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## **R**ESearching the Yugoslav Secret Police in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina: Sources, Historiography, Publicist Writing

### **Introduction**

The security and intelligence system of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija – SFRJ) was a part of the repressive system of the Yugoslav communist regime, and during the existence of that regime (1945–1990) free scholarly research of that system was not possible. The decades-long denial of the crimes committed by the new communist government in 1945 cast a shadow over the already secretive political police and other security systems of the Yugoslav communists. On the other hand, the opponents of communism, then primarily in exile, created a sensationalist image in which the fierce repressive system was exaggerated and mystified. Even after the fall of communism, free scientific research did not occur right away. Only with the onset of the new millennium did a more favourable climate for unburdened historical research appear.

The goals of this paper are to give a short overview of Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian historiography and publicist writing (journalism), including memoir literature, which deal with the topic of the security and intelligence services of the former SFRJ. Another goal is to report on the state and availability of archives and archival sources relevant to research on this same topic in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH) and to point out the difficulties that historians and other researchers have faced or are still facing. In this article, I will also provide an outline of recent

post-Yugoslav historiography. Foreign historiographies have provided rare but valuable academic contributions to research on the topic. Also, this paper will give a brief overview of the structure and organisation of the security-intelligence system of the SFRJ.

This article does not have the ambition to cover all the historiographical and journalistic production of all post-Yugoslav countries, because that would require much more space than available in this one article. As regards, however, historiographies in other post-Yugoslav countries, those in Slovenia and Serbia published the most so far, while much less has been published in Montenegro, North Macedonia and Kosovo. I expect to soon publish a similar overview of the relevant historiographies of those countries including commenting on the issue of the availability of their archival sources.

### **The development and organisation of the security-intelligence system of communist Yugoslavia**

The security and intelligence system of the SFRJ underwent change during its existence. In the late socialism period, it constituted a complicated system consisting of several hierarchies and several different levels. This system is often identified with one of the services best known by the abbreviation UDBA (Uprava državne bezbednosti – Administration of State Security), which was only one of the names of a service that changed its structure, scope and name over time. The secret service of communist Yugoslavia was originally created on the model of the Soviet NKVD (Народный комиссариат внутренних дел – The People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs) during the Second World War.

The building of the security and intelligence system of communist Yugoslavia began in the beginning of the war on the territory of Yugoslavia (1941). In Croatia, during the war, the military and security-intelligence bodies of the partisan movement, i.e. the National Liberation Movement, took the matter of reporting seriously. This was done through various intelligence centres (Obavještajni centri – OC) that were established at the end of 1942. In addition to the Main Intelligence Center (Glavni obavještajni centar – GOC) of Croatia, there were auxiliary intelligence centres, regional intelligence centres and local intelligence centres.<sup>1</sup> Intelligence centres were the predecessor of the OZNA – the Department for People’s Protection (Odjeljenje za zaštitu naroda), which

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<sup>1</sup> Z. Radelić, *Obavještajni centri, Ozna i Udba u Hrvatskoj (1942.–1954.)*, vol. 1 (Zagreb, 2019), pp. 14–15.

was founded in May 1944. The system was transformed into a unified security force like the one which existed in the Soviet Union. This reorganisation was done at the suggestion of the Soviet military mission, which was located at the Yugoslav Supreme Headquarters, the highest military organisation of the Yugoslav communists.<sup>2</sup> At its establishment in May 1944, the OZNA had four departments, and two more were formed in 1945.<sup>3</sup>

In March 1946, the security-intelligence system was reorganised. Two services were established from the former OZNA – the Administration of State Security (UDBA), which was to focus on the civilian sphere, and the Counterintelligence Service (Kontraobavještajna služba – KOS), which was made part of the Yugoslav Army (JA).<sup>4</sup> The UDBA managed state security and was one of the main institutions in the security system of the country. It was regarded as a secret police force and was under the authority of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The UDBA underwent reorganisation over time. Important changes, for example, occurred at the time of the conflict with the Informbiro (Cominform),<sup>5</sup> when UDBA centers were established to carry out intelligence or counterintelligence tasks. It was only in 1952 that the final structure of the UDBA was established.<sup>6</sup> Besides the UDBA and KOS, there were two other services formed at the federal level: the Military Intelligence Service (the Second Directorate of the General Staff of the Yugoslav People's Army) and the Service for Research, Analysis and Documentation created in 1952 as a part of the Ministry/Secretariat of Foreign Affairs.<sup>7</sup>

Up until 1966, the UDBA was organised into eight departments: 1st dept – intelligence work abroad; 2nd dept – fight against the internal enemy; 3rd dept – counterintelligence; 4th dept – technique, archive, documentation; 5th dept – material and financial operations; 6th dept – secu-

<sup>2</sup> J. Vodušek Starič, *Kako su komunisti osvojili vlast 1944–1946* (Zagreb, 2006).

<sup>3</sup> Radelić, *Obavještajni centri, Ozna i Udba*, vol. 1, pp. 37–39.

<sup>4</sup> The Yugoslav Army was later renamed the Yugoslav People's Army (Jugoslavenska narodna armija – JNA).

<sup>5</sup> The Yugoslav conflict with the Cominform was a conflict between Josip Broz Tito and Joseph Stalin. Although Yugoslavia was a loyal ally of the USSR, in 1948 Stalin attacked the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia as “undemocratic and bourgeois”. The conflict was presented as an ideological dispute, but it was caused by a geopolitical struggle in the Balkans and by the fact that Tito was not ready to follow all of Stalin's instructions. For more on the Tito–Stalin split see: I. Banac, *With Stalin Against Tito: Cominformist Splits in Yugoslav Communism* (Ithaca–London, 1988).

<sup>6</sup> S. Kovač, B. Dimitrijević, I. Popović, *Slučaj Ranković: Iz arhiva KOS-a* (Zagreb, 2016), pp. 24–25.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

rity of the party and state leadership; 7th dept – cryptography; and the 8th dept – personnel affairs.<sup>8</sup>

New organisational changes took place from the beginning of 1967. The UDBA was renamed the State Security Service (in Croatian: Služba državne sigurnosti – SDS; in Serbian: Služba državne bezbednosti – SDB). This reorganisation took place after the political fall of the previously unchallenged Aleksandar Ranković in 1966, who was accused by his colleagues, primarily Tito, of turning the UDBA into a system that went beyond the legal framework.<sup>9</sup> Afterwards, the activity of the UDBA came under greater control, and its methods and scope changed to some extent. It became decentralised, so that, apart from the Federation, each federal unit, that is, each republic within its republican borders, was responsible for security within its borders. The federal SDB was comprised of 12 administrations and retained such a structure until the collapse of Yugoslavia.<sup>10</sup>

The SDS at the republic level was organised according to the principles of the federal SDB and consisted of several departments. The three main ones were dealing with foreign intelligence services, “hostile” emigration, and the “internal enemy”.<sup>11</sup> The centre of the SDS of the Socialist Republic of Croatia (Socijalistička Republika Hrvatska – SRH) was located in Zagreb, and that republic’s SDS included ten regional centres (Bjelovar, Gospić, Karlovac, Osijek, Pula, Rijeka, Sisak, Split, Varaždin and Zagreb) and five branches (Dubrovnik, Slavonski Brod, Šibenik, Vinkovci and Zadar).<sup>12</sup>

The Federal Secretariat for Internal Affairs was responsible for the work of the federal SDB. As a member of the Government of SFRJ,<sup>13</sup> the Federal Secretary for Internal Affairs was formally subordinated to the president of the Government but in reality it was subordinate to the Presidency of the SFRJ and the Presidency of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. The SDSs at the level of the

<sup>8</sup> G. Akrap, “Mač i štit u rukama partije – represivni sustav u funkciji oblikovanja korpusa javnog znanja”, *National Security and the Future* 4 (2010), p. 196.

<sup>9</sup> More on this see: Kovač, Dimitrijević, Popović, *Slučaj Ranković*.

<sup>10</sup> Akrap, “Mač i štit u rukama partije”, p. 207.

<sup>11</sup> N. Bukvić, T. Shek Brnardić, *Arheologija otpora: otkrivanje zbirke kulturne opozicije u socijalističkoj Hrvatskoj* (Zagreb, 2018), p. 82.

<sup>12</sup> D. Mikšić, “HR-HDA-1561 Služba državne sigurnosti Republičkog sekretarijata za unutrašnje poslove Socijalističke Republike Hrvatske”, in *Iseljeništvo: Vodič kroz fondove i zbirke Hrvatskoga državnog arhiva*, ed. Vlatka Lemić (Zagreb, 2015), p. 406; N. Bukvić, *Služba državne sigurnosti Republičkog sekretarijata za unutrašnje poslove Socijalističke Republike Hrvatske*, COURAGE registry, 2018, <http://courage.btk.mta.hu/courage/individual/n32435?hr>, accessed 28 March 2021.

<sup>13</sup> The official name of the Government was the Federal Executive Council (Savezno izvršno vijeće – SIV).

republics were subordinate to the political leadership of their republics.<sup>14</sup> The federal SDB oversaw those at the republic and provincial levels and had the task of coordinating their activities.<sup>15</sup>

The SDS was a service completely subordinated to the interests of the party leadership and its activities had the characteristics of a political police force, while the state itself could be characterised as a one-party state. The Rulebook of the SDS from 1975 clearly emphasises that the Service performs its tasks in adherence to the Program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia.<sup>16</sup> The state security service was a defensive and offensive instrument, a “sword and shield” that the League of Communists used in the fight against class enemies and any other enemy that wanted to overthrow the communist regime.<sup>17</sup>

Much less is known about the structure of other security services, those within the Army and that of the Federal Secretariat for Foreign Affairs, but the basic principles and motives certainly were the same. The main goal of the entire state and military security system was to enable the League of Communists to remain in power in Yugoslavia. All other goals of the Yugoslav security and intelligence system stemmed from this basic premise.

## Archival records (status and availability in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina)

In texts on the methods and organisation of the UDBA<sup>18</sup> it is stated that collaborators (informants) constitute the fundamental instrument of the UDBA’s activities. The exact number of collaborators is not yet known, but it was certainly a huge number. The extensive network of informants created an atmosphere of fear and mistrust in society at the time, as it was often the case that informants were people close to those who were being investigated or processed by the secret police. On the other hand, after

<sup>14</sup> J. Mihaljević, *Kako je operirala Udba? Operacija “Paromlin” i sudbina Vinka Markovića* (Zagreb, 2022).

<sup>15</sup> Akrap, “Mač i štit u rukama partije”, p. 206; C. Axboe Nielsen, *Yugoslavia and Political Assassinations: The History and Legacy of Tito’s Campaign against the Emigres* (London – New York, 2020), pp. 20–21.

<sup>16</sup> ARS-1931, RSNZ SRS, box. 1189, Pravila o radu Službe državne bezbednosti, Beograd, 1 August 1975, p. 2.

<sup>17</sup> Akrap, “Mač i štit u rukama partije”, p. 168.

<sup>18</sup> Because the expression UDBA is widespread not only in public use but also in the sphere of historiography, I sometimes use the term UDBA in a broader sense, and thus meaning not only the organisation that existed until 1967 but in reference to secret police for the whole period.

the collapse of the communist system, this matter became a burdensome issue for post-Yugoslav societies. Finding out the truth about who worked for the UDBA and other parts of the security-intelligence system became (and remains) a delicate issue in all post-Yugoslav states. As part of that issue, the question of the archives of the former system is often brought up.

The problem of the availability of the UDBA's archival records is a reflection of the transition of post-Yugoslav states and societies, which was rarely carried out in the best possible way.<sup>19</sup> The archival records of the former security and intelligence services are not fully available in all of the post-Yugoslav countries. In some of those countries, those records are relatively available, in others, they are mostly unavailable, while in some they are completely unavailable. However, what all these countries have in common is that in each of them there are discussions, to a greater or lesser extent, about secret archives.<sup>20</sup>

Archival records created by the security and intelligence services in every society is particularly sensitive since these documents contain much information that can be important for national security. In the case of the countries created by the breakup of Yugoslavia, an additional problem was that it was a secret service of a totalitarian communist regime whose numerous employees continued to work in the security and intelligence services of the newly democratic states. Those records could not be publicly available primarily for the reason of not revealing the people who were still working in the system. In addition, there was the problem of the illegal and unprofessional activities of "Udbaši hunters",<sup>21</sup> unprofessional persons who, for various reasons, complicated and politicised the topic of the state terror of the former Yugoslav regime. Their activities caused a more rigorous and cautious approach of the archival institutions regarding UDBA records, making it more difficult for professional historians to access those records.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> D. Matić, "Dostupnost gradiva Službe državne bezbjednosti (SDB) u Sloveniji: od zakonske regulative 2006. do referenduma o arhivskom zakonu 2011.", in *Arhivi i politika: 4. kongres hrvatskih arhivista*, ed. S. Babić (Zagreb, 2014), p. 2.

<sup>20</sup> On the question of the availability of archival records created by the communist regime in Croatia, as well as the public treatment of the historical heritage of that time, see: J. Mihaljević, T. Shek Brnardić, "The Communist Legacy and Public Discourse in Croatia: The Examples of the Archival Collections in the Courage Registry", *Arhivski vjesnik* 1 (2020), pp. 33–56.

<sup>21</sup> "Udbaši" stands for the members and informants of the UDBA.

<sup>22</sup> See: I. Lučić, "Sigurnosno obavještajne službe u Bosni i Hercegovini", *National Security and the Future* 1 (2001), <https://www.nsf-journal.hr/Online-Issues/Focus/id/1103/sigurnosno-obavjetajne-slube-u-bosni-i-hercegovini-brzbornik-svezak-1-2001#.YzR-sknZByM8>, accessed 28 March 2021.

## Croatia

In Croatia, two archival fonds were particularly important for research into the security and intelligence system of socialist Yugoslavia; namely the fond containing the material of the OZNA and the fond containing the material of the UDBA/SDS, both of which are located in the Croatian State Archives (Hrvatski državni arhiv – HDA) in Zagreb.<sup>23</sup>

In Croatia, a big step in the availability of archival materials of the former security services was the creation of the OZNA archival fond in 2003.<sup>24</sup> Most of the records in this fond came to the HDA through acquisitions in 1995 and 1997 from the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia. Another large amount of OZNA records were received from the former Institute for the History of the Labour Movement of Croatia. In 2010, the protective microfilming of the entire fond was completed and it was made available to researchers.<sup>25</sup>

Another important archival fond is that of the SDS for Croatia, which contains abundant archival material. This fond was formed after the public authorities and the security and intelligence services of the Republic of Croatia handed over records on several occasions in the period from 1991 to 2015. Most of the files were received from the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia in acquisitions in 1993, 2000, and 2001.<sup>26</sup> The last significant acquisition was in 2015 when the Security Intelligence Agency (Sigurnosno obavještajna agencija – SOA) of the Republic of Croatia handed over a large number of documents. Most of the documents were classified.<sup>27</sup> One of the interesting parts of this fond is the segment that contains about 68,800 files of people who were monitored by the

<sup>23</sup> HDA-1491, Odjeljenje zaštite naroda za Hrvatsku; HDA-1561, Služba državne sigurnosti Republičkog sekretarijata za unutrašnje poslove Socijalističke Republike Hrvatske.

<sup>24</sup> D. Mikšić, *Odjeljenje zaštite naroda za Hrvatsku (OZNA): /1923/ 1944–1946 /1961/: Analički inventar fonda* (Zagreb, 2003). See also: *eadem*, “Arhiv OZN-e s osvrtom na godinu 1945.”, in *1945. – Razdjelnica hrvatske povijesti: zbornik radova sa znanstvenog skupa održanog u Hrvatskom institutu za povijest*, eds. N. Kisić Kolanović, M. Jareb, K. Spehnyak (Zagreb, 2006), pp. 473–490.

<sup>25</sup> *Odjeljenje zaštite naroda za Hrvatsku (fond)*, Arhinet, [http://arhinet.arhiv.hr/details.aspx?ItemId=1\\_5378](http://arhinet.arhiv.hr/details.aspx?ItemId=1_5378), accessed 28 March 2021.

<sup>26</sup> N. Bukvić, *Akvizicija, preuzimanje Zbirke dosjea Službe državne sigurnosti za Hrvatsku od strane Hrvatskoga državnog arhiva*, COURAGE Registry, 2018, <http://hr.cultural-opposition.eu/registry/?uri=http://courage.btk.mta.hu/courage/individual/n59617&type=events>, accessed 28 March 2021.

<sup>27</sup> *Idem*, *Deklasifikacija podataka zbirke dosjea Službe državne sigurnosti za Hrvatsku*, COURAGE Registry, 2018, <http://hr.cultural-opposition.eu/registry/?lang=hr&uri=http://courage.btk.mta.hu/courage/individual/n42932&type=events>, accessed 28 March 2021.

SDS. These were persons whose actions were assessed as dangerous for the political and security system of the country.

On the other hand, it should be kept in mind that the records of the OZNA and the UDBA/SDS that are kept today in the HDA do not contain every document that was created within those services. First of all, numerous documents were destroyed long before they became the object of interest of historians. There were regular procedures that stipulated the periodic destruction of records. Also, for the most sensitive activity of these services, such as the liquidations of political opponents, we can forget about explicit evidence about the perpetrators and the orders of UDBA liquidations, because in these actions very rarely a written trace was left. Either such was destroyed, or it never existed in written form.<sup>28</sup> If such materials do still exist, those documents might be found only in the archive of the Federal UDBA due to the fact that only the Federal UDBA/SDS was able to conduct this kind of aggressive activities. This archive is now in possession of Serbia.

There is also the problem of the “cleaning” of the archives before the collapse of the communist system and before its transfer to the HDA. According to the statements of witnesses, mostly former employees of the Yugoslav secret services, the destruction of the SDS records took place on several occasions in the years before and immediately after the first multi-party elections in Croatia.<sup>29</sup> Witnesses from Bosnia and Herzegovina speak of a similar destruction of documentation in the republic headquarters of the SDB in Sarajevo.<sup>30</sup> Some members of the security and intelligence services in Croatia mention in their memoirs that the Service itself destroyed certain records during the democratic changes in 1990.<sup>31</sup>

The discussion about documents that have disappeared mostly pertain to the files of UDBA/SDS employees and collaborators and other groups of informants. This question was a controversial topic shortly after the collapse of communism, and it still is today.<sup>32</sup> In Croatia, the topic of the avail-

<sup>28</sup> Axboe Nielsen, *Yugoslavia and Political Assassinations*, p. 9.

<sup>29</sup> B. Vukušić, “Predgovor”, in *Dosje 240271: Udbin dosje o Vici Vukojeviću*, ed. B. Esih (Zagreb, 2015), pp. XXIII–XXIV.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> J. Boljkovac, *Istina mora izaći van... Sjećanja i zapisi prvog ministra unutarnjih poslova neovisne Hrvatske* (Zagreb, 2009), p. 327; J. Manolić, *Špijuni i domovina: moja borba za suvereniju i socijalnu Hrvatsku* (Zagreb, 2016), p. 245. For more information on the “cleaning” of the SDS archives, concerning similar events in other Yugoslav republics, see: Radelić, *Obavještajni centri, Ozna i Udba*, vol. 1, pp. 13–25; cf. Axboe Nielsen, *Yugoslavia and Political Assassinations*, p. 40.

<sup>32</sup> O. Žunec, D. Domišljanović, *Obavještajno-sigurnosne službe Republike Hrvatske: stanje i načela preustroja za razdoblje konsolidacije demokracije* (Zagreb, 2000), pp. 55–57.



ability of archives from the communist period was present almost before every political election, only to be forgotten after the elections. However, a couple of years ago this issue found itself on the agenda of parliamentary sessions and there occurred a positive shift towards making that archival material available. With the adoption of the Law on Amendments to the Law on Archives, at the beginning of May 2017, many restrictions and regulations that prevented full access to archival material in the previous period were abolished. A year later, a completely new Law on Archives was passed, which confirmed the positive developments.<sup>33</sup>

Certainly one of the more significant events, even before these legal changes, was the change in the classification of a large part of SDS records. Namely, in September 2015, the SOA decided to declassify SDS records located in the HDA. As stated in the Agency's report for 2016, the SOA intended to make these records available to the scientific and general public and to provide a better insight into that period of Croatian history.<sup>34</sup> The year 2015 was particularly dynamic in terms of public pressure for the declassification of those records, which situation can be connected to the publicity of the Perković case.<sup>35</sup>

The use of SDS records before declassification in 2015 was possible, but also limited in many ways. The materials created by the work of the SDS, including personal files, were used following a special rulebook on the manner of providing access to files created by the work of the SDS. Since 1993, historians and other researchers have been able to use the files, but they had to submit a special request and get the consent of the people to whom the files refer or, if that person died, their family members; they also needed to get the consent of the SOA.<sup>36</sup> In practice, this was too big an obstacle for historians, and they rarely managed to get those files. Since the restrictions on the availability of these records in Croatia have been lifted, we have witnessed an increased use of this archival fond.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>33</sup> K. Markežić, *Prikaz arhivskoga normativnog uređenja u Hrvatskoj s naglaskom na razdoblje 1997.–2018.*, in *Arhivska struka u novom normativnom okruženju*, ed. R. Zaričić (Zagreb, 2020), pp. 7–39.

<sup>34</sup> Bukvić, *Deklasifikacija podataka zbirke dosjea*.

<sup>35</sup> From 2014, the High Land Court in Munich tried Josip Perković and Zdravko Mustač for assisting in the murder of Croatian emigrant Stjepan Đureković in Germany in 1983. At that time, Mustač was the head of the Croatian branch of the SDS, while Perković was the head of the Second Department of the Croatian SDS in charge of emigration. They were sentenced to life imprisonment in 2016.

<sup>36</sup> D. Mikšić, "Postupanje s klasificiranim zapisima središnjih državnih tijela socijalističkoga razdoblja u Hrvatskom državnom arhivu – regulativa i praksa", in *Dostupnost arhivskog gradiva*, ed. S. Babić (Zagreb, 2014), pp. 111–112.

<sup>37</sup> See: Mihaljević, Shek Brnardić, "The Communist Legacy and Public Discourse in Croatia".

Declassification in 2015 and changes to the law on archives in 2017 led to a kind of “boom” in Croatian historiography, as more and more was written about the Security Service and its activities, which will be discussed in more detail in the chapter on historiography.

The records of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Croatia<sup>38</sup> are also important for the research of the history of the security and intelligence system. Also relevant is the archive of the Croatian Memorial-Documentation Center of the Homeland War in Zagreb, which contains unsorted UDBA records confiscated after the liberation of the occupied territory of Croatia in 1995. The aforementioned centre submitted the records to the Croatian State Archives. The fonds of local state archives that preserve the materials of the former Ministry of Internal Affairs are also valuable.<sup>39</sup>

## Bosnia and Herzegovina

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the archive of the SDS is still located in the Intelligence and Security Agency (Obavještajno-sigurnosna agencija – OSA), but it is not complete. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, after the fall of communism and the formation of the new democratically elected government, the SDS leadership was replaced and, according to Mirsad Abazović, the winning political parties agreed on the distribution of leading positions in the SDS. Nevertheless, many leading positions were again staffed by the old SDS cadre, and they introduced old practices into the new organisation. The only change was that the political influence on the security and intelligence services was divided between three political parties. Abazović sees all this as a consequence of the fact that war was just around the corner. He also claims that most of the SDS’s secret documents were “grabbed” by the three sides in the early 1990s. In 1992, part of the employees, as well as part of the archives of the once unified republican service, went to Republika Srpska, the other went to the Croatian community (from August 1993 the Republic) of Herceg-Bosnia, and now they are inaccessible and their exact location today unknown.<sup>40</sup>

Bosnia and Herzegovina was divided into the Federation of BH and Republika Srpska by the Dayton Agreement.<sup>41</sup> At the time, there were

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<sup>38</sup> HDA-1220, CK SKH.

<sup>39</sup> Radelić, *Obavještajni centri, Ozna i Udba*, vol. 1, p. 14.

<sup>40</sup> For more on this subject see: M. Abazović, *Državna bezbjednost: uvod i temeljni pojmovi* (Sarajevo, 2002); cf. I. Lučić, *Sigurnosna politika Socijalističke Republike Bosne i Hercegovine 1945.–1990.*, (Zagreb: PhD thesis, University of Zagreb, 2005).

<sup>41</sup> The Dayton Peace Agreement did not solve the status of Brčko. The Brčko District was established only when the arbitration agreement was finalised in 1999, which defined

two services in the Federation of BH – the Croatian one was the National Security Service (Služba nacionalne sigurnosti – SNS), and the other (the Bosniak one) was the Agency for Research and Documentation (Agencija za istraživanje i dokumentaciju – AID). In the Republic of Srpska, there was the State Security Service.<sup>42</sup>

The largest part of the “secret archives” of the SDS of Bosnia and Herzegovina that remained in Sarajevo is not in the State Archives but the headquarters of the Intelligence and Security Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina (OSA). However, part of the documents of the UDBA<sup>43</sup> from an earlier period were handed over to some archives in the early 2000s, such as the records related to the Cazin uprising<sup>44</sup> which were handed over to the Archives of the Una-Sana Canton, or all of the records from the period of the Informbiro (1948). There is a certain procedure if you want to access other documents. You need to write a request to the OSA and the director of OSA decides whether those documents will be made available for research.<sup>45</sup> This, of course, greatly limits and demotivates historians who want to deal with the subject of secret services in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## Contemporary historiography and publicist writing in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

With the collapse of the communist system in Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, the Yugoslav secret services could then be openly discussed, but the problem for historiography still remained the unavailability of archival material. What further slowed down research into the history of the security-intelligence services was the fact that some of the countries created by the breakup of Yugoslavia were at war, and thus relations from

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the Brčko District as a self-governing administrative unit and a condominium of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska.

<sup>42</sup> Lučić, *Sigurnosna politika Socijalističke Republike Bosne i Hercegovine*.

<sup>43</sup> Some data suggests there were around 70,000 documents. S. Čabaravdić, *Otvaranje tajnih dosjea na Balkanu*, Radio Slobodna Evropa, 15 November 2007, <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/719534.html>, accessed 28 March 2021.

<sup>44</sup> The Cazin uprising was an unsuccessful uprising against the Yugoslav communist government that took place in northwestern Bosnia and neighbouring areas in eastern Lika and Kordun. The main cause of the uprising was dissatisfaction with the policy of forced collectivisation implemented by the Yugoslav communist government after the Second World War.

<sup>45</sup> Statement of Mirsad Abazović on the TV show *Kontekst: Tajni arhivi nekadašnjih obavještajnih službi*, Al Jazeera Balkans, 14 February 2017, <https://balkans.aljazeera.net/videos/2017/2/14/kontekst-tajni-arhivi-nekadasnjih-obavjestajnih-sluzbi>, accessed 28 March 2021.

the time of SFRJ were interrupted for a long time, which also meant that intellectual and scientific exchange was at a minimum level.

In the 1990s, information about the activities of the secret services began to appear, mainly in the sphere of journalism and memoir literature, and, apart from a few exceptions that included the publication of original documents, there were no significant developments in historiography. The first decade of the new millennium saw an increase in the publication of memoir literature and publicist writing, including more and more frequent academic scientific endeavours. In the last ten years, however, there has been something of a boost in academic production in Croatia, which is primarily a consequence of the much greater availability of archival fonds relevant to the research of the secret services, and due to the fact that some former members of the intelligence community retired and became members of the academic community.

## Academic monographs

At the turn of the millennium, an academic book was published in Croatia the introduction of which touched upon the issue of intelligence services from the time of socialism. In 2000, Ozren Žunec and Darko Domišljanović published a book on the state of the intelligence and security services of the Republic of Croatia, in which they gave a short overview of the organisation and character of the secret services from the time of socialism.<sup>46</sup> In the same year, at the Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Zagreb, Josip Jurčević defended his doctoral dissertation on the repressiveness of the communist system in Croatia in 1945, which largely focused on the activities of the OZNA.<sup>47</sup>

Croatian historiography gave birth to the first academic monograph on the activities of the communist secret services in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH). Moreover, historiography and journalism dealing with the security and intelligence services of socialist Bosnia and Herzegovina are mostly the product of authors from Croatia and from amongst the Croats of BH origin. The first academic undertaking of the analysis of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian branch of the security services was Ivica Lučić's PhD, which was defended in 2005 at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Zagreb.<sup>48</sup> Lučić analysed the security-intelligence system in BH from its

<sup>46</sup> Žunec, Domišljanović, *Obavještajno-sigurnosne službe Republike Hrvatske*.

<sup>47</sup> It was also published in book form: J. Jurčević, *Bleiburg: Jugoslavenski poratni zločini nad Hrvatima* (Zagreb, 2005). Jurčević also published a book on the Perković case. See: *idem*, *Slučaj Perković: Spašavanje zločinačke budućnost* (Zagreb, 2013).

<sup>48</sup> Lučić, *Sigurnosna politika Socijalističke Republike Bosne i Hercegovine*.

creation in 1944 until the end of the 20th century, especially focusing on the transformation of that system in the period when Yugoslavia stopped being a one-party state and broke up into various states with multi-party systems. He also discussed the conditions and background of the collapse of the socialist security system on the eve of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and described the emergence of new security-intelligence services.<sup>49</sup>

Mirsad Abazović published a book about the State Security of BH and the Cazin rebellion of 1950.<sup>50</sup> As a member of the security services of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Abazović had access to SDB files and used them in writing his book.<sup>51</sup> He explained the role of state bodies in the organisation of the Cazin rebellion. The book also contains numerous dispatches and reports made by the members of the UDBA.

In 2014, William Klinger published a book on OZNA repression.<sup>52</sup> Klinger's attempt to synthesise the main features of the functioning of the OZNA was accompanied by some archival documents, but the book is written in a popular style and lacks in-depth elaboration.

The book that has so far offered the most systematic and complete presentation of the structure, personnel and activities of the Yugoslav secret services is Zdenko Radelić's two-volume book on intelligence centers, the OZNA and UDBA in Croatia from 1942 until 1954.<sup>53</sup> The book is the result of Radelić's long-term academic work on the subject of the security and intelligence services of socialist Yugoslavia. Convinced that many readers are not familiar with his works in scientific journals, Radelić decided to collect almost all of his academic articles on the Yugoslav communist political-security-intelligence system and services in Croatia in one place and publish them as a monograph.<sup>54</sup> Radelić presented the

<sup>49</sup> Lučić is one of the few authors who research the security-intelligence structure in Bosnia and Herzegovina. See, for example, his recent work: *idem*, "Katolička crkva u Bosni i Hercegovini u dokumentima uprave državne bezbjednosti pedesetih godina 20. stoljeća", *Croatica Christiana Periodica* 83 (2019), pp. 203–218. In 2022, Lučić published an article and original archival documents in the magazine *Politički zatvorenik* about the previously unknown fact that the famous Croatian poet Vlado Gotovac was arrested and interrogated in Udba in 1952. *Idem*, "Uhićenje Vlade Gotovca u proljeće 1952. godine", *Politički zatvorenik* 291 (2022), pp. 27–48.

<sup>50</sup> M. Abazović, *Državna bezbjednost NR Bosne i Hercegovine i Cazinska buna 1950: činjenice i kontroverze* (Sarajevo, 2009).

<sup>51</sup> I. Lučić, "Security and Intelligence Services in Bosnia and Herzegovina", *National Security and the Future* 2 (2000), pp. 75–104.

<sup>52</sup> W. Klinger, *Teror narodu: Povijest Ozne, Titove političke policije* (Zagreb, 2014); The book was originally published in Italian. Cf. *idem*, *Il terrore del popolo: Storia dell'OZNA, la polizia politica di Tito* (Trieste, 2012).

<sup>53</sup> Radelić, *Obavještajni centri, Ozna i Udba*.

<sup>54</sup> These comprise eight articles published from 2006 to 2017. In addition to adapting the articles and transforming them into logically ordered chapters of this book, there is

important reasons for building a communist repressive system under the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (Komunistička partija Jugoslavije – KPJ), as well as the reasons that influenced the usage of strong repression by military and state bodies against political opponents. Repression included executions, prison sentences, expulsions, confiscation of property, prohibition of political activity and the social marginalisation of disarmed enemies and political opponents. The causes of repression are interwoven, both stemming from each other and interdependent, and the most important is victory in the war, the building and defending of the state, and the carrying out of the revolution. However, according to Radelić, the main reason for the construction of the repressive system was the revolutionary goals of the KPJ. The fact that the KPJ was a banned party during the time of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and that one of its key features was conspiratorial and secret action, strongly influenced the manner in which the KPJ operated. The events of the war from 1941 onwards intensified their efforts to organise the most effective possible system of intelligence and security to protect its ranks and partisan units. Radelić points out that the OZNA/UDBA played a crucial role in the establishment of the communist dictatorship after the war. Whether enemies and political opponents were active or passive, alive or dead, active in the homeland or abroad – records were kept on everyone. Other citizens were also controlled, especially employees and members of mass organisations, such as women’s and youth organisations, as well as individuals that expressed critical opinions. The communist government and its security-intelligence services wanted to have complete insight into its enemy’s activities and political preferences as well concerning the possible dissatisfaction of the state’s citizens so that they could prevent any opposition activity starting from its roots.

The second volume of Radelić’s book contains a list of 7,504 members of the security-intelligence services – intelligence centers, the OZNA and UDBA in Croatia – from the period 1942 – 1954. This is not a complete number of the members of the security-intelligence services in Croatia in that period, since the list created is based on available archival sources, which, as already mentioned, are incomplete. Radelić estimates that at the beginning of the 1950s, the number of employees of the UDBA in Yugoslavia was around 13,000 people.

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a completely new part in which the author reviews the state and availability of sources and literature on the Yugoslav communist political-security-intelligence system and services. Radelić also reviewed the literature published so far, as well as the state of availability of archival sources.

The liberalisation of access to the archival fond of the SDS in Croatia also resulted in an increase in research at local levels. Recently, historian Stjepan Marković published a book about the repression by the OZNA and UDBA in the Cetina area (Dalmatia).<sup>55</sup>

Finally, I must mention my book in which I try to shed light on the manner of operation and methods of the UDBA. I do so by means of a case study – Operation “Paromlin”, and through the fate of one of victims (Vinko Marković) who suffered because of the implementation of that operation.<sup>56</sup> The book examines the causes and reasons for the state’s overly repressive actions and explains the relationship between the State Security Service and the highest political levels in Yugoslavia.

## Academic articles

Besides monographs, a large number of academic articles were published in journals and other publications. I have already mentioned that the most prolific author in this sense is Zdenko Radelić, who has been continuously publishing articles on the OZNA/UDBA since 2006. Before 2015, few other authors treated the Yugoslav secret services with scientific rigour. Gordan Akrap’s extensive article on the State Security Service should be mentioned because he provided a systematic overview of the SDS organisation and tried to explain the function of the repressive system in the shaping of public knowledge.<sup>57</sup> In 2011, he also published an article on cooperation between the security systems of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and Yugoslavia.<sup>58</sup> There is also a comparative article by Davor Kovačić who compared the OZNA with the intelligence service of the Independent State of Croatia (Nezavisna Država Hrvatska – NDH).<sup>59</sup>

<sup>55</sup> See for example: S. Marković, *Represija Ozne i Udbe u Cetinskoj krajini: (1944.–1955.)* (Sinj, 2022).

<sup>56</sup> Mihaljević, *Kako je operirala UDBA*.

<sup>57</sup> Akrap, “Mač i štit u rukama partije”. A year later, Akrap published a small book (a special edition of a newspaper) in which, among other things, he discussed the methods of action and the development of the repressive system in Yugoslavia. *Idem, Specijalni rat: Sve o spregama politike i tajnih službi u 20. stoljeću u cilju oblikovanja javnog mišljenja* (Zagreb, 2012).

<sup>58</sup> *Idem*, “Suradnja izvještajno-sigurnosnih sustava DDR-a i SFRJ”, *National security and the future* 1–2 (2011), pp. 11–33.

<sup>59</sup> D. Kovačić, “Djelovanje obavještajne službe Nezavisne Države Hrvatske i Odjeljenja za zaštitu naroda (OZNA) krajem Drugog svjetskog rata”, in *1945. – Razdjelnica hrvatske povijesti*, pp. 383–399.

The opening of the archives in 2015 increased the usage of the SDS fond<sup>60</sup> and consequently, increased the number of new academic papers. It doesn't make much sense to describe every individual academic article, considering that quite a lot of them have been published lately, but in the footnote, I will list the ones that I consider most interesting.<sup>61</sup>

## Books and articles based on OZNA/UDBA/SDS files

It is increasingly common to publish books that do not primarily analyse the Yugoslav secret services but use the documents created by those services. The increased availability of records has increased interest in certain prominent individuals, and so it was with Cardinal Alojzije Stepinac, about whom several books, based on UDBA documents, were published.<sup>62</sup>

It would be difficult to list all of the academic books and articles that are at least partially based on the archives of the secret service, so I will mention just those that I find particularly interesting. Miroslav Akmadža's book about Krunoslav Draganović and the statements that this priest gave to the SDS of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1967 can be singled out.<sup>63</sup> Akmadža's other works, which mostly concern the relationship between the communist authorities and the Catholic Church, are largely based on the records of the OZNA/UDBA/SDS.<sup>64</sup> Wollfy Krašić used the files of people

<sup>60</sup> Mihaljević, Shek-Brnardić, "The Communist Legacy and Public Discourse in Croatia", pp. 47–49.

<sup>61</sup> Mikšić, "HR-HDA-1561 Služba državne sigurnosti"; W. Krašić, "Služba državne sigurnosti Socijalističke Republike Hrvatske potkraj 1970-ih i početkom 1980-ih", *Zbornik Janković* 3 (2018), pp. 355–387; V. Kudra Beroš, "Dosjei UDBE kao problematični objekt (re)konstrukcije hrvatskog nacionalnog identiteta", *Etnološka tribina* 41 (2018), pp. 159–173; I. Miškulin, "Tajne tajne policije: Arhivi jugoslavenske Službe državne sigurnosti (1. dio)", *Vijenac* 624 (2018), <http://www.matica.hr/vijenac/624/tajne-tajne-policije-27485/>, accessed 28 March 2021; B. Salaj, "Udbin dosje kao povijesni izvor – slučaj Vujičić", *Studia lexicographica* 24 (2019), pp. 123–152; N. Milovančev, "Milan Žugelj i Andrija Hebrang u dokumentima beogradskog Gestapa i UDBE", *Zbornik Janković* 4 (2019), pp. 307–354; M. Previšić, "Tito-Stalin conflict and the Yugoslav Secret Police (UDBA) in 1948–1956", *Securitas Imperii* 2 (2020), pp. 154–164; *idem*, I. Mlinarić, "Služba državne sigurnosti Hrvatske protiv nogometnih navijača 1989–1991.", *Istorija 20. veka* 1 (2020), pp. 163–184; M. Akmadža, "Operativne mjere komunističkih represivnih službi prema Katoličkoj crkvi u Hrvatskoj od 1951. do 1965. godine", *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 3 (2021), pp. 901–922.

<sup>62</sup> G. Akrap, *Kardinal Stepinac u dokumentima Gestapa i OZN-e* (Zagreb, 2016); T. Kvarnatan Solčatić, *Stepinac iz arhiva Udbe: Udbini zapisi o blaženom Alojziju Stepincu* (Zagreb, 2020); *Dnevnički zapisi Alojzija Stepinca: 1934.–1945.: iz arhiva UDBA-e*, ed. Ž. Karaula (Zagreb, 2020).

<sup>63</sup> M. Akmadža, *Krunoslav Draganović: Iskazi komunističkim istražiteljima* (Zagreb, 2010).

<sup>64</sup> See for example: *idem*, *Franjo Kuharić: kardinal i vlast* (Zagreb, 2020); *idem*, *Katolička crkva u komunističkoj Hrvatskoj 1945.–1980.* (Zagreb – Slavonski Brod, 2013); *idem*,



processed by the UDBA/SDS in his dissertation, and he also published a book about the Croatian state-building groups that were oppressed by the UDBA.<sup>65</sup> Also, Nikica Barić's book about Split in the 1980s is largely based on SDS archival records.<sup>66</sup> Articles based on the records of the security services were published by numerous other authors.<sup>67</sup>

## Publication of archival records on the OZNA/UDBA/SDS

The new millennium brought editions in which original archival records were published. Initially, these documents were mainly related to the documentation of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian SDS. In 2000 Robert Tafra published a book which included UDBA records on Croatian emigres from Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1977.<sup>68</sup> The documents encompassed 1,560 persons. Similar material was published in the following years. Thus, in 2002, Bože Vukušić published a book in which a large number of documents on the activities of the Yugoslav secret services against Croatian emigrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina were presented.<sup>69</sup> In 2003 Ivan Bešlić edited and published a book on SDS collaborators (associates, informants) in Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>70</sup> Bešlić published four volumes with lists of SDS collaborators in the period from 1970 to 1990. The book consists of facsimiles of documents from the database of associates and informants removed from SDS files. In the introduction to the first book, Bešlić himself emphasised that the database on which the book is based is not complete, because it does not list collaborators in the period before 1970, as well as those collaborators who were deleted from the records

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*Katolička crkva u Bosni i Hercegovini i komunistički režim (1945.–1966.)* (Kostrena – Slavonski Brod, 2014).

<sup>65</sup> W. Krašić, *Hrvatski pokret otpora. Hrvatske državotvorne organizacije i skupine 1945.–1966.* (Zagreb, 2018).

<sup>66</sup> N. Barić, *Split 1980-ih: Društveni sukobi u sutonu samoupravnoga socijalizma* (Zagreb, 2019).

<sup>67</sup> For example, see: M. Lučić, "Vrela za hrvatsku crkvenu povijest 1945–1990. u Hrvatskom državnom arhivu s osobitim osvrtom na gradivo Komisije za odnose s vjerskim zajednicama i Službe državne sigurnosti Republičkog sekretarijata za unutarnje poslove SR Hrvatske", in *Crkva i društvo uz Jadran – Vrela i rezultati istraživanja*, ed. V. Kapitanović (Split, 2006), pp. 331–340; S. Najman, "Ogranak Matice hrvatske Valpovo očima UDBE", *Valpovački godišnjak* 17 (2012), pp. 47–64.

<sup>68</sup> *Dosjei UDBE o hrvatskoj emigraciji iz BiH-a: 1977. g.*, ed. R. Tafra (Prozor–Split, 2000). Cf. *Hrvati i drugi neprijatelji SFR Jugoslavije*, ed. R. Tafra (Prozor–Split, 2000).

<sup>69</sup> B. Vukušić, *Tajni rat Udbe protiv hrvatskih iseljenika iz Bosne i Hercegovine* (Zagreb, 2002).

<sup>70</sup> *Čuvari Jugoslavije: suradnici Udbe u Bosni i Hercegovini*, ed. I. Bešlić, vol. 1–4 (Posušje, 2003).

after 1990.<sup>71</sup> However, the unprofessional publication of those records caused numerous objections and complaints, primarily from persons listed in the documents as associates of SDS.<sup>72</sup> Some of these objections and denials may be correct because someone could be once listed in the documents as a collaborator or informer, without really knowing or being aware of it. It is possible that the SDS operatives themselves, wanting to appear more efficient, listed the persons they would bring to informational interviews as their associates. Moreover, the problem is that many of those who were collaborators agreed to that kind of relationship under various pressures, so in a certain sense, some of them can be seen also as victims of repression.

In 2013 Bože Vukušić and Vice Vukojević edited and published a book with a list of the heads of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian SDS in the period from 1970 until 1992.<sup>73</sup> The book also included a list of the names of SDS associates and those whom the SDS monitored. However, it is symptomatic that the editors, who are not professional historians, did not get these records through the regular way in the state archives, but through the intervention of political structures.<sup>74</sup> The problem with this publication is that the original archival records are not available to other researchers, not even to professional historians.

In 2014, a book which presents one of the last collections of SDS documents, including lists of “state enemies”, was published.<sup>75</sup> It included several thousand names of “extreme emigres” and their organisations, as well as the code names of those who stalked them. These documents comprise a report written in the SDS of BH in December 1989. This report was marked as a state secret and was made in 30 copies. This document vividly shows why people were blacklisted by the regime.

The files kept by the UDBA on individuals are an important, albeit very sensitive and often unreliable historical source, especially when talking

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<sup>71</sup> *Čuvari Jugoslavije*, vol. 1, pp. 9–10.

<sup>72</sup> For example see: M. Spahić, *Udba nije sudba* (Zenica, 2004); *Udbini sinovi*, ed. M. Marković (Ljubuški, 2004).

<sup>73</sup> *Djelovodnik šefova bosansko-hercegovačke Udbe: 1970.–1992.*, eds. B. Vukušić; V. Vukojević (Zagreb–Sarajevo, 2013).

<sup>74</sup> Thus, at the end of the book, the editors thank the late Mate Boban, the president of the former Croatian Republic of Herceg-Bosna, and his colleagues for making available to them the original Record of the Heads of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian UDBA in the period from 1970 until the collapse of the SFRJ, as well as numerous other documents from the central archives of the SDS of BH, and also from regional SDS centres in Mostar, Livno, etc. *Djelovodnik šefova bosansko-hercegovačke Udbe*, p. 369.

<sup>75</sup> *Udbini tajni popisi “državnih neprijatelja”: s “ekstremnom neprijateljskom emigracijom” rušili su partijsku državu*, ed. D. Šimić (Mostar–Zagreb, 2014).

about the actual behaviour and actions of those who were persecuted by the UDBA. One of the first individuals who published such records was Rudolf Arapović, a political exile, a long-term political émigré, writer and publicist. In 2003, in Washington, he published a book in Croatian in which he discloses 130 records that he found in the file that the UDBA kept on him in the 1960s and the 1970s. The documents are accompanied by Arapović's short remarks which show that UDBA made many false conclusions about him.<sup>76</sup>

After the UDBA records in the Croatian State Archives became more accessible, files of persons who were monitored by the UDBA began to be published. Thus, in 2015, Vice Vukojević published his file.<sup>77</sup> From the same archival fond is the file of Franjo Tuđman, which was published in 2019.<sup>78</sup> Tomislav Mičić published a book with records which were stolen from his UDBA file.<sup>79</sup> His file was stolen in the early 1990s, and the author deals primarily with the reconstruction of his original file.

The availability of UDBA records in the new millennium increased the publication of archival sources in Croatia as well, especially by professional historians. The first and at the same time the biggest undertaking in this sense was the publication of the original archival records of the Yugoslav state, military, intelligence and party institutions related to communist repression in Croatia in the early days of their rule. In the period from 2005 to 2011, an academic-expert team led by historian Vladimir Geiger and other historians published four volumes of those documents.<sup>80</sup> Many documents of the OZNA for Croatia were also published in these volumes. Geiger's editorial team later published another volume of documents on partisan crimes at the local level.<sup>81</sup> Several books with records

<sup>76</sup> R. Arapović, *DL 229503: UDB-a i njeni suradnici: (prema tajnim izvještajima)* (Washington, 2003).

<sup>77</sup> *Dosje 240271: Udbin dosje o Vici Vukojeviću.*

<sup>78</sup> *Franjo Tuđman dosje br. 229562*, ed. F. Maletić (Zagreb, 2019).

<sup>79</sup> T. Mičić, *Tajne ukradenih dosjea* (Zagreb, 2021).

<sup>80</sup> *Partizanska i komunistička represija i zločini u Hrvatskoj 1944.–1946.: Dokumenti*, eds. Z. Dizdar, V. Geiger, M. Pojić, M. Rupić (Slavonski Brod, 2005); *Partizanska i komunistička represija i zločini u Hrvatskoj 1944.–1946.: Dokumenti: Slavonija, Srijem, Baranja*, eds. V. Geiger, Slavonski Brod 2006; *Partizanska i komunistička represija i zločini u Hrvatskoj 1944.–1946.: Dokumenti: Zagreb i središnja Hrvatska*, eds. V. Geiger, M. Rupić, M. Kevo, E. Kraljević, Z. Despot (Slavonski Brod, 2008); *Partizanska i komunistička represija i zločini u Hrvatskoj 1944.–1946.: Dokumenti: Dalmacija*, eds. M. Rupić, V. Geiger (Slavonski Brod, 2011).

<sup>81</sup> *Dokumenti o zločinima 12. proleterske brigade XII. udarne divizije III. jugoslavenske armije u selima kotara Donji Andrijevići početkom studenoga 1945.*, eds. M. Rupić, V. Geiger, B. Ostajmer (Slavonski Brod, 2016). Geiger himself published a source from the SDS fund that talks about local issues in the district of Đakovo. V. Geiger, "Elaborat Službe državne sigurnosti Republičkog sekretarijata unutarnjih poslo-

of a similar character were published by another group of historians in the last couple of years.<sup>82</sup> Recently, information about the repressive actions of the UDBA towards various religious groups are also being published.<sup>83</sup>

A very valuable book of sources containing SDS documents on the supervision of Yugoslav workers who worked in Western Europe (the so-called *Gastarbeiters*) was published by Nenad Bukvić.<sup>84</sup> In addition to sources that enable a more thorough overview of the history of labour migration, this book also contributes to a better understanding of the work of the UDBA/SDS. The secret police systematically monitored the process of labour migration from Yugoslavia, and, in the book, Bukvić presented a selection of the most important documents of the Service related to that supervision. A significant number of workers abroad regularly came to the country on annual vacations during the summer or for Christmas and New Year holidays. At that time, the UDBA carried out a special operation called “Vacation” in the entire territory of Yugoslavia, during which it tried to collect relevant information. The primary focus was on preventing the collaboration of guest workers with political emigres and they also wanted to create an informant network within the guest worker population.

Bukvić edited and published records related to the SDS “Tuškanac” Operation which monitored and prosecuted the student movement in Croatia in 1971.<sup>85</sup> The State Security Service in Croatia had been intensively monitoring the students and professors of the University of Zagreb since the outbreak of student demonstrations in Belgrade in 1968, the effects of which spread to other republics.

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va Socijalističke Republike Hrvatske o razvoju i djelovanju pojedinaca iz bivših građanskih stranaka na području bivšeg kotara Đakovo”, *Zbornik Muzeja Đakovštine* 1 (2015), pp. 173–220.

<sup>82</sup> *Split i Srednja Dalmacija u dokumentima OZN-e i UDB-e (1944.–1962.): Zarobljenički logori i likvidacije*, ed. B. Matković (Zagreb–Trilj, 2017); *Imotska krajina u dokumentima Ozne, Udbe i Narodne milicije (1944.–1957.): likvidacije i progoni*, ed. B. Matković (Zagreb, 2017); *Vrgorska krajina, Makarsko primorje i neretvanski kraj u dokumentima Ozne, Udbe i Narodne milicije (1944.–1965.): Likvidacije i progoni*, eds. B. Matković, S. Štimac (Zagreb, 2018); B. Matković, R. Topić, *Zločini Jugoslavenske armije i komunistička represija na području Like i grada Gospića 1945. godine: Dokumenti, svjedočanstva i grobišta (1944.–1998.)* (Zagreb, 2019).

<sup>83</sup> J. Krišto, *Partija, UDBA i svećenička udruženja. UDBin elaborat o Udruženjima i drugi dokumenti* (Zagreb, 2014); M. Akmadža, S. Josipović, *Đakovačka i Srijemska biskupija i komunističke državne vlasti: Neobjavljeni izvori, Svezak I. 1945.–1959.* (Slavonski Brod – Đakovo, 2022).

<sup>84</sup> N. Bukvić, *Gastarbajteri pod nadzorom Službe državne sigurnosti: odabrani dokumenti (1963.–1977.)* (Zagreb, 2021).

<sup>85</sup> *Idem*, “Operativna obrada ‘Tuškanac’: dokumenti Službe državne sigurnosti o studentskom pokretu u Hrvatskoj 1971. godine”, *Fontes: izvori za hrvatsku povijest* 27 (2021), pp. 11–698.

Finally, we should mention one interesting source that was not created by the UDBA/SDS but is very important for the research and a better understanding of the organisation, structure and operation of these services. In 2009, the journal *National Security and the Future* published a statement by Radenko Radojčić, a former employee of the security service, which he gave in 1994 when he was arrested by the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Croatia.<sup>86</sup> He gave an extensive statement about his knowledge and role in security-intelligence operations. The statement constituted important testimony about the organisation, methods, goals and structure of the special operations conducted by the JNA against Croatia at the time of the dissolution of the SFRJ.<sup>87</sup>

## Memoirs and publicist writing

The topic of the activities of the security-intelligence services began to be covered by journalists and publicists much earlier than by academic historians. However, except for the magazine *Politički zatvorenik* published since 1994 by the Croatian Society of Political Prisoners, which is almost entirely devoted to the topic of communist repression, and the activities of the communist security system,<sup>88</sup> journalism in Croatia did not contribute much in the first decade after the fall of communism. Only a few memoirs of those persecuted by the UDBA were published. Among the first was Đuro Perica, a victim of UDBA's rigged trial from 1975, who in

<sup>86</sup> Radjočić was an agent of the 5th department of the military counterintelligence group within the Zagreb office of the Yugoslavian Air Force (AF) and Air Defence (AD) command until this group of agents escaped to Belgrade. Then, in mid-1991 he became a member of the Counterintelligence group in the Headquarters of AF & AD. This group planted a bomb in front of the Jewish Municipality in Zagreb in August 1991, and Jewish graves in Mirogoj cemetery (Zagreb) were mined to discredit Croatia and its state leadership. The Croatian intelligence and security agency identified and arrested members of this group during an operation called "Labrador".

<sup>87</sup> Radojčić later claimed that he signed the statement under duress. See: M. Butorac, "Agent KOS-a: Po tijelu su mi gasili čikove i prijetili smrću", *Večernji list*, 30 June 2015, <https://www.vecernji.hr/vijesti/agent-kos-a-radenko-radojcic-po-tijelu-su-mi-gasili-cikove-i-prijetili-smrcu-1012558>, accessed 28 March 2021.

<sup>88</sup> In 1998, the editor-in-chief of that newspaper, Tomislav Jonjić, published the UDBA's secret list of names of Croatian emigrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina whom the UDBA considered enemies of the regime in 1977. See: T. Jonjić, "Hrvatski emigranti iz BiH na popisu Službe državne sigurnosti (1977.)", *Politički zatvorenik* 78 (1998), pp. 18–19. The second part of the article was published in the same magazine, no. 79, October 1998, pp. 19–20. Woffy Krašić recently published in that newspaper transcripts and facsimiles of UDBA reports on Croatian illegal organisations and groups. See: W. Krašić, "Hrvatske državotvorne ilegalne organizacije i skupine 1945.–1966. (Prilog istraživanju)", *Politički zatvorenik* 289 (2021), pp. 17–64.

1990 published a collection of his prison poems in which he spoke about his experiences with UDBA investigators.<sup>89</sup> At the end of the decade, in 1999, Josip Bilušić, another one of those who were imprisoned as a result of trial staged by the UDBA, published a collection of documents from his trial (records, decisions, judgments, appeals) that he received from the Administrative Commission of the Government of the Republic of Croatia.<sup>90</sup>

At the end of the 1990s and in the early 2000s, a couple of books that dealt with some aspects of the activities of the UDBA were published. Marko Marković published a book about the murder of Bruno Bušić, one of the most famous victims of the UDBA, a Croatian intellectual who was murdered in Paris in 1978 as a political emigre.<sup>91</sup> At the beginning of the new millennium, the publicist Bože Vukušić started publishing books about murders by the UDBA and its activities outside the borders of Yugoslavia. In 2001 he published a book about UDBA's activities against Croatian emigres.<sup>92</sup>

A significant part of publicist writing is memoir literature. In addition to the testimonies and memories of people who were the objects of the security services, the memoirs of people who were part of that system were also published. Given that the important goal of the security-intelligence activity was to deal with the advocates of a multi-party system and with opponents of Yugoslavia, it is difficult to expect that the former secret agents will honestly and openly write and publish their memories because they would expose themselves to the moral condemnation of a large part of the public. In this sense, the exception is the confession of former SDS agent Željko Kekić who, after 30 years, on his own initiative, contacted the former political prisoner Anto Kovačević and revealed to him that he was an agent who had monitored him for many years. Kovačević presented that case in his book,<sup>93</sup> based on which a documentary was also filmed.

Also, a rare exception is General Ivan Mišković,<sup>94</sup> who in the last few years, together with historian Andrej Bader, published his memoirs (in

<sup>89</sup> Đ. Perica, *Žar na dlanu* (Zagreb, 1990).

<sup>90</sup> J. Bilušić, *H.O.R.A. – Hrvatska oslobodilačka revolucionarna armija, Zadar, 1974.: montirani proces UDB-e: dokumenti* (Zagreb, 1999).

<sup>91</sup> M. Marković, *Operacija "Pitagorin poučak": istraga o ubojstvu Brune Bušića* (Zagreb, 1999).

<sup>92</sup> B. Vukušić, *Tajni rat UDBE protiv hrvatskoga iseljništva* (Zagreb, 2001). See also: *idem, Tajne iz Udbinih arhiva – egzekucije bez suđenja: Četrdeseta obljetnica "Akcije Fenix 72"* (Zagreb, 2012).

<sup>93</sup> A. Kovačević, *Čovjek i njegova sjena* (Zagreb, 2012).

<sup>94</sup> Ivan Mišković (1920) was a lieutenant general of the JNA, head of the KOS, and from 1971 until 1973 a Special adviser to the President of the Republic and Supreme Com-

three volumes) about his work in the security and intelligence system of the SFRJ. In the third volume, Mišković also published a document from which it can even be seen that the highest state leadership was involved in the assassinations of political opponents (emigres) outside Yugoslav borders.<sup>95</sup> What makes Mišković's and Bader's publication quite valuable is the fact that these books include many facsimiles of original documents from the time of Mišković's active service in the security-intelligence system.

Munir Alibabić, a former head of the State Security Service in Sarajevo, described, in his book, the Yugoslav crisis and the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina from the point of view of the intelligence services, arguing that key events were induced by the KOS.<sup>96</sup>

In Croatia, however, the memoirs of Josip Manolić, a long-time member of the communist security and intelligence community in Croatia, who, after the democratic changes in Croatia, also held the office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia (1990), received the most attention.<sup>97</sup> Given that a significant part of the cadre of the former SDS continued to serve the new democratic government in the Republic of Croatia, the transfer of the former cadre to the new structures remains one of the most frequently discussed topics in the Croatian public sphere. Ivan Krmpotić dealt with this topic in his book.<sup>98</sup> As a criminologist, Krmpotić worked for years in Yugoslavia on economic crime cases, and was familiar with the methods of the State Security Service. He was also a witness for the Prosecution at the trial in Munich in the case of the murder of Stjepan Đureković (the so called Perković case).<sup>99</sup>

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mander of the Armed Forces of the SFRJ, Josip Broz Tito, on security issues. This duty meant that he coordinated and managed all of the security and intelligence services in the SFRJ.

<sup>95</sup> I. Mišković, A. Bader, *General iz Premanture* (Medulin, 2019); *eidem, Iz tajnog arhiva: načelnika Službe bezbjednosti 1963.–1971.* (Medulin, 2021); *eidem, Titov specijalni savjetnik* (Medulin, 2021).

<sup>96</sup> M. Alibabić, *Tajni rat za Bosnu između Službe državne bezbjednosti RBiH i KOS-a JNA* (Sarajevo, 2014).

<sup>97</sup> J. Manolić, *Politika i domovina: moja borba za suverenu i socijalnu Hrvatsku* (Zagreb, 2015); *idem, Špijuni i domovina.* Josip Boljkovac's memoirs also attracted significant attention. Boljkovac, *Istina mora izaći van.*

<sup>98</sup> I. Krmpotić, *Kako je UDBA stvorila Hrvatsku: sustavno uništavanje hrvatskog naroda, njegovog identiteta, gospodarstva i države* (Zagreb, 2018).

<sup>99</sup> Krmpotić argues that the beginning of the establishment of the executive power of the democratic Croatian state was marked by a transfer of cadre from the former SDS to the new structures of the Republic of Croatia and that at that time President Franjo Tuđman did not have much choice because lustration was not possible. Today, many of those members of the SDS have grown old or died, but Krmpotić thinks that they brought their children and grandchildren into all the structures of today's state government.

Recently, several books about the UDBA have been published by a few Croatian journalists,<sup>100</sup> while Anto Nobile, the lawyer of the convicted former secret service member Josip Perković, published a book about Perković's defence in the court in Munich.<sup>101</sup>

## Foreign journalism and historiography

The activities of the Yugoslav secret services were also a topic in foreign historiography and journalism. During the existence of the SFRJ, German journalist and publicist Hans Peter Rullman published a book about the murders outside Yugoslavia committed by Yugoslav secret service, that is, about political murders, primarily of Croatian politicians and emigrant activists on the soil of West Germany and other Western countries.<sup>102</sup> The book was published in English a year later, and also in Croatian in 1990.<sup>103</sup>

Some other foreign authors dealt with the topic of the activities of the Yugoslav secret services abroad.<sup>104</sup> Recently, the Danish historian Christian Axboe Nielsen published a book about political assassinations conducted by the Yugoslav communist government outside the borders of Yugoslavia.<sup>105</sup> Axboe Nielsen shed light on the organisation and activities of the SDS in the late socialist era. The author was an expert witness at the trial of Josip Perković and Zdravko Mustač. The book is based on Axboe Nielsen's expert analyses of the activities of the SDS which he did for the court in Munich. Having received permission from the judge, Manfred Dauster, the author translated the material into English and expanded it

<sup>100</sup> B. Rašeta, I. Alborghetti, *Krvava ruka UDBE: tajne hrvatskih arhiva* (Zagreb, 2017); I. Alborghetti, *Tajni dosjei iz sefa UDBE: od Torcide i BBB-a do ekipe iz vrha HDZ-a* (Zagreb, 2019).

<sup>101</sup> A. Nobile, *Obrana: hrvatskog kontraobavještajca Josipa Perkovića na njemačkom sudu* (Zagreb, 2018).

<sup>102</sup> H.P. Rullmann, *Mordauftrag Aus Belgrad* (Hamburg, 1980); Rullman worked in Belgrade in the 1960s as a correspondent for the German newspaper *Der Spiegel*, in 1970 he was arrested for alleged military espionage and in January 1971 he was sentenced to six years in prison, but in June 1971 was released and returned to Germany.

<sup>103</sup> *Idem*, *Assassinations Commissioned by Belgrade: Documentation About the Belgrade Murder-Apparatus* (Hamburg, 1981); *idem*, *Ubojstva naredena iz Beograda: dokazi o jugoslavenskom ubilačkom stroju* (Hamburg–Toronto–Melbourne, 1990).

<sup>104</sup> See for example: E. Schweissguth, "Die Reorganisation des Staatssicherheitsdienstes in der SFR Jugoslawien", *Jahrbuch für Ostrecht* 1 (1969), pp. 45–68; B. Robionek, *State Security out of Control? The Influence of Yugoslavia's Political Leadership on Targeted Killings abroad (1967–84)*, [https://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/bitstream/handle/document/66766/ssoar-2020-robionek-State\\_Security\\_out\\_of\\_Control.pdf](https://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/bitstream/handle/document/66766/ssoar-2020-robionek-State_Security_out_of_Control.pdf), accessed 28 March 2021.

<sup>105</sup> Axboe Nielsen, *Yugoslavia and Political Assassinations*.



with the necessary academic additions. Nielsen focuses on understanding and describing the methods of operation of the SDS. In 2022, the book was also published in Croatian.<sup>106</sup>

## Conclusion

The Yugoslav security intelligence system during the reign of communism in that country was complex and significantly changed and developed during its almost fifty years of existence. It was conceived as part of the partisan struggle during the Second World War and was initially developed according to the Soviet (NKVD) model. Although Yugoslavia politically distanced itself from the Soviet Union in the late 1940s, the political police and security intelligence system operated much like the earlier Soviet one. The biggest change in the history of the security-intelligence system occurred after 1966 when the secret police became republicanised. This fact is also important from the perspective of today's research, because the archival material created by the activities of the security and intelligence services was not preserved in one place, but was scattered among the former Yugoslav republics and provinces.<sup>107</sup>

This paper provides an overview of the availability of archival sources, as well as an overview of the historiographic, journalist and memoir literature on the Yugoslav security and intelligence services in the area of today's Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Similar overviews for other post-Yugoslav countries are planned to be published later in another article. This present article includes a brief overview of the rare contributions of historiography from outside the former Yugoslavian area.

It can be concluded that poor or no availability of archival records has been a fundamental problem in the research of this topic for many years. Books published on this topic first appeared in the fields of journalism and memoir literature. However, with the new millennium, the first serious historiographical treatments of this topic emerged. In Croatia, the gradual opening of archives has led to an increasingly strong production of

<sup>106</sup> *Idem, Jugoslavija i politička ubojstva: povijest i naslijeđe Titova djelovanja protiv emigranata*; trans. D. Biličić (Zagreb, 2022); *idem*, "Never-ending vigilance: the Yugoslav State Security Service and Cominform Supporters after Goli Otok", in *The Tito-Stalin split 70 years after*, eds. T. Jakovina, M. Previšić (Zagreb, 2020), pp. 109–121.

<sup>107</sup> However, when we talk about UDBA records, all documents from the level of the Republics that were important for the HQ in Belgrade were shared with them. That is the reason why we can assume that the Archive of the Federal UDBA, which is in Belgrade, has copies of almost all important documents from UDBA offices in other republics.

historical works, which has especially been flourishing after 2015 and the declassification of a large amount of SDS records. The new archival laws in Croatia (2017 and 2018) enabled easier access to those records, which led to a further increase in historical and journalistic pieces.

On the other hand, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the historiographical production is much weaker, even though the first sources that talked about the activities, employees and collaborators of the secret services were published in that country. However, those editions were not made by professional historians, but mostly by amateurs, and their unprofessional approach often provoked negative exaggerated reactions from the public. However, the original archival records in Bosnia and Herzegovina are still practically inaccessible to researchers.

What Croatian and BH historiography have in common is that they are primarily focused only on the OZNA/UDBA/SDS, while other security systems have mostly been poorly researched since the archival records of other services were related to institutions and bodies that operated at the federal level (within the JNA, and within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and their records are still mostly unavailable to Croatian and Bosnian researchers.

The archival material created as a result of the activities of the security and intelligence services is a first-rate source for the history of the 20th century. The interest it arouses even in today's society obligates historians to approach it with wariness, checking every piece of data minutely and in comparison with all other available sources. Although these archival sources are important and rich in information that until now was largely unavailable to the public, caution is very necessary when using and interpreting it, because it represents an extremely complex issue. The perspective of repressive bodies, as diverse as it may be, in most cases is such that its main goal was to portray the security and intelligence service as efficient and successful.

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## **Badania nad jugosłowiańską tajną policją w Chorwacji oraz Bośni i Hercegowinie: źródła, historiografia, publicystyka**

**Streszczenie:** Artykuł zawiera przegląd historiografii w Chorwacji oraz Bośni i Hercegowinie na temat jugosłowiańskich tajnych służb i pokazuje ograniczenia uniemożliwiające swobodne badania historyczne w przeszłości i obecnie. Badania ograniczała przede wszystkim niedostępność źródeł archiwalnych, a także upolitycznienie kwestii byłych komunistycznych służb specjalnych. Autor pokazuje, że w Chorwacji dostępność archiwaliów w ciągu ostatnich kilku lat znacznie się poprawiła, co przełożyło się na liczbę publikacji naukowych i dziennikarskich na temat tajnych służb. W Bośni i Hercegowinie nadal istnieją ograniczenia w dostępie do źródeł, dlatego też tamtejsza historiografia wyka-



zuje jak dotąd znacznie skromniejsze rezultaty. W artykule autor przedstawia również rozwój, organizację i działalność jugosłowiańskich służb specjalnych.

**Słowa kluczowe:** jugosłowiańskie służby bezpieczeństwa i wywiadu, archiwa tajnej policji, UDDBA, historiografia chorwacka, historiografia w Bośni i Hercegowinie

**Josip Mihaljević** (ur. 1983) – doktor, pracownik naukowy w Chorwackim Instytucie Historii w Zagrzebiu. Jego badania dotyczą dysydentów i opozycji w okresie rządów komunistycznych w Jugosławii, jugosłowiańskich tajnych służb, historii pracy i historii diaspory. Został uhonorowany Krajową Nagrodą Naukową Republiki Chorwacji (2017) oraz Doroczną Nagrodą Naukową Stowarzyszenia Nauczycieli Uniwersyteckich, Uczonych i Innych Naukowców Zagrzebia (2017). Do jego ostatnich publikacji należy książka o metodach i sposobach działania jugosłowiańskich służb specjalnych (*Kako je operirala Udba? Operacija "Paromlin" i sudbina Vinka Markovića*, 2022).

**Abstract:** The article provides an overview of the historiography in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina on the Yugoslav secret services and shows the limitations that have prevented free historical research both in the past and today. Such research were mostly limited by the unavailability of archival sources, as well as the politicisation associated with the topic of the former communist secret services. The author shows that in Croatia, the availability of archives has significantly improved in the last few years, thus increasing scientific and journalistic production on the subject of secret services. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are still restrictions on the access to sources, which is why that region's historiography shows much more modest results. In the article, the author also provides an overview of the development, organisation and activities of the Yugoslav secret services.

**Keywords:** Yugoslav security and intelligence services, archives of the secret police, UDDBA, Croatian historiography, historiography in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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