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## **EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY OF EMANUEL CHUCHKOV BEFORE AND AFTER SECOND WORLD WAR<sup>20</sup>**

### *Abstract*

Emanuel Chuchkov, Ph.D., is a Macedonian politician, socio-political activist, vice-president of ASNOM, first minister from Macedonia in first post-war Yugoslavia, university professor. He was born in Stip on 14 of November 1901. His family had close connections with the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO). Chuchkov finished elementary and high school in his born town. He enrolled at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, and after two years spend in Belgrade, he moved in new-opened University in Skopje. He graduated on faculty of geography, history, ethnology, ethnography and Slav philology in 1925.

His educational career begins in Ohrid in 1926. After the Skopje student affair, in 1927, he was arrested as a member of Youth Macedonian secret revolutionary organization. In this trial he was released because there was a lack of evidence. But 11 members of the organization were sentenced.

For the Serbian authorities he was suspicion, there for they send him as a high school teacher in Svilajnac. Until the Bulgarian occupation he was out of Macedonia. He formed his family out of Macedonia.

After the Bulgarian occupation, Chuchkov, as a member of YMSRO, was hired by the Bulgarian educational authorities, first, as a high school teacher, and later as a director of Prilep and Skopje gymnasium. His obligations as teacher and director Chuchkov performed according the laws.

In 1943, Chuchkov joined the Action National committee of the liberation front. In 1944 he go out in partisans. The same year, he became vice-president of ASNOM. In new formed Ministry of Federal Units, in February 1945, Emanuel Chuchkov was the first minister from Macedonia in post-war Yugoslavia government. This function he held until March 1946, when he return in Skopje, and became director of National assembly "Tanec". Later he became professor of Skopje University, faculty of economics, after he defend his doctor thesis.

He died as a dean of Faculty of economy, on 1 of September 1967, in Belgrade.

*Key words: IMRO, Macedonia, Education, School, Faculty*

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<sup>20</sup> Specialized paper

Emanuel Mane Cuchkov was born on 14/27 November 1901 in the well-known revolutionary family in Stipsko Novo selo. Here he attends primary school and then continues the High school in Stip and Skopje. He enrolled in the Faculty of philosophy in Belgrade, but after a Faculty of Philosophy was opened in Skopje, he transfers to this faculty in the department of geography, ethnology and ethnography, history and Slavic philology. In 1925 after graduating, he completed his military service in Petrovaradin and Novi Sad.

Immediately after his graduation, he sent an appeal to the Ministry of Education of the Kingdom Yugoslavia and asked to be appointed for a service. After waiting for a few months and without an answer to his appeal, he went to complete his military service in January 1926. After completing the military service, he married Viktorija Petre Maneva on 14 November 1926 in the church "Assumption of Virgin Mary" in Stipsko Novo Selo<sup>21</sup>. At this time when he is already a married man, he should acquire some basic conditions for the life of his family.

His first job was in the High school in Ohrid. With the decision no. 14831 of the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom Yugoslavia, starting from the 1<sup>st</sup> November 1926 he was appointed for a teacher in this High School in Ohrid.<sup>22</sup> In 1927/28, after six months of working, he was transferred in the High school in Svilajnac as a professor.<sup>23</sup> In Sviljanac he was arrested as a member of MMTRO<sup>24</sup>, then he went through trial in Skopje<sup>25</sup>, but as a result of deficiency of proofs, he was released. In April 1929 Cuchkov passed the public exam for a professor for which he got a certificate<sup>26</sup> on 13 May the same year. He was appointed for a vice president of the High school in Sviljanac, with the decision of the Ministry of Education<sup>27</sup>. Later from Smiljanac he is transferred in Cacak<sup>28</sup>, where he makes new friendships and acquaintanceships. There he meets the pharmacist Gvozden Matik, who is well-known democrat and oppositionist to the regime of the Kingdom Yugoslavia. The meetings and friendly encounters of Cuchkov and Matik were noticed by the state authorities. As a result of this and thanks to the Ministry of Education, Emanuel Cuchkov was appointed for a professor in the Bosnian city of Bjelina<sup>29</sup>. Matik opened a pharmacy in Stip, as was suggested to him by Cuchkov. After the end of the 1933/33 school year, Cuchkov wrote an appeal to the Ministry of Education and asked to continue his service the next year in his native town. His inquiry was approved and on 18<sup>th</sup> August 1934 he was transferred in Stip with decree no. 26783 of the Ministry of Education of Kingdom Yugoslavia<sup>30</sup>.

In the school year 1934/35, Cuchkov started his geography lectures in the High School in Stip. About his days as a professor in Stip talked Aleksandar Agovski, who passed away. He said: "The professor Cuchkov taught me in my 4<sup>th</sup> class only for one semester. I and my classmates followed his lectures very attentively. As a specialist in his field, he was incredible. He made friendship with the other professor and with us, the students, very quickly. He and the professors Stevo Jovanovik and Sergej Mihajlov formed a musical orchestra that became very popular in the High School and in the city. As a professor,

<sup>21</sup> Храм на „Успение на пресвета Богородица“, матична книга на венчаните, рег. бр. 117

<sup>22</sup> ДАРМ, ф. Емануил Чучков, сиг. 1.1175.1.37/119

<sup>23</sup> Со одлука на Министерството за просвета бр. 2734 од 8 февруари 1927 година, ДАРМ, ф. Емануил Чучков, сиг. 1.1175.1.39/121

<sup>24</sup> Македонска младинска тајна револуционерна организација

<sup>25</sup> Одржан во Скопје против студентите членови на ММТРО, од 15 ноември до 10 декември 1927 година

<sup>26</sup> Уверение бр 15413 од 13 мај 1929 година, со кое се потврдува дека во предвидениот рок од 24 до 30 април 1929 година Емануел Чучков го положил професорскиот испит, ДАРМ, ф. Емануил Чучков, сиг. 1.1175.1.42/125

<sup>27</sup> Одлука бр. 4947 од 26 февруари 1932 година, ДАРМ, ф. Емануил Чучков, сиг. 1.1175.1.49/133

<sup>28</sup> Одлука бр. 19062 од 26 јуни 1932 година, ДАРМ, ф. Емануил Чучков, сиг. 1.1175.1.51/135

<sup>29</sup> Одлука бр. 31140 од 5 септември 1933 година, ДАРМ, ф. Емануил Чучков, сиг. 1.1175.1.5/136

<sup>30</sup> ДАРМ, ф. Емануил Чучков, сиг. 1.1175.1.54/138

Cuchkov became a favorite teacher of the students very quickly and he was much respected very popular among the other people in Stip.<sup>31</sup>

After the assassination of the king Aleksandar Karadjorgjević<sup>32</sup>, the Serbian regime tightened its measures against its oppositionists. The popularity of Emanuel Cuchkov among the students and the professors could not be unnoticed by the senator Mihail Kalamatievik, who was known in Stip as "Kalamatija". The suggestion by him and the educational inspectorate, and with the decision of the Ministry of Education led to displacement of Emanuel Cuchkov to a High School in the mountain Smederevka in the school year 1934/35.<sup>33</sup> About this displacement, Cuchkov's wife says: "We had had just stabilized in the house of my father in law Risto Cuchkov in Novo selo, when as a result of Kalamatiev's warrant we had to leave Stip with our small children in the middle of the winter and go to Smedervska mountain."<sup>34</sup>

After spending three years in Smederevska Mountain, the Ministry of Education displaced him on 8<sup>th</sup> January 1937 in the Turkish school in Skopje and because of that he taught geography in Turkish.

A year had almost passed when he was again transferred in the High School in Kuprija. The family Cuchkovi changed its dwelling for eighth time. These displacements created discontent and anxiety in the family. At the end of the school year 1937/38, actually on 18<sup>th</sup> May 1938 with a new order, he was again transferred to the Turkish school in Skopje.

This transfer had a reason, of course. The Serbian authorities knew for his activity in MMTRO while he was a student. These transferences were actually a punishment and Cuchkov was sent to a kind of "re-education". Although he was unsatisfied from the situation, he did his job, because he had to feed his family of four members. He didn't had a permanent home, he was often made to travel just to keep his job that provided him for living.

Despite the lectures, Emanuel Cuchkov did scientific researches. In the symposium "Glasnik" in 1936, he published the article "The city of Sveti Nikole". In 1938 he published the articles: "Palestine and the Jewish question", "The agronomy of SSSR"<sup>35</sup>. In 1939 on the University of Belgrade he submitted a request for a doctorate dissertation. He defended his dissertation 20 years later in 1958 on the same theme in the Faculty of Economy in Skopje.

After a military, administrative and police occupation was introduced in Macedonia, the Bulgarian authorities set a systemic enrollment of Bulgarian education, which was the biggest Bulgarian propaganda. The aim of with this educational system was to destroy the spiritual treasure of the Macedonians. For that aim, an office for national propaganda was formed, which did this activity together with the Ministry of Education. The office had to maintain a strict organization of the school system in the annexed regions and to seek suitable teachers that will work in the newly annexed countries. The Ministry of Education made a plan for the education in the "newly released" regions that contained: starting with work in the schools that exist and opening new schools, administrations in the schools, regulation of the status of the teachers, stimulating measures for their effort, connecting the youth in the schools with the working youth, goading the "national" spirit of the youth, making tight connections between the young from the old to the new areas, scholarship fund for students

<sup>31</sup> Разговорот со проф. Александар Аговски го водел Ристо Чучков (внук од брат на Емануел), во домот на Аговски во Штип 1996 година. Овие податоци се земени од приватните белешки на Ристо Чучков.

<sup>32</sup> 8 октомври 1934 година во Марсеј

<sup>33</sup> Одлука бр. 45457 од 15 јануари 1934 година, ДАРМ, ф. Емануил Чучков, сиг. 1.1175.1.56/140

<sup>34</sup> Одлука бр. 46329 од 8 декември 1937 година, ДАРМ, ф. Емануил Чучков, сиг. 1.1175.1.60/144

<sup>35</sup> Viktorija Cuchkova and what she has witnessed, wife of Emanuel Cuchkov. The data was taken from the private memoirs of Risto Cuchkov.

<sup>36</sup> ДАРМ, ф. Емануил Чучков, 1.1175.1

(in schools and faculties) with "Bulgarian origin", sending teachers from Bulgaria to Macedonia, a curriculum etc.<sup>36</sup> People from the Ministry of Education chose the staff with the help of the Ministry of internal affairs. The criteria was that those individuals are checked patriots of Bulgaria. They were not asked just for a special qualification and scientific preparation, but for a rich Bulgarian national spirit. According to the stated criterion, in the school year 1941/42 in Macedonia were sent 1508 teachers from Bulgaria. There were: 87 High school teachers, 224 Preparatory school teachers and 1295 primary School teachers. The number of teachers increased constantly. In order to employ more teachers, the government offered higher wages, special prices, promotions and other stimulating measures. In the school curriculum, a great importance was given to the national subjects through which, the Bulgarian assimilation was done more easily. In that group of subjects was the Bulgarian language, the Bulgarian national history and geography. The Bulgarian language was not only proclaimed as an official language, but was the only language that was aloud. Even to the other subject, a certain Bulgarian genesis was found and if that was not possible, it was proclaimed as foreign, Serbian or Turkish. The Bulgarian origin was placed even upon the Macedonian teachers Kiril and Metodij, Naum I Kliment, the king Samuil and the Ohrid's archbishopric. For Bulgarians were proclaimed and the Macedonian revolutions, and the participation of the Macedonians in the Bulgarian army during the Balkan's wars were said to be done willingly.<sup>37</sup> In context with the propaganda in Macedonia is also the formation of the club of intellectuals in Skopje. On this meeting Chkatrov, Dimitar Gjuzelov, Emanuel Cuchkov, Blagoj Dimitrov, Apostol Apostolov and others were present. It was talked about the formation of a club of intellectual that will have the aim to *"unite all the awaken sons and to be educational and trade center of the city..."*<sup>38</sup> A committee was chosen that will made the Constitution, which will be later approved by the foundation council. On the foundation council day were set the conceptual principles based on which the organization was found and the ways in which it will act.

Emanuel Cuchkov started to work as a Bulgarian teacher since May 1941. Teachers in the "newly released" countries were appointed with an order from the minister of education, which was signed by the prime-minister Bogdan Filov in the period between 1<sup>st</sup> May and 15<sup>th</sup> September 1941 in Macedonia. Emanuel Cuchkov was appointed for a teacher in Skopje with a monthly wage of 3340 Bulgarian lev.<sup>39</sup>

Emanuel Cuchkov was engaged in almost all of the activities that were organized by the Ministry of Education. So, on 18<sup>th</sup> of August a delegation of seven members, among which was Chuckov, went to Sofia to visit the Croatian representative in Bulgaria, the diplomat Vladimir Zidovec and thanked the Croatian Poglavnik (title that represents something like a commander) Ante Pavelic<sup>40</sup> in the name of all of the arrested students during the goings-on in 1927. Dimitar Chkatrov in the name of all the students gave him a book as a present, which was made by Stojan Sotirov and with which he thanked Pavelic about all that he had done during the trial. In the dedication it is written: "Poglavniku, we, the Macedonian juveniles of Skopje's process in 1927, will never forget the sacrificing way in which you

<sup>36</sup> Ванче Стојчев, Бугарскиот окупациски систем во Македонија 1941-1944 година", Григор Прличев, Скопје 1996, стр. 180

<sup>37</sup> Ванче Стојчев, Бугарскиот окупациски систем во Македонија 1941-1944, Скопје, 1996, стр. 182; А. Крайчев, Учебна програма за народните основни училишта в новоосвободените земји, кн. По стъпките на възрожденците, Скопје, 1942, стр. 205

<sup>38</sup> Вестник, ЦБлокупна България", Клубъ на интелектуалцитъ въ Скопие, бр. 10, год. 1, Скопие, 6 юний, петъкъ, 1941 г.

<sup>39</sup> Вестник, ЦБлокупна България", Просвѣтното дѣло въ новитъ земи, бр. 8, год. 1, Скопие, 4 юний, срьда, 1941 г.

<sup>40</sup> Ante Pavelik was hired by the father of Dimitar Guzelov as a lawyer in the Skopje's student process in 1927.

defended us from the tyrant..."<sup>41</sup>. How much importance was given to this event shows Dimitar Gjuzev. The idea came from the emigrants in Sofia, the lawyers Asen Avramov, Dimitar Cilev and Pano Pop Andov. After the making of the book, it was sent to Skopje, where it was signed by all the participants in the Skopje's process (the above mentioned trial). They met with Vladimir Zidovec in the hotel "Bulgaria" in Sofia. Representatives of the emigration, the media from Macedonia and others attended the event.<sup>42</sup>

When the teacher's course in Sofia ended in 1941, Emanuel Cuchkov, with the order no. 2053 on 31<sup>st</sup> July 1941, was appointed for a head master in the High School in Prilep.<sup>43</sup> He was a head master, but also taught geography. In times when in Macedonia there are changes of the system, new authorities, new laws, Cuchkov had to continue to work. He had to take care for his family. As before the 1941, he continued to do his job professionally just now he had to change from teaching in Serbian to teaching in Bulgarian. However, the idea from his time as a student for uniting and emancipation of Macedonia did not leave him. In Prilep he kept in touch with the regional warden Ilija Njcevc. Before being a regional warden, Njcevc took counsel from Kuzman Josifovski and Mirche Acev, and after that accepted the job. Kuzman Josifovski Pity thought that it would be more useful for his fellow-citizens, if he is a regional warden than any other Bulgarian, because he was more trustworthy.<sup>44</sup>

In Prilep and in the whole country, conflicts often emerged between the members of SKOJ and the organization "Branik"<sup>45</sup>. "Branik" was a youth organization that was formed by the Bulgarian government. The basic task of the organization was to lead and control the work of all of the youth in the schools and in the youth organizations as well. It should fight communism, organization of anti-Bolshevik exhibits, sharing leaflets with similar content, fascism among the youth, sharing disinformation about the current and military conditions in Macedonia and Europe, to produce staff from the High schools that will work in the state system etc.

The Bulgarian authorities organized the administration and the police, and after that started to organize the educational system in the newly created countries. The denationalization politics of Bulgaria, was much exposed in the schools. Courses were organized in Bulgaria for students, graduates and teachers. To accomplish this aim, High Schools, were open in a few cities in: Skopje (2 for males and 1 for females), Veles, Stip, Prilep, Ohrid and Bitola, and all of the schools were completely filled with students. In the smaller cities High Schools were also opened that were not completely filled, but had the tendency towards it.<sup>46</sup>

In the beginning of the school year 1941, there was a confrontation between the students and the school staff in the Prilep's High School. The major confrontation was about the enforced enrollment of the students in the organization "Branik". Because the school staff was not able to deal with this, the police intervened. Later that year, a suitable moment was

<sup>42</sup> Вестник „ЦѢлокупна България“, *Признателността на студентите от Скопски процес към хърватския Поглавник*, бр. 70, год. 1, Скопје, 19 август, вторник, 1941 година

<sup>43</sup> „Българското управление във Вардарска Македонија (1941-1944)“, Документален сборник, едиция „Архивите говорят“, книга 63, София 2011, 380

<sup>44</sup> ЦДА – Софија, ф. 177к, оп. 3, а.е. 2055, л.37

<sup>45</sup> НОБ на Македонија, Народна задруга, 1962 година, Скопје, стр. 50

<sup>46</sup> The idea of forming the organization Branik comes from The Propaganda Office that worked under control of the German propaganda, under the command of Goebbels. It was formed with a state law on 29 December 1940. It was formed as a Bulgarian youth organization. The law proclaimed for all Bulgarian juveniles to be submitted into Branik and to listen to its staff. The organization was financed by the state budget and it was conducted by its founder, the president of the Bulgarian government, Bogdan Filov. The basic task of Branik was to educate the youth and to qualify it for the service of the king, the people and the state; Кратка българска енциклопедия, Том први, София 1963, стр. 288

<sup>47</sup> Исто таму, стр. 29

being awaited for begin a strike in the High School. That moment came on 9<sup>th</sup> December 1941. The harsh treatment of the students by the teacher of mathematics and the decision to expel three male and two female students from the school, were sufficient motive to go on strike. There was a boycott to the lectures in this High School in Prilep. Led by the Municipal Committee and the party and SKOJ, the students left the lectures as a boycott to the Bulgarian occupation. The pictures of the Bulgarian king and his family were taken down from the walls. That led to expulsion of four students, and they were forbidden to continue their education in any other Bulgarian school. This expulsion caused revolt among the other students and a strike of the school completely. Emanuel Cuchkov had to fill up a report for all of these activities. He focused his report on the "unsuitable teachers". In his report from 25 December 1941, he says: *"...one part of the guilt should be searched into the unsuitable staff. That thought and suspicion started to better me even a month ago when the activities in the school became regular. My observations and the reports that I have, made me believe that here we have teachers that do not belong in this environment. One of the causes for the strike is exactly this wrong selection of teachers. This is about the teachers in the municipality that are not prepared to conduct with the new school ideology..."*<sup>47</sup>

The strike continued until 12 December, while there was no tuition also. Beside the arrestments and the hearings of about twenty students in the police station, the students did not gave up their requests. Unable to calm down the situation, the police accepted part of the requests, which were about the scholarship, the harsh teachers were warned and certain students were let to come back to school. Although it was not a total success, this particular strike and the strikes in other High Schools in Macedonia increased the feeling of unity among the students.<sup>48</sup>

After the attack of the police station in Prilep, the strike of the students and other confrontations, the police commander Ilija Najcev and the vice-head master Emanuel Cuchkov were in a tricky position. The Bulgarian authorities lost the trust in their people and started to follow them. *"Then even the policemen started to say that Ilija Najcev and Mane Cuchkov are related to the organization for Liberation of the people. Najcev asked Smile Mileski to arrange him a meeting with Mircheta (Mirche Acev) or with Kuzmana (Kuzman Josifovski-Pity). Najcev was accompanied by Mane Cuchkov. " Stile told Najcev that a meeting with Mircheta is arranged in the hotel Bristol, but to do not take Cichkov with him. Najcev told Stile that he (Cuchkov) was theirs too, but beside that Stile did not let him. Najcev explained to Mirche how hard it was to him and that he is a tricky position (with NOD from one side and the Bulgarian authorities on the other side). A short time before that when the Bulgarian minister of interior affairs, Gabrovski, came in Prilep, it was noted that he doesn't trust Najcev. Najcev told to Mirche that he lost the trust of the Bulgarians and because of that he cannot do anything good for the organization NOD... Mirche was persistent and decisive in not wanting to leave the place as a regional warden, because no matter who other came, it can only get worse. They bid farewell and each went on his way..."*<sup>49</sup>

On 10 August 1942, the minister Gabrovski dismissed Ilija Najcev through a phone call, and threatened to make him an internee. The same year Emanuel Cuchkov from Prilep was transferred in the Second Male High School in Skopje. He was probably transferred, because the authorities didn't trust him. The revolution in Macedonia had already started and

<sup>48</sup> Растислав Терзиоски, Некои извештан на бугарските просветни власти за положбата во Прилеп и прилепско 1941-1942 година..., стр. 178-179

<sup>49</sup> Горѓи Малковски, „Бугарската фашистичка организација „Браник“ во Македонија 1941-1944 година“, ИНИ, Скопје, 1992 година, стр. 94

<sup>50</sup> Коде Солунски, Мирче Ацев, Скопје, 1968 година, стр. 123

the authorities doubted the loyalty of their people in Prilep. Gorgi Pejkov was appointed in Prilep as a replacement of Cuchkov.

Emanuel Cuchkov was appointed as a professor in the First Male High School in Skopje, in the school year 1943/44 and for a head-master of the Female High School. There he again moved with the parents of his wife Victoria. He met a few old friends: Risto Prodanov, Pance Karagjozov, Mihajlo Apostolski, Krum Organdziev, Lazo Sokolov and others. In April 1944 he left as a partisan, and replaced his duty as a headmaster with high political duties not only in Macedonia, but also in Yugoslavia.

