

Rewriting the Past in the Present: Politics of Identity in the Montenegrin Historiography

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ABSTRACT

Montenegro was the last former republic of socialist Yugoslavia that declared independence in 2006. Despite this late political emancipation, since the mid 1990s and particularly since the end of the 20th century one can observe the development of clearly articulated state- and nation-building project led by politicians and supported by scholars and intellectuals of the new Montenegrin school. The proposed article presents the means by which the national identity is shaped and constructed by analyzing three fields: scholars' publication on Montenegrin history and ethno-culture; standardization of the Montenegrin language and its application in education and state institutions and new history textbooks in schools. The analysis is overarched by reflection on the key role of intellectual elites in constructing the national identity and draws the trends for the development of the domains of language and history in the context of state building in Montenegro today.

Key Words: Montenegrin identity; nation-building; historiography; politics of identity.

Geçmişin Yeniden Yazılması: Karadağ Tarihinde Kimlik Politikaları

ÖZET

Karadağ, 2006 yılında özgürlüğünü ilan ederek dağılmış sosyalist Yugoslavya cumhuriyetleri içinde en son meydana çıkan devlet olmuştur. Politik özgürlükteki bu geç kalmışlığa rağmen, 1990 ortalarından ve özellikle 20. Yüzyıl sonlarından itibaren; akademisyenler ve Karadağ aydınlarının desteği ve politikacıların çalışmalarıyla sağlanan iyi tanımlanmış devlet ve ulus inşası projesinin gelişimini görmek mümkündür. Bu çalışmanın amacı; Karadağ ulusal kimliğinin şekillenmesini ve gelişimini üç alanda analiz ederek göstermektir: Karadağ tarihi ve etnik kültürü ile ilgili akademik yayınlar; Karadağ dilinin standardizasyonu ve son olarak dilin eğitimde, kamu kurumlarında ve yeni tarih kitaplarında uygulanması. Analizleri entelektüel seçkinlerin ulusal kimliğin oluşmasında kilit rol oynaması şekillendirmiştir ve günümüz Karadağ'ında dilin etkilerinin gelişimi ve devlet tarihi ele alınmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Karadağ kimliği; ulus inşası; tarih; kimlik politikaları.

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Montenegro is the former Yugoslav state that, along with Serbia, has the longest history of membership in the socialist federation² and declared independence only in 2006. Despite this late political emancipation, since the beginning of 90s of the 20th century and particularly since the early 21st century one can observe the development of clearly articulated state- and nation-building project led by the scholars and intellectuals, along with the political elite (Huszka 2003; Caspersen 2003; Bieber 2003). The Montenegrin recent history development is divided into several periods – since the fall of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) in 1992 by 1997, when the Montenegrin government strongly supported the official Serbian policy, and after 1998, when part of the ruling elite elevated the idea for distancing from the Milosevic policy. Since 2000 the Montenegrin government worked for de facto independent state in all fields – economy, security and borders, internal and external policy (Bieber 2003), also in the field of identity (Pavlović 2003; Pavlović 2003 a; Bieber 2009). In 2006 after a referendum with 55,4 % of the voters Montenegro had finally declared its independence and the period since the beginning of the new millennium has been marked by constant debate over the identity of Montenegrins and their “right to be a nation”. The debate went hand in hand with positions for and against independence and with formal and informal discourses in science and media that re-constructed the Montenegrin national identity. The elite in power – both political and intellectual – elevated the formula “Montenegrin nation of all citizens”, which seems the most appropriate for the 627,000 inhabitant country with over 10 ethnic and national communities, none of which is over 50% of the population: according to 2003 census titular community with Montenegrin identity was 43.2 % of the population, followed by Serbs – 31,99 %, Bošniaks - 7.77 %, Albanians – 5,03 %, Muslims 3,97 %, Croats - 1.1%, and Roma 0.4 %.³

What is, in these circumstances, the inter-relation between policies, science and ideology as factor for justification, formation and change of the Montenegrin identity? The development of the academic and political discourse in Montenegro demonstrated the validity of the principle of instrumentalisation of science in legitimizing political

2 It was an internationally recognized independent state in the period 1878 - 1918, then since 1918 part of Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Kingdom Yugoslavia after 1929) (for details see Andrijašević 2000; Rastorder 2003), a republic from 1945 in the Yugoslav federation, part of the so-called third Yugoslavia (Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, 1992 – 2003), State Union of Serbia and Montenegro (2003-2006) and independent state from May 2006 onwards (Morrison 2009).

3 *Stanovništvo prema nacionalnoj ili etničkoj pripadnosti prema popisu 1981. 1991. i 2003. godine*, <http://www.monstat.org/MeniGodisnjiPodaci.htm>. [accessed 07/11/2011]. As for the 2011 census results see *Population of Montenegro by sex, type of settlement, ethnicity, religion and mother tongue, per municipalities* at <http://www.monstat.org/userfiles/file/popis2011/saopstenje/saopstenje%281%29.pdf>. There is slight changes in the identity of the new citizens of the new state: Montenegrins grow up to 44.98, Serbs 28.73, Bošnjaks 8,65, Albanians 4.91, Muslims 3,31, Roma 1,01 etc.

objectives, but also that intellectuals had been shaping concepts that later became part of the official state identity projects. In the first half of the 1990s only a small circle of intellectuals around the Liberal Alliance of Montenegro was elevating the idea for independent statehood and total separation from the common state with Serbia. After 1997-1998 there were clear political messages against the common state with Serbia and afterwards the ruling political elite have been supporting its idea for independence with arguments from the field of economy and politics, but also of historiography, culture and language, justifying the existence of separate Montenegrin nation. In Montenegro there are different scientific schools, which according to the identity that they justify can be divided into: Montenegrin, pro-Serbian and analytical, which conceives of identity as dynamic and fluid category.⁴ In the interpretations of the first two schools ethno-national characteristics such as religion, state history, genesis, language, etc. have become part of the instrumentalisation of the scientific research on Montenegro in two opposite directions. The pro-Serbian school, that historically is the earliest and most influential, asserts that Montenegrins are part of the Serbian national corpus and this is proved by the Montenegrins' (Serbian) language, religion and consciousness (Golomazić 1988; Vukčević 1981; Vlahović 1990; Jovanović 1986). The Montenegrin school position is that Montenegrins form a separate nation with its own particular and different (from the Serbian) culture, language, consciousness and state history (Kulisić 1980; Nikčević 1987; Brković 1974 and recently Živković 1998; Rastoder 2003; Rastoder/ Andrijašević 2006; Andrijašević 2003). I will present the pro-Montenegrin school which shapes and re-constructs the Montenegrin nation- and state- identity, while the pro-Serbian school will not be a special focus of analysis, but its influence will be pointed out only in regard to opposition to the new Montenegrin school.

Language, history, religion, ethno-culture are closely linked to identity, and this becomes a key in the expression, demonstration and construction of national identity. The next lines will present means by which the national identity is shaped and re-constructed by analyzing three fields "manufactured" by the scholars and intellectuals in contemporary Montenegro:

1. Scholars' publication on Montenegrin history and ethno-culture;
2. Standardization of the Montenegrin language and its application in education and state institutions;
3. The new history textbooks in schools.

The national identity is viewed as a social construct, and key prerequisites for nation-identity building are the development of modern society, industrialization, print

⁴ For anthropological analyses of the different schools of thought and scientific discourses on the identity of the Montenegrins see Nedeljković 2007.

media, mass culture and education (Gellner 1983; Anderson 2006; Hobsbawm 1983; Hobsbawm/Kertzer 1992; Brubaker 1996a; Brubaker 1996b). The processes of nation-building are managed by the intellectual elites and are implemented by the institutions of the state itself. The studies of nationalism pay attention to the construction of the nation through formal institutions and social actors. The nation is in this sense the result of deliberate effort of elites to consolidate a community around “primordial” values. Hobsbawm introduces the concept of “invented traditions” that are presenting the community in the state as national, authentic and primordial population (Hobsbawm 1983). In this sense, nationalism ignores the local and ethnic particularity at the expense of the invented markers of national identity, which nevertheless often have ethno-cultural content (Gellner 1983). Folklorists, historians, ethnographers and linguists have a key role to play in this process presenting the “invented” traditions as common for the nation. The constructivists’ interpretation of nationalism at this point does not differ from the ethno-symbolic approach (whose founder Anthony Smith built over the author’s earlier perennialist thesis) that intellectuals have a major role as creators, inventors and analysts of national ideas (Smith 1996a; Smith 1996b). Intellectuals act as “chroniclers” of the ethnic past, elaborating on those memories and cultural elements that can link the modern nation with a “golden ages” in its ancient times (Smith 1996a). The national symbols are affirmed through legislative measure and are transmitted through institutions of the state, and thus, experienced and revealed by the people. We should also note the role of elites, defined as *intellectuals* in the Marxist analysis of nationalism and the process of national revival in Eastern Europe by Miroslav Hroch (Hroch 2000). Hroch identified three main stages in the formation of modern nations in the capitalist era: phase A or scientific phase, when a small elite of activists and researchers began studies on language, history and culture, phase B or phase of national agitation and propaganda, where the patriots stand behind scientific elite and formed the political project of “national revival” phase and when the movement is massive and built the modern social structure and national movements have their own specific political program for the construction of national identity (Hroch 2000: 22-24).

In this key of interpretation, only after World War II in Montenegro fully developed the conditions - economical, cultural and political - for arise of nationalism and we can speak about articulated Montenegrin nationalism. By the middle of XX century, at political level there was a project for development of Montenegro as an independent country, but the political projects for the identity of the population were still unclear (Pavlović 2003a). The population was regarded as Serbs, Montenegrins, Montenegrin Serbs (Malesević/Uzelac 2007; Pavlović 2003; Pavlović 2003a) without stressing on the national distinction. There was no mass movement for Montenegrin national

unity and independence on the basis of ethno-culture, language and religion. At the time of Kingdom of Yugoslavia Serbian identity had been introduced through mass education, politics of identity, censuses and ideology (Pavlović 2003a). Conditions for development of nationalism, with industrial development, mass education and literacy, ideology and print mass culture developed fully at the time of socialism (Malešević/Uzelac 2007), when the political leadership from above formulated the existence of Montenegrin nation (Dulović 2009).

SCIENTIFIC AND POPULAR PUBLICATIONS ON THE HISTORY OF THE MONTENEGRIN NATION

Historiography and humanitarian tradition are essential for building of national identity through studies, publications and interpretations in science, education and public space. Historians play a central role in describing and defining, rediscovery, presentation and analysis of the ethnic heritage (Smith 1996b: 175). Historical research became the basis for the transmission of the national spirit by proving a sense of presence of ethnic identity in the past for the community, which represents the nation in modern times.

Although in the federation known as the second Yugoslavia (1945-1992), Montenegrins used to be considered as constitutive and independent nation, the historians' in both Yugoslavia and abroad (Singleton 1976; Singleton 1985; Wilson 1979) still viewed the Montenegrins as part of the Serbian nation. Only in the 1970s and 1980s as a result of the political climate and the decentralization tendencies in Yugoslavia (Ramet 1992) the Communist Party of Montenegro initiated scientific debate on the formation and existence of the Montenegrin nation based on a different from the Serbs ethnic composition in specific historical conditions (Dulović 2009). The initial position of the Yugoslav Communist Party from the 1940s that the Montenegrin nation emerged from the Serbian ethnicity was transformed into a decision to promote Montenegrin national identity through policies in the fields of culture and education in the 1970s (Zahova 2011: 136-144). In accordance with this position from then on, historians, scholars and experts associated with the ideology of power in Montenegro, worked on publications in which Montenegrins were considered as separate from the Serbian ethnic group with their own culture, language and traditions (Kulišić 1980; Nikčević 1987; Brković 1974). National development, however, still remained under the slogan brotherhood and unity of Serbs and Montenegrins, and trends in historiography, mass education and printing were within the paradigm dictated by Belgrade (Pavlović 2003a).

In the period between the end of 1990s and 2006, along with the establishment of mechanisms for economic and political independence (Huszka 2003: 58; Morrison 2009), the ruling politicians supported and implemented policies on national, understood as Montenegrin, identity (Bieber 2003; Caspersen 2003; Huszka 2003). The arguments related to ethno-nationalist identity and history of the Montenegrins became an essential part of political rhetoric in support of the independent status of the republic, as soon as the issue was on the political agenda of the Democratic Party of Socialists.

In 1998, the Dukljan Academy of Sciences and Arts (*Dukljanska akademija nauka i umjetnosti - DANU*) was established as an NGO closely linked to the Montenegrin PEN Centre (*Crnogorski PEN centar*) and Montenegrin Association of Independent Writers (*Crnogorsko društvo nezavisnih književnika*), both strong supporters of the Montenegrin's independence since the early 90s (Marković/Perović 1997). The purpose of the scientific organization is to study the ancient history of the Montenegrin state, starting from the medieval Duklja state and Vojislavljević dynasty (Brković 2000). This pro-Montenegrin circle of scholars and writers believes that Montenegrin Academy of Arts and Sciences⁵ is pro-Serbian and detrimental to the identity of Montenegrins. The Dukljan Academy, according to its founders, is "part of the Montenegrin identity, civic, Mediterranean, multi-cultural and multi-national" (Brković 2000). The academy publishes periodicals and books, and organizes the distribution of several awards for achievements. From 1999 to 2003 the state financed the activities of DANU, mainly for the work on the project for Montenegro encyclopedia (unreleased to this day).

The first "re-constructors" are representatives of the new historical school are members of Dukljan Academy of Arts and Sciences. The main and most authoritative representatives of the new Montenegrin historiography are Živko Adrijašević and Šerbo Rastoder, authors of the most recent comprehensive study on the history of Montenegro (Andrijasević/Rastoder 2006), which presents the main points in the interpretations of historical events in the light of new Montenegrin identity. In re-constructing the national identity we observe challenging the views of Serbian historiography and historical narration about the Montenegro as a state in early periods.

First point is proving the early statehood in the land of Montenegro since ancient times when in these areas existed Duklja. While in previous disputes, in both pro-Serbian and pro-Montenegrin historiography the period before the medieval Zeta is not focus of research because of too uncertain historical sources data, the Montenegrin science has adopted the view that rulers of the earlier entity from 9th century Duklja,

5 Founded in 1971 in the Socialist Republic of Montenegro in the general course of creation of cultural and research institutions in all republics of SRFY. Most of the academic members in History and Ethnology in the Humanities' department of the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts have been educated in Belgrade and are supporters of the idea that Montenegrins are Serbs in ethnic terms.

Vojislavljević was the first Montenegrin dynasty (Andrijasević 2006: 12 - 13). To prove the relationship between Duklja and Montenegro Živko Adrijašević brings evidence that the name Montenegro⁶ is etymologically related to the name 'Duklja' which is derived from Indo-European word 'dhoukl' - black, dark. (Andrijasević 2006: 38). The conclusion is that Dukljan history proves that Montenegrins have statehood before Nemanjić, e.g. before the Serbian medieval rulers, to whom the XI-XII century entity in the lands of Montenegro Zeta was subordinated.

Second, the existence of an ethnic group, formed in the territory of Montenegro as a result of mixing different groups, called "the ancestors of the Montenegrins" (Andrijasević 2006: 10) to emphasize that ethno-genesis is not only derived from the Slavs, but it is connected with Illyrian and Roman population, that had been living since ancient times. In this point the re-constructed view repeats an earlier thesis of the influential ethnologist Špiro Kulišić, since 1970s, about the Montenegrin nation formation on the basis of mixture of the autochthonous pre-Slavic, Vlach and Illyrian populations and the Slavs (Kulišić 1980: 19-20).

Third, the existence of an independent institution of the Montenegrin Orthodox Church, which is assimilated by the Serbian Orthodox Church and which has historical and legal grounds to be independent. Before 1991 (during the SFRY), because of the notion that the church was considered as retrograde element in building a socialist society, the issues to which church do the Montenegrin people belong had not been explored to prove their national belonging. After 1992, the question about Montenegrin and Serbian Orthodox churches in the territory of Montenegro has formed one of the most vigorous public debates and became an occasion for public discussions that go far beyond the scientific arguments. In the new Montenegrin identity project, the Montenegrin Church is seen as part of the Montenegrin state identity. According to researchers, jurists and representatives of the Montenegrin Orthodox Church, it had been independent as part of the independent Kingdom of Montenegro until 1918 and this fact gives the right of Montenegro to have own national church as soon as the state was renewed in 2006. According to this concept, the church is a national rather than a supranational entity. The defenders of the Montenegrin Orthodox Church (MOC) claim that originally the Montenegrin church was not founded by of Saint Sava, but Balša III since he had been appointing the bishops at the Zethian bishopric (Živković 1998: 115). The first sign of independence of Montenegrin Orthodox Church is an independent state of Balšić dynasty (from 1360), who led an independent church policy (Adrijašević 2006: 89). Montenegro's church was autocephalous from 1603 to 1766, when the All Montenegrins assembly (*Obštocrnogorski Sbor*) had been electing the Montenegrin metropolitans (Roganović 1991; Živković 1998; Šćepanović 2002:

6 Monte Negro in Latin means "Black mountain".

38-39). Montenegrin Bishopric was outside the organizational infrastructure of the Patriarchate of Constantinople by 1879, since Old Montenegro was not part of the lands ruled by the Ottoman Empire. According to these texts, the Serbian Orthodox Church is a foreign church, occupying the territory of Montenegro after 1922, when Montenegro itself was annexed to Serbia in 1918. Montenegrin Church is seen as part of the identity of Montenegrins in the first place to prove its independence from the earliest times.⁷

Fourth main pillar of the re-construction is the interpretation of the political events of 1918 around the Montenegro's entry into the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, but as part of the Serbian lands. Maybe to this topic is dedicated the most extensive literature at the time of Yugoslavia, and thereafter. The main thesis of the Montenegrin school is that as a result of external factors, the internal sovereignty of Montenegro was broken and it was annexed to Serbia, and the national development was suspended (Rastoder 2006: 289; Pavlović 2008), while in the Yugoslav and Montenegrin historiographies before 1992 it was seen as union of two brothers (Vujović, D.-D 1987). It also elaborated interpretation related to the pro-Serbian orientation of Prince Nikola Petrović (1864-1918) as part of his political project of the Montenegrin dynasty to rule the Orthodox population in the region (Šćepanović 2002; Andrijašević 2006).

When we turn from history to ethnography we see that generally, in the Yugoslav ethnography dominated the view that the Montenegrin ethnic culture is part of the Serbian national core (Jovanović 1911; Erdeljanović 1926). Even today, ethnographic works in humanities touching upon the identity issues in Montenegro are few. Historiography seems to be more actively and systematically working on identity issues, in the light of the new social context, while such developments in ethnology are almost absent. The monographic work of Zorica Mrvaljević "The National Costume of Montenegro" (Mrvaljević 2006) stands behind the idea that the Montenegrin national costume is a symbol of Montenegrin statehood in the Middle Ages. Mrvalević discusses the thesis of the early origin of the Montenegrin costume of the time of medieval Zeta, e.g. in 13th and 14th centuries, and its continuation as a symbol of Montenegrin nation over the centuries (Mrvaljević 2006: 185-189). The thesis can be called radical since it is opposed to the dominant view in the study of the Montenegrin festive costume, believed to be officially introduced by Petar II Petrović Njegoš (1782-1830)⁸ himself and uniform for the Montenegrin army and officials until 1910 as part

7 A concise presentation of the views of the Montenegrin school in regard to the Montenegrin Orthodox Church is given by Živko Andrijašević at http://www.montenegrina.net/pages/pages1/religija/naziv_crnogorska_crkva_z_andrijasevic.htm

8 One of the Montenegrin Prince-Bishops from Petrović dynasty whose rule secularized the country from theocracy into a secular state. He is also considered as one of the most famous poets of the South-Slav literature.

of Petrović-Njegoš dynasty project for national unity of the Serbs (Vukmanović 1952; Barjaktarović 1979; Barjaktarović 1987).

Scientific justification for the public policy agenda for Montenegro as a nation of citizens appeared in political sciences and history of law. The most prominent promoter of the view that Montenegro arose historically as a territorial nation is Mijat Šuković, professor of constitutional law. According to academic Šuković, unlike other ethno-nationalist states in the Balkans, the Montenegrin nation had not founded its own state, but the process was vice versa - within the Montenegrin state during the process of modernization in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a gradual development took place, shaping of the Montenegrin national consciousness among all people who live on its territory (Šuković 2001). Unlike the historians who link the nation with the categories “origin”, “common history” and “self-development state” for Šuković the government, law and institutions had the leading role in formation of the Montenegrin nation. Montenegrin nation has been formed in the course of the XX century from many ethnic elements called constitutive parts of the nation. Its development, however, is interrupted by the annexation of the state in 1918. To restore the “natural life of the nation” Montenegrin state must be independent in the present (Šuković 2001). Šuković thus presents a constructivist approaches to address the issue of Montenegrin nation. The author make analogies with Western models of state, where every citizen is identified with the nation, regardless of ethnic origin, mother tongue and culture (Šuković 2001: 287-289). In this sense the Montenegrin state is a territorial nation-state.

However, there are radical advocates of a separate static Montenegrin identity, historically connected with the early population of the Balkan Peninsula or older state formations in the region. As a member of Dukljan Academy of Sciences and Arts, Ph.D. in the history of literature, with extensive experience as a writer and film director, Radoslav Rotković in recent decades developed voluminous publications on Montenegrin history, about the antiquity of the Montenegrin people, ethno-genesis and history of the Montenegrins in all historical periods. In an effort to prove the ethnic difference of Serbs and Montenegrins in a series of publications (Rotković 1992; Rotković 2001) Rotković says that Montenegrins are old Slavic people of west Slavic origin “western neighbors, the Poles” with whom they share common dialect - “jekavica” and the same phonetic system (Montenegrin phonetic system has 33 letters, while Serbian and Croatian have 30). According to Rotković, the myth of Kosovo and Obilić was not known at all in Montenegro among the people, it had been imposed “from above” through the educational system (Rotković 2001: 55).

Although not belonging to the purely scientific fields, two hard advocates of the new Montenegrin school are Jevrem Brković, first President of Dukljan Academy of Sciences and Arts, writer and publicist and Sreten Zeković (1990; 1993; 2003), writer

and publicist, who in public interviews and essays argue for the particularity of the Montenegrins, emphasizing on the pre-Slavic elements in their culture as well as their linguistic characteristics. Their claims are based primarily on attacks on Serbian Orthodox Church, called a policy of invasion.

While the Montenegrin national identity in the time of Socialist Yugoslavia was centred on the origin and ethno-genesis of Montenegrins, some elements of material and spiritual culture, demonstrating differentiation of the Montenegrin nation (Kulišić 1980; Nikčević 1987), the re-constructed concept of the national identity stresses on the historical tradition of the Montenegrin country, including the Middle Ages, the Montenegrin Church distinct from Serbian and development of the Montenegrin language. In the development of this school we see all the “ancient myths of the nation” (Smith 1996) - an early origin, ancient ethno genesis, separate, independent church and historical development.

STANDARDIZATION OF THE MONTENEGRIN LANGUAGE AND ITS APPLICATION IN EDUCATION AND STATE INSTITUTIONS

Along with history, another key element in the nation-building process in the region of South-Eastern Europe (Friedman 2000; Greenberg 2004) is the establishment and standardization of a separate language. The development and standardization of the Montenegrin language and the new linguistic school in Montenegro humanities should be interpreted in this key. The idea of institutionalization of Montenegrin language as part of the Montenegrin identity development of was launched in the first half of the 1990s by intellectuals around the Montenegrin PEN Center, which distributed the Declaration “Language as a Homeland” in 1992 on this issue (Marković/Perović 1997: 28-29). The main figure with fundamental works on the historical development of the Montenegrin language and its standardization in grammar and morphology is Vojislav Nikčević (Nikčević 1993; Nikčević 1997), who in 1997 founded the Institute for Montenegrin language. Montenegrin language is seen as a separate language with a tradition, based on the historical development with more than 1000 years of history, evolved along with the development of Montenegrin nation in specific geographical and historical circumstances. The definition of the Montenegrin language is done by highlighting the differences in regard to Serbian language. While Serbian writers of XIX century used to write in ignorant language, Montenegrin language has given the basis for creating some of the most famous works of Montenegrin literature. “Mountain Wreath” of Petar Pertović Njegoš is written in Montenegrin language and cannot be understood by Serbian audience, as Montenegrin was different and incomprehensible

to Serbian speaking readers (Nikčević 1997: 75). The major difference is the use of long e (“iye) in Montenegrin. Serbian orthography does not reflect three of the specific sounds in the Montenegrin language that are in use in all regions of Montenegro. Supporters of the Montenegrin language standardization think that the orthography should be Latin and three new characters (ç, ĵ and dz), typical of some dialects in Montenegro (Nikčević 2007), should be introduced. These specifics should become a basis for standardization of the language.

Common element in the national ideologies is that a language is associated with a particular territory, which outlines the boundaries of the nation (Anderson 2006: 43-46). Montenegrin language is considered as *koine* type characteristic of all Slavic speaking communities on the territory of Montenegro, thus a basis for “imagination” of a national community of people who speak a common language on a shared territory that forms the nation is provided (Anderson 2006: 140). In other words, the Montenegrin language should be a marker for the border of the Montenegrin nation of citizens. A reference to a language with a foreign name (Serbian) would mean exclusion of the right to national existence and destruction of the Montenegrins’ own identity (Nikčević 2007; Črigić 2007; Črigić 2007). The popular name of the Montenegrin language in the pre-modern past before the Vuk Karadžić reform was *naški* (ours) to be opposed to the neighboring Albanian called by the folks *arbanaški* (Jovičević 1911).

For the first time category “Montenegrin language” was introduced in the official census in 2003, when 22% of the population declared that they speak Montenegrin. In 2004 the Government of Montenegro changed the subject “Serbian” and renamed it to “mother tongue” (*maternji jezik*), which could be Montenegrin, Serbian, Croatian and Bošnjak” (*crnogorski, srpski, bošnjački odnosno hrvatski jezik*). The change was motivated by giving equal right of all peoples in Montenegro, who speak the same from linguistic point of view language, but who have to call it according to their national self-identification. The Minister of education at that time Radovan Damjanović stated that in this way the human rights of the non-Serbian population were to be protected and that the official language of another state (Serbia) cannot be an official language of Montenegro. Since the beginning of the millennium, Milo Djukanović⁹ also supported the idea of a formal separation of the Montenegrin language, stating in public that he speaks Montenegrin. Web sites and official documents of the institutions from the same period gradually changed the name “Serbian” with “Montenegrin-Serbian”

9 See statements of Milo Djukanović on the topic of Montenegrin as a state language and its importance for the Montenegrin identity <http://www.vijesti.me/vijesti/dukanovic-crnogorski-nije-jezik-etnickih-crnogoraca-vec-jezik-drzave-crne-gore-clanak-34983>, <http://www.kurir-info.rs/vesti/milo-crnogorski-jezik-nazvan-je-po-nasoj-drzavi-117508.php>, http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2011&mm=05&dd=21&nav_category=167&nav_id=513592

or “Montenegrin”. Like all nation-states today the standard of Montenegrin national language is introduced through media, education, written culture (Anderson 2006: 43-46).

The language issue was one of the government priorities after 2006 independence and according to the Montenegrin Constitution from October 22, 2007 Montenegrin is the official language in the state. Its entry to the Constitution of Montenegro as an official language has among the key issues in the constitutional debates. In 2008 the “South Slav and Montenegrin language literature” studies have been introduced, along with the previously existing “Serbian and South Slav literature” at the University of Nikšić¹⁰. Adopted on 10.07.2009, the “Working standard of the Montenegrin language” introduced two more letters - “š” and “ž”, Montenegrin language grammar, morphology and vocabulary were approved by the Ministry of Education and Science and since the autumn 2011 the Montenegrin language is a compulsory subject in the educational system. The 2011 census in Montenegro showed that the number of citizens that declared to speak Montenegrin had grown significantly: from 22 % (in 2003) to 37 % in April 2011, while 43 % speak Serbian.¹¹

Today the position of politicians from the ruling coalition is that language is a matter of self-determination, and institutions like Matica Crnogorska, Dukljan Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Montenegrin PEN Centre consider that Montenegrin should be introduced, it should be the language of official publications and studies. Montenegrin language is already in use in institutions, websites of government agencies, publications and educational system. According to the Montenegrin opposition the official language is dead word on paper without plan, program and staff to keep learning. Later if compared to the other former Yugoslav republics, the Montenegrin standard and the process of identification with a language as marker of national identity is still developing. Nations cannot be fully imagined without linguistic nationalism (Anderson 2006: 135) and therefore standardization of Montenegrin language became reality only at the end of the twentieth century, when the real Montenegrin nationalism and aspiration for state autonomy have developed.

TEXTBOOKS AND EDUCATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

From the time of introduction of mass education, including the time of independence from 1878 to 1918, the Montenegrin education system used textbooks in history and literature prepared and printed in Belgrade. In the 1990s the History subject in

10 <http://www.ff.ac.me/dokumenta/raspored%20predavanja/osnovne/crnogorski%20jezik%20osnovne.pdf>

11 *Population of Montenegro by sex, type of settlement, ethnicity, religion and mother tongue, per municipalities* at <http://www.monstat.org/userfiles/file/popis2011/saopstenje/saopstenje%281%29.pdf>

the education system has been thought and studied by programmes and textbooks approved by the republican government of Socialist Republics on Montenegro in the late 1980s (for example Strugar/Popović 1993). In 2000 plans to issue textbooks prepared by historians from the Institute of History in Podgorica, Montenegro, close to the new historical school and the Matica Crnogorska circles have been approved (by the Ministry of Education and Technology). Previous books have focused on the national liberation struggle and the Second World War and Montenegro has been considered as one of the Slav peoples in the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans. In the new textbooks (Burzanović/Djordjević 2003; Burzanović/Djordjević 2008; Djordjević/Popović 2003), produced in the course of independent state building, Montenegro is considered as the country with self-development in earlier historical periods - present shares Duklja and Zeta in the Middle Ages (Burzanović/Djordjević 2003). Montenegro is not viewed as part of the history of South Slavic lands, but as an independent political unit at the time of Ottoman rule in the Balkans. Among the innovations associated with the reconstruction of the identity are: devoting special attention to archaeological findings from prehistory periods on the territory of Montenegro; presentation of Duklja as the first Montenegrin state and special attention and study of all the rulers of the dynasty Vojislavljević; stressing on the importance of Duklja for building the Montenegrin country, linking the state history in the trajectory Duklja-Zeta-Montenegro; Crnojević, the dynasty ruled Zeta at the end of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th centuries, now constitutes part of the historical knowledge that is taught in schools; re-assessing the rule of Prince Nikola Petrović in regard to his declared Serb identity, critical evaluation of position of Montenegro in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the loss of independence and assimilation of a Montenegrin Serb identity; Parts devoted to the birth of Islam and its spread in the Balkans, as well as to history of the Muslims, Bošnjak and Albanian population. Montenegrin history from 16th to 19th centuries is placed in the context of European development and parts, devoted to Montenegro present 50% of the contents of textbooks. For comparison – the textbooks used in the teaching course in 1980s and 1990s, preset Montenegro in the context of South Slavic people, with only 20 % of the content about 18th-20th century, devoted to Montenegrin state under the rule of Petrović-Njegoš dynasty. The new textbooks introduced in mass education the scientific publications of the Montenegrin school (Andrijašević/Rastoder 2006; Živković 1998) or earlier books focused on the development of Montenegro (Jovanović 1995).

CONCLUSION

Historiography and humanitarian tradition have a crucial role in the construction of national identity through research and interpretations in science, education and public

space. The Balkan historiographies play a key role in the analysis of heritage, ethnic culture and ethnicity, respectively, and national identity of Montenegrins. During the 1970s and 1980s started scientific debate about ethno-genesis of the Montenegrins, but until the early 1990s interpretations that stand behind the idea of Montenegrin state separated from the common unity with Serbia were rather exclusion. In socialist Yugoslavia, Montenegrins were one of the most prominent figures, over-represented in the party, military and political leadership of the federation. Despite the fact that the Montenegrin nation was recognized, there was no movement for their own national development, similar to the debates in Croatia, for example. In the 1970s some distinct ideas of the Montenegrin language and nation did exist, but only at the end of the twentieth century in full force we see the development of a movement among the ruling elite and intellectuals, which postulates - Montenegro has the right to exist as a nation on the basis historical, political, religious and language development. Standardization of Montenegrin history and language, its entry into circulation in the educational system and media will be followed by critical position on the national artists from other periods to be interpreted in the key of the Montenegrin national feeling. The new training materials for general education and the official media discourse will strengthen identification with the main resources of national identity - myths of origin, glorious old and new history, church, language and literature.

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