N A C J O N A L I Z M Y W Ś W I E C I E

S P E C I F I C N A T I O N A L I S M S

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INTERNATIONAL STATUS OF A TERRITORY, NATIONALISM AND APPROPRIATION OF HISTORY: THE CASE OF KOSOVO

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary scholarship of nationalism appears to be extremely diversified. As Liah Greenfield and John Breuilly point out, researchers quite frequently are unable to agree on a definition of the phenomenon.¹ Nevertheless, scholars almost unanimously distinguish political (civic) and cultural (ethnic) types of nationalism.² Ernest Gellner, who predominantly scrutinized the later, asserted:

"Nationalism is a political principle which maintains that similarity of culture is the basic social bound. Whatever principles of authority may exist between people depend for their legitimacy on the fact that the members of the group concerned are of the same culture (or, in nationalist idiom, of the same 'nation'). In its extreme version, similarity of culture becomes both the necessary and the sufficient condition of legitimate membership: only members of the appropriate culture may join the unit in question, and *all of them* must do so. The aspirations of extreme nation-

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¹ Liah Greenfield, "Etymology, Definitions, Types," in: *Encyclopedia of Nationalism*, vol. 1, ed. Alexander J. Motyl (San Diego: Academic Press, 2000), 257; John Breuilly, *Nationalism and State* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), 1.

² Liah Greenfield points out that however closely cultural and ethnic nationalisms do not totally correspond to each other, the same applies to political and civic types: Greenfield, "Etymology," 259.

alists are thwarted if their nation-state fails to assemble all the members of the nation, and if it tolerates a significant number of non-members within its borders, particularly if they occupy places of importance.”³

As Henk Dekker clarifies, some authors who understand nationalism as a political ideology or doctrine suppose that: firstly, “nation” is perceived as a huge group of blood relatives, who have a common ancestry; secondly,

“[e]ach nation is expected to be or become a state and each state to be or become a national entity; ‘nation’ and state are expected to be geographically identical.”⁴

Such approach implies that nationalistically-prone political and cultural establishments continuously strive to assemble all members of an alleged nation into one political unit. This, in turn causes struggle for autonomy, independence, irredentism, secession, or, in the case of pan-nationalism, territorial expansion. It is also presupposed that real (if it can be the case), conceived, or constructed common ancestry of the members of a “nation” motivates nationalists to demand elevation of the nation’s international status, i.e. recognition of autonomy and independence.

In the present paper I will attempt to argue that relations between nation-building by means of constructed history and existing international personality are more complex. They can develop in ways counter to the process described in the previous paragraph. I argue that sometimes existing international status of an administrative unit built upon ethnic principle determines the nation-building process, namely its historical side. I am going to show how the views of Kosovar elites regarding the ethnic origins of their constituents varied according to the political status of the region.

USE OF THE PAST IN NATION-BUILDING PROCESS

The celebrated statement of Ernest Gellner reads: “It is nationalism, which engenders nations and not the other way round.”⁵ Cultural nationalists generally engage in “national awakening” by investigating language, literature, history and folklore. According to Liah Greenfield,

“preoccupations with language, history, and folklore reflect a belief in deeper, ‘natural,’ that is, in effect, biological, forces behind them, such as race or ‘blood and soil,’ which form the ultimate reality underneath nationhood and national identity.”⁶

Thus, for nation-builders, reinvigorating sense of national identity is critical. They employ “usable past” for many reasons.

Anthony Smith, drawing on existent scholarship, answers why nationalists refer to history:

“From the standpoint of ‘modernists’ and instrumentalists, the communal past forms a repository or quarry from which materials may be selected in the construction and invention of nations. The assumption here is that nations need usable pasts, their uses being largely determined by needs and preoccupations of present-day elites.”⁷

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³ Ernest Gellner, *Nationalism* (London: Phoenix, 1998), 3-4. The emphasis is in the original.

⁴ Henk Dekker, “Nationalism, its Explanations, and National Socialization” (1998): 2, accessed December 30, 2011. <http://web.ceu.hu/nation/classics/11Dekker1.pdf>.

⁵ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), 55.

⁶ Greenfield, “Etymology,” 259.

⁷ Anthony Smith, “Golden Age” and “National Renewal,” in: *Myths and Nationhood*, ed. Geoffrey Hosking and George Schopflin (London: C. Hurst & Co, 1997), 37.

Communal past serves to control mass emotions and mobilization, to legitimize unpalatable social change by demonstrating historical precedents, and to provide moral lessons for emulation or prior title over contested territory.⁸

Colin Kidd characterizes “the modern historical enterprise” as “a product of the nationalist moment of the nineteenth century.” Conscious or unwitting historical assessment centers on the nation and frames all existed social groups (or even categories) in terms of nation state.

“Nations are the building blocks of history. Underpinning such approaches are assumptions about national continuity, that the ancient histories of the territories of England, Scotland, Ireland, France, and so on yield the origins of modern nation, even when the ancient inhabitants were divided into various different entities, whether regional, ethnic or tribal.”⁹

The notion of a people itself, in Kidd’s eyes, is permeated with descent myths, stemming from 19th century historiographies, whereas many historians tend to confine the past into ethnic and nationalist categories, using a model of ethno-genesis or people formation.¹⁰

Thus, cultural nationalism and history are closely connected and intermingled. Nation-building draws upon appropriation of the past, making nations “natural” by discovering their “ancient roots.” This increases social cohesion and establishes a national agenda. However, it does not mean that the process should go in one direction, that is when historical construction of a cultural nation unavoidably leads to an urge to elevate the political status of a “national territory.” In many cases, constructed national history is used to justify the status quo in domestic power distribution and international affairs.

KOSOVO POLITICAL STATUS AND RENEGOTIATION OF KOSOVARS’ ETHNIC ORIGINS AFTER WORLD WAR II

Albanian nationalism in Kosovo after World War II represents one telling example of interplay between political status of “national” territory and a concept of ethnic origins. With evolution of the former, Kosovar intellectuals and politicians differently viewed ethnic roots of Kosovar Albanians. At first they considered this issue unimportant, but later “revealed” all-Albanian Illyrian (independently of tribal groups) roots and finally embraced Dardanian provenance.

Within Yugoslavia, Kosovo, which had been occupied by the Serbian army in 1912, was first granted a special status under the communist regime. The Constitution of the Federal People’s Republic of Yugoslavia, adopted on 31 January 1946, stated that the Federation was composed by six republics. One of them, the People’s Republic of Serbia, included the autonomous province of Vojvodina and the autonomous Kosovo-Metohijan region (Article 3).¹¹ The rights and scope of autonomy were not specified and should have been determined by the constitution of the parent republic (Article 103). According

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⁸ Smith, “Golden Age,” 37-38.

⁹ Colin Kidd, “Identity before Identities: Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Historian,” in: *History and Nation*, ed. Julia Rudolph (Cranbury: Associated University Press, 2006), 13-14.

¹⁰ Kidd, “Identity,” 14-15.

¹¹ *Constitution of the Federative Peoples Republic of Yugoslavia (1946)*, accessed January 8, 2012, http://www.worldstatesmen.org/Yugoslavia_1946.txt. Here I have to mention that the name Kosovo and Metohija (*Kosovo i Metohija*) is Serbian. Albanians prefer to call the region just Kosovo (*Kosovë/Kosova*).

to Article 3 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Serbia, since 17 January 1947, the territory of the Republic included the Autonomous Kosovo-Metohijan region. Autonomous rights of the later were to be outlined in a respective statute (Article 14). The republic however reserved the right to approve the statutes and borders of the autonomous regions (Article 46). Even though it was not spelled out, special status was granted to Kosovo because of the particular ethnic structure of the region. Article 115 reads that the statute and decisions of regional authorities should be published in Serbian and Albanian.¹² The constitutional provisions of 1946-1947 powerfully limited the autonomy of Kosovo, not to mention that international subjectivity was virtually excluded. Even in respect to education, Kosovan authorities had to follow a Serbian educational plan (Article 106 of the Serbian Constitution).

The later Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, adopted on 7 April 1963, granted Kosovo and Metohija provincial status (Article 111) and equalized it with Vojvodina in terms of rights. The autonomy status of the provinces now could be terminated only in accordance with the federal constitution. It was overtly stated that autonomous provinces should be formed in the territories with specific national (in the ethnic sense) structure (Article 111). The Constitution again stipulated that the details of the rights and obligations of the provinces, and the scope of these obligations, were a matter to be determined in each republic's constitution (Article 112).¹³ According to the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Serbia, republican authorities were responsible for school education (Article 141) and border changes, whereas autonomous provinces had their statutes (135). The relationship between the republic and the provinces, however, remained unclear.¹⁴

The twofold status of Kosovo that legally recognized and accommodated the Albanian population in the region on one hand and at once foresaw its irrevocable loyalty to Serbia on the other, instigated a specific trend in identity politics targeted the Kosovars. The later were seen as a specific group of Albanians, which throughout history had had close and inextricable connection to Serbia and the Slavic peoples of Yugoslavia.

The state and party discourse, as well as official documents of the time, continuously differentiated between Yugoslav Albanians (Serbian: *Šiptari*) and Albanians from the state of Albania (*Albanci*). The Yugoslav and Serbian constitutions of 1946-1947, 1953 and 1963 referred to Yugoslav Albanians as "*Šiptari*" and to their language as "*šiptarski*."¹⁵ In 1957, the Commission for language and literature proposed a new orthography of Albanian language, which relied on local dialects, to be used in Kosovan media and education.¹⁶

Constructing the distinct identity of the Kosovars found expression in historical thought. It was Serbian scholars who first started to engage in investigation of Albanian ethnic origins. In 1955, Milutin Garašanin published an academic article in the major regional magazine *Përparimi* portraying Albanians as descendants of Illyrians and supposing their connections to legendary Pelasgians.¹⁷ These views were shared by ethnographer

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¹² *Ustav Narodne Republike Srbije* (Beograd: Službeni list, 1947), accessed January 8, 2012, <http://scc.digital.nb.rs/document/RA-ustav-1947>.

¹³ *Ustav Socijalističke Federativne Republike Jugoslavije (1963)*, accessed January 8, 2012, <http://sr.wikisource.org/wiki/>.

¹⁴ *Ustav Socijalističke Republike Srbije sa ustavnim zakonom o sprovođenju ustava* (Beograd: Savremena Administracija, 1963), accessed January 8, 2012, <http://scc.digital.nb.rs/document/RA-ustav-1963>.

¹⁵ Rexhep Ismajli, *Gjuhë standarde dhe histori identitetesh* (Tiranë: Academia e Shqipërisë, 2005), 102-104. It was "*šiptarski*" and not "*albanski*" language that was mentioned in the said constitution's article 115.

¹⁶ Ismajli, *Gjuhë*, 185-190.

¹⁷ Milutin Garašanin, "Ilirët dhe prejardhja e tyre," *Përparimi* 6 (1955): 323-333.

Milan Barjaktarević.¹⁸ The first textbook of Albanian history, which was written by Kosovar historian Ali Hadri and appeared in Serbo-Croatian one decade later, also pointed to Illyrian ancestors of the Albanians, Illyrian state of the Ardiei and “relatively advanced culture and way of life.”¹⁹

At first glance, one could assume that the presentation of Albanian ethnic origins as Illyrian at that period resonated with the myth of Illyrian descent launched by Albanian nationalist thinkers over the course of the National Revival (Albanian: *Rilindja Kombëtare*). The later equally praised and elevated alleged Illyrian past and emphasized military valor, successful state-formation, and economic and cultural developments.²⁰ The Yugoslav authors, however, were demonstrably more reserved and paid closer attention to other tenets of the Kosovar history.

The Institute of Albanian studies in Pristina was established in 1953 with the purpose (according to the statute) to study “the history of Albanian people in its coexistence with other Yugoslav peoples.”²¹ The aforementioned schoolbook drew the attention of readership on discussions over the provenance of Illyrians themselves, and important influences of Greek and Celtic cultures on them. Ali Hadri pointed to the close relationship between the Albanians and Slavs as well as stated that the homeland of medieval Albanians laid on quite limited territories of modern Albania, thus considering the Kosovars as later settlers in Southern Serbia.²² In another popular book titled “The Overview of Albanian National History” the Pristina historian told about Illyrian, Thracian, and Albanian (implying Transcaucasian) versions of ethnic descent as equally tenable.²³

The drastic changes of Kosovo’s political status occurred under the federal constitution, adopted in February 1974, which greatly altered the constitutional setup within Yugoslavia. Now the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo itself, formally remaining within the Socialist Republic of Serbia, immediately constituted an integral part of the Federation (Article 3). Its assembly directly elected one member of the Yugoslav presidency (Article 321), where decisions were to be made unanimously (Article 330). This provision gave Kosovo the right of veto at the federal level. The borders of the provinces could not be changed without their consent (Article 5). Albanian (*albanski*) became one of the languages in which federal laws should have been published (Article 269). While the federal assembly, presidency, president, and executive council reserved the right to formulate, confirm, and exercise foreign policy as well as to appoint ambassadors, all federal units could cooperate with organs and organizations of other states and international organizations “within the framework of approved foreign policy” of the Yugoslav Federation. International agreements, which concerned provinces, had to be accepted by authorized organs of federal units (Article 271). Banks of the provinces were also entitled to establish direct relations with international actors (Article 261).²⁴ Thus the political status of Kosovo was significantly elevated: it became a *de facto* Yugoslav republic and even

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¹⁸ Milan Barjaktarević, “Shqiptarët janë shtënipat e ilirëve,” *Përparimi* 7-8 (1955).

¹⁹ Ali Hadri, *Pregled istorije Albanaca. Za VI, VII i VIII razred osnovne škole* (Priština: Zavod za udžbenike, 1966), 3-9.

²⁰ Fatos Lubonja, “Between the Glory of Virtual World and the Mystery of Real Word,” in *Albanian Identities. Myth and History*, ed. Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers et al. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 92-93; Noel Malcolm, “Myths of Albanian National Identity: Some Key Elements, as Expressed in the Works of Albanian Writers in America in the Early Twentieth Century,” in *Albanian Identities. Myth and History*, ed. Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers et al. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 73.

²¹ Arkivi i Kosovës (The Archive of Kosovo). F. 332. Institut Albanologjik - Prishtinë. Dok. Projekti i statutit. F. 2. Hadri, *Pregled*, 10-16.

²² Ali Hadri and Milan Prekaj, *Pasqyrë e historis nacionale shqiptare* (Priština: Rilindja, 1960), 20.

²⁴ Ustav Socijalističke Federativne Republike Jugoslavije (1974), accessed January 8, 2012, <http://sr.wikisource.org/wiki/>.

attained some degree of international personality. The special secretariat for relations with the external world (Albanian: *Sekretariati për marrëdhëniet me botën e jashtme*) was founded in Kosovo.

At the same point in time, relations between Kosovo and Albania got intensified. In 1970, Pristina University, with Albanian as one of the languages of instructions, was established. It launched intensive cooperation with the State University of Tirana, supplying academic literature and encouraging the exchange of professors.²⁵ Furthermore by the end of the 1970s Kosovo and Albania signed agreements between the state publishing houses, the academies of sciences, and the unions of writers.²⁶ That cooperation enabled for accounts of early Albanian national history produced in Albania to penetrate into the Yugoslav province.

The constitutional immunity of Kosovo and closer relationship with the kin state stirred up desires among local Albanians Kosovo to obtain official recognition. Some public circuits even went so far as to speculate that Kosovo could form the nucleus for a future Albanian republic within Yugoslavia.²⁷

In such circumstances, views of Kosovar intellectuals changed appreciably. In line with previous Albanian nationalist ideology, they were now keen to appeal to alleged Illyrian roots binding together all Albanians.

In the second edition of the *Encyclopedia of Yugoslavia* Ali Hadri penned the overview of Albanian history. There, he unequivocally acknowledged his co-ethnics as descendants of the Illyrians.²⁸ In response, the editorial board terminated placing the item in the Belgrade edition. Thereafter the author published a protest in some Yugoslav dailies.²⁹

The Illyrian roots of the Albanians were vastly discussed in the sessions of the first Seminar of Albanian culture for foreigners held in summer 1974.³⁰ Kosovan publishing house "*Rilindja*" issued the proceedings of the congress of Illyrian studies held in Tirana in 1972.³¹ Kosovar pupils now could draw from the schoolbooks that "the Illyrian ancestors of the Albanians were one of the oldest peoples in the Balkans."³² Compiling the textbook of general history, the authors opted to reserve 11 pages for Ancient Greece and Rome, while extending their depiction of Illyrian past to 8 pages. They wrote about the mighty Illyrian kingdom of the Ardiei, which waged severe but glorious wars against the Rome. The readership should have bought that "the Illyrians advanced almost all realms of the culture of the time: arts, building, language, way of life and religious beliefs."³³ Professor Skendër Rizaj of the University of Pristina proposed a clearly fantastic version of Kosovo medieval history. In his paper "The Ottoman sources of 14th-19th centuries for the population of Dečani and its region," presented at the conference "Dečani and the fourteenth century Byzantine art in the medieval world" organized by the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Serbia, he claimed that the "Serbs" who appeared in

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²⁵ Tim Judah, *Kosovo: War and Revenge* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 37-38.

²⁶ Arkivi i Kosovës. F. 219. Sekretari krahinorë për arsim dhe kulturë. Kutu 2. Platforma razgovora pokrajinskog sekretara za obrazovanje, nauku i kulturu sa ministrom SNR Albanije za obrazovanje i kulturu. L. 1-2.

²⁷ Judah, *Kosovo*, 38-42; Gani Mehmetaj, *Dardani a Shqipëri etnike* (Prishtinë: AIDK, 2007), 10-13.

²⁸ *Enciklopedija Jugoslavije*, ed. Miroslav Krleža et al. Drugo izd. T. 1 (Zagreb: Jugoslavenski leksikografski zavod, 1980), 75-79.

²⁹ Aleksandar Stipčević, "The Question of Illyrian-Albanian Continuity and its Political Topicality Today," accessed January 8, 2012, <http://www.alb-net.com/illyrians.htm>

³⁰ Seminari i kultures shqiptare per te huaj. Përmbajtje e ligjëratave të mbajtura në seminarin e vitit 1974 (Prishtine: Universiteti i Prishtinës, 1975), 29-48.

³¹ *Studime ilire. I.* (Prishtinë: Rilindja, 1978).

³² Ali Hadri and Zhivko Avramovski, *Historia. Për klasën I të fazes së parë të edukimit dhe të arsimit të mesëm të orientuar* (Prishtinë: Enti i teksteve mesimore, 1980), 53.

³³ Hadri and Avramovski, *Historia*, 57.

medieval sources actually represented a confessional group. In Rizaj's eyes, "the Serbs" included a great variety of the Balkan orthodox people, namely the Illyrian ancestors of the Albanians in Kosovo.³⁴

Slobodan Milošević initiated the reversal of the political status of Kosovo. The Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, adopted on 28 September 1990, renamed the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo the Autonomous Province of *Kosovo and Metohija* and granted it merely territorial autonomy (Article 6). The Serbian territory was proclaimed one and inalienable and could be changed only after all-republican referendum (Article 4). Serbo-Croatian language and Cyrillic script were proclaimed official on the whole territory of Serbia, allowing the use of other languages and scripts on the territories inhabited by the "nationalities" (Article 8). The Republic now fully control foreign affairs and the educational system and secured territorial integrity of the state (Article 72). Only Serbian National Assembly was responsible for the territorial organization within the republic (Article 73). The territory of a province should have been determined by republic law (Article 108), whereas its statute should have been approved by the National Assembly (Article 110).³⁵

The Kosovars opposed such constitutional arrangements. Albanian members of the dissolved provincial Assembly gathered in the small Kosovan town of Kaçanik on 7 September 1990 and adopted the constitution of the Republic of Kosovo (Albanian. *Kushtetuta e Kaçanikut*), assuming that the later will continue to exist within restructured Yugoslavia. About one year later, on 19 October 1991, the deputies proclaimed an independent and sovereign Kosovo. After separate presidential elections of May 1992, Ibrahim Rugova became Kosovo's president. The "shadow government" and "parallel" social and education system were established.³⁶

Kosovar leaders, who headed anti-Serbian resistance in Kosovo, first peaceful and then (from 1996) military, however, had to bear in mind that their appeal to Albanian nationalist sentiments and reliance on some support rendered by the Republic of Albania had not to lead to playing nationalist card of all-Albanian unification or to developing resonance with the idea of Greater Albania that would be stillborn in the existing international setting.³⁷ This became especially clear after international intervention in Kosovo in 1999. Even though UN Security Council Resolution 1244 left Kosovo's future status open to discussion (Article 11a), it reaffirmed the "commitment of all Member States to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the other States of the region" (preamble) as well as authorized the Secretary General "to establish an international civil presence in Kosovo in order to provide an interim administration for Kosovo under which the people of Kosovo [could] enjoy substantial autonomy within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia" (Article 10).³⁸ Acting in line with the resolution (Article 11c), established United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo adopted the Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self-Government on 15 May 2001. The document recognized Kosovo as "an entity under interim international administration" (1.1), whose people had "the legitimate aspirations... to live in freedom, in peace, and in friendly relations with other people in the region" (preamble). Kosovo territory was declared "undivided" (1.2). The text also implied that existing external and internal borders/boundaries had

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³⁴ Arkivi i Kosovës. F. 130. Skënder Rizaj. Nr. 7. F. 12-14.

³⁵ *Ustav Republike Srbije* (1990), accessed January 8, 2012, <http://sr.wikisource.org/wiki>

³⁶ Judah, *Kosovo*, 65-66, 68, 70-72.

³⁷ Judah, *Kosovo*, 96-97, 173-174.

³⁸ *Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999)* [on the development of international civil and security presences in Kosovo], accessed January 8, 2012, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3b00f27216.html>.

to be preserved (8.1p, 8.1v).³⁹ In November 2005 the Contact Group issued the Guiding Principles for a Settlement of Kosovo's Status, which recommended to start a process to determine the future status of Kosovo and welcomed "the intention of Secretary General to appoint a Special Envoy to lead this process." Principle 6 foresaw that Kosovo would not return to the pre-March 1999 situation, and there would be no changes in its current territory, "no partition of Kosovo and no union of Kosovo with any country or part of any country."⁴⁰ The process of determining final Kosovo's status started in February 2006. On 2 February 2007 UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari delivered the Comprehensive Proposal for Kosovo Status Settlement to Belgrade and Pristina. According to it Kosovo "[should] have no territorial claims against, and [should] seek no union with, any State or part of any State."⁴¹

Such setting effectively rejuvenated the idea that the Kosovars represented, however close to the Albanians, still particular, somehow distinct group of them. Intellectuals, politicians and later political institutions of the region now portrayed the Kosovars as direct descendants of the local Illyrian tribe, the Dardanians.

In 1993 an academic conference on the Kosovo issue was held in Tirana. Kosovar scholars presented their papers that dealt with illumination of powerful Dardanian realm, close relationship, interdependence and friendship between various Illyrian tribes as well as destructive Slavic invasion in the early medieval Balkans, which even though devastated the Balkans and damaged flourishing Illyrian culture, could not displace ancient dwellers from Kosovo.⁴² In 1994, in an interview, Kosovo's "shadow" president and university professor Ibrahim Rugova characterized Albanians as autochthonous population of Kosovo and not newcomers. According to him the forebears of the Kosovars created one of the early European states, Dardanian kingdom.⁴³ In a press-conference in August 1995 he claimed that the Albanians (Illyrians) built in Ancient Kosovo plenty of Christian churches, monasteries and monkeries, which later were destroyed by pagan Slavic invaders. The Albanians themselves at that ancient times professed Catholic and Orthodox creed. Kosovar historians compiled respective school textbooks to be used within clandestine education system. The authors centered their attention on the Dardanian roots of the Kosovars and the past of Dardanian kingdom that allegedly existed on the Kosovan lands between the 4th and 1st centuries B.C. They portrayed it as a state admirably developed economically, militarily and culturally. In eyes of the compilers, the Dardanians lost their independence only after century-last resistance to Rome, while continuously rebelling against Republican and Imperial authorities later.⁴⁴ Books that came out as academic were permeated with the idea of the absolute indigeneity of the Kosovars. The Dardanian forebears of Kosovars putatively were originated in earlier and ceaseless archaeological cultures of Starčevo (7th and 6th millennia B.C.) and Vinča (5th-3rd millennia B.C.).⁴⁵

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³⁹ *Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self-Government*. UNMIK/REG/2001/9-15 May 2001, accessed January 8, 2012, <http://www.unmikonline.org/constframework.htm>.

⁴⁰ *The Contact Group's Guiding Principles for a Settlement of Kosovo's Status*, accessed January 8, 2012, http://www.kosovo.net/news/archive/2005/November_15/2.html.

⁴¹ *Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement*, accessed January 8, 2012, http://www.unosek.org/docref/Comprehensive_proposal-english.pdf.

⁴² See for instance: Edi Shukriu, "Ancient Dardania," in *The Kosova Issue – a Historic and Current Problem: Symposium held in Tirana on April 15-16 1993*, ed. Jusuf Bajraktari (Tirana: Institute of History, 1996), 19.

⁴³ Ibrahim Rugova, *Çështja e Kosovës* (Prishtinë: Faik Konica, 2005), 154.

⁴⁴ *Historia e popullit shqiptar: për shkollat e mesme* (Prishtinë, 1998), accessed January 8, 2012, <http://www.trepca.net/histori/02-iliret.htm>.

⁴⁵ Marenglen Verli, "Ilirët – arbërit – shqiptarët, nga kontaktet para me sllavët deri në fund të mijëvjeçarit të dytë," in his *Kosova në fokusin e historisë*, vol. 1 (Tiranë: Botimpex, 2002), 19; Edi Shukriu, *Kosova antike* (Prishtinë: Ministria e Arsimit e Shkencës dhe Teknologjise, 2004), 36-43.

After international intervention Kosovo self-administration institutions started to propose new symbols drawn on alleged Dardanian origins. Terracotta anthropomorphic figurine known before as the "Lady of Vinca" that was originally excavated in 1929 near to Belgrade,⁴⁶ now became the emblem of Pristina municipality. Kosovar archaeologists renamed the artefact as "Dardanian Goddess," whereas municipal authorities placed it on plaques of their institutions, bus stops and even on litter bins and rubbish containers. In November 2001 Ibragim Rugova offered "Dardanian banner" to be the state flag of Kosovo. A circle in the middle of the banner contained double-headed black Albanian eagle and inscription "Dardania" against the red background and conspicuously resembled Albanian national flag. This circle in its turn was placed on a blue background. In 2007 Kosovo government initiated a competition to create new state flag. One of the participants proposed another project. It was a tricolour of three equal horizontal fields, black, white and red. It also contained heliciform embellishment typical for Illyrian archaeological cultures. Both flags were rejected by the international administration at the end, but the former today became presidential standard. In the early 2000s Kosovo authorities promoted the name "Dardania" by encouraging the establishment of bank, university and broadcasting station named after putative Kosovar ancestral homeland.⁴⁷ Campaign of renaming of sites was launched and as a result streets and towns took new names "Dardan," "Theranda," "Dardania" instead of Slavic ones. After its reestablishment in 2005 the State Museum of Kosovo opened only two expositions. The first one represented ancient period of the Kosovo history and concentrated on the prehistoric roots of the Dardanians, Dardanian kingdom, Dardanian province of Roman empire and early Dardanian Christianity. A visitor could draw knowledge about the indigenusness of the ancient Kosovo inhabitants, their glorious deeds and connectedness to contemporary Kosovar Albanians. What is telling, the exposition paid little attention to the wider Illyrian context. Even maps of ancient Dardania did not depict other adjacent Illyrian states as they did at Tirana. The second exposition was devoted to "The Liberation War, 1997-1999." Therefore a visit in Kosovo Museum would convey impression that the recent "Liberation War" brought renovated Kosovo statehood into being.⁴⁸

CONCLUSION

Kosovar intellectuals and politicians in Kosovo after World War II proposed different pictures of ethnic descent of local Albanians. This reappropriation of communal history generally corresponded to existing political setting in general and political status of Kosovo in particular. Departing from the ideas of cultural nationalism that a territory of culturally determined group should be identical with political unit they accommodated the accounts of group origins, one of the components of distinctiveness, to existing intrastate and international settlement for the status of the territory "of Kosovar Albanians." When Kosovo had little autonomy and was powerfully controlled by Serbia in 1946-1974, Kosovar leaders downplayed alleged Illyrian roots of the Kosovars, which would imply more

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⁴⁶ *Iskustvo rannih zemledelcev na teritorii lugoslavii VII - III tys. do n.e.* (Leningrad: Iskustvo, 1979), 36.

⁴⁷ Aleksandr V. Kolobov, "Drevniaia istoriia v istoricheskom mifotvorchestve na teritorii byvshei lugoslavii," accessed January 8, 2012, 2011, <http://kidmpsu.ru>.

⁴⁸ Matvei Iu. Lomonosov, "Vozrozhdeniia Dardania: istoria novoprovzglashennogo gosudarstva v ekspozicii Muzeia Kosovo," *Etnograficheskoe obozrenie* 4 (2010): 59-68.

expressed loyalty to all-Albanian cause. After asserting by Kosovo high degree of autonomy within Yugoslav Federation and some elements of international personality in 1974, attention of the local elites turned to the Illyrian provenance and autochthony of the Albanians in Kosovo. That had to justify the existing political status and anticipate future establishment of Albanian republic as new federal unit. The break with Serbia initiated by Kosovar leadership in 1991 could not eliminate the limitations of future Kosovo political status, even if the desired independence was to be achieved. As far as confinement of the Kosovars to existing borders became more clear, Kosovar intellectuals and politicians preferred to “discover” the Kosovar’s Dardanian descent. This account allowed for the advocacy of Kosovo as a particular political entity non-unified with Albania or other ethnic Albanian territories. The case of Kosovo shows that the nationalist urge to “aware” the constituents of a “nation” should not always lead to demands for the elevation of the political status of a “homeland.” Sometimes, even within cultural nationalism, an existing state of affairs in domestic politics or on international arena can be justified by constructing new group identities

INTERNATIONAL STATUS OF A TERRITORY, NATIONALISM AND APPROPRIATION OF HISTORY: THE CASE OF KOSOVO

Summary

The issue of how legal arrangements pertaining to the international status of a political or administrative unit can influence the construction of the national identity is rarely addressed in the existing scholarship on ethnicity, nation and nationalism. Classical studies imply that nationalistically-prone political and cultural elites continuously strive to assemble all members of an alleged “nation” into one political unit. This, in turn, causes struggle for autonomy, independence, irredentism, secession, or, in the case of pan-nationalism, territorial expansion. It is also presupposed that real (if it can be the case), conceived, or constructed common ancestry of the members of a “nation” motivates nationalists to demand elevation of the nation’s status in the international arena, i.e. the recognition of autonomy and independence. However, the relationship between nation-building by means of constructed history and existing international personality is more complex. It can be the reverse. As the Kosovo case reveals, sometimes the existing international status of an administrative unit built upon ethnic principle determines the nation-building process, namely its historical side. Since 1945, the views of Kosovar elites regarding the ethnic origins of their constituents varied according to the political status of the region. As the later was evolving, Kosovar intellectuals and politicians differently saw ethnic roots of Kosovar Albanians. At first they considered this issue unimportant, but later “revealed” all-Albanian Illyrian (independently of tribal groups) roots and finally embraced Dardanian provenance.

Keywords: Kosovo, territory, nationalism, appropriation of history

MIĘDZYNARODOWY STATUS TERYTORIUM, NACJONALIZM I ZAWŁASZCZANIE HISTORII: PRZYPADEK KOSOWA

Streszczenie

Kwestia wpływu uregulowań prawnych odnoszących się do międzynarodowego statusu jednostki politycznej lub administracyjnej na budowanie tożsamości narodowej rzadko bywa podejmowana w badaniach naukowych nad etnicznością, narodem i nacjonalizmem. Klasyczne opracowania implikują, że nacjonalistycznie nastawione elity polityczne i kulturalne niezmiennie dążą do tego, by wszyscy członkowie rzekomego „narodu” skupili się w jedną strukturę polityczną. To z kolei powoduje walkę o autonomię, niepodległość, irredentyzm, secesję bądź, jak w przypadku pannacjonalizmu, ekspansję terytorialną. Zakłada się także, iż prawdziwy (jeśli taki może być) postrzegany bądź konstruowany wspólny rodowód członków „narodu” skłania nacjonalistów do tego, by domagać się podniesienia statusu tego narodu na arenie międzynarodowej, czyli uznania autonomii i niepodległości. Relacje pomiędzy budowaniem narodu za pomocą konstruowanej historii i istniejącej prawnej osobowości międzynarodowej są jednak bardziej złożone. Może być odwrotnie: przypadek Kosowa pokazuje, że funkcjonujący międzynarodowy status jednostki administracyjnej budowany na podstawach etnicznych czasami determinuje proces narodotwórczy, a mianowicie jego aspekt historyczny. Od roku 1945 poglądy kosowskich elit co do genezy etnicznej poszczególnych części składowych zmieniały się w zależności od politycznego statusu regionu. Gdy ten się dopiero kształtował, kosowscy intelektualiści i politycy odmiennie postrzegali etniczną genezę kosowskich Albańczyków. Najpierw uznawali tę kwestię za nieistotną, później natomiast „odkryli” ogólnoalbańskie illyryjskie korzenie (niezależnie od przynależności do grup plemiennych), by ostatecznie uznać ich pochodzenie od greckich Dardanów.

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