Warsaw’s National Library and the Archive of the Polish Academy of Sciences’ Institute of Philosophy and Sociology. I am also immensely grateful to Dora Bojanovska Popovska, Elena Mujoska Trpevska, Ivana Hadžievska, Katerina Kolozova, Adela Hincu, Kire Šarlamano, Dejan Donev, and Goran Kitevski who helped me obtain data and materials.

I would like to express my gratitude to the organizers of the conference “Sociological perspective on contemporary post-Yugoslav societies,” which took place in late May 2023 in Belgrade, for the opportunity to present a segment of this text to a very well-informed public. I also extend my thanks to the academic and ancillary staff of the Centre for Advanced Study in Sofia and Tchavdar Marinov, for agreeing to host the first discussion of the book in the late spring of 2024.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends for all the support needed to prepare one’s first monograph in English.

All the shortcomings in the text are exclusively mine.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

All the wording pertaining to Macedonia is used in accordance with the 2018 Prespa Agreement between Greece and the Republic of Macedonia.

The transliteration from Macedonian Cyrillic to Latin script is per the ISO/R9: 1968 system. I used the same system to transliterate from Serbian and Bulgarian Cyrillic alphabets. All the translations to English in the text are mine, if not stated otherwise.

Several other linguistic aspects bear political connotations and demand upfront clarifications. Such is the case with the surnames of some of the figures active in the interwar period when the Slavic Macedonian vernacular was not yet standardized. Many of them Macedonianized their surnames after the Second World War, usually changing the suffix *-ić* to *-ski* or *-ov*. Moreover, some of them kept the *-ić* form in its Macedonian version *-ik*. Others published under Serbo-Croatian transcription of their names and surnames in the early post-war period (sometimes even in Macedonian). For the sake of consistency, I decided to stick to their own articulations of their names and surnames as per the published materials in different periods, in the majority of cases in their authorship. I believe that this approach is more informative as it allows the reader to grasp both the factual situation and the individual decisions, while I certainly refrain from implying any ethnic or other sort of affiliation.

A similar situation involves the surnames of the non-Macedonians in the book. In several obvious cases, I kept the Serbo-Croatian and the other original transcriptions; nonetheless, I provided the Macedonian transcriptions of their surnames if they were published in Macedonia. Hence, some authors might appear with two versions of their surnames in the body of the text, as references, and in the list of references.

Praise for *A History of Macedonian Sociology*

“Due to their contextual closeness to the many varieties of post-1945 Marxism-Leninism—Stalinism, Maoism, Trotskyism, Titoism, etc. —social sciences under state-socialism carry with them mixed blessings: On the one hand and exactly due to this proximity, they offer ample career chances in the political realm. Yet, on the other hand, any deviation from the (currently) “correct” ideological line by scholarly arguments contains the risk of severe sanctions. This the more so when class ideology is blended with ethnic nationalism(s), as in the Macedonian case. Here, sociologists like economists, political scientists and members of the legal profession were needed by the ruling communists to prove that their ideology-based politics provided the desired results in the form of a socialist society, economy, law and culture. But at the same time critical academic theories and research-based findings were suppressed—as were their authors. A major result of Naum Trajanovski’s meticulous analysis is the striking professional “universality” of Macedonian sociologists and other social scientists when it comes to the field humanities, in particular with regard to historiography and institutions of historical research. Due to their ideological corset, sociologists were obviously considered to be more reliable than historians when it came to the politically correct interpretation of Macedonian national history as the basis of Macedonian national identity. This pioneering study on the three periods of Macedonian sociology—pre-1945, state-socialism, and post-communism—amply demonstrates the critical potential of the discipline under changing political conditions as well as its fixation on what still may be called a “Macedonian Question.””

—Stefan Troebst, Professor Emeritus of East European
Cultural History, *Leipzig University, Germany*

“This meticulously crafted book invites you to explore the vicissitudes of Macedonian sociology. Delving into carefully reconstructed historical contexts and theoretical frameworks, it unveils the transformations of Macedonian social thought based on extensive original data. A unique resource for researchers and students, the book spans over a century of intellectual history in a compelling scholarly narrative.”

—Marta Bucholc, *Professor of Sociology, Faculty of Sociology,
University of Warsaw, Poland*

“Synthesizing a large amount of diverse data, Trajanovski skillfully weaves the threads of history of a national sociology in the periphery of Europe. The book has something to offer to not only those working on the region of South East Europe, but also those interested in the history of ideas, especially the role of social scientific expertise in modernizing projects, as well as the contribution of intellectuals to nation-building, in the context of actually-existing socialism and postsocialist transformation.”

—Ivana Spasić, *Professor of Sociology, Department of Sociology, University of Belgrade, Serbia*

“The book focuses on three issues—the history of sociological reflection (theoretical and empirical) in Macedonia, the dependence of social sciences on political climate and decisions, and how contemporary Macedonian sociology tried to become independent as a field of research and an academic discipline. It is mapping out the ways in which the University of Skopje tried to offer sociology courses to students of various faculties (geography, law, medicine) and simultaneously to create a field of sociological studies and research units. I was also reminded about my Macedonian colleagues and their efforts to go beyond Macedonia to overcome the sense of peripherality. They used the contacts within scientific organizations such as ISA and ESA, networks of francophone researchers, participation in research networks in the Balkans, and finally, organizing international sociological scientific conferences. That is why Naum Trajanovski's book is worth paying attention to and reading.”

—Marian Niezgoda, *Professor Emeritus of Sociology, Institute of Sociology, Jagiellonian University, Kraków*

“The writing of a history of Macedonian sociology is far from an easy task. The historical turbulences and the (ongoing) contestations of the Macedonian nation and language make it immensely hard to map the continuities of the national sociological thought, and the selection of the relevant topics, people, and institutions which contributed to its development. As a professor in political sciences and a former senior researcher at the Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research in Skopje, as well as a direct witness and participant in the democratic transition of the state and the region, I see Trajanovski's book as a unique and timely contribution to the history of Macedonian sociological ideas.”

—Mirjana Maleska, *Professor of Political Sciences, School of Doctoral Studies, University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius Skopje, North Macedonia*

“Naum Trajanovski’s book *A History of Macedonian Sociology: In Quest for Identity* provides a well-informed, analytical, and amazingly seamless history of Macedonian sociology. He neatly frames the Macedonian sociological developments in the 20th and the early 21st century as a continued pursuit of a disciplinary identity tightly connected with the deliberations about the groupist identities in the Macedonian society in formation.”

—Ilo Trajkovski, *Professor of Sociology, Institute of Sociology, University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius Skopje, North Macedonia*

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Naum Trajanovski an adjunct at the Faculty of Sociology at the University of Warsaw, holds a PhD in Sociology from the Polish Academy of Sciences. In the past few years, he has coordinated a research project about the history of the social survey in post-earthquake Skopje (1964–65) and authored and edited books about Macedonian and Balkan sociology and politics of memory.