

Orientalist Ethnonationalism: From Irredentism to Independentism
Discourse analysis of the Albanian ethnonationalist narrative about the National
Rebirth (1870-1930) and Kosovo Independence (1980-2000)

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Abstract

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The thesis focuses on the chronological identification and detection of the discursive analogies between the category of ‘the nation’ and those of ‘the West’, ‘Europe’, ‘democracy’ and ‘independence’ in the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist narrative.

The study represents a multi-dimensional exercise analysing the ethnonationalist discourse from a wide array of sample text which was produced during two relevant historical periods: the period between 1870-1930 and the period between 1980-2000. The first interval covers the period which is known in the Albanian history as the ‘National Rebirth’. The second deals with the recent history of political resistance of Kosovo Albanians and their ‘sudden’ discursive shift, from the narrative of ‘unification with the Motherland Albania’ (the unificationist/irredentist discourse) to the narrative of ‘the independent Kosovo’ (the independentist discourse)

The main theoretical pillars of the study focus on the theories about the *nation* (specifically, its ethnic variation) and its narrative, the *nationalism*—as well as the representational systems of *orientalism* and *balkanism* (Said, 1978; Todorova, 1997). The study demonstrates that the discourse about the nation and national identity among Albanians is produced primarily through the internalisation of the external, orientalist approach in defining and understanding the social reality of the Balkan societies. Such internalisation is analysed through the prism of local adoption of the sociocultural and sociopolitical hegemonizing discourse that constituted the Western orientalist ‘knowledge’ about the Balkans—and, specifically, Albanians. (The study notes that such discursive strategy of internalisation of orientalist traits within the ethnonationalist narrative is not limited to the Albanian societies (in both Albania and Kosovo) but appears as common feature in most of the societies/nations of the former Yugoslavia. In time, the study highlights, such process of ‘nesting orientalisms’ (Bakic-

Hayden, 1996) was coupled with the phenomenon of the regional, exclusionist and competing ethnonationalist narratives which was aimed at constituting a nation's 'westernness' and 'Europeanness' through denying it to the other.

Table of contents

Chapter 1

Introduction	8
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Chapter 2

Literature Review: Nations and Nationalism	17
Introduction	17
What is a nation	18
Primordialism and the ethnic origins of nation	19
Modernism	26
The 'good' and the 'bad' nationalism	31
National identity, an imagined community	34
A state ideology?	39

Chapter 3

Literature review: nationalism, Albanian way	44
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Chapter 4

Literature review: Orientalism, Balkanism	64
Introduction	64
Orientalism	66
Balkanism	72
Balkanism: a variation of Orientalism	78
Internalisation of orientalism: making others from brothers?	81
Nesting orientalisms: a means to western legitimacy	87
The Communist detour	92

Chapter 5

Methodology	104
A short history of a discourse?	106
Discourse and its analysis	110
Intertextuality, interdiscursivity	114

Ideology, power and hegemony of discourse	116
The ‘naturalising’ power of the discourse	120
Sampling of text: sources	124

Chapter 6

Discourse analysis of the Albanian orientalist ethnonationalism:

the National Rebirth (1880-1930)	135
Introduction	135
1870s: Sami Frasheri—Enlightenment, Albanian way	140
Albania – What It Was, What It Is, What It Will Be	145
Demonizing the ‘Turk’	151
Albanians in the foreign eyes: the noble savages	166
Europe loves us, Europe loves us not: the resentment	170
‘Albanianess’: nation as religion	179
Scanderbeg: the epitome of ancientness, national cohesion and Europeaness	187

Chapter 7

Albanian Orientalist ethnonationalism: Kosovo and the

discourse of democracy (1980-2000)	198
Introduction	198
‘Return’ to Europe	202
Kosovo: From irredentism to independentism	207
National victimhood, the road to statehood	213
LDK, the philosophy of nonviolence	218
(‘Unrealistic’) Irredentists Vs. (‘Realistic’) Independentists	233
Abandonment of the ‘Motherland’	240
Construction of ‘the state Kosovo’	242
Ibrahim Rugova: the cult of the ‘westernised’ leader	244
Catholicism, signifier of ancient Europeaness?	248
Academia and the ‘scientification’ of Europeaness	260
Europe and Albanians: From Frasheri to Qosja	262
FISH: Intellectuals, the self-evident democrats	266

From Etruscans to Europeans	269
Conclusions	275
Bibliography	288

Orientalist Ethnonationalism: From Irredentism to Independentism

*Discourse analysis of the Albanian ethnonationalist narrative about the National Rebirth
[1870-1930] and Kosovo Independence [1980-2000]*

Chapter 1.

Introduction

On February 17th 2008 Kosovo declared its independence. To many, myself included, it represented a miraculous conclusion of a century-old journey of its majority ethnic Albanian population through diverse state formations that were replacing one-another during the tumultuous history of the region—and each of them followed with atrocious experiences of war, ethnic conflict and mass killings. It was the closing chapter of the saga about a former Balkan *vilayet* (province) in the Ottoman Empire which was annexed to the Kingdom of Serbia through the Balkan Wars (1912-1913), made into an autonomous province during the Socialist Federation of Yugoslavia after the World War II, confronted with ethnic oppression by the end of the 20th century—only to become the arena of the last conflict in the long and gruesome period known as the decade of ‘Yugoslav wars’ (1991-1999).

A bitter-sweet decade to the Balkans, the 1990s coincided with both the demise of the communist regimes across the Eastern Europe and the revival of ethnic nationalist politics in all its destructive force. Simultaneously, both the ‘democratisation’ and the practice of resorting to ethnonationalist vocabulary—assumed as pre-communist and anti-communist—swept like a storm across the Balkans, leaving its most devastating mark on the societies of the former Yugoslavia. Back then, the newly found freedoms of political organising across its major republics—Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro—were aimed at bankrupting the ageing one-party rule through obsessive revival of the narratives from the age preceding the totalitarian period. At the heart of those narratives were the idealised notions about ethnic nation, national identity and the nationalism mythology (Gavrilovic et al, 2009; Meier, 1999).

Those were the narratives that—Kosovo Albanians firmly believed—were brutally suppressed throughout the 45 long years of life under the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia. They had the power to construct and reconstruct the idealised portrayal of nations *before* the coming of communists, when the independent nation-states were, ostensibly, ruling the region. They projected a vision of a golden age of independent, national democracies during the murky periods of intermission between the ever-changing rules of foreign empires; they represented the forgotten and ‘subjugated knowledges’ about a nation’s glorious past, when the imperatives of the present day, such as ‘democracy’ and ‘pluralism’ were—so we believed—alive and prosperous. Be that the case, those narratives continued, in order to establish a future, post-communist and democratic society one had to go *back* in the history and learn from its legacies. Namely, from the revival of a selfish vision of ethnic nation-state in all of its cultural uniqueness, historical ancientness and, specifically, its ideological imperviousness towards the nations of others. One had to go back, to the *future*.

Albanians, whether in Kosovo, in the Republic of Albania or in other areas that they inhabit in the region (western Macedonia, southern Serbia and Montenegro) operated with similarly grand projections in those last days of the communist rule in the Balkans. They, too, dreamt about the glorious past that would pave their way into the future of equal nations encircled within the borders of independent nation-states. Unequivocally, similarly to their competing neighbors, they would agree that such nation-states ought to be (re)established and enshrined on the principles of liberal democracy, civic freedoms, free market, liberal economy, political pluralism and human rights. Such notions were perceived as the ultimate ideological signifiers of nations and societies from the prosperous, western Europe and of what generally connoted the ‘western world’. According to those narratives, to have a nation meant to live in the geographical Europe; to have a nation-state meant to be a member of the political and ideological Europe.

Hence, to be part of Europe or, simply, ‘to go to Europe’—as observed wittingly by Maria Todorova (1997)—emerges as the common ideological denominator of all nations and societies of the Balkans. Dreaming about ‘becoming’ European, longing for Western ‘acceptance’, struggling for European ‘values’ was—so it seemed—always here, with us. They represented the fundamental ideological imperatives of our way of ‘talking about the nation’, indivisible from our discourse on nationhood, national liberation, progress and

democracy. Reaching out to the idealised vision of Europe and ‘the West’ comprised the central feature of our national ‘awakening’ ideology from more than a century ago. It’s what, I argue here, initiated, narrated and shaped our idea of the nation as we persistently continued to associate its purpose, origin and history with the histories of western, European nations.

On that cold February day of 2008, Kosovo was all about that. It was emerging as the youngest state in the world, through a decisive assistance and supervision by the major western political powers. National flags of all major western European states—led by the stars and stripes of the United States of America—were waving in Prishtina, Kosovo’s capital, as hundreds of thousands of ethnic Albanians descended to the streets to mark the ‘celebration of all celebrations’: the end of a history trailed in blood, sadness and devastation.

Yet, there was one flag on that day that was ruling them all, in its appearance, size or frequency of occurrence: it was the Albanian national flag, officially recognised as the national flag of the Republic of Albania. Its black double-headed eagle on a plain red background was held high in the hands of thousands upon thousands of Kosovars: proudly caressed with tearful eyes, on that February day it represented the symbol that meant so many things to so many of us.

‘It helped us survive, so we could live to see this day’, we kept saying to each other. That piece of clothe seemed to embed every collectively shared aspiration, to every living Albanian: it was *our* symbol of freedom, liberation, national pride and our dream of national unification. Always with us through the centuries, in weddings and funerals, in student protests and battlefields, defiantly outspread or secretly owned, it represented the ultimate object of sacredness—during both the Kingdom and the Federation of Yugoslavia. Only in my lifetime, so many people that I knew have perished on its behalf: on that February day, in its king-size model, it was waving from the balcony of my family home.

Yet, all of our tears of joy carried another, hidden meaning on that day. We all knew: it was probably among the last of times that we would wave it in our hundreds of thousands. For, a different insignia was lurking in the background—the flag of the independent Republic of Kosovo, chosen through ‘strong suggestions’ of the ‘international community’ and devised to depict a new, different, European Kosovo. The yellow map of Kosovo on an EU-blue

background with six stars symbolizing the equality between all of its ethnic communities was to become, from that day on, the new national symbol. Kosovo was now a state in its own right.

And, this new reality compelled me to reflect on how the unificationist, irredentist, ethnonationalist ideology that made the independent Kosovo into a political fact had been—ironically—carrying the seeds of its own cessation. On that February 17th 2008, we, Albanians from Kosovo, were parting with a certain way of talking about *our* nation, a way that constructed and shaped our knowledge about it through hundreds of years. Willingly, so we kept saying, we gave up our aspiration to *join* the state of Albania, to *unify* ‘Albanian lands’ and *rectify* the ‘historical injustices’ done to us over the centuries.

To-date, the majority of Albanians in the independent Kosovo believe that such outcome was the only *possible*, therefore the only *right* thing to do. It was a matter of ‘common sense’, they say: either we accept the independent Kosovo or we return to life under the rule of the Republic of Serbia as an ‘autonomous province’—a political status that brought us so many grievances, and which we tried to abandon through relentless political resistance. Any other option was to be rendered invalid, they would note, by the global political overlord: the great ‘international community’.

But, why wasn’t this possible? Who and what decides over what is possible and impossible in such complex sociopolitical situations and processes? And, how? What technologies of argumentation have been operating, endowed with the power to determine what type of social thinking and action would be ‘possible’ and ‘impossible’, ‘rational’ and ‘irrational’, ‘permissible’ and ‘prohibited’ within a given time frame, sociocultural realm and geographic location? Indeed, how and when did we come to *abandon* the goal of unification and *accept* the idea of independence? What happened to the ‘Great Albania’? How and when did the ‘Independent Kosovo’ enter the realm of our political and ideological ‘common sense’? Finally, how did we, Kosovo Albanians, come to think about the nation as a *necessity* of a modern (western) world, to conceive of our national identity, history, independence through external influences and international requirements?

These are questions that I will try to address in this study, through applying a chronological analysis of the ethnonationalist discourse employed in selected stages of its conception and evolution.

The research ahead aspires to tackle such an ambitious scope of questions through narrowing its focus on the analysis of the certain ways of the language use which produced the meaning and projected the notions of nation, national identity and ideology among Albanians. Through a chronological approach, it analyses how the various *styles* of talking about the nation occurred on various stages of Albanian history. It focuses on the ways in which the nation was discursively conceived, defined, affirmed and transformed against sociopolitical and sociocultural influences during specific historical periods. It seeks to detect and identify the influences behind the recurring shifts in the understanding of such notions, i.e. shifts in the knowledge about them. Ultimately, the research ahead attempts to expose the link between such shifts and social actions that ensued, in the context of Albanian ethnonational ideology and political strategy. The analysis of the discourse during selected historical stages is conducted through employment of theoretical pillars such the studies of nationalism, as well the representational systems of orientalism and balkanism. The discourse analysis in the research entails a multi-dimensional approach, applied through selection of a diverse range of texts, from ideological pamphlets, poems and folk-songs.

Structure of the thesis

The point of departure of this research is the phenomenon of nationalism—more precisely, its ethnic variation that dominates most of the Balkan societies, including Albanians from both sides of the Kosovo/Albania border. Due to a rather ambitious historical/temporal scope, the research is divided into separate, yet inter-linked chapters that, in turn, present the theoretical base (Chapter 2, 3 and 4), the methodology that was applied (Chapter 5), and the analysis of the selected sample texts from the diverse pool of the Albanian ethnonationalist narrative (Chapter 6 and 7).

Chapter 2 of this research focuses specifically on the discussion of studies and scholarly debates about the phenomenon of the nation and nationalism. The review of theoretical

approaches regarding their definition, types and manifestations are divided in two major sections:

- (a) Its pre-industrial conception and definition that draws upon the works of the German romanticist philosopher, J.G. Herder (1744-1803). This part focuses on the ‘ethnicist’, cultural model and the understanding of the nation as an ‘extended family with one national character’ (Herder in Viroli, 2005). In many ways, the research exposes the strong presence of such a definition of nation through ‘thinking with blood’ (Greenfeld, 1992) in the Albanian ethnonationalist narrative and adherence to the views about the origin of the nation as both ‘natural’ and ‘primordial’ (Ozkirimli, 2000).
- (b) The 20th century, modernist and constructivist theories on the ‘novel’ origin of nations, based primarily on the works of the leading scholars in the field: Ernest Gellner (1982, 1987), Anthony Smith (1991, 1998), Benedict Anderson (1983) and Liah Greenfeld (1992). Here, the birth of the nation is discussed primarily as a work of modernity and the modern society—a ‘community of opinion’ based on socioeconomic, sociocultural and sociopolitical association of social groups in their attempt to adapt to rapid changes of industrialization and urbanization. A part of this section analyses the popular distinction between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ nationalisms (Kuhn, 1944; Brown, 2000), i.e. between the western-modeled form of ‘civic nationalism’ and its peripheral, non-western (read: eastern) ethnic variation. Highlighting of this binary opposition in the discussion about nationalism is of particular relevance to the general focus of the research for, I argue, it provides a sound theoretical basis for analysing the discourses that constructed the external/western viewpoints about the Balkan (and Albanian) ethnic variation of nationalism.

Chapter 3 discusses the potential application of such a vast spectrum of theories about nations and nationalism against specific manifestation of Albanian nationalist discourse which bears strong hallmarks of the ethno-centric model. The employment of a significant number of theories of nationalism in this chapter is intended to broaden the general discussion about nationalism with respect to two particular aspects:

- (a) The description and explanation of *manifestations* of Kosovo/Albanian nationalist movements from the historical circumstances and geopolitical context (i.e. how would

they be explained and fitted within the current scholarly debates about the models of nationalist movements);

- (b) The analysis of their ideological *content*, of the ways in which the concept of the ‘nation’ was discursively conceived, naturalised and transformed among Kosovo/Albanian communities during specific historical periods (i.e. how the nation was ‘talked about’ in the public discourse?)’

With regard to the first aspect, the discussion and definition of the models of Kosovo/Albanian nationalist movements within specific historical periods and geopolitical circumstances is complemented with studies and theories about ‘peripheral nationalism’ (Hechter, 2000) and, specifically, those about ‘nations without states’, ‘stateless nations’ or ‘proto-nations’ (Guibernau, 1997, Hobsbawm, 1990). They are employed with the aim of providing the historical/geopolitical framework for Kosovo/Albanian nationalism during the historical periods that are covered by this research (1870-1930; 1980-2000). Such theories are important in setting the historical and political context which I consider necessary for explaining and analysing the nature and manifestation of a nationalist movement—specifically, that of Kosovo Albanians—and to locate it within the multitude of theoretical frameworks.

The second part of the discussion about nationalism focuses on the ways in which the ‘nation’, its genesis, history, purpose and ‘national aspiration’ has been discursively conceived, perceived and naturalised inside Kosovo/Albanians societies; indeed, how was the nation ‘talked about’ by Albanians during specific historical periods covered by this study. A range of major theories has been employed with the aim of explaining the discursive logic at work which, I argue, constructed the ‘Albanian nation’ as ethnocentric, perennial and, specifically, supra-religious. Here, contributions such as those about ‘perennialist nationalism’ and ‘ethno-symbolist nationalism’ by Anthony D. Smith (2001) remain among the major theoretical concepts through which the Kosovo/Albanian ethnonationalism is analysed and defined in the context of its application as both ideological text (narrative) and a social action (movement).

Finally, the critical, constructivist, approach to the analysis of the ethnonationalist discourse—a critique of its essentialist claims about the origin of the Kosovo/Albanian

nation, about its historical ‘primordially’ and ‘perennial’ existence—is conducted through addressing a range of theories from scholars in the field of modernist/constructivist theories about the nation and nationalism. Here, theories about the nation as an ‘imagined community’ (Anderson, 1983), and about the myth-based narratives of national ‘awakening’ (Gellner, 1983) are deployed as critical pillars of my analytical point of departure, which holds that the discourse about the nation—‘talking’ the nation, in Brubaker’s term (1998)—lies at the core of the nation-building exercise. In particular, I was encouraged to follow the constructivist approach in this research as I embarked on the analysis of the discursive technologies that brought about the fundamental transformation of ideological goals of Kosovo Albanian nationalism in the second period of the analysis—its sudden shift from the irredentist/separatist model to the self-centered/independentist one.

Having introduced the theories that are considered and discussed with the theoretical framework, let me briefly mention those that are left out or touched upon only sketchily, such as the relevant works from scholars such as Michael Billig and Rogers Brubaker and their theories of ‘banal nationalism’ (Billig, 1995), the ‘nationalizing nationalisms’, the ‘everyday nationhood’ and ‘everyday nationalism’ (see Brubaker, 1995, 1998, etc). The works of these scholars are considered seminal in the field of analysing the all-encompassing—even, to an extent, unconscious—employment of the nationalist ‘text’ permeating steadily the wide range of routinized, daily communication and interaction within and between the institutions, groups and individuals in a nation. However, I argue that the notions of ‘banal nationalism’ and ‘everyday nationalism’ focus more strongly on the manner in which the nationalist discourse is produced and reproduced within the already *established* nations and nation-states—which is not the major focus of this research. Instead, the study ahead focuses primarily on the analysis of the ethnonationalist narrative of a ‘stateless nation’ during the process of ‘nation-building’ (Kosovo/Albania, 1870-1930), as well as during the process of ‘self-determination’ and ‘independent state-building’ (Kosovo, 1980-2000).

In this respect this research represents a study of the ethnonationalist narrative which was of central importance to such social processes, which, I argue, produced the knowledge about the ‘nation’, the very ‘national awareness’ by the end of 19th century, and, subsequently, transformed and advanced into the aspiration for independent statehood, as is the case of Kosovo by the end of the 20th century. The focus of the study is on the causes and subsequent

manifestations of epistemological ‘fissures’ and discursive ‘ruptures’ of that ethnonationalist narrative during specific periods which generated significant social changes.

A modernist analysis of relations between the nationalism and democracy (Greenfeld, 2002) has been employed while discussing the ‘discourse of democracy’ in the context of transformation of the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist narrative (see Chapter 7). Greenfeld’s point about the political/civic nationalism and democracy as deeply relational categories—the complementarity of the latter with the ‘civic’ model’ and not with the ‘ethnic’ one—have been raised in a critical context and are aimed at supporting my claim that, from the outset, the discursive deployment of the concept of ‘democracy’ was reduced to a strictly performative-level discursive practice during the decade of ‘peaceful resistance’ and ‘parallel system’ in the Kosovo Albanian community. As argued by Greenfeld, the (ethnically) inclusionist nature of civic nationalism can provide a sound base for the development of democracy—but this can hardly be the case with the particularist (ethnically-based) models of nationalism which, according to her, are regularly collectivistic and authoritarian. In this respect, I argue that the adoption of the ‘discourse of democracy’ (see Chapter 7) by Kosovo Albanian political elites did not seem aimed at introducing a genuine democratic behaviour as a major social practice in the community during the period of existence of the so-called ‘parallel system’. Rather, in line with Greenfeld’s doubts about the ‘exportability/importability’ of democracy through particularist nationalisms, I argue that in the case of Kosovo Albanians the discourse of democracy was aimed at producing a performance-level social practice which, Kosovo Albanian elites believed, would encourage and accelerate international political support to their ethnonationalist cause.

Chapter 4 focuses on the discussion and analysis of Orientalism and Balkanism which outline specific representational systems—bodies of knowledge about ‘the Orient’ and ‘the Balkans’—that were developed within west-European academia and political elites during various historical stages in their dealings with foreign/eastern cultures and societies. Seminal works by scholars such as Edward Said (*Orientalism*, 1978) and Maria Todorova (*Imagining the Balkans*, 1997) are the major pillars of this section’s theoretical discussion. I argue that the description and explanation of orientalism and balkanism as worldviews about ‘the East’ are critical for understanding the degree of influence that they exercised in constituting the actions by the western political authorities in their dealings with the societies of east-Europe

and the Balkans. The overwhelming, defining power of western authorities imposed these worldviews as supreme referential points for (re)organising social, cultural and political life among remote societies under their influence. The subsequent acceptance and internalisation by those societies produced the phenomenon of ‘nesting orientalisms’ (Bakic-Hayden, 2006). I argue that, among others, the influence of ‘nesting orientalisms’ in competing Balkans ethnonationalist narratives assisted in (re)producing mutual ethnic hatred, intolerance and conflicts.

Chapter 5 explains the methodology that was applied with the research. As mentioned earlier, the analysis focuses on the ways and styles in which the (Albanian) language was used to construct and affirm the idea about the nation. This research involves a discourse analysis of the Albanian ethnonationalist narrative with a specific focus on the concepts that shaped and modified it during various historical periods, such as hegemony, ideology, intertextuality and interdiscursivity.

In the broader sense of the methodological approach the study ahead is greatly influenced by the ‘archaeological’ work of Michel Foucault (1970) in the context of detecting and defining the ‘unity’ of the discourses about the nation in the Kosovo/Albanian ethnonationalist narratives: (a) its ancient origine (theme of autochthonousness), (b) the attachment to the West/European’ civilisation (theme of inherent ‘westernness’), (c) the trauma of externally-induced national partition (theme of victimisation), and (d) the aspiration to ‘return’ under the realm of the West/European civilisation (theme of reclaimed ‘Europeanness’ and national triumph). The temporal periodisation of the thesis has been oriented accordingly with Foucault’s observations about the ‘ruptures’ in the discourses, the particular historical periods of mutation and their transformation—which, in this research are also defined as the outcomes of the struggle for ‘internalisation’ and ‘naturalisation’ of an external, ‘orientalist’, body of knowledge, i.e. the so-called ‘internalised orientalisms’.

I have confined the exercise of the temporal location of such significant epistemological ruptures within the two historical periods which are widely considered as essential in the national history of the Albanians: the birth of the ethnonationalist narrative during the period of the National Awakening Movement (Alb. Rilindja Kombëtare) in the 1870s, and the period of its radical transformation among Kosovo Albanians through the shift—indeed,

adaptation—from the unificationist/irredentist aspiration to the self-centered independentist ideology that reached its peak in the 1990s.

The further narrowing of the methodological approach, the pointing out and focusing on the major features in the research, such as the intertextuality, ideology, power and hegemony in the discourses was applied through drawing upon the practical works from a range of contemporary scholars and experts in the field of discourse analysis, such as Fairclough (1992), Hall (2001), Van Dijk (1998) Wodak (2008), Laclau & Mouffe (1990), Matheson (2005) Jorgensen & Phillips (2002) and others. While Foucault's *oeuvre* in the field of discourse analysis represents an essential methodological umbrella to this research, the studies from the afore-mentioned scholars provided me with a more focused methodological toolbox which assisted in increasing the analytical precision during the discussion of the major themes in the ethnonationalist discourse.

Chapter 6 provides the first part of the analysis of the sample text identified and selected as representative of the major features during the period of the emergence and constitution of the Albanian ethnonationalist discourse, and the subsequent 'national awareness'. Specifically, it focuses on the historical period known in Albanian academia and historians as the period of the Albanian National Rebirth and covers the time frame between the years 1870-1930. The major emphasis of the analysis in this chapter focuses on historiographic account of the events in the context of establishing the 'conditions of possibility' for the discourse on the 'nation' to emerge among Albanian community (eg. the retreat of the Ottoman Empire from the Balkan Peninsula and the subsequent emergence of exclusionist, competing ethnonationalisms in the region). The in-depth analysis is reserved for the identification and explanation of the 'internalised' orientalist traits in that discourse, arguing that the process of 'internalisation' of external, orientalist views about Albanians is congruent with and inseparable from the internal nation-building process—i.e. from the emergence of the 'national awareness' about the 'perennial existence' of the nation and nationhood¹.

Chapter 7 introduces the second part of the analysis through focusing on the major event in the recent history of eastern Europe, the Balkans and the former Yugoslavia: the demise of

¹ For purposes of juxtaposing particular representational practices, the analysis is permeated with examples of orientalist approaches to describing the Balkans and Albanians through a number of travelogues and studies by various western authors and scholars who either visited or were involved in the Balkan affairs of the times.

the communist regimes (the end of 1980s) and the subsequent construction of the ‘discourse of democracy’. The historical time frame that is covered within this chapter focuses specifically on the ethnonationalist narrative of Kosovo Albanians. The sample texts analysed in this chapter encompass the period between 1980-2000 and focuses on the ‘sudden shift’ in the narrative, from the (century-old, traditional) discourse on the ‘unification’ of Albania (separatist/irredentist nationalism) to the discourse on ‘independence’ of Kosovo (peripheral/independentist nationalism). Further, the analysis also places an emphasis on the scope and the influence of the internalised orientalist/balkanist traits within the discourse of ‘democracy’ and ‘independence’ through the re-production of ‘historical’ claims about its (western/European) ancientness, Christian legacy and the inherent ‘democratic’ social qualities such as the religious tolerance and the secular definition of the nation.

In this context, the research draws the temporal/historical parallels between the discursive exercises of ‘internalisation’ of (external) orientalist views about Albanians from the end of the 19th century (which produced the awareness about the ‘nation’ as a category which is congruent with the those of ‘progress’ and ‘Europeanness’) and, the similar ‘internalisation’ exercise from a century after—which resulted in the awareness about the interlinkage of the notions of ‘democracy’, ‘statehood’ and ‘Europeanness’. In the research, the drawing of these historical parallels through locating and revealing underlying ‘intertextuality’, ‘hegemony’ and ‘ideology’ in the discourse is conducted with the aim of underpinning the claim that both the emergence and the transformation of the Kosovo/Albanian ethnonationalist discourse represent the work of an externally-induced discursive hegemony of the ‘orientalist’ system of representation. In short, the research shows the continuous operation and the impact of such a discursive hegemony in the context of its adoption, accommodation and naturalisation within the Kosovo/Albanians’ body of knowledge about their origin, history and the *telos* of the nation.

Here, I would like to note that another important historical period—which would, by all means, qualify for constituting a significant ‘rupture’ in the ethnonationalist discourse—is not considered with this research: the period of the World War II. The years preceding 1940 and those in the aftermath of 1945 undoubtedly produced fundamental changes in the sociopolitical and socioeconomic landscape across the region—such as the introduction of the communist regimes in Albania and the former Socialist federation of Yugoslavia. While

such major changes have been briefly discussed in the research (see Chapter 6 and the debate on orientalism/balkanism), there are two main reasons for its exclusion as the object of this study.

The first relates to the geopolitical fact that, despite the WWII ideological upheaval and sociopolitical reorganisation, the ethnonationalist discourse—specifically in the context of the Kosovo Albanian community—had remained intact from that of its pre-war content. Indeed, for a brief period (1941-1944) Kosovo was annexed to the then-Kingdom of Albania through the Nazi occupation—a move that made the Nazi regime gain a brief, but significant popularity among some strata of the Kosovo Albanians community (see Vickers, 1995; Malcolm, 1998). Such short-lived operation ended with the capitulation of the Nazi Germany and the subsequent regional and international rejection of such Nazi-led ‘annexations’. The Nazi Germany-led unification of Kosovo with Albania failed to produce the ‘unity’ aspired in the unificationist discourses among Albanians communities in Kosovo and in the state of Albania as the latter were pursuing a predominantly anti-fascist, communist ideological base (through significant international/Allies’ support). Henceforth, in the broader geopolitical context, the social reality of the Kosovo Albanian community went unchanged in the aftermath of the WWII: both before and after, Kosovo remained the integral part of Serbia/Yugoslavia. While the WWII aftermath saw the transformation of some significant ideological features of its ethnonationalist discourse, eg. integration of the so-called ‘marxist-leninist’ feature to the ‘unification’ aspiration—an attempt to reconcile the traditional ‘unificationist’ narrative with the newly-introduced national/communist social reality in the then-People’s Socialist Republic of Albania (see discussion in Chapter 7)—the general ideological course of the narrative remained the same. In the research I argue that the very process of naturalisation of such modifications in the post-WWII Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist discourse accounts for its ideological insistence to continue pursuing of the ‘unificationist’ aspiration *regardless* of the fundamental sociopolitical changes inside Albania—and *because* of the geopolitical consistency of the ‘trauma’ of ‘national partition’.

The second reason for leaving out this relevant period from being part of the analysis in this research is technical: its inclusion would not only broaden the scope of the study, but would also risk failure to be adequately fitted within a limited space available for this format of analysis (PhD thesis). One of the ways that it could have been done would be through

reducing significantly the space that was reserved for the current major periods of analysis; this would, in turn, result in the shrinkage of the general analytical scope and inevitable reduction of the respective text samples analysed in the research. Ultimately, during the process of mapping out the periodisation ‘chart’ of the research, I felt confident to exclude this relevant momentum in the history of the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist discourse because it failed to transform its *aspirational* course—the major feature of the national unification. Instead, I argue, that feature underwent radical transformation during the period of the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the fall of communism and the introduction of the discourse of democracy (Chapter 7). This shift of the key paradigm in the discourse culminated in a fundamental sociopolitical transformation which ultimately resulted in the struggle for establishment of Kosovo as a nation-state in its own right. In this respect, I took the necessary decision to focus and single-out two major historical moments of discursive ruptures: the one that gave birth to the Albanian ‘nation’, and the one that gave birth to the ‘state’ of Kosovo.

Finally, in the **Conclusions** I expose the claim that the great discursive exercise in nation-building in Albanian history represents a consequence of adoption of the western social practice of nationhood through the decisive influence of external, orientalist discourses. The history of Albanians—in Kosovo, former Yugoslavia and/or in Albania—as well as the history of the Balkan nations, I argue, accounts for a blueprint of effects of internalisation and naturalisation of such, essentially colonialist, western worldviews about the eastern ‘others’. Further, I argue that, locally, in the context of the former Yugoslav societies, such a process of naturalisation of orientalist traits introduced and intensified the process of reciprocal ‘othering’ of the emerging ‘nations’ in the immediate vicinity. Such a phenomenon of ‘nesting orientalisms’ assisted in heightening the particularist and exclusionist variation of ethnic nationalism, which, in the context of the former Yugoslavia, resulted in ethnic hatred, intolerance, armed conflict and the policies of ethnic cleansing—often committed with the aim of testifying one’s ‘westernness’ through exposing the ‘easterness’ of the immediate other.

Chapter 2.

Literature Review: Nations and Nationalism

Introduction

In this chapter I will discuss a number of theoretical concepts by various scholars from the field that define the phenomenon of *nation* and *nationalism* among social groups and ethnic communities: its variations, manifestations and transformations that occur as a consequence of reforming and re-organising the narratives of national identity and ideology.

The first section unfolds various definitions of nation and nationalism from historical, sociological and etymological point of view. From pre-industrial concepts of the nation as an ‘extended family’ drawing upon the works of the German romanticist philosopher J.G. Herder from the 18th century, or its definition as a ‘community of solidarity’ by the French writer Ernest Renan in 19th century; or, later, modern theories from the late 20th century on the nation as an ‘imagined community’, a ‘social contingency’ or ‘a community of opinion’ as stated in the works of Benedict Anderson (1983), Ernest Gellner (1982, 1987), Anthony D. Smith (1991, 1998, 2008) or Liah Greenfeld (1992). Indeed, there are numerous definitions that examine and explain the birth of the nation while taking into account the different historical, political and cultural experiences which enabled the formation of different sociopolitical systems *between* and *within* the social groups, nations and states of European continent. In this chapter particular emphasis is given to Greenfeld’s explanations on nationalism as a *social norm*, *a canon* that historically became an ‘importable’ social practice in the ever-nationalizing world of nations and nation-states.

In the second section, as I continue to observe theories of nationalism and nationhood, I try to implement selected scholarly explanations on the profile and typology of the nationalist ideology of Albanians—specifically, Albanians from Kosovo—which will be challenged and observed through the theories on ‘irredentist’ and ‘peripheral’ models of nationalism (Hechter, 2000). I find such theories particularly relevant for analysis of the Kosovo Albanian nationalism as they relate to political actions by social groups that became defined as ‘national minorities’ (Brubaker, 1996) in the aftermath of larger, geopolitical settlements in

the region. Theoretical analysis of the Kosovo Albanian nationalism in this chapter aims to introduce the discussion on that ideological and political narrative and the process of its transformation during the turbulent period of the breakup of the former Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (1991-1999).

Numerous books and studies have been written on the subject of the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the rise of ethnonationalism across its former republics—today's nation-states of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo; here, I will mention just a few that will be referred to in the next chapters, such as Meier (1999), Benson (2001), Vladisavljevic (2008), Ramet (2005), Morton et al (2004), Udovicki & Ridgway (2000). They discuss at length the history, actions and ideological principles that were guiding republican political leaderships of the former federation towards the final dissolution of the joint state.

In this section I will discuss further the contemporary theories on the profiles of nations and nationalisms and juxtapose them with the historiographic accounts on the development of Kosovo Albanian nationalism. Theories such as those about 'proto-nations' by Thomas Hylland Eriksen (1997) or 'nations without states' by Montserrat Guibernau (1997) are also invoked as additional theoretical pillars with the aim of examining and explaining the typology of the Kosovo Albanian nationalism as the political ideology of choice in their demands for national self-determination and statehood.

What is a nation?

Principally, there are two concepts and subsequent definitions that regard the manifestation of nations. The first one is the *political* definition of a nation 'by the act of will' as described by Ernest Renan (1823-1892), a French philosopher and writer:

A large aggregate of men, healthy in mind and warm of heart, creates the kind of moral conscience which we call a nation. So long as this moral consciousness gives proof of its strength by the sacrifices which demand the abdication of the individual to the advantage of the community, it is legitimate and has the right to exist. (Renan, 'What is a Nation?' in Woolf, 1996:58-59)

The other is the *ethnic*, cultural nation, defined as a construction that draws upon the power of what Emile Durkheim, a French sociologist from the early XX century named *mechanical solidarity* (in Giddens, 1978), a social practice based primarily on the commonly inherited values such as ethnic kinship, language, culture, and territory. This definition goes along the lines of what the German philosopher and theologian J. G. Herder (1744-1803) described as an ‘extended family with one national character’ (in Viroli, 2005).

The most natural state is one nationality with one national character. This it retains for ages, and this is most naturally formed when it is the object of its native princes; for a nationality is as much a plant of nature as a family, only with more branches. Nothing therefore appears so indirectly opposite to the end of government as the unnatural enlargement of states, the wild mixing of all kinds of people and nationalities under one scepter (2005:123).

In his analysis of Herder’s view on nation and nationalism, Viroli notes that to Herder, ‘nation means oneness’; ‘nation means life’—‘nation is given and entitled to men’s love, a deep attachment as strong as a plant’s attachment to the soil and the air’ (1995:119-22). Ultimately, the sentiment towards the nation should not differ from the feelings that one has towards his/her family. Nation is thus, the ‘fatherland’, Herder concludes.

Indeed, does the nation, nationhood represent an enforced identity of an individual (or, a group) based on naturally inherited values of kinship and culture? Or, is it a voluntary, contractual, act of will that lends its power ‘to political ruler on condition that it be used to satisfy the most important needs’ (Hampton, 1986:256)?

In this chapter I will offer a brief observation on the theories and the ongoing debate about the origin of nations and its constitutive narrative, nationalism.

Primordialism and the ethnic origins of nation

Historically, such simplified distinction of *ethnic* vs. *civic*, of *sacred* vs. *contractual* have been used to define two major schools of thought with respect to the definitions of the nation and nationalism as its constructing narrative. Ozkirimli (2000) argues that ‘primordialism’ represents one of the fundamental paradigms of nationalism which he classifies as an academic approach rather than a theory: an ‘umbrella’ that includes the academic views about

nationhood and nationalism as ‘a natural part of human beings, as natural as speech, sight or smell’ which entails that ‘nations have existed since the time immemorial’ (2000:64).

Primordialist approach is named after the adjective ‘primordial’ which, according to the New International Webster’s Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language (1996 ed.) defined as following:

- (a) First in order of time, original, elemental;
- (b) First in order of appearance in the growth or development of an organism (biological meaning); and
- (c) An elementary principle, first, primeval transcending

In his observation about the primordialist theory of nations and nationalism Ozkirimli refers to the works from scholars such as Edward Shils (1957) and his argument about the strength of the attachment that ‘one feels for his/her family members’ and which does not ‘stem from interaction, but from a ‘certain ineffable significance. . . attributed to the tie of blood’ (Shils, 1957, in Ozkirimli, 2000:65). Such ties, according to Shils could only be described as primordial, conceived and survived since the time immemorial, timeless and, subsequently, eternal.

In the context of the study of nationalist theories, primordialist approach cannot be viewed independently from the debate on ethnicity, Ozkirimli notes. According to him, primordialist arguments have been constructed ‘to explain the origins and the strength of ethnic identities’ (2000:66). In this context, ‘primordialism’ is employed to describe the nature of ethnic attachments which he classifies into three different versions: ‘naturalist’, ‘sociobiological’, and ‘culturalist’:

According to Ozkirimli, the *naturalist* approach can be considered as ‘the most extreme version of primordialism’ (2000:66) which point of departure is based on the claim that national identities represent a ‘natural’ part of all human beings. ‘The nation to which one belongs is predetermined, ‘naturally fixed’: in other words, one is born into a nation in the same way s/he is born into a family (Smith, 1995:31).

Subscription to these views entails that all nations have their ‘natural frontiers’ and therefore ‘a specific origin and place in nature, as well as a peculiar character, mission and destiny (Smith, 1995:32).

Primordialist approach does not make distinction between nations and ethnic groups, according to Smith: nationalism is an attribute of humanity in all ages (ibid). Ozkirimli notes that such primordialist approach of explaining—indeed, narrating—the nationalism represents a viewpoint that is endorsed by most, if not all, nationalists; it represents the ‘ideological view of the past’ (2000:67) and continues to shape the works of nationalist historians as well as the rhetoric’s of political elites that employ nationalism as the strategic discourse in the power struggle over the control/governance of a nation state.

The *sociobiological* approach to explaining the origins of nations and nationalism is influenced in recent years through findings in the field of sociobiology, in particular with the works of Pierre van den Berghe (1978). According to Van den Berghe, the answer to the principal question of sociobiology: ‘Why are animals social, that is, why do they cooperate?’ (1978:402) has been long intuitively known: ‘animals are social to the extent that cooperation is mutually beneficial’ (ibid). In his comparative sociobiological approach Van den Berghe argues that the process of kin selection—mating with relatives—represents a ‘powerful cement of sociality in humans’ (in Ozkirimli, 2000:71). According to him, ethnicity and race represent mere extensions to the idiom of kinship. ‘Therefore, ethnic and race sentiments are to be understood as an extended and attenuated form of kin selection’ (ibid). In his interpretation of Van den Berghe’s views, Ozkirimli notes that the fact that the extended kinship is sometimes ‘putative rather than real’ is not important: just as in the smaller kin units, the kinship is often real enough ‘to become the basis of these powerful sentiments we call nationalism, tribalism, racism and ethnocentrism’ (ibid)

The *culturalist* approach—or, the ‘cultural primordialism’—is generally attached to the works of Edward Shils and Clifford Geertz (1973) who, according to Ozkirimli and other scholars in the field such as Eller and Coughlan (1993) base their concept on three main ideas:

1. Primordial identities or attachments are ‘given’, a priori, underived, prior to all experience and interaction—in fact, all interaction is carried out within primordial realities. Primordial attachments are natural, even spiritual, rather than sociological. . . They have no social source.

2. Primordial sentiments are ‘ineffable’, overpowering and coercive. . . If an individual is a member of a group, he or she necessarily feels certain attachments to that group and its practices (especially language and culture).
3. Primordialism is essentially a question of emotion and effect (in Ozkirimli, 2000:72)

In this context, the cultural primordialism defines the nation through participation within a unique culture, a *Kulturnation* (also, a phrase often attributed to Renan) that is based on the common language, traditions, and common ethnicity of a larger group of people. This definition appears somewhat in line with what Anthony D. Smith defined as essential characteristics of the primary unit of a nation, the *ethnie*, as discussed earlier. Although in line with the modernist, constructivist, theories on the nation and nationalism, Smith’s definition of it as a ‘named human population sharing a historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members’ (1999:13), appears to be more in favor of an ‘ethnicist’ or ‘culturalist’ model:

Though most latter-day nations are, in fact, polyethnic, or rather most nation-states are polyethnic, many have been formed in the first place around a dominant ethnic (...) in other words nations always require ethnic elements (1991: 39)

To Smith, there must be an *ethnie* at the core of a nation for the latter to be able to derive essential components of national identity. Such an ethnocultural profile of the *ethnie*, in Smith’s terms, stands for the *original unit* of the nation.

One could argue that Smith’s point of departure for defining the nation—through the primordial unit of the *ethnie*—does not differ from Herder’s concept as it stands at the forefront of the ethno-culturalist definition, centered around the ethnic uniqueness and the ‘natural’ fact of the common origin. It refers to the unchangeable, preconstituted, criteria such as the common language, culture, origin, territory and the national myth, placing their relevance above that of the contract-based social interest and the labor division:

...myth of common and unique origin in time and place is essential for the sense of ethnic community (...) Cultural dimensions remain secondary to the sense of

common origins and history of the group. This constitutes the core of the group's identity and of its sense of uniqueness. (1981: 66-67)

The national myth or the myth about the nation is also one of the essential elements of the nation-building process. Referring to the spiritual power of nationhood as a derivation, or, indeed, a substitute, to the religious devotion, Vjekoslav Perica notes that 'nation-states cannot exist without history and myth' and that they also 'require a worshipful acceptance' (2002:5). He observes the importance of the national myth which he defines as the narrative about the origin, the national tale on the 'birth of the community'. Regardless of historical inaccuracy, this narrative 'becomes sacred' (ibid) and manifests in a constructivist reciprocity – it shapes the national mindset which, in turn, constructs its sacredness:

Regarding the phenomenon of the nation-state: it consists of territories with borders, peoples, armies, and bureaucracies, but that is not enough: the nation-state cannot exist without an adequate system of public patriotic worship, symbol, myth, and ritual. Nation-states require of their citizens not only that they be governed and they govern but also that they love their 'country' and be prepared to kill, die, and lie for it. As in the case of religion, an individual or group's disrespect of this requirement calls for some kind of excommunication, punishment, and sometimes even death (2002:5)

According to Maurizio Viroli (1997) the views launched through thinkers like Herder at the wake of the industrial age consider kinship, cultural and ethnic belonging as key elements of nationhood as they derive the 'national soul' as the ultimate social achievement:

In Herder's language the concept of national soul 'is the mother of all culture upon the earth and all culture is the expression of national soul'. 'A person without patriotic spirit', Herder remarks, 'has lost himself and the whole world about himself'. He means that he has lost his own spiritual identity which comes from the contact with national culture. (1997:118)

'In the beginning, the nation was perennial', writes Smith (2009) as he notes that in every historical period—be that ancient Egyptians, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks and so forth—were 'all 'nations' when they were not 'races' (2009:6). According to him, the modern evolution of

nations inevitably originates from the primordial unit of any nation, the 'ethnie' or the ethnic community of which 'ideal-typical' structure he gives an exhaustive account:

1. A large mass of peasants and artisans in villages and small market towns, subject to various restrictions on their freedom (. . .) and wedded to local 'folk cultures' (vernaculars, legends, rural customs and rites, dress, dance and music) influenced loosely by the nearest Great Traditions
 2. A small urban stratum of competing elites in the main towns—rulers and their courts, bureaucrats, noble landowners, military leaders—monopolizing wealth and political power, and centered loosely on an administrative capital and core area, and patronizing specialist trading and artisan client strata;
 3. A tiny stratum of priests/monks and scribes claiming a monopoly of the community's belief system, ritual and educational services, and acting as transmitters and conduits of its symbolism between the various urban elites and between them and the peasants and rural artisans, thereby seeking to incorporate various Little Traditions of the latter into the central Great Tradition of which they act as guardians and agents of socialization;
 4. A found of myths, memories, values and symbols, often encoded which express and explain the community's perceptions of itself, its origins, development and destiny, and its place in the cosmic order; all of these being manifested in a round of ceremonies, rites artefacts and laws which bind the community to its celestial pantheon and its homeland;
 5. Processes of communication, transmission and socialization of the store of myths, memories, values and symbols among both urban elites and their specialist clients, and where necessary outwards and downwards to the dependent peasantry; using mainly temple ritual and worship, dissemination of the precepts and morals of sacred texts, the use of symbols in art, architecture and dress, the elaboration of oral traditions, ballads, epics and hymns, but also the promulgation of the legal codes and edicts, some rudimentary rote learning in local schools for selected members of various strata, and the use of military service and public works labour forces
- (1997:28-29)

To Smith, the ethnic model of nation focuses primarily on the feature of descent, other than territory. Here, the nation is seen 'as a fictive, super-family', and it boasts pedigrees and genealogies to back up its claims, particularly in East European and Middle East countries'

(1991:12). Ethnic, then, is primordial, notes Smith. Below, I will offer further definitions of ethnicities, ethnic groups, due to their particular importance to the focus of this research—the form and the manifestation and performance of nationalism among Kosovo Albanians who were officially defined as an ethnic community and ‘national minority’ in the former federation of Yugoslavia with a history of distinct ethnic, or ethnic group. Below is an interpretation of the ‘ethnic group’ by Frederick Barth (1998) as a population which:

- (a) is largely self-perpetuating
- (b) shares fundamental cultural values realised in overt unity in cultural forms
- (c) makes up a field of communication and interaction
- (d) has a membership which identifies itself, and is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order (1998:10).

There is a difference between the ‘ethnic’ or the ‘ethnic community’ and nation, argues Adrian Hastings (1997), as he endorses the theory shared by Benedict Anderson (1983), that of the critical importance of the vernacularisation of literature but also the imminent external threat. Here is his observation of the differences between ethnicity (ethnic group) and the nation:

1. An ethnicity is a group of people with a shared cultural identity and spoken language. It constitutes the major distinguishing element in all pre-national societies, but may survive as a strong subdivision with a loyalty of its own within established nations.
2. A nation is a far more self-conscious community than an ethnicity. Formed from one or more ethnicities, and normally identified by a literature of its own, it possesses or claims the right to political identity and autonomy as a people, together with the control of specific territory, comparable to that of biblical Israel and of other independent entities in a world thought of as one of nation-states (1996:3)

Finally, the milder and more inclusive variation of primordialism has been introduced by Smith (1984) through the term ‘perennialism’ which is derived from the adjective ‘perennial’ and signifies the ‘continuing or enduring through the year or through many years’, and

‘growing continuously, surviving (the New International Webster’s Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language, 1996 ed.)

Primarily, I understand the perennialist theory nationalism as an academic attempt to reconcile the opposed approaches in the study of the nation and nationalism: the *essentialist* which is confined within the hardline primordialist/natural definition, and *constructivist*, which relies on the modernist theories about relational, transformative and narrative-dependent nature of nation and which will be dealt in the next section of this chapter.

In this context, perennialist view allows for the projection of the existence of nation in the historical antiquity while rejecting the idea about it as ‘natural’ (in Ozkirimli, 2000); thus, perennialists do not identify a specific date of birth for nationalism. For them, the origins of both nations and nationalism stretch back as far as the medieval period—that is, well beyond the modern ages—and the ‘essence’ which differentiates any particular nation from others ‘manages to remain intact despite all the vicissitudes of history’ (ibid:70))

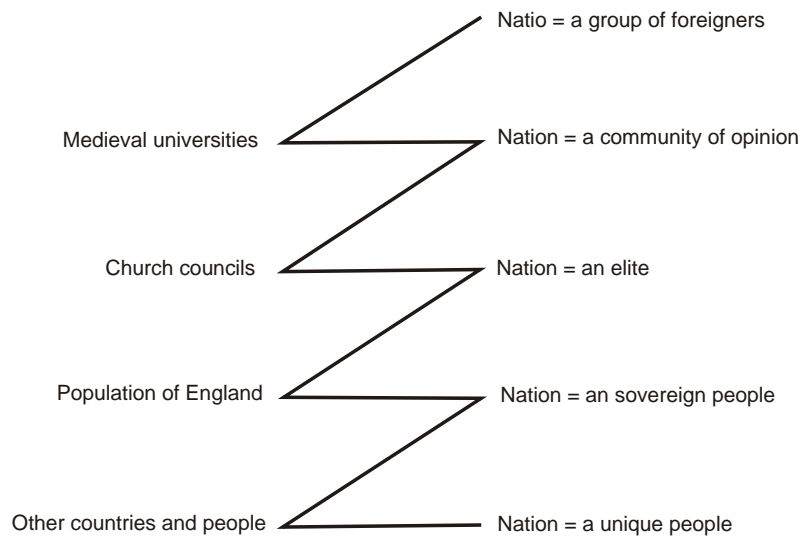
Modernism

Ozkirimli notes that modernist theories of nation and nationalism have emerged as reaction to the primordialism of the ‘older generations who tacitly accepted the basic assumptions of the nationalist ideology’ and very soon became ‘the dominant orthodoxy in the field’ (2000:85).

In simplified terms, the dualism between ethnic/primordialist and civic/modernist origins of the nation is often described as the British/French model and the German model—where the British/French model is defined as resting on the ideology of *political* nation-building (civic nationalism) and the German *ethno-cultural* model (ethnic nationalism). A useful differentiation on the usage of these terms is stated in Brown (2000) as he discusses arising distinctions in the meaning of ‘Britishness’ and ‘Englishness’ in the UK in the period after 1960s:

The cohesion of the United Kingdom as a ‘nation-state’ was previously manifested in the degree of interchangeability of the terms ‘English’ and ‘British’. But such ambiguities seem to have given way to a clearer differentiation between ‘English’ perceived increasingly in ethnocultural terms, and ‘British’ perceived in predominantly civic terms. (2000:2)

Below is an overview of scholarly works done on the definition of the notion and the concept of nation. Below is the model of the temporal shift of the meaning of the word as devised by Liah Greenfeld (1992). In her all-encompassing study *Nationalism, Five Roads to Modernity* (1992:6) she offers a graphic presentation of evolution and semantic change of the term nation during the history:



Greenfeld notes that whereas its usage in the context of *supra-ethnic* ‘community of opinion’ was introduced in Middle Ages, its civic/political connotation that the term bears today was born in the population of England of XVII century. It spread throughout the European continent as the invention of the new English aristocracy ‘which considered the traditional image of the society, where upward mobility was an anomaly, uncongenial’ (1992:487). It simply substituted this with the idea of a ‘homogenously elite people’ – the nation.

Etymologically, Greenfeld explains the ascendance of the notion from its early context, used to describe a group of foreigners (Roman = *natio*; Greek = *ta ethnae*), to its 19th century connotation of *sovereign* and *unique* people in the Western Europe.

The word ‘nation’, meaning ‘sovereign people’ was now applied to other populations and countries, which, like the first nation, naturally had political, territorial and/or ethnic qualities to distinguish them, and became associated with such geo-political and ethnic baggage. As a result of this association, nation changed its meaning once again, coming to signify ‘a unique sovereign people. (1992:9)

To Ozkirimli (2000), the general feature and the common denominator of modernist theories of the origin of nation is the belief that both nation and nationalism represent a novel, thus modern construction. Modernist perspective traces the birth of the nation and its narrative during the turbulent periods in the Europe of 18th and 19th century, specifically in the period imminent to the French Revolution (1789) and subsequent emergence of modern processes such as capitalism, industrialism, bureaucratic state and secularism (Smith, 1994:377; 1995:29). In this respect, it is the narrative about the nation—nationalism—that gave birth to them as a ‘sociological necessity’, Ozkirimli argues quoting Hobsbawm (1990) that ‘nationalism comes before nations’, and that ‘nations do not make states and nationalisms but the other way around (Hobsbawm (1990) in Ozkirimli, 2000:86).

In my analysis with the next chapters of is research, in the context of the Kosovo/Albanian ethnonationalism, I will adhere to this approach which I find constructivist at its core, for it argues for the construction and development of the nation primarily through respective discursive practices, such as the narrative about the nation. Such approach will assist in this research in reinforcing my argument about the ‘elasticity’ of the nationalist narrative and its capacity to change, transform, adapt through influences from other discourses and practices—dependently on the historical period in which an ethnic community, such as Albanians and, specifically, Kosovo Albanians would be living in. I argue that such a transformative capacity of the nationalist narrative as a discursive practice will, in time, produce a different perception and definition of the nation; it will influence both the interpretation of a nation’s history—in terms of the ‘ideology of the past’—as well as its contemporary definition, its mission and its future.

Such transformative capacity of nationalist narrative appear in line with Renan’s definition of the political aspect of nation-building as an ‘act of will’, also known as *Willensnation* (in German); as such, it constructs the basis for numerous scholarly theories that view the birth of the nation as a work of *modernity*, the modern society – an attempt to adapt to rapid social changes of industrialization and urbanization. According to those theories, such an act of will makes the aspiration for nationhood a purely political, indeed contractual, action of an individual or a group. Such definition appears in line with Greenfeld’s ‘community of opinion’ or with Ernest Gellner’s ‘norm’ of nationness devised through ‘the fusion of will, culture and polity’ (1983, 2006:54).

Rather, when general social conditions make for standardized, homogeneous, centrally sustained high cultures, pervading entire populations and not just elite minorities, a situation arises in which well-defined educationally sanctioned and unified cultures constitute very nearly the only kind of unit with which men willingly and often ardently identify. The cultures now seem to be the natural repositories of political legitimacy (1983:55)

What Gellner wants to highlight is the process of production of the social norms, which, eventually, shape the social and institutional practices. He understands the concept of nation along the lines of well-defined and 'educationally sanctioned and unified cultures' which, once established will define the nation in terms of 'will and culture'.

Although Renan is considered among the first thinkers of nationhood as a political act, his position on the motivations that drive an individual (or, a group) to become *a national* places a strong emphasis on ethno-cultural bonds that he sees essential for construction of the great community of 'solidarity'. According to him, the common race, the common religion, the common language, the common interest and the common geography represent, indeed, essential components that construct the conditions for promotion of a certain social, ethnic group into the category of the nation. But, it takes a yet another sentiment, Renan argues, in order for these components to be put in the nation-building motion:

A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which strictly speaking are just one, constitute this soul, this spiritual principle. One is in the past, the other in the present. One is the common possession of a rich legacy of memories; the other is actual consent, the desire to live together, the will to continue to value the heritage that has been received in common. (. . .). The nation, like the individual, is the outcome of a long and strenuous past of sacrifice and devotion. (1996:58)

The nation is, therefore, according to Renan, an 'expression of the great solidarity' that is shaped through common sacrifices: 'it presupposes a past; however, it is epitomized in the present'. Such community would, according to him, be based on 'common glories of the past, a common possession of a rich legacy of memories' and even 'the cult of ancestors' (ibid:58). It is a natural ambition for preservation of both personal identity and collective heritage. One could argue that Renan suggests an elevation of the commonness of ethno-cultural values

onto a political ideology; a politicization of the origin—a politics of ethnicity at the core of the nation-building ideology. It is at this point that some modernist scholars take a slightly different path with Ernest Gellner at the forefront who, in his symbolical essay paraphrasing Renan's *What is a Nation?* notes that his 'community of solidarity' appears insufficient to explain the evolution of particular social groups into nations:

...(unfortunately for this definition) the same also applies to many clubs, conspiracies, gangs, teams, parties, not to mention many numerous communities and associations of the pre-industrial age which were not recruited and defined according to the nationalist principle and which defy it. Will, consent, identification were not ever absent from the human scene, even though they were (and continue to be) also accompanied by calculation, fear and interest. (1983, 2006:53)

According to modernist theories such as Gellner's, it is the administrative impositions of a particular social formation (kingdom, empire, state) that will eventually lead to cultural diffusion in a community (or between communities) on the road to nationhood and/or statehood. What this entails is that administrative institutions of a particular social formation will require an individual or a social group to adhere to the values which shape its conceptual basis: language, culture, social relations and political ideology. Thus, according to Gellner, an individual becomes a national not out of voluntary acceptance of shared values, but because of the structural requirements of modern, industrial societies: such requirements become social conditions; they are imposed through social relations, media and the public discourse, high culture, and other administrative requirements.

In a similar argument, Anderson (1983) discusses the historical 'arbitrariness' and the technology of such cultural diffusion as he makes the case for the role of 'print-capitalism' in the 'vernacularisation' of communities in the process of constructing the nation and national consciousness, identity. In his seminal work 'Imagined Communities', Anderson sees the nation as a modern construct which is enabled through the standardization of language, literacy, education, communication and culture:

In pre-print Europe, and, of course, elsewhere in the world, the diversity of spoken languages, those languages that for their speakers were (and are) the warp and woof of their lives, was immense; so immense, indeed, that had print-capitalism sought to

exploit each potential vernacular market, it would have remained a capitalism of petty proportions. (1983:43)

This goes in line with Gellner's theory of cultural diffusion and impositions by the modern society which become structural requirements and are, in time, defined as a system of common values in a nationalized community: they become a national culture, a national way of life. Here, Gellner admits to Durkheim's 'organic' model of social systems of a contractual nature (in Giddens, 1986:22-24) as he notes that the concept of nationalism 'is rooted in a certain kind of division of labor, one which is complex and persistently, cumulatively changing'. (1983:24).

The 'good' and the 'bad' nationalism?

Whereas its potentially pre-modern (ethnic) origin is still a matter of larger debate, there is a workable consent that the political ideology based on nationness or nationhood, *the nationalism*, represents the ultimate doctrine that shaped the map of the modern world. Being a state-building ideology, for the past two hundred years it manifested as a two-fold concept: civic and ethnic. Subsequently, such a difference came to constitute two major variations of today's nation-states: liberal democracies that are often defined as constructed through civic/political nationalism, and/or unitarist, particularist regimes resting on ethno-culturalist nationalist ideology.

Nevertheless, such definitions provide only for simplistic, practical demarcation between existing models of nation-states, therefore such a rigid division has not been accepted by a range of scholars and experts in the field such as Brubaker (2004), Gans (2003), Silverman (1994), Brown (2000), Richter (1994) and others. According to Rogers Brubaker (2004), the ever-changing face of national ideology is one of the reasons that leads to such discursive distinctions:

For more than a century, scholars and public figures have distinguished 'civic' and 'ethnic', western and eastern, liberal and illiberal forms of nationalism. These and similar distinctions have provided a way of coming to terms with the empirically unruly and morally and politically Janus-faced phenomena of nationhood and nationalism. (...) The distinction between civic and ethnic nationalism, I argue, is

conceptually ambiguous, empirically misleading and normatively problematic.
(2004:5)

It appears extremely difficult to use such contradicting terms in a precise manner, although in numerous theoretical works the German model (ethnically based) appears mostly as an antithesis to the French and/or British (civic based). It is often considered 'a symbol of the attempt to depict Germany (which had no unified state) as a nation on a par with that of the French' (cf. Brubaker, 1992:1, in Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl and Liebhart, 1999:19). In a simplistic use of the notions Germany is often presented as a role model of ethno-nationalist nation-states whereas the French model represents the flagship of civic, or political nationalisms. In the case of the former it is the nation that constructs its own state, whereas in the latter the constitution of the state constructs the national identity of its citizens, requiring adherence of its political principles. Shortly, the German nation produces the state of Germany; the state of France constructs the French nation.

Moreover, in numerous texts a political value judgment is implied in the dichotomy Staatsnation versus Kulturnation, specifically between the 'bad' Staatsnation and the 'good' Kulturnation. (Many scholars) relativize the significance of the distinction between ethnically based and a politically based understanding of the nation in the contemporary world inasmuch as they notice a 'convergence' in the ideological patterns of these two 'paths' to becoming a 'nation'. (1999:19)

However, according to John Rex (1999), the simplistic interpretation of the political nation cannot avoid inclusion and operation with ethnic-cultural symbolism as these two appear intertwined in their relevance and manifestation:

The problem is that, while it denies particularistic ethnic loyalties or subordinates them, it has itself to create its own sense of belonging, and it does this very often for instance to the mother country or the fatherland (1999:27)

According to Brubaker, this ambivalent views and definitions of nations and nationalism are a consequence of the fact that *nation* and *nationalism* 'designate a whole world of different things' (2004:132). However, in practical use, outside of the narrow circle of researchers

working primarily on nationalism, Brubaker notes, lies the distinction between civic and ethnic understandings of nationhood and forms of nationalism.

This has been used to suggest that there are, fundamentally, only two kinds of nationalisms (and nations): civic nationalism, characterized as liberal, voluntarist, universalist, and inclusive; and ethnic nationalism, glossed as illiberal, ascriptive, particularist, and exclusive. These are seen as resting on two corresponding understandings of nationhood, based on common citizenship in the first case, common ethnicity in the second. (2004:132)

Brown (2000) points out at the division between the manifestations and theories of nationalism that has been channelled into two major categories:

- (a) ethnocultural nationalism, which, according to him has been labelled as ‘integral’, ‘organic’, ‘ascriptive’, ‘exclusive’ or ‘radical’—ultimately authoritarian and collectivist, and
- (b) civic nationalism, labelled as ‘liberal’, ‘political’, ‘social’ or ‘voluntarist’ – ultimately projected as potentially democratic and individualistic (2000:49)

He notes that those types of nationalism are analytically distinct, but that their manifestation in various nations and societies can appear intertwined and combined, with one form being more dominant than the other. Below is a definition of distinction between the ethnocultural and civic nationalism, according to Brown:

The widespread depiction of ethnocultural nationalism as illiberal and civic nationalism as liberal is based partly on the distinction between irrational and rational attachments, partly on the allegedly liberalising impact of the middle classes and partly on a distinction between reactive and self-generated identities (2000:50).

In addition, Brown employs the term ‘cultural nationalism’ instead of ‘ethnic nationalism’ which he finds perpetually disputed between those who believe that it refers to the myth of ethnic identity, and those who refer to it as a biological fact ‘of genetically fixed primordial racial attributes’ (1999:282). An interesting approach is given through the emphasis that each of these nationalisms revolve around the language of the family—and that the typology of the family is what defines their characteristics. Brown notes that the family of civic nationalism

is primarily the *marriage* family; entry into the family from diverse sources indicates ‘commitment to a common loyalty or destiny’. The family of the cultural nationalism, on the other hand, is primarily that of *parenthood*; with the ‘commitment of (genetic or adopted) children to the family deriving from the belief in the common ancestry.’ (ibid:283).

Finally, Hans Kohn (1944) provided a different definition of differences between the ‘good’ and the ‘bad’ nationalisms—to paraphrase Brown: according to him, there is a Western (North Atlantic) type of nationalism, and the East-Central European nationalism. Kohn defines the first, North Atlantic nationalism, as ‘predominantly political occurrence’ (1944:329) that is derived through the process of state-formation. The narrative of such nationalism, indeed, produces and constructs the nation as a distinct social group, as ‘it is connected with the concepts of individual liberty and rational cosmopolitanism’ (ibid:330). By contrast, the Eastern nationalism—which, according to Kohn, include the German, Russian and Indian variations—originated in ‘the ethnographic demands’ and eventually developed in societies which were ‘at more backward stage of political and social development (ibid:329). He sees the Eastern nationalism as ‘excessive and militant’ (1962:24), with a rather cultural than a political form and heavily dependent on ‘myths of the past and dreams of the future’ (ibid). Drawing upon Herder’s concept of ‘fatherland’, Kohn refers to the German variation as a model of choice for the description of this nationalism, which is:

...held together not by the will of its members nor by any obligations or contract, but by traditional ties of kinship and status. . . and by infinitely vaguer concept of ‘folk’ which . . . lent itself more easily to the embroideries of imagination and the excitations of emotion. Its roots seemed to reach into the dark soil of primitive times and to have grown through thousands of hidden channels of unconscious development, not in the bright light of rational political ends, but in the mysterious womb of the people, deemed to be so much nearer to the forces of nature (Kohn, 1944:331)

National identity, an imagined community

Other studies from the field demonstrate that, for a community to evolve into a nation ‘through the idea’ it has to construct a distinct individual and collective awareness, a new

type of identity. It ought to be able to imagine its cohesiveness, its commonness, its inner solidarity and devotion. Such a power of individual and collective ability to imagine the national identity and belonging was most notably stated by Benedict Anderson (1983):

It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion (1983:6)

The history of the nation state and nationalism accounts for ferocious struggle to dismantle preceding social formations, empires and kingdoms. This process of disintegration of supra-ethnic social formations is similar to the manner in which Anderson defines the long process of the ‘the decline of the imagined community of Christendom’, which, according to him, happened through the confronting process of the ‘elevation of vernaculars to the status of languages of power’. The popularization and institutionalization of local languages/vernaculars—particularly, the ability to print them—caused the subsequent decline of Latin by rendering it useless as the *only*, until-then, permitted written language of the peoples within the realm of Christendom.

In simpler terms, Anderson argues that the legalization of vernaculars gave birth to (ethno)national awareness and new social relations. It was the replacement of ‘the sacred imagined community’ with an abundance of smaller, national ‘imagined communities’. The effect of such process resulted in formation of both the nations and nation-states. To Anderson, it was on the ashes of former empires and the imposition of new ‘languages of power’ that the emerging nations were to redraw boundaries of new, smaller states. Such new identities that were coined in a new environment required new ideological base; nations were to (re)invent their national traditions through nationalism, according to Eric Hobsbawm (1983):

Traditions are highly relevant to that comparatively recent historical innovation, the ‘nation’, with its associated phenomena: nationalism, the nation-state, national symbols, histories and the rest. All these rest on exercises in social engineering which are often deliberate and always innovative, if only because historical novelty implies innovation (1983:13)

Hobsbawm argues that the process of invention of traditions –specifically, traditions that establish and maintain the national identity—is essential for construction of nationhood and national awareness. According to him, such a process entails ‘a set of practices governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition’ (1983:1). According to him, such procedure of repetition would, eventually, imply the continuity with the past through the rites—and thus achieve the continuity and cohesiveness within the social group practicing them. Hobsbawm defines three overlapping types of ‘invented traditions’ in the period since the industrial revolutions:

- a) Those establishing or symbolizing social cohesion or the membership of groups, real or artificial communities;
- b) Those establishing or legitimizing institutions, status or relations of authority, and;
- c) Those whose main purpose was socialization, the inculcation of beliefs, value systems and conventions of behaviour. (1983:9)

Establishment of social norms, production of the national cohesion through the process of repetition of rites—all this appears to have had critical relevance in the process of the transformation of a social group into a nation with a unique collective, national identity. But, according to Anderson, it also takes a certain degree of collective imagination to enable a certain social group to project its cohesiveness and uniqueness. The logic of *imagining* one’s nation and one’s attachment to it, according to Anderson, is indivisible from imagining its unique identity and origin which, be that the case, has to be finite, limited, so that it can realise its uniqueness and identification through comparisons with other nations that lie beyond its boundaries. In his study ‘Imagined Communities’ (1983) Anderson envisages the nations as a collectively ‘imagined’ construct, projected through a shared imagination, and limited—so that only a finite social group can claim ownership over it. Below are some of the most relevant excerpts that underpin his theory:

- 1) It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion;

- 2) The nation is imagined as limited because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. No nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind;
- 3) It is imagined as sovereign because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm;
- 4) Finally, it is imagined as a community, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship (1983:6-7)

In his theoretical approach, Anderson highlights the elusive nature of the notion of nation and nationalism which, according to him present any historian of nationalism with three paradoxes: the paradox of (a) *objective modernity*, the paradox of (b) *universality* and the paradox of (b) *political power* which is disproportionate to their philosophical deficiency and incoherence.

The paradox of ‘objective modernity’ is related to the simultaneously ‘modern’ and ‘ancient’ nature of nations and nationalism; to Anderson, nations appear modern to historians, yet ancient—even sacred—to nationalists. The paradox of their ‘universality’ is related to the commonly held idea that everyone in the modern world has—or, should have—a nation, similarly to the pervasiveness of having a gender. To Anderson, this ‘universality’ represents a socially constructed norm of modernity, an outcome of social contracts and agreements elevated onto the level of naturalness and universality; such claim goes along the lines of Hegel’s observation about the states: ‘*once none had the state, then some had it, and, finally, all have it*’ (in Gellner, 1983:5).

Finally, there is the paradox of its political power. To Anderson, ‘unlike most *isms*’ nationalism never really produced a durable intellectual fabric or grand thinkers: ‘no Tocquevilles, Hobbesses, Marxes or Webers’, notes Anderson. Yet, there is a certain, powerful and resilient fanaticism that permeates the idea of nation, nationalism—ultimately, the idea of national identity as a grand ‘fraternity’:

Ultimately it is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings. (1983: 8)

Many modernist scholars who admit to Anderson's key thesis, the structured *imagining* of nationness, agree that it could only occur as a direct consequence of the process of urbanization and industrialization (Smith, 1986; Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1990; Greenfeld, 1992), a historical period which peoples of Western Europe were experiencing steadily since the late 17th century. According to them, the reconfiguration of the division of labor in industrial environment and evolution of social relations during this period established new stratification of societies. Enter capitalism. This raised the need to devise a new, modern form of individual and collective identity. Official use and, more importantly, ability to *print* and read in vernacular, local language was yet another sign of a differing social reality, according to Anderson:

The convergence of capitalism and print technology on the fatal diversity of human language created the possibility of a new form of imagined community, which in its basic morphology set the stage for the modern nation. (1983:46)

The age of modernization, industrialization and the subsequent transformation of social and economic relations offered an additional, linguistic framework to that new identity. Former ethnies became socially stratified in emerging industrial circumstances; their public interaction and discourse was vernacularized and hence, the new sense of belonging appeared. Mechanical solidarity was being diluted and absorbed through organic solidarity which was being formed around the emerging communities of interest and the division of labor. Nations thus came to life with the modernity and industrialization and modified the framework of existing state formations into the new concept of the nation-state.

In a remark that complements Anderson's thesis on the efficacy of introduction of the vernacular in the public discourse of a social group as a shift towards sustaining new, national identity, Gellner notes that 'the written word seems to enter the history with the accountant and the tax collector' (1983:8). Again, Gellner places an emphasis on the role of modern social relations, where the process of vernacularisation conducted by the state became a 'structural requirement' and thus an essential ingredient to the national identity. In the 'Warwick Debates on Nationalism' (1996), his account on the evolution of Estonian national identity is of particular relevance to this discussion:

I mean, take the Estonians. At the beginning of the nineteenth century they didn't even have a name for themselves. They were just referred to as people who lived on the land as opposed to German or Swedish burghers and aristocrats and Russian administrators. They had no ethnonym. They were just a category without any ethnic self-consciousness. Since then they've been brilliantly successful in creating a vibrant culture (...) but, it was created by the kind of modernist process which I then generalize for nationalism and nations in general. (1996:367-8)

Undoubtedly, the rationalisation of the work of imagination in the context of nation-building is a phenomenon not to be neglected; such is the capacity of a populace to 'dream' its nationness, according to Stathis Gourgouris (1996). The historical manifestation of the nation, Gourgouris notes, appears almost overnight, and it is evoked like a 'perfectly transparent dream'—a collective dream:

Nations came into historical consciousness precisely by articulating their own self-interpretation while relegating it to damned oblivion the historical time of their non-existence. (...) Dream and nation are thus implicated in a paradoxical complicity of form, their antagonism over the significance of oblivion and interpretation being consubstantial with their structural affinity as social forces in human history. (1996:6-7)

Gourgouris' attention to the *national dream* in his thesis about 'dream-nation' focuses on its operative force as a 'social fantasy' in line with Anderson's concept of imagined community. According to the former, such social fantasy represents the national attempt to make the history 'sensible'; it is, therefore, a set of forces 'that enable us to identify history'. Such national dream, national fantasy 'lies in ambush behind every historical inscription' (1996:5).

A state ideology?

During the last century, nationalism became the fundamental ideology of state-building in the modern Europe. It turned into a norm, a canon that was to be followed by all nations that aspired equal status in the continent. Regardless of varying stages of internal development, many European societies began importing and domesticating the nationalist ideology during a common period – between the 18th and 19th century – considering it as an essential ingredient

for construction of their modern nation-state. A new era was introduced in the history of European societies: that of *nationalization* of societies and peoples. Gellner, in his quotation of Hegel and his observation about the states which once *no one* had—and now *everyone* does, goes at the core of his thesis: that both nations and states are socially constructed phenomena that should be considered as ‘contingency’ and not a ‘universal necessity’. Nevertheless, they represent the key social and political norm of the contemporary world: ‘having a nation (or a state) is not an inherent attribute of humanity, but it has now come to appear as such’. (1983:6)

According to Greenfeld (1992), nationalism is not necessarily a form of ‘particularism’, i.e. nationalism as a political ideology does not necessarily have to be identified with any particular community or to the object relevant to this paper – the struggle for self-determination and statehood. Greenfeld notes that as such, nationalism doesn’t necessarily need to refer to the state (or even statehood) either as a reality or as an aspiration:

‘It has to do with the definition of the ultimate source of authority which does not have to belong to the state, as religious believers among us so well know, although it may be in part delegated to it. As a result, nations without states of their own are in no way abnormal or incomplete, and the one-to-one correspondence between the two, while a fact or desideratum in many cases is not at all of essence to nationalism. (1992: 494).

Nevertheless, predominantly, the formation of an independent state for the nation lies at the heart of most of the nationalist ideologies of stateless nations/communities. According to Chaim Gans (2003), nationalist movements often explicitly vow for the right to self-determination as they voice practical demands on behalf of national groups they claim to represent ‘in both public and private spheres’. Regularly, such demands evolve into those for establishing an independent, nation state.

Many national groups interpret their right to self-determination as a right to independent statehood, which they in turn interpret as a right to a state of their own, a state which ‘belongs’ to their people. Many nation-states view themselves as belonging to their predominant national group. Some nation-states, such as Israel and

several of the new states that belonged to the former Yugoslavia, express this overtly in their constitution or by means of some other important laws (2003:67).

Historically, not all societies who imported nationalism were admitted to the family of nations or nation-states. In most cases this is due to the historical inability to establish and sustain their own state formations. In the emerging map of the nationalist Europe of nation-states by the late 19th century such societies were to be defined as national minorities or ethnic communities within the administrative boundaries of a state. Often, they considered themselves 'nations without states' as described by Guibernau (1996) or proto-nations as described by T.H. Eriksen (1997):

Proto-nations (so-called ethnonationalist movements). By definition these groups have political leaders who claim that they are entitled to their own nation state and should not be 'ruled by others'. These groups, short of having a nation state, may be said to have more substantial characteristics in common with nations than with either urban minorities or indigenous peoples. They are always territorially based; they are differentiated according to class and educational achievements, and they are a large group. (1997:40)

This idea of *stateless* nationalism which, Greenfeld argues, should not be considered abnormal, is partially admitted also by Gellner, Smith and others. Although Gellner admits to the thesis that the fundamental drive of majority of nationalisms is based on the demand for a nation-state, the link between nationalism and the state is not necessarily historical but, rather, ideological. Here's one important point by Gellner:

(Moreover) nations and states are not the same contingency. Nationalism holds that they were destined for each other; that either without the other is incomplete, and constitutes a tragedy. But before they could become intended for each other, each of them had to emerge, and their emergence was independent and contingent. The state has certainly emerged without the help of the nation. Some nations have certainly emerged without the blessings of their own state. (1983:6-7)

Indeed, can there be a nation without a state? Can such *stateless* ethnic communities qualify for contemporary definition of the nation in line with Gellner's 'structural requirements'? Can there be nationalisms functioning within fluid boundaries of an ethnicity and that can

shape its substance into that of a nation without the presence or the need for the institution of the state? An interesting insight comes from Montserrat Guibernau:

‘By ‘nations without states’ I refer to those territorial communities with their own identity and a desire for self-determination included within the boundaries of one or more states, with which, by and large, they do not identify. In nations without states, the feeling of identity is generally based on their own common culture and history (which often goes back to a time prior to the foundation of the nation-state or, to employ (Anthony) Smith’s theory, to its ethnic roots), the attachment to a particular territory and an explicit desire for self-determination. (...) A nation without state is defined by the lack of its own state and by an impossibility to act as a political institution on the international scene. It is based on the existence of a community with a stable but dynamic core containing a set of factors, which have generated the emergence of a specific identity. (1997:132)

One of the most common forms of nationalism within stateless nations is to be found among national minorities. According to Brubaker (1996) they have their *own* nationalism; they, too, make claims on the grounds of their national belonging and, often, geographic autochthonousness. As he unfolds his concept of *triadic nexus* of nationalisms that links (a) national minorities, (b) the newly nationalizing states in which they reside and (c) the external national homelands, he devises the concept of the *core nation* as the ‘owner of the state’ (1996:4-5). Such core-nation employs the state power to promote its specific political and ethno-cultural interests. Such interests are complementary to Gellner’s ‘structural requirements’ and manifest through Anderson’s battle of prevalence of ‘vernaculars’ as the future ‘languages of power’. According to Brubaker, such interests can endanger the position and heritage of distinct national minorities, whose definition itself presumes the existence of an ethnic majority as the *norm*. Brubaker invokes this argument as he observes the reactions of members of former nations who fell under the jurisdiction of new nation-states, and ended up with the status of ethnic communities, in the aftermath of the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Socialist Yugoslavia:

Again, tens of millions of people became residents and citizens of new states conceived as ‘belonging to’ an ethnic nationality other than their own. Most dramatically, some 25 million ethnic Russians have been transformed, by a drastic shrinkage of political space, from privileged national group, culturally and politically

at home throughout the Soviet Union, into minorities of precarious status, disputed membership, and uncertain identity in a host of incipient non-Russian nation-states. But many other groups in the region—including large numbers of Hungarians, Albanians, Serbs, Turks, and Armenians—found themselves similarly 'mismatched,' attached by formal citizenship to one state (in most cases a new - and nationalizing - state)... (1996: 5-6)

Historical events that unfolded with the breakup of the former Communist supra-national state formations account for increase of ethnic tensions (cases of pre-Baltic independent states of Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia with Russian-speaking minorities) and even armed conflicts (state aggression in former Yugoslavia that evolved into ethnic wars: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo). I admit to Brubaker's thesis that rapid, indeed negative, shift of the political status of communities from nations to national minorities can almost regularly make the ethnic nationalism (re)appear as an externally imposed political ideology. A significant number of them continue to be based on separatist platforms as revealed in the cases of regions of Republika Srpska in Bosnia & Herzegovina, Abkhazia in Georgia, Transdnistria in Moldova, Chechnya in Russian Federation², etc.

Often, it can mean a new importation of nationalism as a foreign (read: Western) doctrine. I will admit here to Greenfeld's concept of *importability* of nationalist ideology as a necessary nation-building platform which is valuable in the context of political developments in the south-western Balkans during the breakup of Yugoslavia:

As the sphere of influence of the core Western societies (which defined themselves as nations) expanded, societies belonging or seeking entry to the supra-societal systems of which the West was the center had in fact no choice – but to become nations. The development of national identities thus was essentially an international process, whose sources in every case but the first lay outside of the evolving nation.' (1992:15).

² For a detailed account, see Bahcheli, Bartman, Srebrnik in 'De Facto States: The Quest for Sovereignty', 2004.

Chapter 3.

Nationalism, the Albanian way

In this section I will introduce the category of Albanian nationalism—specifically, its manifestation among Kosovo Albanians—with the aim of enhancing the framework of this theoretical discussion on nationalism. Through a brief presentation of its history and evolution I will try to form a theoretical framework through juxtaposing and confronting some of the models and theories of nationalism onto the historical background of Kosovo Albanian narrative about their national history, and their national ideology.

I find the discussion and definition of the Albanian nationalism—and, specifically, its Kosovo Albanian ‘peripheral’ variation—important to the overall aim of the research which focuses on the transformative capacity of ethnonationalist narrative due to external, discursive and epistemological influences in various historical periods. I argue that, despite the fact that the Albanian nationalist narrative is represented as entirely based on the primordialist/ethnic approach, its evolution—particularly in the context of Kosovo Albanians—demonstrates the power of the narrative to inflict substantial changes in the ways in which the nation’s ‘primordially’ is reinvented, revised and—reformed. Therefore, in this respect the notion of ‘perennialist nationalism’ (Smith, 1984) comes useful as it offers a ‘less radical version of primordialism’ (Ozkirimli, 2000:68) as discussed in the earlier chapter—and which holds that nations do evolve and develop over the centuries ‘with their intrinsic characteristics largely unchanged’ (ibid).

In the context of Albanians, those in Kosovo as well as others in the present state of Albania, western Macedonia or south Montenegro, the nationalist narrative accounts for a historically distinct ethnicity, an *ethnie*, in every stage of the Balkans history of conquests and continuous shifts of political rule. As it will be discussed at greater length in the following chapters of this research, they were ‘Arnauts’ under the Ottoman Empire; they were ‘Shiptars’, ‘Moslems’ or even ‘Turks’ (Malcolm, 1998, Vickers, 2000) during subsequent territorial/geopolitical partition in the first decade of the 20th century, which produced the present state of Albania and brought Kosovo and its Albanian population under the

Serbian/Yugoslav rule. In the context of the latter, the ethnonationalist narrative and history appears intertwined with attempts for organising rebellions and insurgencies against a rule that was considered foreign and oppressive. I would argue here that, at least during the past hundred years, Albanians of Kosovo would formally share Gellner's primary preconditions of the 'idea of the nation':

- (a) two men are of the same nation if and only if they share the same culture, where culture means a system of ideas and signs and ways of behaving and communicating
- (b) two men are of the same nation if and only if they recognise each other as belonging to the same nation. In other words, nation maketh man... (1983:6-7)

On the surface, it appears that Gellner's set of preconditions would suffice to define Kosovo Albanians as a nation *even* in the context of the modern connotation of the term. But, did they also represent a *community of opinion* in Greenfeld's terms, or *community of solidarity* in Renan's terms? Moreover, did the Albanian variation of ethnonationalism during the past century slipped from being narrated as strictly 'primordialist', 'natural' and 'naturally given'—to what Smith (1984) defines as 'perennialist' and which, according to him, enables to concede the antiquity of ethnic and national ties without holding that they are 'natural'? Indeed, what was the nature of (Kosovo) Albanians' national identity? Was it based on adherence to a set of political principles (self-determination, national liberty, statehood), or was it a repression-triggered mobilisation for preservation of its distinct, culture, language and tradition? Or, again, both?

As mentioned in earlier chapter and the theoretical debate about the origin of nations and nationalism, I adhere to the view that the 'perennialist' approach attempts to combine the two—often diametrically opposed—views about the origin and the manifestation of nationalism, such as the essentialist/primordialist and constructivist/modernist. Therefore, in the context of this analysis of the Albanian nationalist narrative, the perennialist approach appears as the most suitable conceptual umbrella that would reconcile the ethnonationalist approach about the nation as existing since 'time immemorial' and, simultaneously, able to change and transform through the centuries—while retaining its ethnocentric perspective.

In this respect, Smith argues that one of the core ideas of perennialism maintains that 'modern nations are the lineal descendants of their medieval counterparts (1995:53). Ozkirimli notes that, according to such a view 'we might come across nations in the Middle

Ages, even in the antiquity' (2000:69); the perennialists, Ozkirimli argues, concede that nations may experience periods of recess or decadence in the course of their historical journey; but 'bad fortune cannot destroy the 'national essence'. (ibid).

In this context, and with the aim of providing a local example in this theoretical exercise about the variation of Kosovo Albanian nationalism, I will refer to few essays written by Gani Bobi, a Kosovo Albanian sociologist (1940-1996), written during the 1990s, and his views on the Albanian 'lifeworld' in the 1990s (term employed here comes from the definition by Edmund Husserl (1936). According to Bobi, it was characterized by the 'lack of rationalisation' in several essential segments:

- (a) cultural reproduction (there are no reflexive and distinct relations with respect to cultural heritage and tradition);
- (b) social integration (symbols of collective identity are not yet in place; civic culture is not internalised; there is an absence of sufficient orientation in accordance to universal norms;
- (c) socialization (there is no attention given to the aspect of individualization) (1994:7)

I would argue that to Kosovo Albanians, situated in the south-western Balkans—itsself a peripheral region to the European developments of the 18th century—the constitutive components to the concept of civic/political nation operated by Greenfeld and other modernist theorists of nationalism, were distant. Until the beginning of the 20th century social relations in Balkans societies were still dwelling within feudal/agrarian system. In the words of the French social geographer Michel Roux, who produced one of the few serious studies on Kosovo, it was the 'Third World within Europe', a '*veritable périphérie de la périphérie*' (Roux, 1992:238 in Duijzings, 1999:5). The official language in use, that of Gellner's 'accountants and tax collectors', was the language of the Ottoman Empire (from 15th to 20th century), that of the Serbian Kingdom (from 1900-1945), the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (from 1945-1991) or the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (from 1992-1999). Throughout this period, and specifically under the former Yugoslav rule, the Kosovo Albanians were defined through the notion of a 'national minority', as explained by Brubaker (1996):

Caught between two mutually antagonistic nationalisms—those of the nationalizing states in which they live and those of the external national homelands to which they belong by ethnonational affinity though not by legal citizenship—are the national minorities. They have their own nationalism: they too make claims on the grounds of their nationality. 'Indeed it is such claims that make them a national minority (1996:5)

Brubaker invokes the examples of the tens of millions of people across the East Central Europe who were left to dwell within the newly formed nation-states in the aftermath of the World War I. As in the case of Kosovo Albanians, such ethnic groups—indeed, national minorities—gained the new citizenship within the new states (Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Yugoslavia, Greece, Bulgaria), but by ethnic nationality they perceived themselves as part of external, national homelands.

Throughout the 20th century, Albanian national identity in Kosovo is thought to have been constructed in opposition to the other, adverse ethnic groups or nations, which in this particular study focuses on the Serbian nation and state as a generalized bearer of administrative/political state repression. However, according to a number of historians such as Malcolm (1998), Vickers (1998) and anthropologists (Duijzings, 1999) this was not always the case; historically, identities in Kosovo appear to have been of a quite fluid nature and manifestation, as noted in Duijzings:

People have often changed their ethnic identity or converted to another religion without completely abandoning and forgetting the legacy of previous identities. Because of these historical experiences of conversion and 'mimicry' (the outward adoption of an identity for the sake of survival), and the consciousness of mixed and composite origins, there is often a high awareness among Balkan inhabitants that most identities should not be taken for granted: they are often regarded as 'guises' or 'constructs' that may be accepted or rejected. The phenomenon of contesting the identities of others is widespread, and is even part of the political game. Kosovo is just an example of this phenomenon. (1999:15)

The *elasticity* of ethnic identity is confirmed by a historical fact that there are no accounts of conflicts between Albanian and Serbian ethnic groups during the rule of the Ottoman Empire; ethnic conflicts appeared with the dissolution of this empire and enlargement of new nation-states during the early 20th century. The immediate post-Ottoman environment of Kosovo

(and Albania proper) is effectively described by Arber Xhaferi (1996), an Albanian writer and politician from Macedonia:

Left without a system, and in the absence of other subsystems, divided into three religions, two language dialects, without unified linguistic, cultural, judicial norms, without local institutions, without its bourgeoisie and elite, without industry and financial capital, without an external sponsor, without distinct civic codes or unified national codes, they, Albanians, were destined for extinction. (1996:65)

Therefore, in the western-European context of the debate on nations and nationalisms the emergence of Kosovo Albanian nationalism—or, for that matter, of the Albanian nationalism in general—represents an occurrence of a slightly later form. As such, it also accounts for a different evolution than that of nations and nationalisms of the Western Europe from the early industrialist period. It bears some similarities with a number of nationalist movements in Europe although the circumstances in which it developed makes it unique in both its aspiration and manifestation. As for its typology with respect to contemporary theories I would admit to the view that Kosovo Albanian nationalist idea evolved from starting as an attempt for equal treatment by the *core-nation* of the state/kingdom (Brubaker, 1996:5) to becoming *separatist-irredentist* and finally *peripheral*—as explored later in this research—employing here with slight modifications terms used by Michael Hechter (2000):

Irredentist nationalism occurs with the attempt to extend the existing boundaries of a state by incorporating territories of an adjacent state occupied principally by co-nationals.

Peripheral nationalism occurs when a culturally distinctive territory resists incorporation into an expanding state, or attempts to secede and set up its own government. Often this type of nationalism is spurred by the very efforts of state-building nationalism. (2000:15)

Here's what I mean by *separatist-irredentist*: considering themselves as a population forcefully separated from the mother country (Albania, bordering Kosovo in the west) after the dissolution of the Ottoman empire, Albanians in Kosovo developed an aspiration for joining 'the Motherland', the unified state of Albania. One could argue that historically they

never admitted to their official definition as an ethnic community—or, of the national minority—by the core-nation of the new state, the Kingdom of Serbia/Yugoslavia. The memory of partition from what was becoming the Kingdom of Albania (1912) conserved also the perception of themselves as a nation; more precisely, as its amputated part. Such perceptions were indeed labelled ‘irredentist’ by the ruling regimes, particularly in the aftermath of the WWII, by the Socialist Federation of Yugoslavia—a topic that will be examined at greater length in the next chapters of this study.

Below I will invoke an interesting observation by Billig (1995) who questions the construct of the notion of ‘nationalism’ in its western context which, according to him, tends to locate it into social and political ‘periphery’:

There is something misleading about this accepted use of the word ‘nationalism’. It always seems to locate nationalism on the periphery. Separatists are often to be found in the outer regions of states; the extremists lurk on the margins of political life in established democracies, usually shunned by the sensible politicians of the centre. The guerrilla figures, seeking to establish their new homelands, operate in conditions where existing structures of state have collapsed, typically at a distance from the established centres of the West. From the perspective of Paris, peripherally placed on the edge of Europe. All these factors combine to make nationalism not merely an exotic force, but a peripheral one. (1995:5)

Here, one would be tempted to start a debate on whether the nationalist movements and ideologies of the contemporary Europe are—indeed—the mere leftovers from the treaties and settlements that produced the ‘modern’ European nations, and subsequently relinquished its ‘periphery’ (the Balkans and the Southeast Europe) to deal with their consequences. As mentioned earlier, Brubaker draws a long list comprised of ‘tens of millions’ of peoples who ‘suddenly’ became national minorities across the region – from Germans in Poland and Czechoslovakia, Hungarians in Romania, to Albanians in Yugoslavia. Their definition as ‘peripheral’ and the influence of such a projection in the development and transformation of the ideological fabric of their nationalism will be the focus of the next chapters of this research; there, I examine the western discursive hegemony that led to such transformation in of the Albanian ethnonationalism in both Albania (prior to the World War I) and Kosovo (during the Yugoslav rule).

But let us return to the theoretical debate about the relation between the Hechter's definition of 'peripheral' and 'irredentist' nationalism and its Kosovo Albanian manifestation. I would agree that it bears some elements of Hechter's model; yet, one should note that his model places the center of irredentist nationalism in the *already existing* state formation: in this case, the Republic of Albania, the assumed mother-country. In other terms, the already existing state is the *subject* of the irredentist nationalism whereas the territory which it claims represents the *object*. In this respect the case of Kosovo Albanian nationalism represents a somewhat unique situation of irredentism, for it is exposed simultaneously as both its subject and its object. In simpler terms, it was Kosovo Albanians who introduced the aspiration to rejoin the mother-country (through separatism), and it was them who demanded this to be accomplished *by* the mother-country. They expected a response by the mother country similar to what Brubaker (1995) calls 'actions of an external national homeland':

(External) homeland nationalisms assert states' right—indeed their obligation—to monitor the condition, (...) assert the rights, and protect the interests of 'their ' ethnonational kin in other states. Such claims are typically made when the ethnonational kin in question are seen as threatened by the nationalizing (and thereby, from the point of view of the ethnonational kin, de-nationalizing) policies and practices of the state in which they live. (...) (External) 'homeland' state claims that their rights and responsibilities vis-à-vis ethnonational kin transcend the boundaries of territory and citizenship. 'Homeland,' in this sense, is a political, not an ethnographic category (1995:5)

Hechter's definition of *irredentism* may fall short to explain a complex situation of Kosovo Albanian nationalism; nevertheless, his concept of the *peripheral* type could be employed as a prescription as to what follows with the failure of the former. For a number of reasons that will be analysed in the course of the study, the failure of Kosovo Albanian irredentist nationalism to trigger a complementary action by their external homeland forced them to embrace the *peripheral* type of nationalism – hence, their demand for self-determination. It is a situation well explained in Brubaker:

Although national minority and homeland nationalisms both define themselves in opposition to the 'nationalizing' nationalisms of the state in which the minorities live,

they are not necessarily harmoniously aligned. Divergence is especially likely when homeland nationalisms are strategically adopted by the homeland state as a means of advancing other, non-nationalist political goals; in this case ethnic co-nationals abroad may be precipitously abandoned when, for example, geopolitical goals require this (1996:5)

Ultimately, this appears to have been the case with the Kosovo Albanian nationalism. Brubaker's 'geopolitical goals' indeed required Albania, as the external homeland, to ignore the separatist /irredentist outcry of the part of its fellow nationals in Kosovo. Such geopolitical constraints are a matter of ongoing debate in Albanian political discourse, as noted by Bugajsky (2005):

Kosovarism as Albanianism could clearly be perceived as a major threat by neighbouring groups whatever the reality of popular aspirations. It can be viewed as an encouragement for expansionism and the goal of a 'Greater' or 'Ethnic Albania'. It may thereby promote tension and conflict, as the Kosovars will stand accused of seeking absorption into a larger Albanian state once they attain full independence, and (Albanian capital) Tirana would also come under intense international pressure. (2005: 40)

Such rigid geopolitical restrictions—the 'international pressure' as noted by Bugajsky—haunted the Kosovo Albanian nationalist elites throughout the period preceding the dissolution of Yugoslavia as well as its aftermath. In this study, I argue that the impact of such pressure induced fundamental modifications of the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist narrative which transformed their political ideology from the (initial) *irredentist* model to the so-called *independentist*—a topic that will be analysed at length in the chapter 7. Such transformation entailed also the fundamental change in their definition as *peripheral*; their demands for self-determination produced the sense of self-centered and self-sufficient nationalist discourse as their major demand focused on the formation of an independent nation-state along the lines of its definition by Hastings (1997):

A nation-state is a state which identifies itself in terms of one specific nation whose people are not seen simply as 'subjects' of the sovereign but as a horizontally bonded society to whom the state in a sense belongs. (1997:4)

The new situation deployed a new ideological argument and, subsequently, a general shift into a new discursive formation, that of self-determination and independence, pursued and interpreted as an unalienable right of the (Albanian) people of Kosovo.

To put it in simpler, chronological, terms: what was potentially started as an organised demand of an *ethnie* for improvement of its status at the demise of a multi-ethnic state was forcefully ushered into acceptance modernist, geopolitically conditioned, principles of civic nation-building. Therefore, in many respects, the modern elements of the Kosovo Albanian nationalist movement from the 1990s, particularly their demand for self-determination and independence should be viewed as an outcome of a historical accident, a social contingency—to paraphrase Gellner—an unanticipated, perhaps even unwanted, result and action.

Such ideological evolution is discussed in the next chapters, where I examine the influence and effects of the transformation of the ethno-nationalist narrative with the aim of producing a political platform that would be acceptable and complementary with the assumed ‘international norms’ of civility and political action. In other words, what started as a ‘unification nationalism’ (Hechter, 2000) at the outset of the 20th century evolved into a ‘peripheral nationalism’ (ibid) by its end. In my analysis in the following chapters, I argue that such paradigmatic, discursive—indeed, epistemological—shift of the nationalist narrative and political strategy of action was driven by the commonly shared aim of the Kosovo Albanian political elites to introduce and apply an ‘internationally acceptable’ form of nationalist/political organising. And, as I will argue in the following chapters, the local/Albanian interpretation of the term ‘international’ has been regularly—indeed, historically—reduced to that of ‘western world’ and/or ‘western governments’. In the Kosovo/Albanian nationalist discourse the latter were adopted as the cultural references to the realm of civilised and advanced societies; therefore, an acceptable form of (ethno)nationalism that would not collide with western geopolitical interests in the region (such as the ‘unification nationalism’ through the change of administrative state-borders) would achieve a two-fold aim: a political safe haven for an oppressed ethnic community, as well as a dignified place for it among the western ‘community of nations’.

It is precisely in this context that Greenfeld places an emphasis at her definition of the point of departure of the nation and nationalism as ‘a matter of dignity’. In her analysis on the birth of nations in the XVIII century western Europe, which she ironically generalizes as outcomes of individual and group ‘vanity’, she makes the important point of nationalization as a future social norm, a *canon* which spread through imitation and importation throughout western and eastern Europe.

‘It guaranteed status and gave people reasons to be proud. Being a representation of identity, it is a social convention, socially constructed in its every element, and easily deconstructs if the convention is broken. (...) Within a nation, status (and, with it, the sense of pride and self-respect) can never be totally lost.’ (1992:487)

However, in practical terms, for a nationalist ideology to be successful – i.e. to achieve establishment of the nation-state, its ultimate goal – a community is bound to choose a model from an abundance of examples in the ever-nationalizing world. It has to find a role-model that would best suit its needs and circumstances – a ‘reference society’ as defined by Benedict (1978, in Greenfeld, 1992). In the case of Kosovo Albanian nationalism such an act of selection of the reference society was a matter of vivid public debate throughout the decade of 1990s. This perpetual quest was caused by highly unstable and ever-changing political constellations among communities during the dissolution of the Yugoslav Federation and often manifested periods of its serious crisis of identity as a political platform and a mobilising social practice.

On this identity crisis of nationalism Greenfeld employs Durkheim’s term of ‘*anomie*³’ in a community—a state of ‘normlessness’ and/or ‘aimlessness’. Caused by various agents, situations and circumstances this *anomie* of nationalism would profoundly change its very character. The continuous quest for individual and collective identity would push the actors of a nation to reinterpret their aspirations, frustrations and interests in terms of indigenous traditions which might have existed in the previously dominant system of ideas/values in which now-rejected traditional identity was embedded. This is where Aleksic (2006) introduces the term *mythistory* in the attempts to define the Balkans variations of nationalist

³ I will use this concept in the context defined by Emile Durkheim in the ‘The Division of Labor in the Society’, The Free Press, Macmillan, New York.

narratives: according to her, in the context of the Balkans the mythistory represents a combined narrative of nation in which the national mythologies and historical events are intertwined; they cohabitate, they construct and reconstruct one-another and, thus, produce different projections of identity during different time periods. To Aleksic, mythistory 'is based on the impossibility of delineating a clear-cut distinction between the historical as opposed to mythological origins of nation' (2007:3). Such a mythistorical approach to the narrative of the nation has been common within the Kosovo Albanian nationalist discourse, as noted by Pula:

This new ethnic confrontation, convergent with the all-national movement for independent Kosovo, gave new energy to Albanian nationalism in Kosovo. Other than mobilising the people, this conflict mobilised the history as well. Memories of 'eternal' conflicts between Serbs and Albanians were extracted from history's treasury whereas Albanian historians were attempting to raise the historical counter-argument for 'Albanianness of Kosovo, a thesis that would confront the Serbian nationalism based on the myth of Kosovo as the 'cradle of Serbianness'. (2005:32)

In the context of such post-conflict crisis of Kosovo Albanian nationalism, Bugajsky (2005) places a rhetorical question about its current identity as he draws upon concepts in favour of independent state (i.e. a distinct nation-state) and those in favour of joining the 'motherland', Albania:

Kosovar identity is based on a long shared history of indigenous community as well as resistance to foreign occupation. Indeed, the sense of the community was strengthened during the existence of Yugoslavia, particularly as a result of the racism and brutality of the Milosevic regime. But, is this experience sufficient in forging a distinct national identity or will Kosovars inevitably drift and merge with Albania? (2005: 39)

Independence or irredentism? The independent state of Kosovo or the Great Albania? Regardless of fundamentally different social and political circumstances during the past two decades which caused this dilemma and *anomie*, it continues to permeate the nationalist discourse in Kosovo Albanian community and comprises the core of its dichotomous nature. In the chapter that deals with the construction of Kosovo Albanian 'orientalist

ethnonationalist' narrative, I examine the discursive technologies that bridged this difficult ideological and programmatic gap of their political platform. As mentioned earlier, during the 1990s its genuinely irredentist nature had to be redefined and reshaped into a struggle for independence and self-determination: I argue that such transformation was made possible through domesticating of what were considered to be the ultimate conditions laid out by the international community to accept a political solution within the existing, internationally recognised, state borders (Clark, 2000; Judah, 2008).

In such circumstances, I argue, the Kosovo Albanian nationalist discourse engaged on mythistorical narration of the nation—or, what Aleksic calls, 'the Janus-faced discourse of the nation' (2007:4)—which ambivalence enabled for the ethnic mythology based on autochthonousness, origin, language and culture to be presented as a set of civic principles in line with the norms of existing Western nationalisms which, allegedly, produced liberal democracies of today. I argue that it represented a very difficult task for a society which lacked adequate civic social stratification and was surviving under immense state repression and geopolitical constraints. This situation introduced a period of ideological frustration of Kosovo Albanian nationalism which is important from the historical perspective and goes in line with another point made by Greenfeld as she describes the nature of nationalism as both socially constructed and importable ideology: that of the state of *ressentiment*, a phrase she uses drawing upon definitions by Max Scheler and Nietzsche:

ressentiment refers to a psychological state resulting from suppressed feelings of envy and hatred (existential envy) and the impossibility of satisfying these feelings. (...) The first condition (the structural basis of the envy itself) is the fundamental comparability between the subject and the object of envy, or rather the belief on the part of the subject in the fundamental equality between them, which makes them in principle interchangeable. The second is the actual inequality (perceived as not fundamental) of such dimensions that it rules out practical achievement of the theoretically existing equality.' (1992:15)

According to Greenfeld, the structural conditions—the sociological basis—for the manifestation of resentment are two-fold: the first condition is the capacity by the subject to perceive its object of envy as equal, a situation that makes them 'interchangeable'. The second condition is the actual inequality that, again, rules out the theoretically existing

equality and becomes the cause for the (collective) expression of the feeling of envy and bitterness:

Ressentiment felt by the groups that imported the idea of the nation and articulated the national consciousness of their respective societies usually resulted in the selection out of their own indigenous traditions of elements hostile to the original national principle and in their deliberate cultivation (1992:16)

In simpler terms, and in the context of Kosovo Albanian political struggle for self-determination, such a feeling of resentment has been often addressed to their projection of the international community and the western (European) political authorities. Whereas this topic will be discussed at greater length in Chapters 6 and 7, I argue that it is important to note that the nationalist narrative of resentment with the ‘world’ has been almost regularly related with the failure to achieve the western acceptance and legitimacy; specifically, the aftermath of the process of transformation of the nature and content of the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist discourse—from *irredentist* (deemed unrealistic) to *independentist* (deemed rational)—represented a period of heightened resentment in the community. As noted by Greenfeld, the manifestation of resentment is similar to that of anomie; in case of Kosovo Albanians, I argue, it was directed against the indifference of the international community and its indifference towards such an ideological sacrifice aimed at its appeasement and support. Whether in particular cases of such ‘ideological envy’—e.g. envy at the reunification of Germany in 1989, at the independence of pri-Baltic states from Soviet rule in 1990s, the recognition of independence of former-Yugoslav republics (1991-1992) and so forth—the feeling of resentment emerged as a confused quest to resemble or, indeed, reject particular models of successful nationalisms in the world. One should also view this resentment-nationalism as an important agent that has caused shifts and ruptures in discursive practice in Kosovo Albanian public ever since. Here is an interesting, simplified, point made by Mehmet Kraja (2005), a Kosovo Albanian writer and journalist, as he highlights the feeling of resentment and the social state of anomie:

To be perfectly clear: we demand and aspire for Kosovo to become a state; the international community that assisted us to reach this point hesitates to recognise this natural right because of the scarecrow called Great Albania that, once achieved, could endanger the geopolitical balance. On the other hand, it appears clearly that we are

incapable of achieving on our own what we aspire. What is to be done? We must eliminate the preconception of the Great Albania from the minds of Western diplomats and documents. How can this be done? By convincing ourselves and others that we not only reject the Great Albania, but that we are different (from Albanians in Albania), that we have a different identity and that this identity is the best assurance that once Kosovo becomes independent, it will not join Albania. (2005, 289).

This perpetual quest for an *acceptable nationalism*, i.e. acceptable to the Western governments as the source of international legitimation, is well-explained by Greenfeld when she notes that, historically, the sources of importation of nationalism were always ‘to the west’ of the importers. And, what is even more important, they were invariably defined as parts of the ‘symbolic West’. To Greenfeld, Western-modelled nationalism is of primarily civic nature and never ethnic-based. From here, she points out the need for Eastern European nationalisms ‘to exchange their ethnic nationalisms for those characteristic of some Western European nations’ (1992:33-34).

In the next chapters, I argue that this rejection/acceptance syndrome remained one of the key issues that affected fundamentally the manifestation of Kosovo Albanian nationalism and performance of its political movement; through importation and domestication of the discursive practice of ‘democracy’ and ‘non-violent resistance’ the Kosovo Albanian nationalist elites struggled to gain international acceptance and legitimacy. Almost overnight, I argue, the great epistemological shift occurred within the Kosovo Albanian nationalist elites, poised to represent their political cause as complementary with the international norms of political action and thus disassociate their nationalist ideology from its definition as an ‘ethnic’ variant of nationalism. Here’s an observation by Greenfeld on the ‘non-westerness’ of such nationalism:

Ethnic nationalisms developed as variants of an explicitly anti-Western ideology. Societies which imported national ideas from elsewhere - whether they defined themselves as nations early or late, but which did not at the moment of the adoption of national identity believe themselves to be inferior to their models - tended to define themselves in civic terms. In such cases, the record of their achievement provided them with sufficient reasons for national pride, and they had no need to resort to the claim that their superiority was inherent (in their blood, soul, soil, unadulterated language, or whatnot). (1992:33)

At a later stage I will examine aspects of the discursive technology that was used by interpreters of the 'national cause' and the nationalism as ideology of choice; I will argue that it was based on the *reification* of the idea of the community through the public discourse and practice, in this case the notion of 'Albanianism' as a supra-ethnic and—more importantly—a supra-religious narrative of sociopolitical mobilisation. Also, in the chapters that discuss the attempts of Kosovo Albanian nationalist elites to transform its narrative into an 'internationally acceptable' form (Chapter 7), I analyse the social and historical conditions that led them to the formation of linkage between the concept of 'democracy', 'independence' and 'nation-state'.

In the context of this theoretical debate, many scholars of nationalism indirectly admit to such claim. Often, nationalism is seen as a product of efforts to advance individual and group identity in the face of social changes of the modern world; a means to secure one's status and protect the dignity from 'total social degradation', as noted by Greenfeld; an attempt to locate the sovereignty within the people and the recognition of the fundamental equality among its various strata – 'the very tenets of democracy':

Democracy was born with the sense of nationality. The two are inherently linked and neither can be fully understood apart from this connection. (...) Nationalism was the form in which democracy appeared in the world, contained in the idea of the nation as a butterfly in a cocoon. Originally, nationalism developed as democracy; where the conditions of such original development persisted, the identity between the two was maintained.' (1992:10-11).

Indeed, the (re)birth of the nationalist movement in Kosovo during the late 1980s and throughout 1990s should be interpreted as indivisible from the internalised concept of democracy as an ideological novelty of the decade. Its core message was the demand for democracy which was seen as both internal and external process; it was an appeal for establishing democratic norms of behaviour *within* the nation and *between* nations residing in an unstable federal state.

However, in the case of Kosovo Albanian political movement the perception of nationalism evolved into predominantly ethnic and particularist form. I argue that this feature reduced its

discourse on democracy into a discourse on internal, ethnic hierarchy. Attempts to enforce such particularist variation of nationalism to converge with the principles of civic democracy ushered their political leadership into introducing a dualist representation of itself: external and internal. By *external* representation I have in mind the logic of discursive construction of itself as complementary to ‘geopolitical’ requirements of the international, Western public (media, governments), whereas by *internal* representation I place an emphasis on its actual *performance* inside Kosovo Albanian society: its discursive practice, the impact it had on power-relations in the community and the construction of social hierarchies.

Externally, (in line with Brubaker’s geopolitical requirements) the national/political movement was introducing itself as a civic-based concept that was aiming establishment of democratic values in the society; a legitimate struggle for self-determination in line with principles of peaceful resistance, civic disobedience and demands for political liberties. Internally, it was ran on unitarist and particularist concepts designed by those who claimed competency over their interpretation and who engaged in designing of a new, different environment of power-relations in the community through employment of ethno-cultural myths and the authoritarian cult of national leader, in line with Greenfeld’s explanation:

‘Such national principle is collectivistic; it reflects the collective being. Collectivistic ideologies are inherently authoritarian for, when the collectivity is seen in unitary terms, it tends to assume the character of a collective individual possessed of a single will, and someone is bound to be its interpreter.’ (1992:12)

In the case of Kosovo Albanian nationalism, such dichotomic attempt to (a) enforce national cohesiveness through authoritarianism and, at the same time (b) formally represent it as a democratic movement based on respect of diversities, peaceful resistance and adherence to democratic principles, gave birth to a genuine state of the community, the so-called *parallel society*, a parallel social system⁴. A socially constructed feature in its every element, this parallel society was based on the collective capacity to *imagine* and *imitate* the existence of institutional framework of the aspired nation-state, an act seen as necessary for the

4 The state of Kosovo’s ‘parallel society’ during the decade of 1990s comprises a separate, yet brief, section in the research chapters of this study. It is examined in the context of the analysis of technology of construction of parallel discursive and institutional practices in Kosovo Albanian society—as a performance-based political action aimed at disassociation from the dependency to the Serbia’s hegemonic rule, and at construction of the projection of a modern ‘democratic’ type of political resistance.

enforcement of the idea of Kosovo as a *de facto* state, and of its Albanians population as inherently a nation-building one. In the light of this debate, in the following chapters I argue that it represented a certain discursive practice of reinventing and modernizing the concept of a nation in the form of an advanced, developing *ethnie*. The exclusive profile of its ethnic nationalism was employed for reconfiguration of relations of power in the community and for sustaining a social hierarchy. And, as the latter became a social and political norm, it appeared that—at least symbolically—the birth of democracy from the spirit of reformed ethnic nationalism was almost possible for Kosovo Albanian parallel society during the 1990s, as they were switching from the unificationist/irredentist ideological narrative to that of peripheral/independentist. Its parallel ‘independent’ state was to rest on effortless, formal modification of imported concepts of civic nationalism and democracy. It was yet another ‘reign of words’—to paraphrase Dimitrijevic’s (2000) critique of Yugoslav system—which served the ends of political propaganda that projected an external image of Kosovo Albanians as dignified victims.

In such parallel society—indeed, an underworld of makeshift parallel schools, hospitals, government, media, parties and NGOs—Kosovo Albanians managed to construct a new dimension of their political being. Being insignificant in its external impact to the repressive reality and state-conducted apartheid policies, such parallel society was allowed to indulge in devising its own, authentic perception of nation-building and democracy. Yet, in order to achieve this it was necessary to implement a radical ideological shift.

I will make a digression here by recalling that the aspiration for democracy as an ideological deliverance from totalitarianism in the early 1990s appeared parallelly with the attempts for *re-nationalization* of communities across Eastern Europe and the western Balkans at the demise of the Cold War and Warsaw Pact. By all means, democracy was an ideological novelty of the upcoming decade for communities which dwelling for half a century under the Communist rule in which nationness was either suppressed or remained inferior to the formal doctrine of ‘dictatorship of proletariat’. Therefore, the introduction of the notion of western democracy in the context of Kosovo Albanian political struggle came as an ultimate ideological opposition to the previous, irredentist, practice. This was the point where the radical ideological shift had to occur (see Chapter 7)—shifts which explain the manner in which the ‘independentist’ discourse and respective communicative strategies were employed

and enforced through the guiding principle of compliance with the perceived international/western views about acceptable forms of nationalist/political organising. I argue that such a swift—by all means, sudden—shift caused irreversible reconfiguration of power-schemes in the Kosovo Albanian community and the redefinition of its national political strategy. In other words, what was until 1990 understood as illegal Kosovo Marxist-Leninist underground struggle for unification with the Communist Albania evolved almost overnight into a popular movement for democracy, statehood, free-market and capitalist economy.

Now let us go back to the dualist performance of the parallel society, externally seen as a democratic mobilisation of an excluded community and internally ran on authoritarian hierarchy. I argue here that the reasoning behind this popular constructionist operation was based on a tactical political point; *imagination* and *imitation* of the state was entirely about projecting a sense of political maturity of the community and of its national leadership to the imagined West, in Greenfeld's terms. Among others, the future state had to be imagined as embracing and manifesting its essential prerequisites: the undisputable existence of its nation that was realising—indeed, making—the state through an act of will, and of democracy as the natural system of its governance.

As the study will try to show, such discursive strategy of political 'parallelism' by Kosovo Albanians and its national leadership failed significantly to achieve and resemble values that were imitated/minicked: those of the western, civic democracies. Establishment of the state through an 'act of will' was quickly contaminated by social forces that were operating on 'mechanical' principles of solidarity and social adherence; as the values of kinship and patriarchy were prevailing over the necessary right to diversity, the notion of democracy was perceived as equivalent with democracy and exclusive hierarchy. Values of the imagined 'West' were to be adjusted to serve internal needs of the rising authoritarian mindset. Greenfeld derives an important conclusion in this respect, from both historical and sociological view:

As nationalism spread in different conditions and the emphasis in the idea of the nation moved from the sovereign character to the uniqueness of the people, the original equivalence between it and democratic principles was lost. One implication of this, which should be emphasized, is that democracy may not be exportable. It may be an inherent predisposition in certain nations (inherent in their very definition as

nations – that is, the original national concept), yet, entirely alien to others, and the ability to adopt and develop it in the latter may require a change of identity. (1992:11)

The study of Kosovo Albanian parallel society and its ethnonationalist political ideology make this assumption discouragingly true. Moreover, in this particular case, such a failure caused another striking phenomenon, that of introduction of environment of parallel repression. The contamination of its parallel ‘lifeworld’ through the introduction of an authoritarian discourse aimed at reorganising the social hierarchy was placing yet another layer of repression on the Kosovo Albanian community with far-reaching consequences; this, due to the fact that, being formally constructed by an ‘act of will’, their parallel state was primarily dependent on one’s devotion to *moral* norms of its nationalism. In other words, disobedience to external repression conducted by the oppressive Serbian/Yugoslav state was illegal; disobedience to internal state of the ‘willing’ was—immoral. Such environment produced a situation of life under unique, *parallel* authoritarianisms which were often resting on symbiotic relationship.

I argue that the occurrence of this phenomenon could be partially explained as a consequence of the alteration of the *democratic* variation of civic nationalism during the process of its importation and internalisation; aspired ‘civility’ of its substance was quickly lost as it was compelled to perform under conditions of external/geopolitical constraints, strong patriarchal pre-modern culture and ethnic particularism of the importing community. Subsequently, this process of alteration affected the very meaning, definition and connotation of democracy in Kosovo’s society. On behalf of democratic principles, its nationalism was practiced as an authoritarian political ideology. Below is another important observation by Greenfeld on this phenomenon which I employ as a relevant reference in the context of Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalism from the 1990s :

The emergence of the ensuing, particularistic concept results from the application of the original idea to conditions which did not necessarily undergo such transformations. It was the other, in the original concept accidental, connotations of people and country which prompted and made possible such application. (1992:12)

This applies a great deal on the perception and interpretation of nationalism among Kosovo Albanians and their discourse on liberation, democracy and independence during 1990s. The

imported definition of the nation, as an advanced *community of opinion*, was to be applied onto a society that was formally dwelling on pre-industrial perceptions; be this the case, its nationalism took a complementary path, evolving into a particularist variation and an (internal) authoritarian practice. Following Greenfeld's line of reasoning, its aspiration to sovereignty would be defined as merely 'theoretical' because it entailed not only the exclusionist principle on the *uniqueness* of its people, but also a strong collectivistic tendency.

Chapter 4.

Literature review: Orientalism, Balkanism

Introduction

Theoretical definition and debate about the ‘orientalism’ and ‘balkanism’ are the focus of this chapter. In this research they connote two representational systems, a set of discursive assumptions and practices—academic and institutional—that deal with description, regulation, construction and understanding of ‘Orient’ and ‘the Balkans’ as the West’s (or Europe’s) supposed ‘Other’. A theoretical analysis of such discursive practices appears essential for understanding the origin, nature and features of ideological narratives of the cultural, political and national identity among societies defined as non-European or ‘semi-European’. There are two authors and, subsequently, two seminal works that will serve as pillars of this theoretical analysis: Edward Said (1935-2003) and his study of *Orientalism* (1978), and Bulgarian scholar Maria Todorova with her ground-breaking analysis of the external practices of representation of the Balkans, *Imagining the Balkans* (1997).

Although dealing with separate objects of study—the origin of concept and knowledge about ‘Orient’ in the first, as well as the external understanding and depiction of ‘the Balkans’ in the second—both of these works provide an essential theoretical basis for the argumentation of the main hypothesis of this study: the ideological interconnectedness between the influence of western (European) culture and politics, and the process of production and formation of the national identity as a contemporary sociopolitical category in the Balkans.

Moreover, the orientalist and the balkanist discourses are instrumental in my attempts to identify and explain the communicative technologies and strategies that shaped the meanings of ‘nation’, ‘nationhood’, ‘democracy’, ‘independence’ not as much as discursive signifiers of societal ‘westernness’ or ‘Europeanness’—inasmuch as the signifiers of ‘non-Easterness’ and ‘non-Orientalness’ of political and ideological determination of those societies, namely, the Albanians.

In this context, as noted by Pula, ‘the historical discourse of (Balkans/Albanians) nationalism could be seen as an embodiment of a Western mode of knowledge *par excellence*.’ (2006:72). The effects of such western knowledge *par excellence* produce the ‘discursive hardening’, notes Buchowski (2008) which ‘permits politically stronger groups to define weaker groups’ (ibid:463). In the following chapters, I will argue that the construction of Albanian national identity as a political category appears inseparable from the local introduction of such western knowledge and the subsequent domestication and naturalisation of such external discourse about itself, perceived as a vehicle/condition to achieving western legitimacy and its acceptance as a modern, European nation.

Numerous books and scholarly debates offer accounts on the Balkans as the grand battlefield of interests, influence and ambitions of the western European powers of the times: Jelavich (1983), Hupchick (1998, 2002), Gallagher (2001), Johnson (1996), Kaplan (1993), Vickers (1995, 2002), Fowkes (2002) represent a few of the authors that offer historiographic, sociological analysis on the perplexed and complex nature of the evolution of Balkans societies during the period that followed the fall of the Ottoman Empire. To this research, they provide the relevant historiographic insight of its main focus, the developments in the Balkans societies and states during the 20th century.

The other aspect of theoretical considerations highlights the works by the various authors that engage in the field of the analysis of the sociocultural/sociopolitical effects and influence of the orientalist and balkanist discourse on the societies in the vicinity of Europe ‘proper’: Todorova (1997, 2005, 2007), Bakic-Hayden (1992, 2006), Bjelic & Savic (2002), Spivak (2003), Sulstarova (2005, 2007), Aleksic (2007), Fleming (1999, 2002) Buchowski (2008), Ugresic (1995) and others. Their analysis’ and works focus on the discursive technologies that were applied by the West—specifically, the European academia, media, literature and political institutions—in the process of describing, explaining as well as associating the ‘Orient’ and the ‘Balkans’ in the context of its former Ottoman/Eastern legacy.

Of the political legacies that have shaped the southeast European peninsula (the Balkans) as a whole (the period of Greek antiquity, Hellenism, Roman rule, etc.), two can be singled out as crucial until the 19th century. One is the millennium of Byzantium with its profound political, institutional, legal, religious and general cultural impact. The other is the half millennium of Ottoman rule that gave the

peninsula its name, and established the longest period of political unity it had experienced. Not only did part of Southeastern Europe acquire a new name during this period; it has been chiefly the Ottoman elements or the ones perceived as such which have mostly invoked the current stereotype of the Balkans. In the narrow sense of the word, then, one can argue that the Balkans are, in fact, the Ottoman legacy. (Todorova, 2005:69)

As noted by Aleksic (2007), the highlight of the most of the works about balkanist narrative consists of explaining the cultural, political, historical reasons that continue to shape it through ‘a dialogue between a patronizing/accusatory discourse and a self-defensive one’ (2007:2). In short, the balkanist discourse is about highlighting the *irrevocable* differences that the area holds with respect to Europe and western civilisation as well as ‘justifying’ the existence of such differences through stressing its ‘eastern’ historical legacy. More specifically, according to Aleksic, such approach of sociocultural castigation has been predominantly coined as a western response during the decade of conflicts in the territory of the former Yugoslavia (1991-1999), as a ‘simplistic pseudo-analysis’ of the aftermath of the break-up of the federation and the outburst of atrocities, mass-killings and ethnic cleansing.

Such linkage between the castigating ‘balkanist’ discourse and the Yugoslav wars bears a specific relevance to this research as it includes Kosovo, the chiefly Albanian-inhabited province of the former Yugoslav federation. The influence of the balkanist discourse in the formation and the transformation of the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist discourse comprises a separate chapter of this research. In this respect, the exposure and analysis of the theoretical debate about orientalism and balkanism in this chapter will assist in setting up a workable basis for concentrating on that foremost focus of the study: the construction of the Albanian (and later on, the Kosovo Albanian) ethnonationalist discourse—and, subsequently, its national identity—as an outcome par excellence of such patronizing/self-defensive dialogue between the assumed western/eastern discourses and epistemologies.

Orientalism

Firstly, I will try to clarify the content of pervasive stigma that the notion of orientalism by employing an explanation by Said:

...it is, above all, a discourse that is by no means in direct, corresponding relationship with political power in the raw, but rather is produced and exists in an uneven exchange with various kinds of power, shaped to a degree by the exchange with power political (as with a colonial or imperial establishment), power intellectual (as with reigning sciences like comparative linguistics or anatomy, or any of the modern policy sciences), power cultural (as with orthodoxies and canons of taste, texts, values), power moral (as with ideas about what 'we' do and what 'they' cannot do or understand as 'we' do) (2003 (1978):12).

But, let us first try to explain in simpler terms, and later contextualize the meaning and the connotation that *orientalism* bears from the time when devised by Said and on. Insofar as 'Orient' carries the meaning of 'the East' where 'Oriental' characterizes a person, an object, a trait or feature belonging to the East, the orientalism refers to a system of knowledge on the places, countries and peoples from/at the East. According to *Oxford English Dictionary (1971)*, Orientalism has been the term used for the subject and the works of the orientalists, scholars versed in the cultures, histories, languages and societies of Asia or the Orient, since the 18th century when the tradition was born. Historically, Orientalism evolved into a science with a distinct object of study through the establishment of departments for studying Arabic and Indian languages in British and French universities during 18th century (Macfie, 2002: 25-50). Later on, such departments became known as Oriental Studies.

To speak of Orientalism therefore is to speak mainly, although not exclusively, of a British and French cultural enterprise, a project whose dimensions take in such disparate realms as the imagination itself, the whole of India and the Levant, the Biblical texts and the Biblical lands, the spice trade, colonial armies and a long tradition of colonial administrators, a formidable scholarly corpus, innumerable Oriental 'experts' and 'hands,' an Oriental professoriate, a complex array of 'Oriental' ideas (Oriental despotism, Oriental splendour, cruelty, sensuality), many Eastern sects, philosophies, and wisdoms domesticated for local European use—the list can be extended more or less indefinitely (Said, 2003 (1978):4)

In short, orientalism—as a discursive practice and as a body of knowledge about Orient—is indivisible from the notion of colonialism and its definition as the 'geopolitical, sociocultural, linguistic and hegemonic project of domination and oppression rooted in the racialized and gendered contracts emerging out of Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries' (International

Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, 2nd edition, 2008:11). In this research the notion of *Orientalism* will be employed as an additional theoretical base for explaining the process of political, cultural and sociological identification, classification and distinction of social environments which differ from what is generally defined as the *Western culture*, and which over time, as noted by Todorova, was self-proclaimed into ‘the civilised world’ (1997:3). The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Sociology (2007) provides an additional illustration on the formal, historical object of ‘orientalism’:

Orientalism is the study of the ‘Orient’ and its ‘eastern’ arts, languages, sciences, histories, faiths, cultures, and peoples by Christian theological experts, humanist scholars, and natural and social scientists since the 1500s. Orientalist writers consider the ‘Orient’ as consisting of societies geographically east of Christian Europe to be explored, acquired, and colonized for their raw materials, abundant labor, and pieces of seemingly opulent civilisations in decline. These colonial explorations resulted in man made, imaginary geographies and political demarcations such as the Near East, the Middle East, Central Asia, the Far East, the Pacific Isles, the New World, and the ‘Dark Continent.’ (2007:3343)

Historically, from 18th century, the process of military conquests and subjugation of societies residing to the east and south-east of the geographic location Europe by the major powers that constructed the notion of European/western civilisation – in Said’s terms, the Great Britain and France – formed the conditions for ‘the Orient’ to become the object of study through (and by) orientalism, as a discursive practice and system of representation. I will comply with the meaning attached to the notion of orientalism in Said’s work – understood as a critique of the epistemological arsenal of ‘oriental studies’ for their role during colonial conquests and rule imposed upon countries and nations of the Eastern hemisphere by Western European imperial powers. Implicitly, Said notes that if ‘the East’ wouldn’t have become a victim of Western colonialist conquests, there would have never arisen a need or interest to study ‘the Orient’ and, hence, produce, a regime of knowledge about it; an institutionalized truth about what it *is* and what it *means*—an intellectual, cultural, political and moral authority:

There is nothing mysterious or natural about authority. It is formed, irradiated, disseminated; it is instrumental, it is persuasive; it has status, it establishes canons of taste and value; it is virtually traditions, perceptions, and judgments it forms,

transmits, reproduces. Above all, authority can, indeed must, be analysed. All these attributes of authority apply to Orientalism, and much of what I do in this study is to describe both the historical authority in and the personal authorities of Orientalism. (ibid:20)

According to Said, orientalism places Europe or *the West* in a privileged position with respect to *the East*, which, in turn, is treated as its *other*. Here, it is important to note his clarification that ‘Orient’ should not be confined solely to already stereotyped locations and cultures such as the ‘Far East’, ‘Asia’, ‘Arabia’, ‘Middle East’, but also other geographic, sociocultural entities such as India, Russia – even the Balkans: simply, in the orientalist discourse, Orient is all that is not considered ‘West’.

The demise of the global colonial system during 1950s and 1960s was followed with the criticism that the orientalist discourse was serving the western intellectual hegemony with respect to the ‘Orient’—and that it provided a ‘scientific’ justification to Western preconceptions about the Orient and the ‘orientals’. It was a form of the ‘colonialism of the mind wherein the colonized are institutionally, pedagogically, linguistically and cognitively conquered by the colonizer’ (International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences, 2nd edition, 2008:11). The key principle of such hegemony, Said notes, lies with the ‘scientific’ justification of the concept of a divided world—the Eastern and Western worlds. Said defines such differentiating technique as a method through which orientalist discourse provides the:

- (a) **strategic location** or ‘a way of describing the author’s position in a text with regard to the Oriental material he writes about’ (1978:20), and
- (b) **strategic formation**, or ‘a way of analysing the relationship between texts and the way in which groups of texts, even textual genres, acquire mass, density and referential power among themselves and thereafter in the culture at large’ (ibid).

Reading about Orient entails taking sides ‘vis-à-vis Orient’, notes Said. The discourse about Orient entailed one’s cultural and political positioning towards it; it was a process in which ‘the West’ would gain positive connotations while the East would become simplified and produced as its essential other, its *negation*. Thus, the East becomes the West’s negative mirror: undeveloped, indulged in irrational features such as passions, mysticism, ignorance, fanaticism, despotism: be this the case, it represents a permanent danger to the West, to its

social, political and cultural foundations. As noted by Said ‘the East has been considered for at least three decades to be in the need of modernization’ (1981:ii). Historically, he argues, the Orientalist discourse was functioning as a self-fulfilling prophecy, through (a) constructing and defining the reality of an Eastern environment, and (b) raising the urgency for it to be treated accordingly:

‘To say simply that Orientalism was a rationalisation of colonial rule is to ignore the extent to which colonial rule was *justified in advance* by Orientalism, rather than after the fact’ (ibid:39)

Paradoxically, the technology of constructing and cultivating the *otherness* of the East, the Orient, according to Said, assisted in its deprivation from progress and modernization, which supposedly represented an ideological aim behind the establishment of oriental studies. Thus, orientalist discourse became an antithesis to its hegemonic ideal: instead of studying and analysing the Orient with the aim to modernize (and, subsequently, exploit), it became circumscribed in re-defining and cultivating its *otherness*. Description of this technique of *othering* is well-documented through a graphic account of *the European vs. the Oriental* by Lord Cromer, England’s representative in Egypt, Evelyn Baring, Egypt’s master in the period 1882-1907:

‘The European is a close reasoner; his statements of fact are devoid of any ambiguity; he is a natural logician, albeit he may not have studied logic; he is by nature sceptical and requires proof before he can accept the truth of any proposition; his trained intelligence works like a piece of mechanism. The mind of the Oriental, on the other hand, like his picturesque streets, is eminently wanting in symmetry. His reasoning is of the most slipshod description. Although the ancient Arabs acquired in a somewhat higher degree the science of dialectics, their descendants are singularly deficient in the logical faculty. They are often incapable of drawing the most obvious conclusions from any simple premises of which they may admit the truth. Endeavour to elicit a plain statement of facts from any ordinary Egyptian. His explanation will generally be lengthy, and wanting in lucidity. He will probably contradict himself half-a-dozen times before he has finished his story. He will often break down under the mildest process of cross-examination.’ (1978:38-39)

In normative terms, orientalism was designed to not only shape the Europeans' perceptions of the East, but also to serve as an integral part of the colonial *disciplining* and *normalising* discursive machinery, notions employed by Said in Foucauldian context. It was – and largely still remains – an ideological beacon in the attempts to modernize remote regions of the globe; a well-structured system of cultural representation. Yet, as noted by Said in his response to the mounting criticism to his work, orientalism is not necessarily 'evil, or sloppy or uniformly the same in the work of each and every Orientalist' although 'the *guild* of Orientalists has a specific history of complicity with imperial power, which it would be Panglossian to call irrelevant.' (2003 (1978):342). Ultimately, it is indivisible from the tumultuous dynamics of contemporary society as an effort by the Western polity to identify and classify, to rationalise and functionalize the perception of the *other* as perpetually and irrevocably *different*. In time, according to Said, it evolved into a predominant formula for description of the East as its evolution and modification continues tirelessly to-date, driven by current events, news and their impact on both hemispheres. Such instability of the notion and definition of orientalism has been revisited by him almost three decades after the first publication of his work, in the aftermath of 9/11 attacks and the subsequent War on Terror:

'I emphasize in it accordingly that neither the term Orient nor the concept of the West has any ontological stability; each is made up of human effort, partly affirmation, partly identification of the Other. That these supreme fictions lend themselves easily to manipulation and the organisation of collective passion has never been more evident than in our time, when the mobilisation of fear, hatred, disgust and resurgent self-pride and arrogance – much of it having to do with Islam and the Arabs on one side, 'we' Westerners on the other - are very large-scale enterprises.' (2003:xii)

However, one of the emphases of this research falls on the explanation and decoding the *disciplining* and *normalising* effects that an orientalist discourse as a system of representation could have on developing societies and nations; more precisely, on those nations and societies in the immediate geographic vicinity of the West and Europe, perceived as *not-quite* or *not-yet* European (Goldsworthy, 2002) in their developmental *liminality* (Bjelic, 2002): the nations of the Balkans.

Specifically, the analysis of the effects of the orientalist discourse is relevant in studying the epistemological landscape that conditioned the formation of the national identity and

ideology in the non-Western societies. During the processes of modernization in the 18th and 19th century, nationalist elites across the non-western or almost-western societies required from their communities to achieve resemblance with their western counterparts that were considered as the source of reference of ‘modernization’ and ‘progress’ (see Todorova, 1997). And, as I will try to explain and expose in this research, the process of ‘westernisation’ of such societies entailed the simultaneous exercise of their ‘de-orientalisation’; in short, it meant that one’s *westernness* can only be measured through one’s *non-easternness*. I argue that this conforms with the history of the ideological narrative that established and shaped the ethnonational identity of Albanians in the Balkans. In the next chapters of this research I will be looking into the epistemological process that led their nationalist elites into adopting orientalist views about society, culture, politics and national identity. I will try to explain the orientalist discursive technologies at work through which such views were (a) imported and imposed so that (b) they could be distributed locally and be defined as a new, modern, set of social norms that would, in turn, (c) enable the achievement of the aspired, western-modelled *progress* (at the outset of 20th century) and the *democratic* rule (by its turmoiled end).

Balkanism

‘In the past decade, the international community has regarded the Balkans primarily as a post-conflict region’, writes the International Commission on the Balkans in its report *The Balkans in Europe’s Future*, published in 2004. Being the third such report by a third such Commission⁵ within a single century, it only repeated what seemed to have been the opening remark similar to those in previous reports: (a) stating of facts about horrible atrocities in a war-torn area which, in turn, (b) repeatedly fails to meet Western/European expectations of civility. Over time, an abundance of alike reports, essays and studies referring to the Balkans

5 The first such report on the Balkans has been compiled by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, in 1914 under the title: ‘Report of the International Commission on the Balkan Wars’, Published by the Endowment, 1914, Washington D.C. The chair of this first Balkan Commission was the French Senator, Baron d’Estournelles. The second report was published in 1996, by the Aspen Institute and the Carnegie Endowment for Peace, titled: ‘The Unfinished Peace’ (Aspen, 1996). The chair of the second Balkans Commission was the former Italian Prime Minister, Giuliano Amato. Finally, the third report, ‘The Balkans in Europe’s Future’ was published in 2005 by Robert Bosch Stiftung, King Baudouin Foundation, German Marshall Fund of the United States, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. The chair of this, third, Balkans Commission was the former Prime Minister of Belgium, Leo Tindemans.

in similar terms assisted in constructing a unique Western discourse that came to be known as *Balkanism*:

‘(Balkanism and) ‘balkanisation’ not only had come to denote the parcelisation of large and viable political units but also had become a synonym for a reversion to the tribal, the backward, the primitive, the barbarian. In its latest hypostasis, particularly in American academe, it has been completely decontextualized and paradigmatically related to a variety of problems. That the Balkans have been described as the ‘other’ of Europe does not need special proof. What has been emphasized about the Balkans is that its inhabitants do not care to conform to the standards of behaviour devised as normative by and for the civilised world. As with any generalization, this one is based on reductionism, but the reductionism and stereotyping of the Balkans has been of such a degree and intensity that the discourse merits and requires special analysis.’ (Todorova, 1997:3)

‘In the nineteenth century, Western-style nationalism imposed itself upon the multicultural traditions of the Ottoman world’, notes Gallagher (2002:86). I argue that such an observation refers also to the period of the introduction of a new discursive practice for the ethnicities of the Balkans which were to become nations through—to paraphrase Rousseau—‘establishing a general will and a new, moral collective body’. I argue that, among others, this period also marks the beginning of the construction of the sociocultural and sociopolitical notion of the Balkans through the discursive essentialisation and racialisation of its ethnicities by the western-European narratives, which almost regularly projected it through the concepts of ‘oriental’, ‘irrational’, ‘savage’, and, therefore, ‘un-European’.

As an illustration of historical trait of such representation, I will provide below two different, yet similar, accounts on Albanians written by Robert Curzon in 1834 and Hermann Neubacher in 1956—an English and a German scholar, as illustrations of the effects of such ‘cultural ideology of the observer’ (Bakic-Hayden, 2006) during the analysis’ of essential characteristics of an ethnic community at Europe’s backyard:

They have none of the composure of the Turks, who delight to sit still in a coffee-house and smoke their pipes, or listen to a story, which saves them the trouble of thinking or speaking. The Albanians did not scream and chatter as the Arabs do but they lounged about the bazaars listlessly, ready to pick a quarrel with anyone, and

unable to fix themselves down to any occupation. In short, they gave me the idea of being a very poor and proud, and good-for-nothing set of scamps.(Curzon (1834:254-271)⁶;

Since Roman times, the Albanians have had a traditional strategy to deal with occupations. It has been custom among this small but martial mountain nation, not wishing to be squashed by mightier plunderers, to seek gold and weapons from the strong and to seize them from the weak when they withdrew. They have maintained themselves in their mountains for centuries. (Neubacher, 1956:105-121)

Such a simplified and reductionist way of defining an ethnicity whose volume and structure in reality exceeds that of a larger gang or tribe, tells sufficiently about the existence and deployment of a preconceived picture of them in the analysis. Here, Albanians are consciously and formally described as a 'nation' but they are analysed as *not-quite* one; persistently, they are seen through a previously established opinion of them as an inert, static social category limited in its volume, comparable in its deliberations and predictable in its actions. The analysis places them on the level of a set of gangs, or of a larger tribe with no profilised social strata or any other, modern, manifestations of a nation. Undoubtedly, they are a nation—or, a specific, Balkan, sort of it—but certainly not modern, and definitely not 'European'. As Sells would note, illustrating the external viewpoints on the region: 'people in the Balkans are fated, by history or genetics, to kill one another' (1996: xiv).

In fact, it is the group of statements, such as the 'composure' 'the Arab', 'the Turks', 'mightier plunderers', 'gold and weapons', 'the strong', 'mountains', etc., that speak about the cultural ideology of the observer: their order and the context in which they are invoked tells about the employment of a specific discursive practice with heavy orientalist features as it indulges in emphasizing the social/ethnic characteristics alluded to as remote and brutal – therefore, expectable – for a society seated in the realm of an 'Eastern' empire.

Since the discourse on the Balkans has a history that is at least century old (Todorova, 2002 (1997)), an adequate analytical approach to it would require engagement in both *historical* as well as *discursive* analysis, as noted by Bjelic (2002). Such a combination of both approaches has been introduced with this study with the aim of contextual clarification of the topic of the

6 Selected fragments of this travelogue to be found also in <http://www.albanianhistory.net/texts19/AH1834.html>

Balkans which, I argue, dwells within the discourse of Europeaness as either a mere geographical toponym or a disparate sociopolitical and sociocultural signifier. ‘The very terms ‘Balkan’ and ‘Balkanism’, as Todorova convincingly argues, cannot be divorced from the history of the place’ (Todorova, 1997:7).

She traces the origin of knowledge about the Balkans—the very genealogy of balkanism—through written explorations of the area by the Western travellers and authors. She classifies the formation of the current, negative connotation that ‘Balkans’ and ‘balkanization’ into three stages:

1. The Balkans were first ‘discovered’ in the late 18th century by Western travellers. Although these first Western accounts of the Balkans contained some geographical inaccuracies, their treatment of the Balkans was primarily classificatory and descriptive.
2. After a series of Balkan wars and with the advent of World War I, the Balkans were increasingly permeated with ‘political, social, cultural, and ideological overtones,’ and ‘Balkan’ was increasingly used as a pejorative term.
3. Today the term ‘Balkan’ has been almost completely disassociated from its object, as journalists and academics utilize the construct of the Balkans as a powerful symbol conveniently located outside any spatial or temporal contexts (1997:7-8)

In the analysis of the historical events that surrounded the region and affected the meaning of the ‘Balkans’ and ‘balkanization’, Gallagher notes that ‘the Balkanization of the Balkans was the price Europe paid for preserving several decades of peace between suspicious and narrow-minded European powers’ (2001:47). According to Todorova, such a notion was introduced and popularized as a means of *adequate* description of the relationship of the Balkans with the West. It was meant to describe an unclear status of a region, that was *geographically* European but *oriental* historically, politically and culturally.

‘Balkanization’ entered the dictionary as a result of actions by the great powers who, later on, would blame the unforeseen consequences on the immaturity and allegedly uncivilised nature of local peoples and their leaders (Gallagher, 2001:280)

Since the early 20th century, the term ‘balkanization’ has been connoting one of the most negative paradigms in international politics and relations.

Specifically, as noted by Todorova, the pre-1914 turmoil—the period of the Balkan Wars⁷--was enormously important for popularizing its negative image. To Hammond (2006), the accusations of ‘discord, immorality, savagery, violence and congenital backwardness’ (2006:8) have been the major focus of historians, writers, diarists and novelists who constructed the Balkans as one among the major ‘Others’ of the Western civilisation.

Such an estranged and troubled relationship between the western-European projections and the destiny of the Balkans’ populations—who were perpetually ‘defined by geography’ (Djordjevic, 2008)—made the Balkanist discourse fall under the category of orientalism, ‘even when not explicitly stated’, notes Todorova (1997:8).

It is at this point that the failed Western expectations towards the Balkans gain their Orientalist edge, as described by Timothy Garton-Ash in his parallel between Sarajevo as the launching pad of the Great War (1914-1918), and an arena of terror and ethnic cleansing by the end of the XX century (1992-1995):

‘...Eighty years later, in the early days of the siege of Sarajevo in the mid-1990s, a photo of a half-ruined post office with three items of graffiti written on its wall captured the imagination of the world. The first graffiti read ‘This is Serbia!’; the second stated ‘This is Bosnia’. And someone scrawled underneath, ‘No, you idiots, it's a post office!’ But a European historian of the present added a line of his own, ‘This is Europe’. Because all of the destruction in the Yugoslav wars has been done by Europeans to other Europeans in Europe. The line ‘This is Europe’ embodies the European Union's moral imperative when it comes to overcoming the legacies of war and destruction in the Balkans. (1995:1)

Historically, the genesis of such ‘moral imperative’ of Europe—or the European Union, as contemporary institutionalization of the idea of common Western polity—can be traced from the outset of the XX century, following the demise of the Ottoman Empire and its retreat from the region. Ever since, the analysis of the Balkans entailed an observation of an

7 See Hall, Richard S.: ‘The Balkan Wars 1912-1913: A Prelude to First World War’, Routledge, 2000.

irrevocably transformed social arena that could be considered *European* in the strictly geographic sense: Territorially, Balkans were part of Europe, but they were not *European*, or *Europeanized* for that matter. As I will analyse it later in the research, such ambiguous approach to the history and culture of the Balkans societies—their very social fabric—has been the major cause of representational instability both from the outside, as well as from the inside. As noted by Djurdjevic:

At present, to designate which states belong to the Balkan Peninsula a single geographical criterion is not used. There is a tendency to regard as Balkan those countries which were under Ottoman rule between the 14th and 20th centuries, thereby linking anything Balkan to eastern cultural influences. Most of the countries in the Peninsula in question do not recognise themselves as ‘Balkan’ and prefer the label ‘central European’, which reveals the practice of stigmatisation applied to that peninsula and the East in general (Djurdjevic, 2008:157)

Similar to the connotations of *tribalism* as a graphic description of the lack of *civilised* sense of social organising—or *orientalism* as a definition of an irrevocable cultural difference—*balkanism* has historically functioned along the lines of Kipling’s infamous ‘The White Man’s Burden’ (1899); a narrative on a lawless and backward territory engulfed in communal feuds which call for international/western intervention, mediation and—enlightenment.

Such a conception of the Balkans, as a home to a geographically identifiable group of nations left half-way on the path to civilisation, evolved into an explicit Western discourse of political paternalism and sociocultural castigation. ‘It is hardly surprising that (even) parts of Southeast Europe deny a Balkan identity because of its association with unpredictability, lawlessness, and cruelty’, notes Gallagher (2001:11). Be this the case, it became the source of endless opinions and definitions which, according to numerous contemporary scholars on the subject, assisted in shaping balkanism into an orientalist-like and yet, unique, system of social representation. And, as it evolved into a Western public discourse towards the Balkans, it became ideologically circumscribed within one single demand/expectation; to see it finally adopting and respecting its social norms of civility and, thus, becoming Europeanized:

‘Far more interesting is the fact that the process of ‘Europeanization’, ‘Westernisation’, or ‘modernization’ of the Balkans in the nineteenth and twentieth

centuries included the spread of rationalism and secularization, the intensification of commercial activities and industrialization, the formation of a bourgeoisie and other new social groups in the economic and social sphere, and above all, the triumph of the bureaucratic nation-state. (Todorova, 1997:20)

Balkanism: a variation of Orientalism?

But, where does Balkanism differ from Orientalism? Or does it represent only its localized, geographically distinct, variation? According to Todorova, such technique of social representation of Balkan nations—as locked inside a continuous state of transition, of endless shift of power, ideology and rule—constitutes a specific approach in the process of its *othering* by the West. And, according to her this makes it fundamentally different from Orientalism:

‘Unlike orientalism, which is a discourse about an imputed opposition, balkanism is a discourse about an imputed ambiguity (. . .) Here, ambiguity is treated as anomaly. Because of their indefinable character, persons or phenomena in transitional states, like in marginal ones, are considered dangerous, both being in danger themselves and emanating danger to others. In the face of facts and ideas that cannot be crammed in pre-existing schemata, or which invite more than a single interpretation, one can either blind oneself to the inadequacy of concepts or seriously deal with the fact that some realities elude them.’ (1997:17)

To Buchowski (2006), balkanist discourse represents a new form of European orientalism which he defines as ‘a way of thinking about and the practices of making the Other’ (2006:465), and which after the 1989 and the anti-Communist awakenings across the Eastern Europe ‘managed to escape the confines of space and time’ (ibid). According to him, such orientalism serves as ‘a tool for concocting social distinctions across state borders as well as within them’. Here’s a relevant observation on the new dimension of such ‘European orientalism’ by Buchowski, which extends its constructionist capacity beyond the formal/geographical location of the ‘Orient’:

The revolutions of 1989 created, at least in the European context, confusion, uncertainty, cognitive dissonance, symbolic disorder, a liminal stage in the rite of

passage (. . .) that needed to be worked out. Within the old paradigm the simplest solution that adjusted to the expansion of ‘the free market and liberal democracy’ has been employed without shattering the entrenched orientalising mindset. The Occident’s lines have simply been moved eastward (2006:465)

According to Todorova, another fundamental component that makes balkanism to not only differ from orientalism, but to surface as far more radical, disciplining, discourse that defines the aspired *Westernness* as an unquestionable political aspiration and an overruling social norm is the ‘historical and geographic concreteness of the Balkans, as opposed to the intangible nature of the Orient’ (1997:11). The location of the Balkans is distinct and territorially identifiable and so is the number, the names and the histories of nations inhabiting it; in fact, there is hardly any account in the recent texts in which Balkans is not considered clearly as a geographical part of Europe. However, regardless of its geographic *concreteness* there is another feature that continuously appears in most of the recent studies on the Balkans as a key reason for constituting the uniqueness of balkanism as a radical and impactful hegemonic discourse (in Gramsci’s terms): its social, cultural *inbetweenness* or, as noted by Bjelic (2002), its *liminality*:

‘What then is Balkan specificity? What were the historic contingencies engendering the Balkan specificities? (...) Historically, the paradox may be explained, by acknowledging that the Balkan region was never colonized in the modern sense, as the Orient was, despite being subject to the Ottoman rule. Rather than exploiting natural resources and human labor, the Ottoman Empire introduced policies of re-population, coupled with policies of religious conversion and polarization, underwritten by perennial military campaigns. Thus, Balkan people perceived each other as both colonial rulers *and* as colonial subjects. (Bjelic, 2002:6)

The Balkans is neither *here* nor *there*, neither *this* nor *that*; it exists in two places at the same time. It is part of Europe but has an Eastern/Ottoman/Oriental history, tradition, legacy. As for the outsiders, Balkans ‘can not be told apart or put together’, notes Bjelic as he refers to an observation by K. E. Fleming (2000) that the ‘discourse on the Balkans is one both of *sameness* and of *difference*.’ (2000:15):

The Balkans’ liminal status—at the interstices between worlds, histories, and continents—is tantamount not so much to marginality as to a sort of centrality. To be

‘liminal,’ after all, is to be *between* (and overlapping) two (or more) domains, while to be marginal is merely to be at the edges of one (2000:35)

According to Bjelic, Fleming’s observation about the centrality of the Balkans which is derived out of a sheer state of its non-belonging to either ‘east’ or ‘west’ can actually serve as possible pillars for its negative identification, i.e. the construction of identity through the process of what it’s *not*. Thus, the Balkans may reclaim their representational concreteness because the liminal status will eventually cause its differences to melt into sameness. ‘Simultaneously and tautologically, then, the Balkans are both fully known and wholly unknown’ notes Fleming (2000:3), as she refers to a certain trait of North American and Western European discourse on the Balkans which focuses on overlooking the differences that exist between countries, regimes and peoples. Such process of systematic neglecting of the differences also entails the neglecting of the body of local, Balkan, knowledges about itself, its communities, culture, politics. The act of ‘overlooking’, I argue, downgrades such local epistemologies onto the level of what Foucault defines as ‘subjugated knowledges’:

a whole set of knowledges that have been disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated: naive knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity (1980:82)

Such an approach makes balkanist discourse—and the relationship between the Western Europe and the Balkans—as ‘homologous to colonialism’, notes Fleming (*ibid*:15), as it attempts to (a) discount the relevance of local, Balkan knowledge about itself, and (b) construct its own, external definition of it. Here, Bjelic invokes Foucault’s notions of power and domination as he refers to the reasoning behind such systematic castigation of the Balkan’s knowledge *about the Balkans*: according to him, such knowledges ought to remain concealed by the balkanist discourse for they originate from entities which are perceived as resistant to the discourse of universal rationality—simply, ‘their incorporation into that discourse would *rupture* it’ (2002:7). As noted by Fleming:

if, according to outside observers, it is difficult to distinguish between the Balkan states and peoples, it is still more difficult (say those same observers) for Balkan peoples themselves to *stop* making distinctions between themselves, and to stop killing one another senselessly over those distinctions. (2000:4)

To Bjelic, the people of the Balkans are not participators and constructors of the balkanist discourse: they are not allowed to correct or enrich it with their own narratives. Rather, they are being talked about, analysed and constructed through such assumed discourse of ‘universal rationality’ to which they can not claim co-ownership. Be this the case, another paradox of the Balkans looms: the intense internal polarities created by *balkanism’s* binary logic (Christianity/Islam, civilisation/barbarism, etc.) ‘infuses any reality imposed upon the Balkans by *balkanism* with dangerous instability’ (2002:8).

It is a discourse of informal, unstructured knowledge – produced through ‘travelogues, journalistic accounts and occasional history books’ (ibid:9) as opposed to the ‘expert’ knowledge that surrounds the orientalist discourse, in Said’s terms.

Internalisation of orientalism: making *others* from *brothers*?

The ethnonational ideologies of the Balkan societies have been regularly based on the emphasis of one’s ethnic uniqueness and authenticity of their geographical origin; however, at the same time they have been added a strong connotation of *Europeanness* and perceived cultural belonging with it, as both a referential and legitimation center. A brief excursion into the recent past of these societies reveals a distinct and common fear among them: that, if the liminality of their area—which in Fleming’s terms (2000) defines them as a sort of an autonomous centre—would entail their expulsion from the sphere of influence of grander narratives (specifically, of European, western, modern) then their fragile existence would be endangered through perpetual local feuds.

Therefore, the histories of adoption of the European principles of modernity—at least, of the sociopolitical mimic of its imagery—ought to be viewed as a consequence of inner societal fears about the unviability of autonomous and independent survival in an aggressively competitive and, mutually exclusionist environment. At their outset, the new Balkan nation-states were swift in adopting constitutions modelled on Western forms; however, the establishment of the concept of the representative government was being attempted ‘in countries unprepared for self-rule, with borders that had been carved out arbitrarily by the great powers and populations whose sense of national awareness was often only dimly felt’, notes Gallagher (2001:50).

In terms of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia by the end of the 20th century, such balkanist discourse of rejection of existence of a potential for 'Europeanization' can be traced as one of the discursive practices that fuelled the war-mongering rhetoric:

The discourse of being or not-being European (civilised, modern, democratic, capitalist) preceded the Yugoslav wars. The secessions from 'old-fashioned' communist Yugoslavia cannot be understood outside of global identity politics, outside of the attempt to escape the stigma of being in the backwards, non-European, communist Balkans. It encouraged a proliferation of highly dependable 'client states,' fighting each other for Western recognition in domains of democracy, human rights, and economic reform (Hammond, 2004:149)

To Kovacevic (2008), the balkanist discourse imposed upon the former Yugoslavia has a significant share in the manner in which the exclusionist ethnonationalism paved the road to the armed conflicts between the federation's republics and ethnicities. Attempts by various ethnic communities to exclude themselves from the generalizing western-European balkanist discourse transferred the 'accusatory/self-defensive dialogue' (Aleksic, 2007) to an inter-ethnic domain; it became a tool for projecting one's 'Europeanness' while denying to the immediate, 'non-European' neighbour.

The attempt to escape the backwards Balkans and join Europe was articulated as a necessary disassociation from ethnicities seen as Balkan or Oriental (Serbs for Croatia, Moslems/Albanians for Serbia and Macedonia). The process of ethnic differentiation was encouraged both from the inside – through openly racist narratives about 'us', Europeans, and 'them', Orientals – and from the outside – through the more subtle narratives of cultural racism about, for instance, democratic, hardworking, tolerant Slovenians and authoritarian, shift, corrupt, and narcissistic Serbs (Kovacevic, 2008:163)

I argue that such differentiation that was produced through such clash of competing representational systems caused, on the one hand, the construction of national aspirations for the 'modernity', 'progress' and 'Europeanness' (therefore reproducing a perception of oneself as a cultural *periphery*) and, on the other, the emphasizing of the ideologised postulates of 'authenticity', 'ancient past' and 'ethnic culture' (reproducing the perception of

oneself as a cultural *center*). This complies with Todorova's observation on the inherited modernity/ancientness dichotomy of nationalism which is, on the one hand, a product of modernity—'an unprecedented form of group identity made possible only within a modern regime with all its paraphernalia'—while on the other 'insists on the need for roots and tradition' (2005:143).

However, in terms of the ethnonationalist discourse in the former-Yugoslav ethnic communities such dichotomies produce ambiguities which, in turn, raises social anxieties and uncertainties: Balkan societies are 'semi-European' rather than 'non-European'; they are 'semi-developed' rather than 'un-developed'—'semi-civilised', rather than 'un-civilised'.

Undoubtedly, this brings to light a rather confused order of signifiers that constitute balkanism into a distinct variation of orientalism. One could argue that, while orientalism regards a system of socio-cultural representation of (a) geographically abstract, but (b) socially, culturally, ideologically distinct environment/object – balkanism on the other hand is about explaining (a) a distinct location with (b) highly ambiguous social, cultural and ideological environment. In short, everyone knows where the Balkans *are*; no one knows for sure what they *represent*.

Unlike Said's Orientalism, which brackets Orient's historical concreteness in order to describe orientalist constructions, Balkanism as a critical study is a system of representation based on historical perception of the Balkans by colonial rulers. These perceptions took root as schemes of self-recognition for Balkan peoples, so their study must be based on historical as well as discursive analysis. The very terms 'Balkan' and 'Balkanism' cannot be divorced from the history and the place.' (Bjelic, 2002:8)

Indeed, how do we know that the Balkans are utterly different from the rest of Europe? How different? What exactly are these differences about? How were they constructed and how did they become part of the current reservoir of definitions with the balkanism as a system of representation?

As the Balkans does not represent a finite, homogenous space, whether geographically, culturally or conceptually, its 'objective' external characterization was regularly preventing its self-differentiation, writes Bakic-Hayden (2006). Such an 'objectivity' was far too often

conditioned with the ‘cultural ideology of the observer’ and the specific idea of progress and standards that the observer held valid. I argue that in the context of external description of the Balkans, notions of ‘universal rationality’, ‘objectivity’ or ‘common sense’ can hardly be considered as neutral epistemologies. They are proclaimed as ‘universal’ and ‘rational’ by the western-European discourse during the patronizing/self-defensive dialogic engagement on the Balkans, through which the Balkans is maintained as the Europe’s *other*. Here’s an observation by Bakic-Hayden:

There is little doubt that the Balkans, either Byzantine or Ottoman, represented a cultural and religious ‘Other’ to Europe ‘proper.’ This older symbolic geography was reinforced in the post-war (cold-war) period by an ideological and political geography of the democratic, capitalist west versus the totalitarian, communist East (1992:3)

I argue that such technologies of *othering* the Eastern Europe and the Balkans through ideological, political—and, economic—‘geography’ has enabled the establishment of the western-European discourse of universal rationality, objectivity and neutrality as an epistemological order and the ultimate referential system, which, in Bourdieu’s terms, produces ‘the naturalisation of its arbitrariness’ (1977:164). Through such technologies then, the *views* on the Balkans become the *truth* on the Balkans and, subsequently, the reference *for* the Balkans in which, eventually, no one wants to be *from* the Balkans.

As Bakic-Hayden points out, such expectations can expose ‘the danger of unconscious acceptance of one’s depiction as an ‘object’ of historical events which lie beyond one’s domain of responsibility and therefore, one’s power and destiny’ (2006:18). An interesting illustration comes from Ugresic (2006) and her ironic account about the tendency of escaping and rejecting the West’s generalizing definition of ‘Balkans’ by the Eastern European and former Yugoslav nations and societies:

The Balkan stigma circulated within the Balkans too, and there nobody wanted to admit any DNA connections. The Slovenians saw themselves as a European protection shield against ‘balkanization’; the Croats thought the same about themselves, and still do; the Serbs didn’t mind shopping in Sofia, Istanbul or Thessalonica, but left ‘the Balkans’ to Bulgarians. Bulgarians didn’t have a way out. They could not move their Balkan mountain any further – over the Black Sea, to

Russia, say. After the disappearance of communist leaders with artistic aspirations such projects were no longer possible. So, who lives in the Balkans now? The Bulgarians do. (Ugresic, 2006:3)

Analysis of the historical events in the area account for the continuance of such political and ideological renegade of the Balkan societies well beyond the demise and the disappearance of the Ottoman empire from the region, as they engaged in the process of combining respective ethnonational mythologies with the modern, externally induced, political aspirations. Expectedly, the next step led to the creation of the independent nation-states which, among others, were conceived and interpreted through a distinct orientalist discourse.

This marks the point of evolution in the local histories of the Balkan societies when the final break-up with the diminishing Empire is introduced through adoption of a new discursive formation. Subsequently, a great competition was launched for organising one's ethnicity into 'modern', 'advanced', 'progressive' and 'European' nation-state. In the early years of the 20th century, this set of power-words, lying at the core of the new ethnonational ideologies was indivisible from the discursive practice that had shaped the national anti-Ottoman (read: anti-Oriental) sentiment and the political actions against its hegemony. In fact, I argue that their adoption as part of a linguistic arsenal of the ethnonationalist ideology—certainly, a new system of representation—constituted the very foundations of the anti-Ottoman discursive practice. The birth of the Balkan ethnonationalism through the construction of the anti-Ottoman narrative as the basis of the national identity will be the focus of the chapters 6 and 7 of this research. In the context of the history of the former Yugoslav region, Bakic-Hayden (1992) includes also the sociopolitical effects induced by the presence of the former colonizing powers, such as the Austro-Hungarian (northwest) and the Ottoman empire (southeast). Other than projecting the geographical delineation of the scope of influence of the two opposed empires, Bakic-Hayden finds such distinctions as hardly neutral, culturally or politically:

They privilege the predominantly Catholic, formerly Hapsburg territories of Slovenia and Croatia over the predominantly Orthodox or Muslim, formerly Ottoman territories in the rest of the country. Strangely, this depiction sees the essences of the peoples of Yugoslavia as having been developed by foreign rulers who had departed from the various regions long ago, from 1867 (Serbia) to 1918 ((Bosnia, Croatia,

Slovenia), and had never completely conquered a few places (Montenegro). In the northwest the European character and apparent advantages of the Hapsburg empire are stressed, while the Ottoman oriental is blamed for the ills of the rest of the country. (1992:5)

However, to scholars such as Buchowski (2006) the contemporary history of Europe accounts for transformative nature of the balkanist discourse which—with respect to the Balkans—is not necessarily always related to its othering due to the past Ottoman legacy. Very often, as in the case of the Eastern Europe and its grand sociopolitical leap from soviet-modelled socialism to western liberal capitalism, the orientalist/balkanist discourse is applied as a tool for connoting the failure to reform and to achieve westernness through internalising the political, economic and social norms stemming from the western institutional practices and their ‘capitalist set of values’:

Individuals have to be disciplined and educated, internalise a certain, in this case capitalist, set of values in order to become ‘normal.’ In the socialist past they dropped out of any reasonable control and ‘landed in a moral vacuum.’ Demoralized, corrupted and orphaned victims not of current practices but of the past, have to learn new standards, change their mentality in order to join the progressive part of the humanity. If they cannot do it, they remain ‘Easterners’ and should indict themselves for being alienated. Any failure is ascribed to their ‘oriental nature.’ (2006:475)

According to Buchowski, through highlighting the sets of values as the identification tool, the Western discourses on the other have eliminated the category of space and location in their dealings with either orientalism or balkanism. The accession of the former Eastern European communist states into the European Union pushed the notion of European Orient further southeast, onto the Balkans and Russia, while the distinction between ‘us’ and ‘them’ was defined through the degree to which ‘countries, social groups, authorities and individuals have embraced the free market and democracy’ (2006:465). Thus, the battle for *Europeanness* and, subsequently, *de-orientalness* was to be waged *between* the societies and *within* the societies.

The ‘new order’ that emerged in the 1990s has allowed orientalism (. . .) to escape the confines of space and time. Orientalism is also a specter that haunts people’s minds and serves as a tool for concocting social distinctions across state borders as well as

within them. In that sense, the new European orientalism is a refraction, a derivative or correlate of a phenomenon covered by such concepts as globalization, the expansion of multinational capital, flexible capitalism, transgressions, migrations, transnationalism or the media-covered global village. With these changes the meaning of orientalism acquires entirely new dimensions. (. . .) I contend that for those still thinking in ‘orientalising’ terms a mental map has morphed into social space, or, that they have found ‘otherness’ in their sisters and brothers. Similarities, analogies and connections can be traced between discourses concerned respectively with spatial and social issues (2008:466-7)

In this respect, the history of the demise of the former federation of Yugoslavia accounts for similar sociopolitical effects that followed the process of internalisation of the balkanist/orientalist discourse among its rival nations. The ethnonationalist rhetoric of its nations was comprised of distinct balkanist features and served as political justifications of ‘Europeanness’ of clearly disparate ideological programs. Whether openly secessionist/independentist (Slovenia, Croatia, Kosovo), hegemonic/unitarist (Serbia, Montenegro) or conformist/federalist (Macedonia, Bosnia & Herzegovina), the political programs of competing ethnicities were equally highlighting the ‘Europeanness’ and ‘European belonging’ as their ideological core (see Volcic, 2005). It appeared as if ‘Europe’ seemed possible and justifiable through both separatism and unitarism; the struggle for ‘returning to Europe’ and, thus, disassociation from the Balkans became the underlying rhetoric that was generating the ethnic hatred and paving the road to armed conflict. The case of the former Yugoslavia is indicative of Todorova’s claim that ‘the outside perception of the Balkans has been internalised in the region itself.’ (2002:39). The balkanist differentiation was launched on the federal level—*between* the nations—but it continued to permeate and reshape the ethnonationalist narratives *within* the nations.

‘Nesting’ orientalism: a means to western legitimacy?

The history provides exhaustive accounts on the period that followed the birth of the nation states on the ashes of the Ottoman hegemony: they were devised through regional feuds that have twice erupted into all-out wars (Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913). The latter were fought viciously in an arena of constantly shifting alliances and allegiances, fuelled by the discursive practices of othering, confronting and subduing the treacherous neighbour – that newly

invented *oriental* other – whether for the reasons of its perceived pro-Ottoman legacy, territorial aspirations or treacherous conversion to Islam that would construct their new definition of ‘primitive’, ‘backward’ and ‘anti-European’ group.

The majority of those involved in Balkan national liberation movements (including some of the leaders) understood their struggle essentially in terms of ethnically identified Orthodox Christians versus Muslims (most often inaccurately amalgamated into religiously defined ‘Turks’)—a civilisational conflict with heightened emotional enmities (Hupchick, 2002:279)

New wars were to be based on ancient mythologies as each nation would launch a great leap into its misty past, in search of evidence that would confirm the righteousness of its demands of the present: evidence of the lost lands of the forefathers, of the remnants of the ancient temples, proofs of their presence in the territories currently in control by the *other*. ‘Each of the Balkan national movements went through a long gestation phase that involved the creation of a literary language and a revival of interest in the pre-Ottoman history of the people’, notes Gallagher (2001:32). Below is a juxtaposing account – itself bearing a heavy orientalist approach – written by Edith Durham (1905) that illustrates both the phenomenon of the ethnic conflicts fought under the flag of exclusive ethnonationalism, and the manner in which they were viewed by external observers:

‘When after that long night they awoke—the Rip Van Winkles of Europe, animated only with the desire of going on from the point at which they had left off— they found the face of the world had changed and new Powers had arisen. Internally, there were the problems of the fourteenth century still unsolved. Externally, they were faced with those of the twentieth century, Western and insistent.’ (1905:5)

New histories were to revolve around newly constructed pasts and national mythologies; they were supposed to reconcile one’s ancient ethnic origin and rites with the notions of Western modernity. Abruptly, Balkan societies were as *ancient* as they were *modern*; they were praising their authenticity and uniqueness as much as they were pointing out the similarities with the Western culture. The importance of their medieval kingdoms ‘had to be grossly inflated, their maximum size seen as being the natural and proper boundaries for new nations-in-waiting’ (Jelavich 1983a:27). In order to move from a Europe of kings and emperors to a

Europe of nations, disparate groups of people had ‘to be convinced that, despite their obvious differences, they shared an identity that could be the basis of collective action’ (Thiesse, in Gallagher 2001:32):

History had to be radically reinterpreted and made highly selective. For the sense of a nation enjoying a continuous past to be invoked, the intermingling of people, their constant migratory movements, and major changes of political culture or religious allegiance had to be ignored or concealed (Bringe, in Gallagher (2001:21))

I argue that such a collective action of writing-off the certain local knowledges about itself represent a critical side-effect in the process of domestication of the orientalist/balkanist discourse and its integration within their ethnonationalist political programmes. According to Bakic-Hayden (1992), such subjugation of epistemologies was followed with a localized process of *othering* that was applied against the immediate neighbourhood and, eventually, utilized for redefinition and re-emphasis of ethnic differences, regional enmities and ideological rivalries.

In the east, Islam is generally less favourably viewed than Orthodox Christianity; while in the west, the Protestant tradition is generally seen more positively than is Catholicism. The entire hierarchy may be seen in terms of symbolic geography as declining in relative value from the north-west (highest value) to the south-east (lower value). In terms of cultural representations, of distinguishing disvalued Others, one might envision a system of ‘nesting’ orientalisms, in which there exists a tendency for each region to view cultures and religions to the south and east of it as more conservative or primitive (1992:4)

In short, nesting orientalisms represent a sort of a conditioned reflex of refusal by Balkan societies to be looked upon as *objects* of balkanist discourse by external observations. Through adoption of the ‘nesting’ orientalist discourse, a nation or a social group from Europe’s periphery attempts to exclude itself from such marginal treatment; it represents a manner in which such groups engage in re-organising the knowledge about themselves—and about immediate others—so that it becomes compatible with the perceived body of external, western knowledge and practices. Thus, they aim to achieve the aspired western, European

acceptance and association, which, in turn, redefines their local power and authority with respect to the immediate ‘other’ in the vicinity.

I argue that such an exercise of ‘nesting’ and domesticating the external knowledge relates with the endemic presence of collective fears in those social groups of being excluded from the scope of the influence of grander, legitimizing, narratives – and thus be forever doomed in one’s ‘authenticity’ of non-belonging and expulsion. Therefore, the evidence of one’s Europeaness is found through the process of differentiation from the imminent *other* who is presented as unfit to fulfil its requirements (see specifically chapter 7 of this research). This is in line with what Rastko Mocnik (2002) sees as a perplexed power-relations analysis of the Balkans – in the context of contemporary developments – which, I argue, can be applied in the analysis of the Balkan societies from the end of the 19th century, as well as the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st. This is how he defines the two major structures of domination and subordination that govern conceptual formations:

- (a) the *horizontal antagonism* between the Balkan states and ethnic groups, in which each of them is a potential aggressor;
- (b) a *vertical system of co-operation* between each of these parties and the European Union (In Bjelic, 2002:8)

I would add that the maintenance of such dichotomy of antagonisms on the regional level on one hand, and the cooperation on the global (Western-governed) level on the other – accounts for existence and influence of the fears and insecurity of being left in-between the worlds (albeit with a sort-of a cultural *centrality*). In fact, the interaction between antagonisms and aspiration for association with the western, ‘European’ structures appears symbiotic, as one is perpetually fuelled by the other: in order to gain a respectable membership with those structures, an ethnic society must *differ* from the rest of the neighbourhood. This strategy of representation of one’s ‘European’ origin *as opposed to* other’s ‘oriental’ traits characterizes those societies with a genuine ‘propensity to construct internal orientalisms’, as noted by Todorova as she refers to the feature of Bakic-Hayden’s ‘nesting’ orientalisms:

‘A Serb is an ‘easterner’ to a Slovene, but a Bosnian would be an ‘easterner’ to the Serb although geographically situated to the west; the same applies to the Albanians

who, situated in the western Balkans, are perceived as easternmost by the rest of the Balkan nations'. (1997:58)

In her attempts to explain the geographical magnitude of such attitudes, Todorova recalls that this is certainly not an isolated phenomenon that regards the Balkans only. Bakic-Hayden shares a similar opinion as she defines balkanism as a 'variation' of orientalism, which in its localized, *nesting*, mode occurs commonly among societies and nations of what is nominally defined as the Eastern Europe:

'This tension is, of course, a permanent feature of Russian identity and it exists also, with more subdued overtones, among Poles. East is a relational category, depending on the point of observation: East Germans are 'eastern' for the West Germans, Poles are 'eastern' to the East Germans, Russians are 'eastern' to the Poles (...) Greece, because of its unique status within the European Union, is not considered 'eastern' by its neighbours in the Balkans although it occupies the role of the 'easterner' within the European institutional framework. For all Balkan peoples, the common 'easterner' is the Turk, although the Turk perceives himself as Western compared to real 'easterners,' such as Arabs. (1997:58)

In the context of this research, the feature of nesting orientalism is of particular relevance for it accounts for—often—desperate attempts by societies, nations, social groups and even individuals to (a) disassociate from what has been discursively 'naturalised' as pejorative category of cultural, political belonging, and (b) to domesticate that 'naturalised' discourse on the Balkans through addressing its accusatory and castigating aspect onto the immediate 'other' in the neighbourhood. In the context of the former Yugoslavia, such a chain-reaction for collective *de-orientalisation* and *de-balkanization* proved to have been critical for deterioration of the inter-ethnic relations and subsequent descent to war and hatred. However, such a rhetoric of castigation, racialization *between* and *within* the nations should also be understood as an aspiration to associate with the local projections of 'the West' and 'Europe', considered as beacons of progress, democracy and welfare. And, as noted by Todorova, to the nations of the Balkans *democracy* was introduced as a power-word with identical connotations as those embedded in the notion of *progress* at the close of the 20th century (1997:110) – as signifiers of western/European excellence. I argue that the introduction of these notions in the public discourse of Balkan societies represented an attempt to import and

domesticate western institutional and discursive practices, as part of one's ideological and political agenda of achieving ideological compliance with the aspired *other* through a technology of resembling *that* other in order to induce its legitimation and acceptance. In this respect, 'Europe' was a destination: a geographic, cultural, economic destination and getaway from the despair of the Balkan's periphery and desolation.

'What did exist in the Balkan vernaculars of the nineteenth century and throughout the first half of the twentieth, and may still be encountered among a certain generation, was the phrase 'to go to Europe'.' (1997:43)

In the chapters 6 and 7 I will analyse the ways in which the discourse about 'Europe'—as well as democracy—was employed in the context of the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist narrative; 'Europe' was thus achievable through either 'going' to it, through enabling the local conditions for it to 'come' and establish itself as a sociopolitical rule – which ultimately connoted the sociocultural and sociopolitical 'returning' to it after centuries and decades of perceived, forceful separation. I argue that 'Europe' represented an idealised endpoint of which the Balkan nations—including Kosovo Albanians and Albanians in general—believed that they are part of, both historically and culturally. It represents a projected centre of their primordial belonging from which they were deprived and expelled through the turmoil of foreign/eastern invasions and conquests—be that the Ottoman empire (until the 20th century) or the communist rule (during the 20th century). As noted by Sulstarova (2009), the idealisation of the interwar period by the Balkan societies – the years in the aftermath of the Ottoman retreat that preceded the communist regime—represent a frequent nostalgic feature in the discourse of the lost 'Europeanness':

The notion of 'returning to Europe' has had a strong cultural appeal in the Eastern European countries during transitions and many East Europeans look nostalgically at the interwar period as the time when their country was part of—or at least was entering—Europe. In other words, 'returning to Europe' is interpreted as 'returning to history', after the long communist 'pause'. (2009:699)

The Communist detour

The grand ideas of ‘progress’, ‘modernization’ and ‘nation’ have had a turbulent and rather unfortunate political journey with the histories of the Balkan societies during the 20th century. Introduced as the power-concepts of an era – condensed ideological epistemes of the Western modernity, a roadmap to its legitimacy – they were soon to be adopted within a sociopolitical formation standing at the opposite semantic end of nationalism, nation-state and liberal democracy: the Communism. By the second half of the 20th century, they were to evolve into vestiges of a regime which was to develop and strengthen aspects of political culture in Southeast Europe ‘that was inimical to democracy-building’ (Gallagher, 2001). The ideological narrative of Communism would drain the conceptual resources of modernity as it would channel and engage societies into redefining local views and knowledges about group identity, national history and political legitimacy. In the context of relevance to this research, communism as a specific discursive formation of the times (1945-1990) was shifting eastwards – both geographically and ideologically – as the centre of production of its meaning and interpretation as a political regime was transferred to the Soviet Union.

In the next chapters, I will analyse in more detail the orientalist discursive technologies that were employed by the (Kosovo) Albanian ethnonationalist elites in the process of systematic ‘easternisation’ of communist rule as an alien, un-European and oppressive hegemony. Additionally, I will try to identify and explain the specific discursive feature of generalization and equalization of the Islamic Ottoman Empire (until 1912), the Soviet-modelled communism (until 1990) and the Christian-Orthodox Serbian domination (until 1999)—and their ultimate definition as the ‘oriental’ ideological and institutional practices.

Here, however, in a broader, regional context, I argue that such geographical, cultural and political journey of the modernist ideology of Communism, from the Western (inception) to the Eastern (application) hemisphere could be viewed as a grand discursive/paradigmatic shift that would, naturally, induce the dislocation of the very epistemological centre that was producing orientalism as a representational system. Interestingly so, it was not the case. Despite the fact that—as an ideology—Communism embroiled the conceptual quintessence of key principles of Enlightenment and modernity (reference to Thomas More’s ‘Utopia’ (1516), Eduard Bernstein’s ‘Cromwell and Communism’ (1895), writings of Jean Jacques Rousseau or biographies of Robert Owen and Charles Fourier), the Communism acquired the connotations of ‘easterness’ quickly after the Russian Revolution in 1917. While already

perceived as dangerous to the sociopolitical order of the western European states at the outset of the 20th century, it became defined as ‘alien’ and ‘foreign’ in the aftermath of the birth of the Soviet Union, as noted by Hupchick (2001):

Although rightly viewed by the West’s traditional establishment as radical and dangerous, Marxism was not considered ‘Eastern’ until Vladimir Lenin’s Marxist Bolsheviks took control of Russia (...) Thereafter it acquired an overriding ‘foreignness’ and ‘Easternness’ for westerners (...) Marxism was a foreign ideology imposed by force on an Orthodox European society (2001:382)

Both as a narrative and as a political formation, Communism would be remembered as an ‘eastern’ invention, bearing ‘eastern’ social characteristics and/or ‘barbarian’ (Kovacevic, 2010) collectivist features. ‘Industrialization’, ‘agrarian’ reform’, ‘proletariat’, ‘equality’ and ‘workers class’ were the leading epistemes and signifiers of the Communist narrative which, in combination with an ideologically transformed connotations of ‘democracy’, ‘independence, ‘people’ and ‘progress’ engaged in a policy of aggressive detachment from the realm of civilisational interchange between states, nations and societies. Nationalist ideologies were to be replaced with *Internationalist* ideology—which Hatzopoulos (2008) defines as the combination of ‘communism, liberal internationalism and agrarianism’—of the ‘dictatorship of the Proletariat’. Further, the nations ruled by the Communist institutions of power evolved to adapt within a self-centred and oppression-based sociopolitical formation and a system of knowledge, underpinned by application of the doctrine of inhibition of the (ethno)national identity and political mobilisation on nationalist grounds, as noted by Fowkes (2002):

The period of Communist control, starting roughly in 1917 in the case of the Soviet lands and around 1945 in the case of Central and Eastern Europe, used to be seen as a time when the differences between nations were suppressed and a determined effort was made to eradicate nationalism. In this view, the course of history was diverted for a half century or more, only to revert to ‘normality’ after 1989 or, in the Soviet case, 1991. (2002:71)

Although the limited space of this research will not allow for a deeper analysis of the influence, effects and consequences of the Communist discourse in the construction and

reconstruction of individual and collective identities, the confronting ‘East-West’ epistemologies and so forth – nevertheless, for the purposes of this research we will focus briefly on few major features of its Yugoslav variant and its peculiar relationship with nationalism.

According to Hupchick, the Communist regime of the former Yugoslavia that grew from the anti-fascist struggle of Partisan organisations maintained an ‘ideological flexibility with nationalism’ (2002:372). This makes it differ a great deal from the nature and structure of Communist states in the rest of Eastern Europe. The utilization of nationalist sentiments of all stripes—overt embracing of every nationalist program—contributed to popular recruitment during the period of WWII and evolved into a widely-accepted political ideology in its aftermath. Its leader, Josip Broz-Tito ‘defly tied the antifascist struggle to the old ‘Yugoslav’ national problem by considering the two as one’ (2002:373). A more thorough account is to be found in analysis by Hatzopoulos (2008):

Communist rule in the region is assumed to adopt a nationalist guise, dominated by ‘supposedly internationalist-minded leaders (who) continued to pursue the traditional objectives of their individual countries’. Either playing the game of ‘false appearances’ *tout court*, preserving appearances whilst ‘manipulating nationalism in a pragmatic way’, or ‘making an open appeal to nationalist sentiment’ communism, in the Balkans, was ‘deeply nationalist in nature despite its internationalist phraseology’. . . Balkan communism underwent—necessarily—an, inner metamorphosis when it was forced to face the fact that the ‘nation rather than class has been the main political category throughout the region’s recent history and still is today (2008:61)

Yet, at its birth as a political regime, Communism was perceived as a formation that had induced major sociopolitical changes which some historians attributed to a ‘new spirit’ that was created among the Balkan populations based on massive rejection of the traditional societal order. In the wider context of what is today defined as ‘Eastern Europe’ it promoted the radical transformation of gender relationships and policies, industrialization of rural strata, the discrediting of traditional leadership models through sociopolitical presence of peasantry and youth – which altogether assisted in the reinvention and redefinition of a ‘modern’, ‘Socialist’, society. In the context of the former Yugoslavia, the aim of the

communist leadership was to ‘get beyond the ethnic differences and produce ‘Yugoslavs’ (Fowkes, 2002:87) as a supra-ethnic, modern national construction.

In the context of Yugoslav nations under Communist rule, the technology of disassociating from the communist paradigm was stemming from the distinct ethnonationalist discourse that was re-emerging at the eve of its collapse, followed with a subsequent manifestation of orientalist features. I tend to agree with a number of experts in the field of Balkan studies, such as Hupchick (2001), Fowkes (2002), Hatzopoulos (2008), Ramet (2002) and others that the analysis of the Yugoslav demise ought to take into account the:

‘parameters of competing nationalisms which ultimately brought the whole erection down. . . its constituent national groups sentenced to misperceive, distrust and ultimately turn against one another’ (Hatzopoulos, 2008:63).

I argue that the final moments of Yugoslavia—the launch of military aggression against Slovenia, Croatia (1991), Bosnia (1992) and finally, Kosovo (1998)—were preceded and followed by an unparalleled exercise of ethnonationalist and ethnoreligious rhetoric which, specifically, in the case of Kosovo Albanians (and Bosnian Muslims) developed traits of a distinct orientalist discourse. An excerpt from a commentary in the Serbian weekly ‘Duga’ from 1990 provides an adequate example:

The truth about Kosovo and Metohija has not changed much over time, so that even today Muslim fundamentalism, persistently knocking at the door of Kosovo and Metohija, is trying to approach Europe. It is hard to believe that Europe is not aware of this. Even those in Europe who do not hold Serbia close to their hearts know very well that this old Balkan state represents the last barrier to the ongoing onslaught and aggression of Islam (Saric, August, 18, p.67-69)

Projection of religious divide and difference appears as a specific feature of ethnonationalist discourse across the former Yugoslav republics/nations. Communism was to be overthrown through emphasizing the national identity—and, subsequently, the nation-state—as the only acceptable norm of modern ‘Europeanness’. However, the reiteration of such ‘Europeanness’ was only seen possible through negative comparisons taken from the immediate vicinity; driven by the fears of their generalized depiction as ‘one among’ the similar societies from

the ‘socialist bloc’ by the western-European balkanist discourse ‘the orientalist paradigm gained prominence (. . .) as the old socialist paradigms have faded’, notes Bakic-Hayden (1992:5):

The new image of the ‘brother nations’ of Yugoslavia was one of mistrust, threat and exploitation, each so characterizing the others. Thus, Serbs discovered that some Serbian industries had been transferred to Slovenia (. . .) Slovenes and Croats, on the other hand, complained that their money was going to Belgrade and that their sons were drafted to fight Serbia’s battles against the majority Albanians in Kosovo (ibid:6)

It is here that Mocnik’s (2002) dichotomy of ‘horizontal antagonisms’ between ethnicities and ‘vertical system of cooperation’ between them and the ‘European Union’ emerges as a useful guidance: for, the outburst of Yugoslav ethnonationalist rage was formally based on individual aspirations of its nations for the Western legitimacy.

Such a feature was—and remains to-date—the fuel behind the ideological core of its post-Communist discourse. I adhere to the view that, although manifested differently, there is a number of relevant similarities between the rise of ethnonationalism after the fall of the Ottoman Empire and its revamping after the collapse of Yugoslavia, as described by Henry Kissinger (1999) in his analysis on the war in Kosovo:

...(it) is the product of a conflict going back over centuries. It takes place at the dividing line between the Ottoman and Austrian empires, between Islam and Christianity, and between Serbian and Albanian nationalism. The ethnic groups have lived together peacefully only when that coexistence was imposed – as under foreign empires or the Tito dictatorship (Newsweek, 5 April, 1999:12)

It was, indeed, a struggle for ‘the return to Europe’ through mutual annihilation of the neighbourhood; a symbolical—yet, tragic—exercise of one’s ‘Europeanness’ through resorting to medieval stereotyping of the oriental *other* constructed and rediscovered through the prism of ethnonational mythologies. In the context of this research—analysed in more detail in following chapters—the beginning of the 1990s in the former Yugoslavia marks a specific discursive and representational ‘time-warp’, as the anti-Communist public discourse

swiftly slipped into an arena of reviving and revising of ethnic myths highlighting the existence of the pre-Yugoslav 'European' condition of its ideologically 'subjugated' societies: a genuine sociopolitical and sociocultural back-to-the-future exercise. Similarly to the reinvention of their ancient ethnic worth at the sunset of the Ottomans, the majority of ethnic nations of the former Yugoslavia by 1990 indulged in expelling the formally supra-ethnic communist decades from the collective memory of history. 'In Serbia and Croatia, employment of *political and historical amnesia*, the past and the present of a nation—as well as of its each and every individual—enabled adequate reformulation which would be in harmony with the new political and nationalist practice of authoritarian regimes of Milosevic and Tudjman', writes Despotovic (2009:66).

The aim of the revision of the imminent, pre-hegemonic past, remained the same with the one from the outset of the 20th century: confirmation of the pre-existing 'Europeanness' before the great sociopolitical shift (Ottoman and/or communist). It was the exercise of the ideological modernity in reverse: instead of reaching out to the future democracy lying *imminently beyond* the communist dictatorship—a general trait of Eastern-European post-communist public discourse—ethnic nations of Yugoslavia reverted to *imagined* returning to the perceived democratic ideal that allegedly existed in their imminent past: the alleged pre-communist *belle-époque* of political pluralism, advanced national monarchies and parliamentary democracy. Again, a competition was launched and it regarded the urgency of individual nations to invoke one's pre-communist (preferably, anti-communist) 'European' legacy, that would enable it acquisition of a fast-lane ticket to the EU accession. Below are a few examples that illustrate the technology and manifestation of distinct 'nesting' orientalist approach that became widely used in the inter-ethnic polemics with respect to one's 'Europeanness' and the other's absence thereof.

We Slovenians have this problem of identifying with the *pro-Asian* an *pro-African* Yugoslavia. We cannot identify ourselves with such Yugoslavia which confronts with our character that was coined through a thousand-years of history. Symbolical fact that Slovenian rulers were Charlemagne, Charles V and Napoleon is of less importance: much more important is the fact that we personify a way of life that is devised in the Western Europe (in Bakic Hayden, 2006 (1987):42).

Croatian accession with the states of Middle Europe, region that it adhered to throughout its history – except for the recent past, when the balkanisms and the so-called national representatives were constantly castigating Croatian state territory through an *Asian* form of governance – while the justified rage and protests of certain Croats were labelled as terrorism, even fascism...(ibid:43)

In India, the initial Sorabian or *Serbian* cradle, where, some 5000 years before the birth of Christ, existed two Serbian states: the great Sarbarian, in the region of Gang (river), and coastal Panovian . . . it turns out that the Serbs were such an ancient nation that, compared to the Old Testament, they appear older than Adam . . .(in Gavrilovic et al, 2009 (1994):19)

The world will face a tectonic cataclysm of unparalleled proportions which will be survived by a group of people that can be sheltered under a single pear tree. . . Which, by the way, is a metaphor for the Serbs, descendants of Sorabs and predecessors of all Europeans. Serbian language will remain the only one in the planet, the only one capable of sustaining communication with civilisations from other planets. For, Serbs can trace their genesis beyond the bright, cosmic side with the face of the Atlantis...(Radic, 2003:83)

These, by all means grotesque, excerpts should offer a glimpse of what used to be commonly encountered as the ethnonational—and, specifically in the context of Serbian and Croatian conflict—the ethnoreligious lingo of the exchange of extremist views between the political and (quasi)intellectual elites of two beleaguered nations in the period before, during and well after the armed conflict in 1990s. It appears almost pointless to emphasize the extreme, disparaging orientalist discourse employed from each of the parties in the conflict: here, the *other* is either ‘pro-Asian’ (direct allusion to the ‘Eastern’ roots of communism and the Serbs as its die-hard followers), either ‘pro-African’ (racist tendency unhindered here) – or, simply, of divine descent and the source of all there is ‘European’ (a Serbian response to regional rivals and Western criticism of its aggressive policies).

A uniquely (former) Yugoslav phenomenon, this unprecedented slide of the short-lived anti-communist discourse into the war-mongering ethnonationalist-chauvinist representational practice of castigating the immediate *other* was operating on Mocnik’s ‘antagonisms’ principle: it was about uncritical construction one’s ‘Europeans’ through uncritical denying

it to the other. According to Bianchini, (1994b), such practices were about glorification of *parts* of the past praised in the present, so that they could be used to sketch out a different future:

‘...This helped to keep alive, as time went by, a deep-seated sense of instability, which combined with the aspiration towards a ‘nobler mission’ experienced, albeit in different ways, by all (...) The defence of Christianity or Catholicism, as well as the ideas of ‘bastion’ and of ‘protection of Europe’ (for example against Islam) have permeated the identities of these groups who have long been living on a geopolitical and cultural border since Diocletian times.’ (1994b:101)

As discussed earlier, the dramatic fall of Yugoslav Communism was due to the ingredient of ‘the hidden syntax’ (to quote Claude Levis-Strauss) of nationalism that was embedded in its fabric from the outset. Although formally an ‘internationalist’, supra-ethnic and a ‘non-class’ sociopolitical formation, the actual policy and actions of the Yugoslav Communist elites were either based on, or driven by, ethnonationalist tendencies; over time, the usage of ethnonationalist signifiers within its ideological realm—Serb ‘domination’, Slovene ‘detachment’ Croatian ‘independentism’, Albanian ‘separatism’, Bosnian ‘Muslimness’, and so forth—became part to the communist discursive practice which evolved from ethnic intolerance to outright hatred. In many ways, the story of Yugoslav Communism speaks about the *impossible relationship* between Marxism and nationalism, as its subsequent dissolution into ethnoreligious enmities produced a completely different post-Communist history of the area – as opposed to the rest of the Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union.

Therefore, one can hardly argue for the existence of some *mainstream* variation of former Yugoslav post-Communist discursive practice that would bear similarities with the rest of the former Communist societies from the Eastern Europe. Moreover, the collapse of Yugoslav Communism in the sense of a state/political infrastructure was not applied linearly across the former federation, a fact that added to further worsening of mutual misperceptions as to the common goals of reformatory policies. Whereas the republican branches of the Communist League of Slovenia and Croatia (including Macedonia and Bosnia & Herzegovina) saw their disappearance from the political scene during the period between 1989-1990, republics such as Serbia and Montenegro retained the party infrastructure throughout the most of the 1990s. In Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia & Herzegovina, communist apparatus and bureaucracy was

swiftly replaced in first parliamentary elections with the predominantly ethnonationalist cadre (Croatia, Bosnia) and reformatory/national-liberal (Slovenia). Such transitions in the republics of Serbia and Montenegro were merely cosmetic, confined to a performative level: in Serbia, the Communist League was renamed (the Socialist Party of Serbia) and had its political structure virtually intact while the former head of its Central Committee, Slobodan Milosevic, was elected as the party chairman. The same model was applied in Montenegro: its Communist League was renamed into the Democratic Socialists' Party under the same leadership and the party structure.⁸

Such a disparate structural and ideological evolution within a still common federal state quickly set the stage for a ferocious war of words, a confrontation of epistemologies abundant in orientalist constructions and ethnic castigations; it plunged into the rhetoric of 'Europeans' against 'Asians', a war between 'western servility' and 'eastern despotism', between 'traitors' of the Yugoslav idea and its 'saviours.'

Perhaps the explanation about the title of her book, 'Balkan Babel', by Sabrina Ramet (2002) could be used as an adequate illustration here:

I have given this book the title 'Balkan Babel' because I have felt that the biblical story of the Tower of Babel bears a certain allegorical resemblance to the Story of Yugoslavia. In the case of Babel, the people of the area had largely friendly and cooperative relations over a period of time . . . But as the Book of Genesis tells us, soon after they had embarked on the joint project (of tower building) they found themselves speaking different languages, with the result that work on the great project broke down. The story of Babel may be read, thus, as a story of the failure of cooperative action. (2002:3)

The discursive equalization of communism with 'easterness'—even Ottomanism, in terms of an imposed, foreign derivation—induced the collective exercise of disassociation with it across the republics and nations of the former Yugoslavia. As discussed earlier in this

⁸ For exhaustive accounts on the chronology of the dissolution of the Socialist Federation of Yugoslavia, see Meier, Victor: 'Yugoslavia, A History of Its Demise' (Routledge, 1999), Benson, Leslie: 'Yugoslavia, A Concise History' (Palgrave 2001), Vladisavljevic, Nebojsa: 'Serbia's Anti-Bureaucratic Revolution: Milosevic, the Fall of communism and Nationalist Mobilisation' (Palgrave, 2008)

chapter, the new western, 'European' knowledge that was castigating the communism as a failed doctrine was necessitating the need to conceal any relation that a society might have had with that unwanted sociopolitical formation. Jansen (2005) provides a brisk illustration of such collective subjugation of previous knowledge, legacy—even memories—by the Croatian nationalist elites during the last days of communist Yugoslavia:

Sticking to the political amnesia, already perfected by the nationalists in other post-socialist countries, Croatian nationalists were projecting the previous communist system as something that was imposed from the outside—namely, by the Serbs, rather than the Russians. Thus, the nationalism managed to collectively liberate Croats from all traces of the daily routine of collaboration and conformism: innocent by birth, Croats were projecting themselves as forced to enter the Tito's (communist) Yugoslavia which represented an impossible combination of clashing cultures—and where they felt dreadful all the time. (2005:25)

The subjugation of the communist knowledge—to paraphrase Foucault—was applied through the domestication of the new, western, anti-communist paradigm. I argue that such collective 'political amnesia' about life under communist rule became among the major conditions for achieving the 'Europeanization' standards by the late 1980s for most of the former Yugoslav nations. To all Balkan societies that experienced the communist rule, it was the period spent under an alien political regime and ideological doctrine; without exceptions, the Balkan nations who aspire accession with the European Union, project the communist rule as (yet another) eastern hegemony that prevented them from the rightful 'return' to their primordial European belonging.

Ultimately, the debate about orientalism and balkanism shows that the discourses of constructing the other of 'the West' and 'Europe' continue to permeate the cultural, intellectual and political narratives in both European 'proper' (including north America) and in its 'eastern' mirrors, such as the Balkans. Functioning as distinct representational systems of identifying and measuring the differences of non-western societies with those western and European, both orientalism and balkanism affect the manner in which those societies perceived as marginal and peripheral adopt the knowledge about themselves. This chapter has attempted to explain the manner in which from Said, to Todorova, Bakic-Hayden, Bjelic and Buchowski, the orientalist narrative was modified, transformed and adapted with the aim of

maintaining the its fundamental purpose: to construct the Europe's 'other' in both geographical and sociopolitical terms.

The discursive practice of orientalism and balkanism have proven essential in the process of formation of the 'modern' concept of nation in the Balkans. They were employed by the local nationalist elites as a means to redefine the national identity, its 'westernness' and 'European' origin. The following chapters of this research will analyse in further length the effects of such a discourse on the formation and the development of the Albanian ethnonationalist ideology in the periods of its introduction—by the end of the 19th century—and its of revival, by the end of 20th century.

Chapter 5.

Methodology

This chapter discusses the methodology applied with the research ahead—an analysis of the evolution and transformation of the Kosovo/Albanian *ethnonationalist* narrative through the influences of the discourse of *orientalism*—as defined by the work of Edward Said (1978)—and, subsequently, that of *balkanism* (Todorova, 1997) which Bakic-Hayden (1992) defines as one of its ‘variations’. I argue that the internalised component—‘text’—of the orientalist/balkanist approach within the ethnonationalist narrative constructed, shaped and modified the Kosovo/Albanian body of knowledge about its ethnic, historical and political identity; as noted by Jorgensen & Phillips, ‘no discourse is a closed entity: rather, it is constantly being transformed through contact with other discourses’ (2002:6). Therefore, I understand this research in the context of ‘discursive struggle’ (ibid) between the various systems of knowledge which influenced the notion, perceptions and projections of categories of ‘nationhood’, ‘national identity’, ‘democracy’, ‘Europe’ and the ‘West’ among Albanian societies in both Kosovo and Albania proper.

Through analysis of selected samples of a body of ‘text’—indeed, ‘knowledge’—I aim to identify the presence, form of manifestation and influence of the orientalist/balkanist discourse on the ethnonationalist Kosovo/Albanian narrative about the nation. Also, I examine the social situations that were affected/produced through such influence of power, i.e. the relations of dominance, discrimination and control *within* the Kosovo/Albanian society, as well as *between* Kosovo/Albanian societies (in both Kosovo and Albania), between them and the neighboring Balkan societies—and, ultimately, between them and the western and/or ‘international’ political authorities.

Here, the dualist formulation ‘Kosovo/Albanian’ is intentional: it represents my attempt to illustrate the complex geopolitical condition and historical background of this society/societies. In short, ethnic Albanians were part of a single, homogenous community during the reign of the Ottoman Empire (15th-20th century). The process of its dissolution in the region was followed with Balkan Wars (1912-1913) during which a number of territories

inhabited by ethnic Albanians became integral parts of the upcoming, neighboring nation-states. The territory of the newly-established state of Albania (1912) failed to include a sizeable number of ethnic-Albanians residing in surrounding areas—formerly known as ‘Ottoman provinces’ or ‘vilayets’ (Vickers, 1995:x). Kosovo was one of them. In the new geopolitical reality that ensued in the aftermath of Balkan Wars, populations of former vilayets alike Kosovo became national minorities in the newly formed nation states, such Greece, Montenegro and the Kingdom of Serbia that would later evolve into a federalized Kingdom of Yugoslavia⁹. The largest concentration of Albanians in the latter was in the province of Kosovo, where ethnic Albanians were imposed a status of a subdued national minority throughout various stages of transformation of Yugoslavia—from the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, to the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia.

The research ahead recognises the fact that the emergence of the narrative about the nation among Albanians took place few decades before the administrative partition of their lands by 1912. Consequently, the first part of the research analysis (Chapter 4, the period beginning with 1880s) is compelled to treat the notion of ‘Albanians’ within a framework of a geographically, politically and culturally homogenous ethnicity (for further reading on the subject, see Malcolm 1998, Vickers 1995). The second part of the analysis (Chapter 5, the period beginning with 1980s) focuses specifically on the ethnonationalist discourse of Albanians in Kosovo who, in time, developed an autonomous variation of this narrative due to different reality produced after geopolitical partition and life under the rule of another nation-state. Therefore, the research analysis is divided into two separate chapters defined through distinct temporal perspective:

- 1880-1930. Analysis of the construction of the common, unified Albanian ethnonationalist discourse during the final days of inhabiting a distinct and homogenous geo-social space—i.e. the period prior to the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. This period is of particular relevance to the study as it refers to the pivotal stage of formation of the Albanian national identity, otherwise known as the period of Albanian National Rebirth Movement (see Vickers, 1995, pp. 30-44)

⁹ For further insight, please refer to: Malcolm, Noel: ‘Kosovo, A Short History’, Macmillan 1998, specifically pp. 239-264.

- 1980-2000. Analysis of distinct, Kosovo Albanian, ethnonationalist narrative in the context of their political resistance as a national minority in the former Socialist Federative Yugoslavia (1945-1991) and, further, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1991-1999). More specifically, the analysis covers the period of the final dissolution of the former Yugoslav federation which coincided with the anti-communist movements across the countries of then-Eastern European Communist bloc.

A number of books, studies and research on the history of the region—and Kosovo/Albanians—has been employed with the research with the aim of establishing a stronger temporal context of the periods from which the analysed text had originated¹⁰. Also, numerous *external* accounts, studies and scholarly articles about Albanian history, their social reality and geopolitical conditions of the Balkans region are invoked with the research aiming the illustration of *internal* influence of such views on Albanian ethnonationalist elites which, consequently, influenced the construction and transformation of their ‘body of knowledge’ about the nation, national identity and nationalist ideology. In line with Wodak’s observation, I argue that such accounts have assisted in internalisation and naturalisation of the ‘relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control’ (2001:2) through the language which is detected and analysed in the diverse corpus of the text-sample that was selected for this research.

A short history of a discourse?

In this respect then, this research represents a combination of the *historiographic accounts* about the Balkans—both Albania and Kosovo Albanians—as well as the *discourse analysis* of a diverse corpus of texts illustrating their respective ethnonationalist narrative. Perhaps, in a more specified manner, it represents an analysis of the evolution/change of ethnonationalist narrative through particular historical periods with specific emphasis on the (external) influences and other discourses that triggered its continuous alteration. Indeed, I would expect this research to be understood as a brief examination of the pivotal effects of the orientalist discourse in both construction and reconstruction of the Albanian ethnonationalist narrative, whether in Albania or in Kosovo.

¹⁰ See section about sampling and sources methodology at the end of this chapter

The central hypothesis of this research appears two-fold: initially, I argue that along with the introduction—indeed, importation—of the western-modeled idea of the nation-state in the Balkans (circa 1870s), the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire produced the ideological core of the Albanian ethnonationalist narrative as we know it today. Subsequently, the demise of the former Socialist Yugoslav federation (circa 1990s)—and the communist era in general—has been reintroduced through the discourse of, yet again, western-modeled idea of a democratic society based on the fundamentals of an independent nation-state. I argue that, while during the 1880s the western narrative about the Balkans—and Albanians—could be classified as a general *orientalist* discourse, by the 1990s it evolves into its distinct variation, that of *balkanism*. And, as noted by Todorova (1997) who coined the term, while in the 1880s the discursive binary opposition was positioned in the relation of *Western/progressive* vs. *Eastern/primitive*, in the 1990s it was reinvented through the *Western/democratic* vs. *Eastern/totalitarian*.

I was stimulated to apply such conjoined methodological approach—a combination of chronological/historiographic accounts and the analysis of the ethnonationalist discourse through a variety of sample texts—in accordance to an observation by Bjelic (2002) about the scholarly dilemmas regarding the adequate methodology for doing a critical analysis of balkanist/orientalist discourse:

Balkanism as a critical study is a system of representation based on the historical perception of the Balkans by colonial rulers. These perceptions took root as schemes of self-recognition for Balkan peoples, so their study must be based on historical as well as discursive analysis. The very terms ‘Balkan’ and ‘Balkanism,’ (. . .) cannot be divorced from the history of the place (2002:7)

The focus of the study in this research remains the language—specifically, the written form of ethnonationalist discourse; however, in few occasions I refer to particular relevance of visual images as an integral part of the analysed ethnonationalist ‘text’, drawing upon observations by Norman Fairclough (1992) about extending the notion of the discourse ‘to cover other symbolic forms such as visual images and texts which are combinations of words and images’ (ibid:4). In this context, the research represents an attempt to put together a language analysis and social theory as it focuses on combining of this ‘social-theoretical sense of ‘discourse’ with the ‘text-and-interaction’ sense in linguistically-oriented discourse

analysis' (ibid). Again, in line with Fairclough, the specific interest of this research is the analysis and the investigation of social change that—in the context of the Kosovo/Albanian ethnonationalist discourse—followed the evolution/transformation of meanings established in earlier discursive structures. As observed by Jorgensen & Phillips, 'concrete language use always draws on earlier discursive structures as language users build on already established meanings' (2002:7). In this respect, the research engages in detecting the intertextual analogies of the contemporary, 1980s, ethnonationalist narrative with those from the 1880s and the 'Rebirth' period. Further, I adhere to Jorgensen & Phillips observation that changes in the discourse represent 'a means through which the social world is changed', and that 'struggles in the discursive level take part in changing, as well as reproducing, the social reality' (2002:9). In this context, the research engages in a chronological analysis of the changes in the ethnonationalist discourse while juxtaposing them with respective social *actions* within a specific historical period. It examines the manners through which categories of *knowledge* and *power* embedded in certain discursive practice(s) have constructed and reconstructed the notions of ethno-national *identity*, nationalist *ideology*, political *strategy* and social action in the Kosovo/Albanian society.

From this perspective, I adhere to the view that such notions, as well as the subsequent realities that they can establish, are socially constructed: I understand them as dynamic categories prone to constant influences, evolution and transformation. Therefore, the underlying principles that encouraged me to undertake this research ought to be seen within the theoretical framework and key premises that Viven Burr (1995) articulates as basic approaches in the social constructionist analysis:

- It represents a *critical approach to taken-for-granted knowledge*—more specifically, the knowledge about the nation, national identity and national history. Such approach entails that 'our' knowledge of the world should not be treated as 'objective' truth and that its representation is not the reflection of the reality 'out there', but rather a product of 'our' ways of categorising the world, the product of the discourse (Burr: 1995:3, in Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002:5-7)
- It takes into account the *historical and cultural specificity*; in this context, it refers to specificities in which Kosovo/Albanian societies were situated during both historical periods, in the context of the history of their knowledge about the nation and their

nationalist narrative. The research adheres to the position that human beings are ‘fundamentally historical and cultural beings’ (ibid) and that their views and the knowledge of the world represent ‘products of historically situated interchanges among people’ (Gergen 1985, in Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002:5). Such view envisages human knowledge as culturally and historically specific and *contingent*, which, consequently, according to Jorgensen & Phillips, represents an *anti-foundationalist* position—as it opposes the view that knowledge can be based on ‘solid, metatheoretical base that transcends contingent human actions’ (ibid). Moreover, such view is also *anti-essentialist*: this research takes into account that the social world is constructed discursively and that its character is not pre-given or determined by external conditions, therefore ‘people do not possess a set of fixed and authentic characteristics or essences’ (ibid).

- It attempts to construct a *link between knowledge and social processes* which ultimately entails that ‘knowledge is created through social interaction in which we construct common truths and compete about what is true and false’ (ibid). Therefore, to paraphrase Wittgenstein (1961)¹¹, ‘the limits of my language are the limits of my world’, or vice-versa—the limits of one’s world are manifested through the limits of one’s capacity to articulate it. Hence the *chronological/temporal* perspective of this research: it attempts to detect and analyse the technology of the evolution of the body of knowledge about the nation and its transformation with respect to the external factors and processes which affected it; as noted earlier, it analyses the shifts of meanings in the Kosovo/Albanian ethnonationalist discourse as it struggled with continuous influences from other discourses—from those *orientalist* at the turn of the 20th century to those *balkanist* by its end.
- Finally, this research attempts to create a *link between knowledge and social action*. In line with observation by Jorgensen & Phillips (2002), some forms of action within a particular historical period—and/or, a worldview—become ‘natural’ while others unthinkable. In this respect, in Chapter 5, analysis is focused on the sociopolitical processes that caused the transformation of the major Kosovo/Albanian ethnonationalist paradigm: from that based on the idea of unification with the motherland Albania, to that of conceptualizing an independent state Kosovo as the

11 Wittgenstein, Ludwig: ‘Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus’, trans D.F. Pears & B.F. Guinness, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961

fundamental ideological goal. The shift of paradigm ensued the shift in the strategy of social/political action and this was, I argue, made possible through the ‘naturalising’ power of the transformed discourse. Further, Jorgensen & Phillips argue that different social understandings of the world lead to different social actions: in this context, the research ahead explores the manner in which an ethnonationalist ideological fabric is changed over time through making some social actions—specifically, nonviolent resistance and/or armed struggle—both acceptable and unthinkable, dependently on the historical period, available information and discursive practices.

This research understands the concept of representation through adhering to the constructionist approach to meaning in language, by recognising its ‘public, social character’ (Hall, 1997:25):

(Constructionists) do not deny the existence of the material world. However, it is not material world which conveys meaning: it is the language system or whatever system we are using to represent our concepts. It is social actors who use the conceptual systems of their culture and the linguistic and other representational systems to construct meaning, to make the world meaningful and communicate about that world meaningfully to others’ (1997:25).

Ultimately, this research is about a description, interpretation and explanation of a history of *an* idea about *a* nation; yet, it is not so much about the articulation and formulation of that idea—as it is about the underlying structures, conditions, that formed its discursive basis and constructed the social context for its conceptualization, dissemination and institutionalization.

Discourse and its analysis

According to Ruth Wodak (2008), one of the leading scholars in the field, the definition of a discourse can range from ‘a historical monument, a lieu de memoire, a policy, a political strategy, narratives in a restricted or broad sense of the term, text, talk, a speech, topic-related conversations, to language *per se*’ (2008:1). One could perhaps say that it entails a particular way of writing and speaking about something or someone.

In the structuralist/poststructuralist debate about whether ‘language *determines* thought’ and whether ‘our shared lives *happen* through language’, Matheson (2005) argues that it is difficult ‘to refute the notion that certain patterns that we find in a language shape rather than determine what speakers can experience or think’ (2005:5). The language then, represents ‘a store of values and ideas’ and scholars from both camps study it ‘not so much as part of everyday lived activity but more as a structure which shapes the way people can experience the world’ (ibid:4). In this respect, the language is, according to Jorgensen & Phillips ‘a machine that generates, and as a result constitutes, the social world’ (2002:9).

Norman Fairclough proposes the use of the term discourse ‘as a form of social practice rather than a purely individual activity’ (1992:63). He envisages the ‘three-dimensional conception of discourse’, which, according to him, is connected to three analytical traditions:

- (a) the tradition of close textual and linguistic analysis within linguistics
- (b) the macrosociological tradition of analysing social practice in relation to social structures, and
- (c) the interpretivist or microsociological traditions of seeing social practice as something which people actively produce and make sense of (1992:72).

Below is an illustration of such three-dimensional conception of discourse as devised by Fairclough (1992:73):

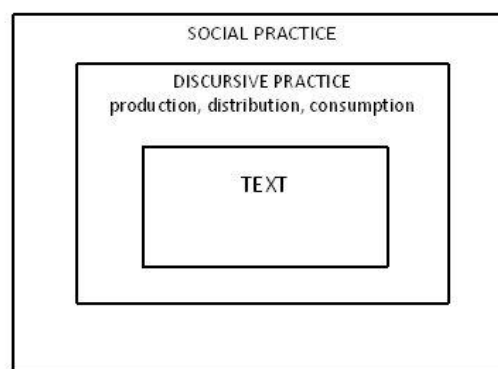


Figure 3.1. Three-dimensional conception of the discourse

To Salkie (1995:ix) ‘text’ and ‘discourse’ represent ‘a stretch of language that may be longer than one sentence’. According to him, the text and/or discourse analysis is about the manner in which the text is produced through the combination of sentences. In other words, as

Jorgensen and Philips observe, a discourse ‘is a particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of the world)’ (2002:1). Language then, does not represent a mere channel through which the mental states or facts about the world are communicated. In line with the definition of the discourse by Michel Foucault, language contains the rules that determines which statements are accepted as meaningful and true in a particular historical moment, period or epoch:

We shall call discourse a group of statements in so far as they belong to the same discursive formation (...Discourse) is made up of a limited number of statements for which a group of conditions of existence can be defined. Discourse in this sense is not an ideal, timeless form (...) it is, from beginning to end, historical – a fragment of history (...) posing its own limits, its divisions, its transformations, the specific modes of its temporality. (Foucault 1972: 117)

The *functioning* of the discourse then represents a *discursive* practice, which, in turn becomes a *social* practice that, consequently, shapes the social world. In this context, the discourse represents a set of practices that ‘systematically form the objects of which they speak’ (Foucault, 1972:49). Therefore, as Fowler notes, discourse represents both speech and writing which is seen from the perspective of ‘the beliefs, values and categories which it embodies’. Such beliefs then constitute a way of looking at the world—‘an organisation and representation of experience’ (in Mills, 1997:6)

Language then, is ideological, Matheson (2005) argues as he draws upon Foucault’s understanding of the notion of the discourse as a means to ‘production of knowledge through language’. He notes that an analysis of the language that attempts to go beyond the ‘simple sentences’ enters the realm in which the science of linguistics ‘is not very equipped to explain’ (ibid:9). Therefore, an inter-disciplinary approach becomes a necessity, and that, Matheson argues, would involve sociology, anthropology, psychology, philosophy and further disciplines:

The term ‘discourse analysis’ is used by researchers in this tradition rather than terms such as ‘linguistic analysis’ or ‘textual analysis’ to signal that language is being situated within these wider frameworks on the nature of thought, experience and society (2005:3)

The analysis of discourse then builds on the tradition of textual analysis when it draws upon sociological, anthropological and philosophical heritage (ibid:7).

Hall (2001), in his analysis of Foucault's understanding of discourse and discourse analysis notes that the discursive processes 'govern' the manner in which 'a topic can be meaningfully talked about and reasoned about' (Hall, 2001:72). The process of *ideologization* of language, according to Foucault is shaped through the formation of the 'enunciative modalities'—types of discursive activity such as describing, forming hypotheses, formulating regulations, teachings and so forth (in Fairclough, 1992:43).

I argue that the analysis of the discourse in the context of this research reveals the complex relationship between differing and, often, contradicting narratives and knowledges about nationhood, national identity, political ideology and/or cultural affiliation. The transformation of these narratives accounts for the influence of external, hegemonizing discourses which adoption induced substantial social changes in respective societies such Kosovo/Albanians. One of the major impact of such externally induced knowledges has been the internalisation and naturalisation of the condition of *national awareness*, a feature which occurrence coincides with the adoption of the discourse on the *nation*, *national identity* and *nation-building* which spread across the Balkans during the 19th century from the Western European societies (Greenfeld, 1992).

In this respect, the research ahead views the condition of 'national awareness' as an outcome of the process of *adoption* and *naturalisation* of an external system of knowledge about 'nationhood' which had transformative powers on both individual and collective level. In the context of Kosovo/Albanians, I argue that the 'awareness' about the 'existence' of the nation—more specifically the 'perenniality' of its being (Smith, 1981; Anderson, 1983; Todorova, 2005)—ought to be examined as indivisible from the discursive practice about its 'ancientness', 'autochthonousness', 'Europeanness' and, finally, 'Westernness'. In the ensuing chapters I attempt to expose the causality between the process of 'discovery' of the Balkans by the western historiographers, authors and travellers in the late 18th century—as defined brilliantly by Todorova (1997)—and the subsequent introduction of the discourse on the 'nation' among the Balkans societies, namely Kosovo/Albanians. I understand such causality through the prism of the operation of power and domination of discursive processes in which

a certain discursive practices—in this case, orientalist/balkanist—succeeded in producing a particular system of knowledge about the Balkans—and, Kosovo/Albanians—and, in time, became a commonly shared social practice through the processes of naturalisation and internalisation.

Intertextuality, interdiscursivity

‘There can be no statement that in one way or another does not reactualize others’, notes Foucault (2002 (1972):98) as he discusses the interweaved nature of knowledge and discourse between and within the specific time periods, fields and practices. According to Hall (1997:232) intertextuality represents an ‘accumulation of meanings across different texts, where one image refers to another, or has its meaning altered by being ‘read’ in the context of other images’.

In the context of this research, the intertextuality is highlighted as the vehicle in the discourse through which knowledge—e.g. the ‘knowledge’ about the past, the nation, national identity—is transferred, transported, influenced or modified through various historical periods and contexts. I would recall here Bakhtin’s (1981 (1935)) observation about the notion of the ‘meaning’ as a process that is produced through the dialogue between two or more speakers, arising through ‘give-and-take between speakers’ (in Hall, 1997:235)

The word in language is half someone else’s. It becomes one’s own only when (. . .) the speaker appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic expressive intention. Prior to this (. . .) the word does not exist in a neutral or impersonal language (. . .) rather it exists in other people’s mouths, serving other people’s intentions: it is from there that one must take the word and make it one’s own’ (Bakhtin (1981) in Hall, 1997:235-6).

The components of intertextuality and Bakhtinian definition of the meaning as ‘dialogic’ are of specific importance to this study: they represent the processes through which the ideological narrative about the nation, the national past and national mythology have been passed on, reconstructed and reshaped so that they could serve the political action undertaken at the given historical period.

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, the temporal transportation of the ethnonationalist narrative, its re-invention and reprocession during the specific historical periods represents the major reason behind the selection of these two distinct moments in the Kosovo/Albanian history of ethnonationalism: the 1870s and the 1990s. The research attempts to expose the manner in which the Kosovo Albanian political resistance at the end of the 20th century (1989-1999) has been discursively constructed through powerful analogies and fervent rearticulation—indeed, re-branding—of the ethnonationalist discourse from the age of National Rebirth (1878), a century earlier. In this respect, the research traces the power of ideological intertextuality in the ethnonationalist discourse which is capable of:

- Construction of a perception about the temporal *continuity* of the nation—i.e. the narrative of nation's 'perenniality' (see Smith, 1981). In case of Kosovo/Albanians the research demonstrates that the rearticulation and reproduction of the ethnonationalist narrative through intertextuality enabled the strengthening and naturalisation of ideological claims about 'autochthonousness' and 'ancientness' of the nation.
- Production of a powerful symbolism of 'perpetual' *victimisation* – i.e. the narrative of continuous—even, 'perennial'—oppression under the foreign, alien, and, ultimately, 'eastern' rule. In terms of the focus of this research, the intertextuality between the ethnonationalist discourses from different historical periods enabled the establishment of parallelisms about the 'Easternness' and 'anti-Europeaness' of the Ottoman Empire (until 1890s) and the communist rule (until 1990s).
- Rearticulation of claims about 'Europeanness', and, more importantly, the 'non-Easterness' of the nation. Intertextuality between the ethnonationalist discourses produces important perceptions about political, ideological and cultural 'continuity' with respect to its ultimate 'return to Europe', to use Todorova (1997). Recollection of the discourse on 'Europe' and 'nationhood' from a century ago and its contemporary re-invention as the discourse on 'democracy' and 'independence' assisted in establishing both internal and external perceptions of ideological continuity of sociopolitical aspirations of the nation.

Further, the research views the transformation of the Kosovo/Albanian ethnonationalist discourse—and its capacity to accommodate and adapt to the influences of other, competing discourses—through the notion and definition of interdiscursivity. According to Jorgensen & Phillips, the interdiscursivity occurs when different discourses and genres are ‘articulated together in a communicative event’ (2002:73). It is a form of intertextuality, they argue, which itself refers to the ‘condition whereby all communicative events draw on earlier events’ (ibid). On the other hand, the interdiscursivity depends on the power relations between the discourses and their capacity to produce a respective social reality through endorsing a different set of social practices and actions. To this research, the concept of discursivity appears relevant in the context of discursive struggle between the ethnocentric/irredentist narrative and the liberal nationalist/independentist one—or, indeed, in the context of the former eventually evolving into the latter (see Chapters 4-5). I argue that such transformation occurred through the influence of the orientalist discourse about Kosovo/Albanians and the Balkans in general by the West’s political authorities and, subsequently, through the intense process of its adoption, internalisation and naturalisation.

Ideology, power and hegemony of discourse

The term ‘ideology’ often bears pejorative, negative connotation. Initially coined as a word that would promote the initiative about establishing the ‘science of ideas’ by Destutt de Tracy (in van Dijk, 1998), the notion of ideology has been commonly attributed to ‘wrong, false, distorted or otherwise misguided beliefs’ (ibid:2). Historically, since its introduction, the notion of ‘ideology’ was related to particular systems of belief which formed the base and justification for exercising certain social action. In this respect, the term ideology denoted the set of values behind sociopolitical or sociocultural positions and schools of thoughts, such ‘communist ideology’, ‘capitalist ideology’, ‘imperialist ideology’, ‘nationalist ideology’, etc. Its common usage as a term that connotes negative, threatening views of ‘others’ has been well-defined by Van Dijk (1998):

- (a) ideologies are false beliefs;
- (b) ideologies conceal real social relations and serve to deceive others;
- (c) ideologies are beliefs others have; and
- (d) ideologies presuppose the socially or politically self-serving nature of the definition of truth and falsity. (1998:2)

I adhere to the more inclusive views about the notion which have been developed during the second half of the 20th century and which that define 'ideology' as social or political 'systems of ideas, values and prescriptions of groups or other collectivities, and have the function of organising or legitimizing the actions of the group' (ibid:4). I argue that, to this research, such 'neutral' definition of ideology appears versatile for describing the process of imposition, adoption and legitimation of ideas about the 'nationhood' and 'national identity' among Kosovo/Albanians which, in turn, shaped and reorganised their social relations and the knowledge about their political 'reality' and position.

According to Fairclough (1992), the theoretical base for the debate on ideology is comprised of three important claims:

1. The claim that (ideology) has a *material existence* in the practices of institutions, which opens up the way to investigating discursive practices as material forms of ideology.
2. The claim that ideology '*interpellates subjects*', which leads to the view that one of the more significant 'ideological effects' (. . .) is the constitution of subjects.
3. The claim that 'ideological state apparatuses (institutions such education or the media) are both *sites of* and *stakes in* class struggle, which points to struggle in and over discourse as a focus for an ideology-oriented discourse analysis (1992:87)

Fairclough also highlights the multiple meanings that have been attached to the notion of ideology through various discursive and social practices—to the extent that, often, it is described as 'a meaningless word' (1989:93). He classifies the meaning of the 'ideology' in two families: the first relates to its definition in the USA in the aftermath of the Second World War: 'any social policy which is in part or in whole derived from social theory in a conscious way'. He refers to the second family as the 'Marxist tradition': 'ideas which arise from a given set of material interests' in the course of the struggle for power' (ibid:93).

In the context of discursive practices and text-production, ideologies are also understood as 'significations/constructions of reality (the physical world, social relations, social identities)

which are built into various dimensions of the forms/meanings (ibid:87). Fairclough prefers the view of ideology as ‘located in the structures (the orders of the discourse) which constitute the outcome of the past events and the conditions for current events, and in the events themselves’ (1992:89). In this respect Eagleton (1991) points out that a dominant power can ‘legitimize and promote beliefs and values that are in agreement with it’ (1991:5-6). Further, it can ‘naturalise and universalize such beliefs, making them appear inevitable and denigrate ideas which might challenge it’ (ibid). This claim is accepted by Fairclough who observes that the ideologies are linked to power ‘because the nature of ideological assumptions embedded in particular conventions, and so the nature of those conventions themselves, depends on the power relations which underlie the conventions...’ (1989:2).

The relations between ideology, power and society have been conceptualized through the notion of ‘hegemony’ by Antonio Gramsci (1971) in his analysis of capitalism and revolutionary strategy in western Europe. As noted by Ives (2004) ‘temporal contextualization’ of Gramsci’s definition of hegemony in the period of revival of ethno-nationalism during in the western Europe of the early 20th century is of particular relevance to this research which deals with the analysis of the evolution of an ethnonationalist discourse. Despite all possible meanings that are attached to this concept, notes Ives, there is one common element to all definitions of hegemony and it helps to:

...explain why large groups of people continually acquiesce to, accept and sometimes actively support governments – and entire social and political systems – that continually work against their interests (2004:6)

I find such observation essential for this research as it hints on the puzzling phenomenon of *acceptance* and *internalisation* of external—often discriminatory—discourses and knowledges by a large group of peoples, societies and nations about themselves. This process of ‘localizing’ the ‘external’ body of knowledge relates closely with the main focus of the research: the adoption of orientalist/balkanist features within the Kosovo/Albanian ethnonationalist narrative and their political programmed of action.

In its common usage ‘hegemony’ is often considered as a synonym for ‘suppression’ and ‘domination’. In her observation about Gramsci’s understanding of the notion, Smith (1998) highlights the two dimensions that a political authority holds in (and/or over) contemporary

societies: ‘force, and the organisation of consent’ (ibid:162). Smith sees the organisation of consent as a cultural dimension within political projects, aimed at ‘its promotion of popular identifications in terms of its corresponding imaginary’. This corresponds with Louis Althusser’s understanding of a structural relationship in social formations that are structured by domination which is established through the operation of the ‘repressive State Apparatuses’ and ‘Ideological State Apparatuses’ (ibid:165). Also, of particular importance to this research is Fairclough’s observation that, for the discourse, the concept of hegemony ‘provides both a matrix—a way of analysing the social practice within which the discourse belongs in terms of power relations, in terms of whether they reproduce, restructure or challenge existing hegemonies—and a model, a way of analysing discourse practice itself as a mode of hegemonic rule, reproducing, restructuring or challenging existing orders of discourse’ (1992:95).

Hegemony can thus be understood as the outcome of the power in the discourse—or the power that is operated through the discourse, as noted by Foucault and his theory of power/knowledge (Foucault, 1980). The meaning of power as employed by Foucault should not be understood as necessarily oppressive, but rather as productive; power constitutes discourse and knowledge, bodies and subjectivities:

What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it does not only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression. (1980: 119)

Laclau and Mouffé’s (1990) approach to the definition of the power in discourse is similar to Foucault’s: it is ‘not something that people possesses and exercise over others’; rather, they argue power produces ‘the social’ (1990:30). An important momentum in formation of the hegemonic discourse is the ‘struggle over the creation of meaning’, note Jorgensen and Phillips (2002:47) as they emphasize that ‘no discourse can be fully established as it is always in conflict with other discourses that define reality differently and set other guidelines for social action’ (ibid:47). The act of collision of discourses produces antagonisms, they argue, which can only be dissolved through ‘hegemonic interventions’ (ibid:48). In this context, hegemony could be understood also as the aftermath of the ‘conflict’ between

discourses; a state that follows after a discourse overpowers and dominates another: i.e. hegemony becomes the condition, manifestation of the ruling discourse:

For instance, when people from different nations actually went to war against one another in the First World War, this was a sign that the hegemonic articulation of people as ‘Germans’ and ‘Frenchmen’ had succeeded at the expense of the articulation of people as ‘workers’ (2002:48)

One could argue that the language mirrors and shapes the power struggles and ideological influences of those competing for power in a human society. In this respect Van Dijk (1998) classifies two trajectories of language operation—the micro and macro level. According to him, ‘language use, discourse, verbal interaction, and communication belong to the micro-level of the social order’. On the other hand, their influence in shaping of social practices, such ‘power, dominance, and inequality between social groups’ represent the terms that belong to a ‘macro-level of analysis’ (1998:354).

The ‘naturalising’ power of the discourse

As noted earlier, the analysis of the operation of power, ideology, hegemony in/on the narrative about the nation, national history and ethnonationalist politics *is* the focus of this research. Through methods provided by the discourse analysis this research intends to examine and highlight the manner in which the orientalist/balkanist discourse has succeeded in *naturalisation* of the knowledge about (Kosovo/Albanian) difference with the ‘western civilisation’ in sociopolitical, sociocultural and historical aspect. In time, such process of naturalisation, I argue, produced various social conditions, perceptions and political actions aimed at ‘westernisation’ and ‘modernization’ of their ethnonationalist narrative and, consequently, their social reality. Conditions of ‘collective resentment’, ‘social anomie’ and ‘mimicry’ are revealed and discussed in the research as the *outcomes* of the antagonistic situation between the local/Balkan discourses and the external/western discourses about the Balkans and—of importance to this research—about Kosovo/Albanians.

In the context of this research the various sample-texts have been used with the intention of encompassing the effects of the constitution of knowledge and power in the discourse on the ‘micro-level of the social order’, as defined by van Dijk (1998). I argue that the selected

sample-text from diverse sources and genres, ranging from various political manifestos, literary works and poems have shaped certain beliefs among Kosovo/Albanians about their national identity and political ideology on the micro-level which, in turn, influenced a range of social actions on the macro-level social order. Invoking and analysis of such variety of texts was done with the aim of illustrating the multi-dimensional influences that constructed the ethnonationalist narrative in the context of what Michael Billig (1995) sees as the capacity of nationalism to naturalise the nationalist condition as ‘something which is psychologically general, or endemic to human condition’ (1995:17). According to him, the loyalty to the concept of the nation or the nation state can be theoretically transmuted into ‘needs for identity’, ‘attachments to society’ of ‘primordial ties’ which are theoretically posited to be universal *psychological* states. Therefore, Billig argues, ‘an infinite variety of psychological acts is required for the reproduction of nationalism (ibid).

I found this observation particularly important in the context of the analysis of Kosovo/Albanian ethnonationalist narrative which has been initially rooted in the tradition of local folklore, songs, epic poetry (1880s) that was later conveyed, ‘naturalised’ and/or ‘institutionalized’ through political manifestos, ideological pamphlets, scholarly studies and newspaper articles. Specifically, the works selected from the body of Albanian literature and epic poetry account for such a psychological transmutation of the nationalist condition: the chapters ahead will identify and analyse phenomena such ‘the trauma of national partition’ (1880s) and/or ‘the national resentment’ (1980s). In this context, this research also becomes an analysis of a history of a social cognition—of what Jorgensen & Phillips define as ‘the mental processing of information about the social world’—about the ways in which a spoken or a written language is seen as a ‘reflection of an external world or a product of underlying mental representations of this world’ (2002:96). In this respect it also touches upon the definition of discursive psychology in the context of understanding the written or spoken language ‘as constructions of the world oriented towards social action’ (ibid).

As noted by Fairclough, ‘the ideologies embedded in discursive practices are most effective when they become naturalised and achieve the status of ‘common sense’ (1992:87), a position which is shared by Mouffe (2006) who observes that the ‘common sense’ is regularly a result of political articulation. According to her:

Reality is not given to us; meaning is always constructed. There is no meaning that is just essentially given to us; there is no essence of the social, it is always constructed. The social is always the result of a hegemonic articulation; every type of social order is the product of a hegemony as a specific political articulation' (2006:4)

Ultimately, as Hall argues, the process of 'naturalisation' is a 'representational strategy designed to fix 'difference' and thus secure it forever.' (1997:245). Through becoming a 'common sense', the process of naturalisation of a discourse attempts 'to halt the inevitable 'slide' of meaning, to secure discursive or ideological 'closure'.' (ibid:245). In Billig's words, such process of discursive naturalisation 'makes existing conditions of consciousness appear natural, taking for granted the world of nations' (1995:17) and the nationalist discourse.

In this respect, (a) the naturalisation of the knowledge about the nation (nationalist discourse), (b) the naturalisation of knowledge about the *differences* between the nation's culture and the projected Western culture (orientalist discourse) and, finally, (c) the naturalisation of the knowledge about the *necessity* to adopt and, indeed, adapt the nation to the projected international/western norms and requirements (internalised/orientalist discourse)—represent the major analytical targets in this study. As noted by Said (1978), the western institutions of power—political, economic, cultural and military authorities—have for centuries spoken on behalf of the rest of the world. I argue that in the case of Balkans—and, specifically, Kosovo/Albanians—such an attitude as the 'final authority' has been essential in constituting collective identities of social groups. Almost every Balkan society, whether defined as an ethnic community, national minority or a nation accounts for a history of attempts to modify and reshape the knowledge about itself, its worth, its past, present and future in order to fit the imposed—and, consequently, internalised—western discourses about 'progress', 'nation', 'Europe', 'democracy' and so forth.

This is in line with Fairclough's (1992) observation that a dominant discourse will not be detected as autocratic or oppressive, despite its overpowering dominance and subjugation of other discourses/knowledges. Rather, it will be accommodated as natural and legitimate—specifically as a form of a cultural hegemony. In this context, the capacity of a naturalising discourse is related with the definition of both ideology and hegemony; through naturalisation, the content of a discourse becomes the ideological fabric and—ultimately—is

defined as the 'common sense'. In the context of orientalist discourse, as noted by Said, it is primarily based on the intention to create for itself 'a solid and homogenous theoretical terrain' through the application of power stemming from 'supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles' (in Ezzaher, 2003:5)—a strategy which enabled orientalists to group together numerous differences that existed between and within the 'oriental' societies into one homogenous sociocultural identity. Through such 'institutionalization' and generalization the orientalist discourse achieved its 'naturalisation' which effectively produced a hegemonic relationship through emphasizing a representational binary opposition which produced the East/Orient as the West's 'other': 'primitive', 'non-western', 'non-European', 'third-world'. This corresponds to what van Dijk understands as the 'discourse strategies of mind control' (1998):

Contextually based control derives from the fact that people not only understand and represent text and talk, but also the whole communicative situation. People are not merely influenced, persuaded or manipulated by properties of discourse, but also by those of speakers or writers, such as their (perceived) power, authority or credibility (1998:10).

In the discussion about ethnocentrism, anti-Semitism, nationalism and racism van Dijk notes that the strategy of such discourses—in the context of this research, the orientalist/balkanist discourses—fluctuates 'between the emphasis on exotic difference on the one hand, and supremacist derogation stressing the Others' intellectual, moral and biological inferiority, on the other' (1998:11). In this context, the research represents an attempt to illustrate the ways in which such external discourses about the Balkans and Albanians—applied through a simplified binary opposition 'progressive Europe / primitive Balkans', 'modern Christianity / savage Muslims, 'democratic West / despotic East'—constituted a hegemonic order of discourse of 'the West' and 'Europe'. Therefore, I found a combined methodology of historical/temporal analysis of the ethnonationalist discourse through a diverse range of texts as a necessary approach in order to reveal the stages in which such work of discursive hegemony became *accepted*, *internalised* and, finally, *naturalised* as the body of knowledge of the Balkans about itself—more specifically, the knowledge of Kosovo/Albanians about themselves, their past, present and their future.

Sampling of text: sources

The analysis of the orientalist features within the ethnonationalist narrative is examined through identifying and highlighting the sample-text from various fields of its production, such:

- *Political/ideological* pamphlets and manifestos that discuss and construct the notion of (Albanian) national, cultural, political and ideological identity.
- *Works of literature*: novels, poems, tales, which serve as the literary vehicle for popular distribution of the conceptual fabric of the ethnonationalist narrative and enable its naturalisation with larger strata of the targeted social group
- Various *historiographic* accounts, scholarly books and studies, excerpts from local/international newspapers, travelogues and novels produced by historians, foreign observers, ethnographers and journalists on the Kosovo/Albanians and the region that they inhabit—the Balkans. In their attempts to depict the social realities surrounding the geographic region Balkans this significant number of authors—predominantly western-European (British, French, German)--assisted in construction of a certain sociocultural definition of the peoples, their ethnic characteristics and identities, as well as the nature of their social actions and interaction.

The research analysis is divided into two chapters that discuss and examine two different historical periods: the period of the Albanian National Rebirth (1870-1900) and the period of Kosovo Albanian political resistance (1989-1999). Below I provide the detailed description of the publications, books, articles and travelogues which samples were employed with this research and its analysis of the ethnonationalist discourse.

I. National Rebirth: 1870-1900 (samples)

Political/ideological pamphlets and manifestos

- ‘Albania - What It Was, What It Is and What Will Become of It? Reflections on Saving the Motherland from Perils which Beset It’.
 - This long political essay/manifesto comprises the major body of analysis in the first part of the research analysis—the period between 1870-1900—and

represents the major work of Sami Bey Frasheri (1850-1904) a renowned intellectual and ideologist of the Albanian National Rebirth Movement (1878). It was written in Bucharest in 1899 and represents ‘the highest degree of the development of political and social thought of the Albanian National Rebirth’ (Grillo, 1997:12). In both Albania and Kosovo—as well as in ethnic Albanian communities elsewhere in the region—this political essay is widely considered as the cornerstone of the awakening of the Albanian national identity. The 115-pages version of the essay/manifesto employed with this research was published in 1999—a symbolic centennial which coincided with the liberation of Kosovo through the international military intervention. Otherwise, the publication represents a compulsory literature with the late primary and early secondary schools curriculum, as well as the academia—particularly History and Albanian studies.

- *Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey*. A renowned political figure, Ismail Qemali (in Albanian) is considered the founder of the modern state of Albania in 1912.
 - The compilation of memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey has been written in 1924 by Somerville Story, a British journalist with ‘Daily Mail’, and represents a biographical account and political views of another seminal figure in the Albanian National Rebirth Movement. The content of the book has not been used extensively with the research analysis, although it deals with one of the most important personality of the Albanian National Rebirth Movement; the reason to this is the fact that it was only available to the Albanian public during the second half of the 20th century (after its translation) and has not been part of the active construction and influence of the ethnonationalist narrative of this period. However, few excerpts which reflect Ismail Kemal Bey’s common views with those of the rest of the National Rebirth ideologists, such Sami Frasheri, Naim Frasheri and Wassa Effendi have been taken into account and presented in the discussion about ‘ancientness’ and ‘Europeanness’ of Albanians and their ethnic genealogy.

- *Memoirs of the Albanian National Movement*, by Faik Konitza (1875-1942).

- Excerpts from the biographical essays and writings Konitza have been used with the research with the aim of providing an additional, critical views on the National Rebirth romantic discourse about the nation and national identity. The English version of the memoirs has been translated from French ('Mémoire sur le Mouvement National Albanais', Brussels, January 1899) and is part to the compilation 'Faik Konitza: Selected Correspondence 1896-1942', published by the Centre for Albanian Studies, London (2000). Also, few excerpts have been used from the compilation of republished essays and articles by Konitza under the title: 'Albania, The Rock-garden of South Eastern Europe' (Buzuku Publishing, Prishtina, 1996).
- *Oriental or Occidental*. A longer essay written in 1937 by Krist Maloki (Plejad, Tirana, 2003).
 - I have selected Maloki's article because of its binary-opposition approach: in his writing, Maloki, an ethnic Albanian Catholic priest, discusses the great division that he sees as existing between the 'oriental' and 'occidental' Albanians—between the Ottoman 'backwardness', 'slyness' and Western 'modernity' and 'civility'. I find his views quite striking in their castigating tendency towards the assumed 'oriental' part of Albanians who, according to him, epitomize the legacy of everything evil that beset the, otherwise western and European, Albanian nation. Maloki's polarizing approach appears indicative of the tendencies of ideological and historical disconnection with 'the East' that permeated numerous works of Albanian writers and intellectuals throughout the 20th century.

Works of literature, poetry

- *The History of Scanderbeg* by Naim Frasheri (1846-1900), published in 1899.
 - Excerpts from this voluminous poem have also been part to the analysis of the internalised orientalist traits within the Kosovo/Albanian ethnonationalist narrative. Naim Frasheri—a brother of Sami Bey Frasheri—represents another important figure of the Albanian National Rebirth Movement. His influential poetry expresses strong beliefs on the 'orientation of Albanians towards

Western modernity as their natural path to civilisation' (Sulstarova, 2007:35). The version of Frasheri's epic that was used with this research has been published in 1986 in Kosovo as part to a wider compilation of works from the Albanian romanticist period (Naim Frasheri, Vepra, Rilindja, 1986).

- *Lahuta e Malcis* by Gjergj Fishta (1871-1940)
 - This is another important work from the corpus of the Albanian ethnonationalist narrative. Written in 1902 as a voluminous folk-epic poem, 'Lahuta e Malcis' describes the period of the retreat of the Ottoman Empire from the Balkans and the encroachment of the Albanian-inhabited territories by upcoming nation-states in the region, such Montenegro, Serbia, Macedonia and Greece. Its author, Gjergj Fishta, is today acclaimed as an important author, poet and ideologist of the Albanian nationalist discourse. Himself an ethnic Albanian Catholic/Franciscan priest from northern Albania (Dajç, Albania), Fishta's epic deals primarily with the heroic resistance of Albanians against the Serbian/Montenegrin territorial pretensions of the times. I find Fishta's ethnonationalist discourse of particular interest to this research due to its capacity to re-articulate and thus perpetuate the 'anti-easterness' of the National Rebirth movement—predominantly expressed through the anti-Ottoman sentiments—into anti-Slavic (and, subsequently, anti-communist) symbolic. In this respect, Fishta's poetry represents an important addition to the 'nesting-orientalist' approach which assisted in the revival and revision of the discursive features of castigation of the Ottoman 'easterness' and reconstructed them into ideological signifiers that were to denote the immediate ethnic/national rival, such the 'easterness' of the Slavs, Russians, Serbs, Montenegrins, Macedonians and so forth.

- *Oh, Albania*, poem written in 1880 by Wassa Effendi (1825-1892) a renowned ethnic Albanian intellectual, politician and statesman (known in Albanian as Pashko Vasa or Vaso Pashë Shkodrani).
 - Selected parts of the poem have been used to depict and analyse the important trait of supra-religiousness of the Albanian ethnonationalist discourse. Wassa Effendi's verses on the 'Albanianness' as the 'Albanians' religion' have had a

powerful impact on the ethnonational cohesion and political actions that followed throughout the 20th century and to-date continue to permeate the Albanian ethnonationalist discourse. Its underlying message about the ethnic/national belonging as a supreme category of individual/collective identity gave to the Kosovo/Albanian ethnonationalist discourse a distinct, non-religious, approach that made it differ from the more religiously-affiliated ethnonational narratives in the region, such e.g. Serbian (Christian Orthodox) or Croatian (Roman Catholic).

External sources: historiographic accounts, travelogues

A range of travelogues, articles and books written by foreign authors have been consulted during this research. Few excerpts have been used in the course of the analysis and I will mention them here briefly:

- *Fanny Janet Blunt*: 'The People of Turkey, Twenty Years' Residence among Bulgarians, Greeks, Albanians, Turks and Armenians, by a Consul's Daughter and Wife'. Edited by Stanley Lane Poole (London: John Murray, 1878).
 - The chapter that was used with the study regards Blunt's depictions and encounter with Albanians (chapter 'The Albanians') during her journey through the territories of contemporary Greece, Albania, Macedonia and so forth.
- *Aubrey Herbert*: 'Ben Kendim, a Record of Eastern Travel' (London: Hutchinson & Co. 1924)
 - The fragments from this travelogue that were used with this research deal with Herbert's journeys through Montenegro and Kosovo in 1912 and his impressions from the meetings with various Kosovo Albanian brigands and guerilla leaders, as well as his overall views on ethnic Albanians in the context of their political/military resistance against the Ottoman Empire and the encroaching Serbian military on the eve of the first Balkan War (1912).

- *Edith Durham*, 'High Albania' (London: Edward Arnold 1909, reprint London: Phoenix Press, 2000), p. 232-300.
 - Probably the most influential foreign ethnographer to the Kosovo/Albanian public, Durham's views have been employed in several occasions in this research with the aim of describing and analysing the perplexed approach of the western/European scholarly circles to the Balkans and its societies. While a great sympathizer of 'the Albanian cause', Durham engages in detailed analysis of ethnic Albanians as 'the most savage peoples in the Balkans' (1905), impressed by their remoteness and tribal way of life. The excerpts that were used with this research come from her volumes 'High Albania', 'In the Debatable Lands' and 'The Burden of the Balkans', written between 1905 and 1909.

- *Leo Freundlich*: 'Albaniens Golgotha: Anklageakten gegen die Vernichter des Albanervolkes. Gesammelt und herausgegeben' (Vienna 1913). Translated from the German by Robert Elsie (2000)
 - The version used with this research is published in Robert Elsie, 'Gathering Clouds: the Roots of Ethnic Cleansing in Kosovo and Macedonia', Dukagjini Balkan Books, Peja 2002. Freundlich's accounts of atrocities committed against ethnic Albanian population in Kosovo by the Serbian military and paramilitary troops during the period of the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) represent an important description of the feature of national victimisation. Such feature will be invoked and employed steadily by the Kosovo/Albanian ethnonationalist discourse throughout the 20th century as one of the major mobilisatory component of their narrative about the nation.

- *Leon Trotsky*, 'Balkany i Balkanskaya Voyna', in *Sočinenia*, vol. 6 (Moscow & Leningrad 1926), reprinted in German in 'Leo Trotzki: Die Balkankriege 1912-1913' (Essen: Arbeiterpresse 1996), p. 297-303
 - Excerpts from this compilation of articles have been translated by Robert Elsie (2000, www.elsie.de). Similar to Freundlich, Trotsky's accounts of atrocities and mass-killings of Albanians during the Serbian military conquest of Kosovo (1912-1913) are employed as part of the foreign, external narrative

about Albanians and Kosovo. I argue that such views have assisted in constructing the ideological base of national victimisation on the one hand, and the demonization of the imminent ‘other’ (e.g. Serbs) as inherently ‘criminal’ and ‘eastern’.

II. Kosovo, 1989-1999 (sources and samples)

Political/ideological pamphlets and essays

- *‘Democracy and Independence’* by Ibrahim Rugova, published in 1990. This publication represents a compilation of interviews with Ibrahim Rugova (1944-2006), a public intellectual, chairman of the Democratic League of Kosovo and, later, the President of Kosovo (after the conflict of 1999).
 - Fragments from this compilation have been used with this research with the aim of tracing and identifying the early attempts to construct the so-called discourse on ‘democracy’ and ‘independence’ among Albanians in Kosovo. Rugova’s views are essential to the topic of the research because they introduce a new angle of analysing the historical past of Kosovo Albanians, its distinct ‘ancientness’ and ‘Europeanness’. In the research, Rugova is examined as the epitome, the personification of the ‘ideological turn’ of Kosovo Albanians from ‘irredentist’ to ‘independentist’ nationalism during the 1990s, as well as of the widely accepted strategy of non-violence and ‘passive resistance’.
- *‘Albanian Question: History and Politics’* written in 1994 by Rexhep Qosja, a renowned literary critic, author and contemporary ideologist of the Kosovo Albanian political resistance.
 - This ambitious book/analysis has been published by the Institute for Albanian Studies, Prishtina, Kosovo of which Qosja was both the founder and director. This publication has been widely acclaimed by the Kosovo Albanian public of the time as the major ideological work and a contemporary political manifesto. I find Qosja’s voluminous analysis critically important for its strong resemblance with the similar manifestos written in the period of the National

Rebirth, a century earlier (namely, Sami Bey Frasheri's). The feature of discursive intertextuality, reinvention and rearticulation of the 'old' knowledge from the Romantic period and its application onto the 'new' political realities in Kosovo of 1990s bears a specific importance to the overall analysis in this research.

- *'Self-Understanding of the Albanians in Nonviolence'*, (1994); *'Conflict or Dialogue: Serbian Albanian Relations and Integration of the Balkans'* (Subotica, 1994) and *'Kosova/Kosovo—Separate Worlds: Reflections and Analyses'* (MM/Dukagjini, 1998).
 - These titles represent a compilation of longer articles, essays and books written by Shkelzen Maliqi, a renowned Kosovo Albanian scholar and political commentator. The selected text-samples have been written during the period between 1990 and 1997. Their importance to this research lies with the discussion and analysis about the sociopolitical and sociocultural conditions that enabled the wide acceptance of the new ethnonationalist discourse of 'democracy', 'non-violence' and 'independence' during the early 1990s.

- *'Europe and Albanians: Past and the Present'*, excerpts from the academic conference held on 24-27 May, 1991 in Prishtina, Kosovo.
 - Speeches and documents from this conference were published in 'Bujku', the only Albanian (semi)daily newspaper that was published in Kosovo as a replacement for the prohibited 'Rilindja' which was closed down on July 1990 by Serbian authorities. The excerpts from the conference are used with the research to illustrate the 'academic' approach to the revival of Kosovo Albanian political resistance in 1990s. In a condensed form, the conference provided an overview of positions, views and opinions about national identity, origin, resistance, ideology and political strategy. The specific importance of the event lies with the attempt of the Kosovo Albanian academia to resemble and recreate the sentiment of the National Rebirth in the context of Kosovo Albanians' oppression by Serbian/Yugoslav authorities.

- *National Cause and Critical Awareness*. This compilation of presentations and essays on the state of the Kosovo Albanian political strategy and programme was written and published in 1998 by the members of then-Forum of Albanian Intellectuals.
 - The time-span of the writings encompasses the period between 1991 and 1998 and it engages in a critical approach to the widely-accepted strategy of nonviolence as the preferred course of political action by then-Kosovo Albanian political elite, led by the Democratic League of Kosovo and its chairman, Ibrahim Rugova. Specifically, the works cited question the ‘independentist’ course of the Kosovo Albanians during the 1990s and the strategy of non-violence—often interpreted as a ‘do-nothing’ politics. Below is a list of few of the works that were selected for the analysis with this research:
 - Rexhep Qosja: *‘Strategjia e Bashkimit Shqiptar’* (Eng. The Strategy of Albanian Unification), published by the Institute of Albanian Studies, Prishtine, 1992
 - Agim Vinca: *‘Bashkimi Kombetar – e Vetmja Zgjidhje e Drejte e Çeshtjes Shqiptare’* (Eng. National Unification – the Only Just Solution to the Albanian Question), published by the Forum of Albanian Intellectuals, (FISH), Prishtina, 1997.
 - Masar Stavileci: *‘Atomizimi i Çeshtjes Shqiptare—Pozicion Politik i Paqendrueshem’* (Eng. Atomisation of Albanian Question—An Unviable Political Position), a paper presented with the conference ‘Pozicioni i Shqiptareve ne Aktualitetin Ballkanik dhe Evropian’ (Eng: The Current Position of Albanians in the Balkans) held in Prishtina, August 1993.
- *‘The Albanians—A Divided Nation’*. A compilation of writings/analysis by three authors: Giuseppe Catapano (Italy), Nermin Vlora-Falasci (Italy) and Skender Rizaj (Kosovo), published in 1996.
 - At best, this compilation of ‘analysis’ and ‘studies’ could be defined as a self-styled historical approach to the origin, history and genealogy of Albanian nation. Nevertheless, this compilation of pseudo-historical and pseudo-anthropological arguments aimed at re-discovering and representation of the

origin of Albanians as ‘the oldest of the old’ nations of the world has had a major ideological influence on the Kosovo Albanian public in the period of its publishing, in 1996. To this research, this compilation has been selected as relevant from the point of view of ‘invention’ of the national tradition and construction of ‘ancientness’ and ‘sacredness’ of the national origin.

- *‘Pavaresia si Kompromis’* (Eng. Independence as Compromise) by Jakup Krasniqi, published in 2010. (Buzuku Publishing, Prishtina).
 - Few excerpts from this compilation of various essays on the Kosovo Albanian past and present political thought have been used for analysis in the discussion about the great ideological turn of the ethnonationalist discourse—from ‘irredentist’ to ‘independentist’ model. Specifically, Krasniqi’s views about the acceptance of the independence of Kosovo as a mere political ‘compromise’ aimed at respecting the demands of the ‘international community’ have been highlighted as features of the induced, internalised ‘orientalist’ content of the ethnonationalist narrative.

- *‘Realiteti dhe Perspektivat e Çeshtjes Kombetare’* (Eng. Reality and Perspectives of the National Cause) by Muhamet Kelmendi, published by Albin, 1998, Tirane, Albania.
 - A highly critical book/publication that opposes the discourse of ‘democracy’ and the political course of non-violence and passive resistance that was applied in Kosovo through the democratic League of Kosovo and its leader, Ibrahim Rugova. Specifically, the book is highly critical of the ‘international community’ as it retains a strong feeling of resentment towards the international ‘indifference’ and ‘ignorance’ of Kosovo/Albanian history of suffering and oppression under the foreign and ‘eastern’ rule.

Newspapers / articles

- *‘Bujku’*, Albanian daily newspaper (4 days a week) was published from 1992 as a substitution for the traditional ‘Rilindja’ (Eng. Rebirth) which has been closed down in July 1990 by then-Serbian/Yugoslav authorities.

- Articles and commentaries with this newspaper have been employed with the analysis of the construction of the new ideological paradigm of ‘democratic’ ethnonationalism, particularly during the period of formation and popularization of the Democratic League of Kosovo, and its leader, Ibrahim Rugova.
- *‘Flaka e Vellazerimit’*, Albanian daily from Skopje, Macedonia.
 - A number of extensive interviews with Ibrahim Rugova, the chairman of the Democratic League of Kosovo have been published in this newspaper during the period 1991-1994. Being a Macedonian newspaper, ‘Flaka e Vellazerimit’ was not subjected to censorship and potential harassment by Serbian/Yugoslav authorities, therefore a number of important interviews and commentaries of the period were published in this paper.

Chapter 6

Discourse analysis of the Albanian orientalist ethnonationalism: the National Rebirth (1880-1930)

‘That the modern Albanian is the more or less direct descendant of the primitive savage people of the Balkans is a fact which, I believe, no one now disputes’

Edith Durham,

‘The Burden of the Balkans’ (1905:9)

Introduction

In simple terms, there are four major ideological principles or premises on which the construction of the contemporary, post-1990, Kosovo Albanian nationalist discourse is based:

- Albanians are one, single autochthonous nation of the Balkans;
- Albanians descend from ancient Illyrians and were part of the Christian/European civilisation before the Ottoman conquests;
- Their predominantly Islamic heritage represents an involuntary consequence of the hegemonic past;
- Albanians belong to the realm of Western, European civilisation.

None of these premises are of a recent history, as I will show in this chapter: they are at least century old, originating from the period known as Albanian Romanticist Period characterized by the Movement for National Rebirth (1878-1912) – the so-called ‘League of Prizren’¹². Adopted and employed to this day as key principles that define the national identity of

¹² Due to a substantial list of local literature references for this subject, I will confine in highlighting Malcolm, Noel: ‘Kosovo: A short History’, 1998, University Press New York; Riza, Skender: ‘Lidhja e Prizrenit ne Dokumentet Britanike’, (Public Record Office, London F.O 78/2784; F.O. 195/1186, 1367; The British Museum, London, Accounts and Papers (38), 1878-9, 461-477’ (Rilindja, Prishtina, 1978); Frasher, Kristo: ‘Lidhja e Prizrenit’, Tirana, 1956.

Albanians from both sides of the border – Albania and Kosovo – they continue to shape the inner perceptions and manners by which Albanians experience themselves. Such ontological claims assisted in constituting their political being; they defined their geographic (spatial) and historical (temporal) context and produced the ideological edge of their national awareness, uniqueness and aspirations. In short, the idea of nation among Albanians has been shaped through the discourse that was produced during the National Rebirth Period, as noted by Pula (2008):

Historically, in our academic life – as well as in politics – the categories of the nation, state and identity have been formed predominantly on the basis of interpretations of nationalism of the Albanian Rebirth Movement (. . .) From this nationalism, for various reasons, a concept of ethnic nation was created and put to work (2008:109)

This chapter represents a combination of historiographic and discourse analysis of the narratives that have constructed these major features of Albanians' ethnonationalist ideological base. They are analysed through the prism of their perplexed history of political and cultural transformations, evolution of discursive practices and representational systems that assisted in the constitution of their perceptions about the nation, nationalism and nationhood.

The analysis of the text in this research will cover selected samples produced in the periods of major sociopolitical changes in their national history and the history of the Balkan region, such as:

- (a) The retreat of the Ottoman Empire (1870-1920) that was followed by the appearance of ethnonational movement and, subsequently, the process of reconstruction of complementary ethnic histories in the region
- (b) Dissolution of the Federal Yugoslavia and the subsequent period of military aggression and ethnic conflict (1990-1999)

The chapter will be confined to an analysis of the first period (1870-1920), which also marks the process of initiation of the ideas of Albanian national identity, nationhood and the nation-state and is thus considered among Albanians as the most important period of their political and ideological history. Malcolm (1998) observes that, to Albanian historians, setting up of

the nation-state of Albania was not only seen as the ‘culminating achievement of the whole period’, but that they projected its preceding history as a mere part of ‘a national striving which always had independence as its goal.’ (1998:217):

Albanian history books refer constantly, when dealing with this period, to the national movement or ‘the national liberation movement’, phrases that conjure up the idea of a single political force, at once historically continuous, socially cohesive and ideologically consistent (1998:217)

At the heart of this ‘national liberation movement’ and its nationalist discourse lies the projection of Albanian nation as both an ‘autochthonous’ Balkans ethnicity and an integral part of the ‘western culture’ and ‘western civilisation’. Yet, its affiliation with ‘westernness’ inevitably draws upon the idea of the nation as a new and ‘modern’ invention—for, as noted by Todorova, ‘the link between modernity and nationalism appears to be consensual’ (2005:142). In the case of Albanian ethnonationalism from the late 19th century, this approach, I argue, has been introduced as a means to reject and abandon the sociopolitical dependence on the old hegemonic structure, deemed ahistorical and ‘primitive’, such the rule of the Ottoman Empire. According to this logic, the Albanian ethnonationalist ideologists produced an idea, a new narrative of their nation which was both ‘new’ and ‘ancient’ at the same time. Thus, it was *ancient* in its quest for constructing the historical, geographical and ethnic legitimacy over the Ottoman Empire as an intruding, foreign and – above all - ‘eastern’ hegemony; on the other hand, it was sufficiently *new* and ‘*modern*’ to be able to mobilise and revolt against the Ottoman Empire as ‘old’, ‘ahistorical’ and anti-European. A relevant explanation on such conceptual dichotomy comes from Todorova (2005):

When nationalism spread to Europe in the nineteenth century, history as a discipline had been formally constituted, and the secular and sequential notion of time it produced and employed made it impossible to experience the nation as new. Instead, it was reinterpreted or rather reinscribed as ancient or as eternal. Hence the anthropomorphic metaphor of the nation being awakened from a slumber, revived, reborn. (2005:141)

According to Todorova, such projections of nationalism – ‘its tendency to narrate and legitimize itself through history’—explain the ‘essentialising’ discourse on the nation as a ‘perennial biological entity’ (2005:142).

In line with such an explanation, in this chapter I will engage in the analysis of the discursive technologies that were employed with the Albanian ethnonationalist discourse where such dichotomy—and, indeed, the ‘anthropomorphic metaphors’ of revival, rebirth—was justified and employed in the process of the construction of Albanian ethnonational identity through the phenomenon of ‘differentiating oneself from what one is not’ (Benhabib in Wodak, DeCillia et al, 1999:2).

I will argue that, in the context of the history of Albanian ethnonationalist ideology, this differentiation has been prevalently manifested through the discursive construction of arguments that would underpin claims for a genealogical, cultural and political dissimilarity of ‘Albanian nation’ with the ‘East’ or ‘the Orient. Historically, such technology of ‘othering’ of the imminent political rival – the ‘national enemy’ – has been perpetuated as a major component of the ideological power of the Albanian ethnonationalist discourse across the 20th century. Specifically, it connoted the discursive construction of ‘essential’ dissimilarities between the projected Albanian national identity and the influence/legacy of the Ottoman Empire. Further, I argue that, to-date¹³, the obsessive reiteration of such dissimilarity comprises one of the major ideological rituals in the Albanian ethnonationalist discourse: it connotes the ‘European’ and ‘Western’ origin of Albanian nation, which, it believes, can only be possible through the process of cultural differentiation, as noted by Said:

European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self. (1978:3)

¹³ The next chapter of the research will focus entirely on the orientalist/ethnonationalist discursive practices of the Kosovo Albanian society as a separate geopolitical entity within the definition of ‘Albanian nation’. The post-Ottoman developments in the region produced the formation of nation-states of Albania, Greece, Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro – and, later the federation of (the former) Yugoslavia (see Malcolm, 1998; Jelavich, 1984, Vickers, 1995). Subsequently, in this new geopolitical reality the chiefly Albanian-inhabited territory of Kosovo became part of the new nation-state of Serbia (1912-1918), the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1918-1945) and, further, an autonomous province within the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (1945-1991). The next chapter will analyse the enduring nature of (Kosovo) Albanian orientalist ethnonationalism and the discursive construction of the ‘easterness’ of the Serbian/Yugoslav hegemony during the period of organised political resistance (1989-1999).

The history of the ethnonationalism in the Balkans has been a focus of numerous scholars, historiographers and authors, whether local or international. From the historiographic aspect, specific relevance to this study bear references from a variety of international authors, such as Gingeras (2009), Gallagher (2001), Hupchick (2002), Hall, Kolev & Kolouri (2009), Jelavich (1983), Kaplan (1993). On the other hand, the contemporary history of Albanians has been widely accounted for in the works of Malcolm (1998), Vickers (1995, 2006, 2007), Bieber (1993), Pettifer (1996, 1997, 2001, 2006), to name just a few that will be referred to in this and the following chapters.

I argue that the major reason that makes the period of the retreat of the Ottoman Empire an essential point of departure of analysis in this research is related to historical events that occurred during that period and which marked the end of existence of Albanians as a common and unified ethnicity under the realm of a single Empire, in both geopolitical and cultural context (Feraj, (1998); Rizaj (1982, 1991), Bajrami (1997), Qosja (1994). Historically, the Ottoman retreat would mark the beginning of the ethnonational awakening of the regional ethnicities of the Balkans, a process that would be initiated through local rebellions against regimes under the Ottoman servitude and would escalate into regional ethnic conflicts that became known as the Balkan Wars (1912-1913; see Hall, 2000). To Albanians, the ultimate consequence of the Balkan Wars was their geopolitical partition. From then on, the Albanians would continue to reside separated in different states: in Albania, in the Kingdom of Serbia and Montenegro (later, Kingdom/Federation of Yugoslavia) as well as in parts of northern Greece. Here, it is important to note that one of the major achievements of the orientalist ethnonationalist discourse was the production of the ideological analogy about the 'Eastern' origin of both the Ottoman Empire (late 19th century ethnonationalist discourse) and that of the Communist regime (late 20th century ethnonationalist discourse) as externally imposed hegemonic rules.

I argue that the adoption and dissemination of such analogy had a major impact in the revival of ethnonationalist discourse in the last decade of 20th century, particularly in its capacity to reconstruct and reproduce the sociopolitical syntax of the 19th century. I argue that such practice is not confined to Albanians only: the nationalist revival in the former Yugoslavia after the collapse of the Communist regime (see Volcic, 2005) would not have been possible without an aggressive adoption of orientalist views as an 'epistemic field'—to paraphrase

Foucault—which at its core represented an internalised, applicable, perception of projected principles of ‘western’ modernity.

According to Sulstarova (2005), the ‘official’ high culture of Albanians always contained orientalist traits which persevered in the efforts to disrupt national links with the Orient: ‘contemporary Albanian orientalists project onto ‘the Turk’ everything that they dislike in their society’ (ibid:59). To-date, a number of influential Albanian authors and scholars continue to explain the national history as a continuous confrontation with the East which wants to cut Albania’s ties with Europe and the West. And, in the context of Albanian ethnonationalist ideology, in time, ‘the East’ came to connote a signifying field that was wider than the notion of the Ottoman Empire. Here’s an account by Feraj (1998):

Albanian nationalism represents a specific political stream which, on one hand, was in a conflict with the Ottoman Empire and, on the other, was in an even deeper conflict with the rest of the Eastern peoples, such as Slavs and the Orthodoxes. In such a situation, it appears understandable for the Albanian nationalism to turn to Western Europe for support. (Feraj, 1998:104)

Whether in the 1870s or the 1990s, such orientalist features in the ethnonationalist discourse carried an ideological appeal, a strategy that is embedded within the ‘second-order semiological system’ (Barthes, 1964)—a political message within its ‘hidden syntax’ which pledged for acceptance and legitimation of Albanian nationhood, history and culture by the Western sociopolitical systems and influential institutions of power. I argue that such features have been constructed and articulated as fundamental principles of (Kosovo) Albanian ethnonational political programme, and have, as such, endured unchanged connotations for more than a century. To-date, those features represent the manner in which Albanian political and academic elites attempted to establish the ‘missing link’ between their ethnic history and their assumed western, ‘European’ legacy. Ultimately, I argue that from the very outset, the Albanian ethnonationalist discourse represented an orientalist exercise.

1870s: Sami Frasheri—Enlightenment, Albanian way

‘Since the Albanian Rebirth Movement, orientalism has been the integral component of all modernizing processes in Albania’, writes Sulstarova (2006:21). According to him, the

signifiers such 'west' and 'east' were regularly employed by the political and intellectual elites, 'in accordance to the needs and interests of historical agents in the power/knowledge relational circumstances' (ibid: 22).

In the context of the history and evolution of Albanian ethnonationalism, I view its orientalist feature as instrumental in the process of representing the Albanian national identity as a 'separate', 'unique' and 'autochthonous' culture of the Balkans. And, its point of departure marks also the early days of the national rebirth movement from the 1870s, when the emphasis on the 'uniqueness' and 'autochthonousness' of national identity was articulated with the aim of connoting both its pre-Ottoman (or, pre-oriental) existence, and therefore its 'Europeanness'. According to Feraj (1998) it was important to Albanians to project themselves as a 'historical' nation, rather than an 'ahistorical' group of people who become a nation due to a certain set of political circumstances. Feraj also observes that in the period prior to the Albanian National Rebirth, the major European conceptions about the nation were divided into two definitions: 'there was a rigid difference between the 'historical' and 'non-historical' nation', and that, according to him, only the 'historical' nations were entitled the existence; the 'non-historical' ones would, he argues, 'have to assimilate and become included within a larger nation' (1998:90)

Historically, the Balkans has been considered the integral part of the European civilisation and culture, particularly before the Ottoman conquests by the late 13th century. However, to paraphrase Todorova (2005), the arrival of the Ottomans did not only change the name of this part of southeastern Europe—their elements have assisted in invoking the stereotype of the Balkans.

The discourse of autochthonousness underpins the claim to 'Europeanness' in its quest to oppose the foreign, 'eastern' cultural and political derivations such Ottomanism—the stereotype that was constructed during (and through) the Ottoman reign. The political value of projection of such European 'ancientness' was seen as all the more utilizable for ethnonational ideologies, considering the archaeological and historical claims about the Balkans as the cradle of Hellenic—therefore western—civilisation. The major pillars employed to support the attempts to highlight the uniqueness of the Albanian identity are 'the myth on the origin and the myth on the ancientness', notes Kullashi (2004:110), an

observation which I find particularly relevant in the context of the ‘naturalising’ capacity of the Albanian ethnonationalist discourse about the national identity and origin. This approach is apparent in the following excerpt from the ‘Memoirs’ of Ismail Kemal Bey, also known as the founder of the contemporary state of Albania (1912), and his formulation of the ancientness of the Albanian ‘race’:

Between the Adriatic, the Pindus, the range of the Balkans and the Dinaric Alps, on the dividing line between East and West, where history has witnessed the meeting of so many wandering peoples and so many nascent civilisations, Albania stands like a formidable rampart (. . .) Though not strangers to the civilisation of the Greeks, this race nevertheless preserved its own character and the pride of its pre-Hellenic origin. (1920:353)

Here, Kemal Bey, a cult-personality of the Albanian national history, produces a projection of ancientness which will become essential for establishing the ‘historical preciousness’ of Albanian ethnonational identity: its primordial, ‘pre-Hellenic’ origin. While acknowledging the tumultuous history of the region which is permeated by ‘so many nascent civilisations’, Kemal Bey highlights the longevity of Albanian ‘race’ as a ‘formidable rampart’ that was capable to endure and prevail. With this, he argues for the primordial origin of Albanian ancientness and the *perenniality* of its ethnonational identity—the perennial origin of the nation, as defined by Smith (1984, 2009).

Later in this chapter I will demonstrate that the projection of Albanian autochthonousness as pre-Ottoman, Illyrian/Aryan origin were specifically aimed at emphasizing its ancient worth—a testimony of its non-easternness—through *othering* of the imminent territorial rival. As noted by Wodak, DeCillia et al (1999), such quest of proving one’s ancient presence in the region represents a re-interpretation of one’s ethnic uniqueness through ‘dynamic, relational complexity of identificational process’ (ibid:11). This has been also noted by Lubonja (2002) who sees the process of ‘exalting the antiquity’ of Albanian people and language as a major component of the mythology of national identity:

Since it was necessary to distinguish the Albanians from the Greeks and the Slavs – even to stress their superiority – the origin of the Albanian people was found to be in Pelasgian people, which, according to mythology, were the inhabitants of the Balkans before the Greeks (later the Pelasgians were replaced by the Illyrians). (2002:92).

Due to its political importance for the future Albanian ideological programme, strategy and political aspirations this research focuses on the analysis of the orientalist features in the ethnonationalist discourse that was employed during the compilation of a pamphlet *'What Will Become of Albania'*¹⁴, written in 1899 by Sami Bey Frasheri (1850-1904), a writer, publisher and ideologist of the Albanian Movement of National Rebirth (1878)¹⁵. Additional text-samples will be used and analysed from the respective period – or related to it. However, Frasheri's pamphlet will remain the centrefold object of the analysis, for it has been commonly accepted within the Albanian political and national literature as the 'most sublime political programme of the National Rebirth movement' (Bajrami, 1997:21).

The structure of this chapter is divided into three sections that deal with the following issues:

1. **Albania, What it Was, What it Is and What it Will Be.** This is the introductory section that provides the general overview of the central sample-text that was used for the analysis in this chapter, i.e. Frasheri's political pamphlet/manifesto. Briefly, I will highlight the discursive arguments with the pamphlet that construct and underpin the major ideological principles that (to-date) govern the production and application of the Albanian orientalist ethnonationalism, as listed at the beginning of this chapter. I have chosen Frasheri's pamphlet due to the impact that it had on the subsequent development of the Albanian national identity and political thought. To-date, it is considered by contemporary Albanian scholars as the major 'programmatic essay' of Albanian ethnonationalist ideology which managed to 'clearly express the dualism between European Albanians and Asian Turks' (Sulstarova, 2006:40).
2. **Demonizing the Turk.** This section analyses the discursive construction of 'historical' justification that underpins the idea of Albanian ideological, cultural and political

14 The translation employed is by Robert Elsie (http://www.albanianhistory.net/texts19/AH1899_1.html). The verbatim translation in English would be: 'Albania, What it Was, What it Is and What it Will Be (Alb. Shqipëria, ç'ka qënë, ç'është e ç'do të bëhetë)

15 The pamphlet 'Shqipëria - Ç'ka qënë, ç'është e ç'do të bëhetë? Mendime për shpëtim të mëmëdheut nga reziket që e kanë rëthuarë', was firstly published in Bucharest 1899, and later reprinted in numerous Albanian editions. The edition used with this research is reprinted in Kosovo (1999) and is part of the elementary school textbooks, published by the Libri Shkollor, public company under the auspices of the Kosovo Education Ministry.

difference from the realm of the Ottoman hegemony. Specifically, I will analyse the discursive technologies and the strategy of denunciation of the influence and relevance of the Ottoman culture and its political system in the Albanian society. Also, I will analyse the impact of literary works and political essays by the leaders of the Albanian Rebirth Movement in constructing the projection of historical ancientness, ethnic autochthonousness and cultural uniqueness of Albanians in the Balkans. This formed part of the discursive strategy of ideological denunciation and distancing from the realm of a hegemonic structure defined as ‘eastern’ and opposed to values of ‘Europe’ and ‘Europeanness’. Also, additional text samples written by Albanian and foreign authors and historiographers will be used and analysed with the aim of enriching the context of the research, as well as introducing an external, orientalist, perspective.

3. **Europe Loves Us, Europe Loves Us Not.** This section highlights the confused relationship of the ethnonationalist narrative with the concept of ‘Europe’ as an idealised projection of the post-Ottoman social system. Here, I analyse the evolution of the Albanian ethnonationalist discourse and its orientalist traits in the aftermath of the events such the Berlin Congress (1878) and World War I. The discourses of ‘western betrayal’, of inner-Albanian discontent with its oriental/Ottoman, un-European cultural legacy are analysed through juxtaposing the sample-texts from the period of the National Rebirth from both local/Albanian writers and foreign historiographers.

4. **Albanianism, nation as religion.** This section focuses specifically on the state of ‘religious fluidity’ in Albanian societies (Dujizings, 2004). I analyse the discursive technologies that affirm such ‘fluidity’ and present it as the evidence of ideological ‘versatility’ of Albanian sociopolitical culture with the ‘secular’ and ‘western’ norms. Here, among others, one of the major examples in the context of relativizing the religious divide among Albanians the poem ‘*Oh, Albania*’, written in 1898 by another exponent of the National Rebirth movement, Vaso Pasha (Eng. Wassa Effendi) – and addresses specifically the tendency of gelatinization of the religious belonging as a base for forming the national awareness. I argue that this specific feature of Albanian ethnonationalist discourse – as a supra-religious construction – makes it unique and different from its, predominantly ethnoreligious, variations in the region.

5. **Scanderbeg, the narrative of cohesion.** This section focuses on the narrative of ethnonational cohesion through the applied version of history and biography of Gjergj Kastrioti-Skenderbeu (Eng. George Castrioti–Scanderbeg (1405-1468)) as a personification and the epitome of distinct, non-Ottoman (therefore, Christian/European) legacy of the Albanian nation. The personality of Scanderbeg will be analysed through the text-sample originating from Albanian and foreign authors, and will point out the construction and usage of the ‘Scanderbeg narrative’ in the representation of historical cohesiveness of Albanian ethnic culture as the core of the orientalist/nationalist narrative of ethnoreligious cohesion and political ideology.

As noted, a number of sample texts written by foreign observers and historiographers on Albanian-Ottoman relations from the same period have been selected to extend further the insight and scope of this analysis. Accounts from foreign writers, historiographers and travellers to the region such as Edith Durham (1905), Leo Freundlich (1913), Aubert Herbert (1912), Lord Byron (1809) are selected with the aim of illustrating the external-internal interaction of orientalist discourse. I argue that the manner in which Albanians were constructed in the foreign, western public assisted greatly in the manner in which they would define themselves and their ethnonationalist ideology in the future.

Albania – What it Was, What It Is, What It Will Be¹⁶

‘The fate of small nations passes through the gates of great tragedies’, wrote Ismail Kemal Bey in his memoirs (1920) as he was describing the position of Albanians at the outset of the 20th century. He was the leader of a national movement launched in 1870s that proclaimed the independence of Albania after the Ottoman retreat from the region in 1912 – but left out Kosovo and other Balkan territories that were inhabited by ethnic Albanians. Ever since, the latter would develop a projection of themselves as part of a nation divided at the intersection of the Great Powers’ geopolitical interests, entrenched between the ever-changing frontlines, partitioned through regional feuds and international treaties ‘that awarded Kosovo to Yugoslavia’ (Vickers 2001:96). The trait of national loss, the ‘lost land’, the ‘lost glory’ that ought to be revived to its worldly acclaim, surfaces as the key element in all of the works

16 The verbatim translation of Sami Bey Frasheri’s pamphlet: (Alb. ‘Shqipëria, ç’ ishte, ç’ eshte dhe ç’ do te behete’), Libri Sh kollar, Prishtine, 1999.

written by Albanian scholars during the period of the National Rebirth Movement and after, such as Gjergj Fishta, (1923 (1958)), Wassa Effendi (1890), Naim Frasheri (1886) or Sami Bey Frasheri (1899). Here is an example from the Wassa Efendi's poem, 'Oh Albania':

But now, Albania, you're a sight of woe
Just like an oak tree brought down low!
All step on you as if you were dead,
And not one kind word to you is said.
Once you dressed well, like a woman high-born,
Today, your fine robes are badly torn

Later in this chapter (see 'Demonizing the Turk'), I will analyse the discursive linkage that enables the projection of the connection between the feature of national calamity – the territorial partition, destruction caused by the immediate neighborhood and/or assisted by the political interests of stronger rivals – and the emphasis on the great national and historical sacrifice by Albanians done for the ends of European causes. I argue that the subsequent feeling of national resentment and betrayal towards 'the west' and 'Europe' that permeates the ethnonationalist discourse was employed by the ideologists of the Rebirth Movement to produce an idea of Albania as the civilisational scapegoats, a nation sacrificed for Europe's wellbeing and safety – whose sacrifice was, ultimately, neglected, ignored and forgotten.

'Europe has a debt to pay to this nation; today is that day as this nation is with one foot in the grave', writes Visarion Dodani, an Albanian journalist and activist in 1898 (in Sulstarova, 2005:38). According to him, other than being a mere, subdued, part to the Ottoman Empire, Albanians have nothing to do with its culture – and everything to do with Europe. As such they are to be acknowledged their 'Europeanness' and their sacrifice for Europe. Such specific trait of resentment remains one of the most important features of orientalist trait in the Albanian ethnonationalist discourse: it projects the sentiments about their ignored cultural ancientness, their forgotten sacrifice for Europe and their present sufferings in the hands of 'eastern' hegemonies. I argue that the pamphlet written by Sami Bey Frasheri compiled such sentiments within a single, political manifesto that gave birth to the Albanian ethnonationalist discourse. Below is an excerpt from the opening sentences of the pamphlet:

Albanians have always fought and died, but it was others to gain from their spilled blood (. . .) Many Albanians became famous in knowledge and crafts; yet, others take pride in them, not Albanians – not Albania (. . .) Other than ancient Greeks, Romans profited from Albanians; their bravery and honour was hailed by Romans, not themselves. Many of our brave men rose in those times, but the world remembers them as Romans – not Albanians (. . .) After the Romans came the Turks. Albanians fought with them in all wars; their bravery made many victories but they were carrying the name of the Turk, not of the Albanian. . . (1999:37)

Known in Turkish as Semseddin Sami, Sami Bey Frasheri (1850-1904) was a writer and an ideologist of the Albanian Rebirth movement (Qosja, 1984). Educated in both Greece (Ioannina gymnasium) and Istanbul, Frasheri spent most of his life as a high, carrier official and bureaucrat with the Ottoman Empire. During his stay in Istanbul he worked briefly as a journalist, but also a devoted linguist involved with the advancement of the modern Turkish language as well as Albanian (Grillo, 1997). His writings and works include a wide range of interests, from academic compilations, such as the ‘Alphabet of Istanbul’ (1879), ‘Grammatical Work’(1886), ‘Encyclopedia of General Sciences’ (1889-1898) to various novels, poems and plays. Finally, his political pamphlet ‘What Will Become of Albania?’ (1889) has been widely adopted as the ultimate ideological manifesto of the Albanian Rebirth Movement. ‘It was written with the aim of recreating the national pride and to incite Albanians to regain the lost glory of Albania that once was—a free and proud country’ (Grillo 1999:9). Sami was the second of the three Frasheri brothers: Abdyl Frasheri (1839-1892), Sami Frasheri (1850-1904) and Naim Frasheri (1846-1900). As noted by Malcolm (1998) the Frasheri brothers represented the Ottoman-educated elite of Albanian society who cherished ‘progressive ideas’ about education, law and social policy (ibid:220). This research will also employ a number of selected sample texts from their work as it represents the cornerstone of Albanian literature from the Rebirth/Romanticist Period (Hamiti, 2004).

Also, it is important to note that the edition of the pamphlet that was used in this research has been published by the public company Libri Shkollor (part to the Kosovo Education Ministry) and is used as a required literature with the Kosovo elementary schools curriculum in Albanian language.

Below I will provide a brief insight and introduction into the structure and the content of the pamphlet – and the manner in which it corresponds with the orientalist postulates that were listed at the beginning of this chapter. I argue that from the outset Frasheri's pamphlet sets the stage for employment of the reconstructed pre-Ottoman national roots as the major component of rationalisation of the ideological basis, as well as the discursive *naturalisation* of the knowledge about the historical legacy of the Albanian nation:

(a) Illyrian/ancient roots. The claim about nation's ancientness represents the first, opening chapter of the pamphlet, 'What Was Albania?'¹⁷, followed by the sub-section 'Pelagians' who Frasheri sees as the great ancestors of modern Albanian nation: 'Our ancient race, our forefathers have been called by the world as the Pelagians.' The Pelagians are employed here under the context of 'a hold-all term for any ancient, primitive and presumably indigenous people in the Greek world'¹⁸. Frasheri refers to the Pelagians as a pre-Hellenic, thus autochthonous, civilisation of the region which linkage to Albanians would prove beyond any doubt their historical ancientness in the region and also underpin their political claims for statehood (see also Grillo, footnote 2, 1999:13).

The relations between Illyrian/Albanians and Epirotes/Greeks (1999:15-18), the Albanians and the Roman Empire (1999:18-21) and the Albanians' Kingdoms and Byzantium (1999:21-26) will come back throughout this chapter, as it is central to the discourse.

(b) Adherence to the pre-Ottoman, European civilisation. Frasheri provides the ideological base that argues for the 'European ancientness' of Albanians before the arrival of the Ottomans. It builds up the claim that the 'natural' Albanian Europeanness was interrupted through Ottoman conquests (sub-sections 'Albania in the times of Scanderbeg', 'Albania Under the Turks'), as it reveals the strong feature of resentment nationalism (Greenfeld, 1992) in the ending sub-section 'Albanians: Always for the World, Never for Themselves'. Through such resentment Frasheri highlights for the sacrifice that the Albanian nation endured for the preservation of the

17 The original title of the pamphlet in Albanian is 'Shqiperia, ç'eshte, ç'ka qene dhe ç'do te behete? (literal translation would be: 'Albania, What it Was, What It Is and what It Will Be?')

18 Reference from 'Apollonius Rhodius' (trans. Peter Green). The Argonautika (Expanded Edition). University of California Press, 2007, p. 223 (Commentary on I.987). Found in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pelasgian#cite_note-0

European, civilisation and mourns over the misfortune of Albanians as a people who ‘died and fought do that others would profit from their spilled blood’ (1999:35):

(c) Islamic legacy as a historical misfortune. The fall under the Ottoman rule as a great historical disruption of Albanians’ ‘natural’ development under the realm of ‘Europe’ remains the major argument of Chapter 2 ‘*What Is Albania?*’. Here, Frasheri refers to the contemporary grievances of Albanian nation and their, once glorious, state that lies ‘in tatters, with the name of Illyria forgotten’ (1999:44), yet still among the ‘most beautiful countries of the entire Europe’ (1999:45). Here, simultaneously, Frasheri glorifies the Albanian ‘peoples’ who remain a unified nation regardless of the religious divide ‘into two-thirds of Muslims and one-third of Christians – with the latter divided in half between (Roman) Catholics and Orthodoxes’ (1999:45). To Frasheri, ‘Albanians today are slaves, suppressed, humiliated and reduced more than any other peoples under the Turks’ (1999:50). The orientalist features surface with the section 8, ‘*Friends of Albanians*’ where Frasheri projects the ‘nations of the entire Europe’ as friends and allies to the Albanians – as opposed to the ‘insane nations’ of Greeks and Turks with their attempts to devour it. ‘French, Allemans¹⁹, English and others – all love and respect our nation’ notes Frasheri, reiterating that ‘they all recognise us as the most ancient and noble nation of Europe (ibid)’.

(d) Adherence to the (post-Ottoman) European civilisation. This is the last chapter of the pamphlet and encapsulates the political programme and reasoning behind the writing. Its sections such as ‘*Can Albania Remain As It Is?*’, ‘*Are Albanians Capable To Protect and Maintain Themselves?*’, ‘*Salvation or Vanquish of Albania is in the Hands of Albanians*’, ‘*Aims of Albanians*’ – have been devised as both an explanation of the existing state of affairs of Albanian nation, as well as the roadmap to creating a future, modern, independent nation state of Albania.

But what have we done to them (the Turks) that, in their fall, they want to take us down with them? What do we have in common with them? Did we arrive with them? No, not at all. We are not Turks, nor did we arrive from the wilds of Asia. We are the

19 Archaic Albanian adaptation of ‘Allemagne’ (Fr. German).

oldest people of Europe. We have more rights to live in Europe than any others.
(1999:76)

I argue that, in any other given historical period, be it the Ottoman Empire, the Austro-Hungary, or the Communist Yugoslavia, the technology of accelerated, almost competitive, othering and repudiation of the worthiness of a dissolving hegemony by the Balkans ethnonationalist discourse will inevitably bear two major discursive features:

- a) The ability to relativize and transcend the temporal aspect of the social/political influence of respective hegemonic power; i.e. its longevity and contribution in shaping the social practices of that ethnicity is, simply, evaded—or, at best, relativized. Here, in the context of the discursive operation of demonizing the Ottoman Empire at the end of their rule, ‘the Turk’ was being looked upon with a sense of hideousness that one would express at an abrupt, novel, therefore shocking sight. ‘The Turk’ is ‘primitive’, ‘savage’, ‘filthy’ and ‘alien’—all of a sudden. His presence in the region that went beyond half a millennia is to be downplayed or outright excluded from the ethnonationalist discourse; his existence and influence is preferred to be discussed in the present tense only, for ‘the Turk’ must have no history in an ethnonationalism’s purity of origin. At least, no history that can relate to any vital influence of the constitution, features and qualities of a new—yet, in other senses, ‘old’—native, nation.
- b) The ability to construct ‘scientific’ arguments for differentiation from possible historical, cultural, political, ideological, even racial, relations and influences with the diminishing hegemony: ‘the Turk’ and his rule cannot and shall not be remembered, as his heritage must not contaminate the purity of the recently (re)discovered ethnonational identity. The origin of the latter must be sought away from the current history of the hegemonic ‘episode’, in the misty past of antiquity that is (re)constructed to represent a social excellence intact from interaction with the former. I argue that, ultimately, according to Frasheri and leaders of the Albanian Rebirth, the legitimate and durable membership of Albanians with the western, European civilisation can only be possible if the political discourse of the former’s elites can produce convincing evidence – historical, cultural, ideological, political – that would prove their profound civilisational difference with the East, the Orient –

‘The Turk’. In this case, it meant the production of statements and proofs about their geographical autochthonousness, historical uniqueness, ideological and ethnic resilience to foreign (eastern) rule and devotion to the European (western) civilisation (see also Sulstarova, 2009:694).

Demonizing the ‘Turk’

Frasheri’s pamphlet is important for different reasons, amongst which its linguistic simplicity and bluntness, abundance of metaphors and comparisons. One of its major features, though, is its technology of constructing the arguments for the denunciation and demonization of the Ottoman hegemonic construction, namely ‘the Turk’. Frasheri appears to understand such discursive projections as the first and necessary step to construct, emphasize and institutionalize the separate ethnonational identity—its autochthonousness, uniqueness and, above all, its projection of ‘Europeaness’. The feature of autochthonousness—‘Albanians, are the oldest of the old nations of Europe’ (1999:13)—rich in its severity and bluntness of representation, historical validations, ethnic rationalisations and even racial justifications, is, of course, not limited to the Albanian nationalist movement of the time, as one can encounter an abundance of alike anti-hegemonic depictions across the literary heritage of region’s ethnicities/nations, such Serbian, Macedonian, even Slovenian and Croatian. Abundance of similar illustrations can be found with works of (Bakic-Hayden (1995), Perica (2002), Pesic (2009)) and Despotovic et al (2006) as follows:

(Serbian romanticist historians) were grounding their idea of multi-millennia old ancientness of the Serbian nation on etymology, similarly to their romanticist colleagues in the rest of the world. (2006:15)

Part of the Croatian scientists saw the pre-historic residents of the present Iran as the Croatian ancestors; others believed that those should be the Ostrogoths, which was particularly popular during the World War II (. . .) Slovenians were no strangers to extending of the national existence on the multi-millennia scale. Representatives of their autochthonous school of thinking believe that Slovenians have to be linked to Venets, insisting that their linkage is of genetic nature and that it represents a continuing developmental stream that enables Slovenians to exist as a nation for 2000 years (2006:20-21)

For the purposes of this study, the emphasis on autochthonousness remains exemplary of an important ideological trait with the rest of Balkans' ethnic nationalisms: its capacity to negative construction of one's ethnic identity. We can recognise Benhabib's (1996) account on the process of differentiation 'from what one is not'. In short, the political value of the claim to historical autochthonousness is expressed in the ability of the ethnonationalist discourse to render inexistent any foreign (read: eastern) influences in the process of construction of the national identity.

In Said's terms (1978), the feature of denunciation of 'the Turk' and its legacy relates to the negation of the *power political*, *power cultural*, *power intellectual* and *power moral* that the diminishing Ottoman Empire exercised over Albanians—a claim that is also heavily underpinned through projections of the empire as an oppressive and hegemonic rule. Such tendencies of denunciation of historical linkage or heritage can be detected in the Albanian ethnonationalist discourse during both periods covered by this research. As such, they represent an important feature of *intertextuality* in the discourse which underpins and maintains the key principles of ethnonationalist ideology on Albanian nationhood, statehood and political independence. They permeate the works of early representatives of the Albanian Rebirth Movement, such as Wassa Effendi (1879) or Sami Bey Frasheri's pamphlet (1889), but also those from succeeding generations by the mid-twentieth century, such Rexhep Qosja (1990) from Kosovo, or Ismail Kadare (1978, 1986 and others) who will be discussed in the next chapter.

Below are two accounts, written in respective periods that provide a chronological context and insight into the intertextuality of the feature of the denunciation and othering of 'the Turk' within the Albanian ethnonationalist discourse. The first one is an excerpt from an Albanian newspaper, 'Shkopi' that was published in Cairo, Egypt – written in 1908. The second is an excerpt from the interview compilation with Albanian author, Ismail Kadare, 'Barbaric Times: From Albania to Kosovo', written in 1999:

I will not bother calling it good or evil – only the Western civilisation can save the Albanian nation and country and ensure our existence at the Europe's belly-button; for, it is only this civilisation that is existing in the right way, preparing its peoples for the needs of the times that change unstoppably. The world prospered enormously due to this civilisation; just remind yourselves about what Europe used to be, and what it

is today... Take a look at the Turkey and see at what (low) scale it dwells, for it wanted to pave its road through the midst of Europe... ('Shkopi', nr. 4, 15.11.1908, in Sulstarova, 2007:33)

The only thing that interests me is the orientation and anchoring of Albania in the West. Albania is fed up with the East... The East is for Albania worse than it was for the Poles, Czechs, Hungarians, for the East was, to Albania, the soviet East, the Chinese East – the Ottoman East... In short, the East is a misfortune, a disaster. All this time, the Albanian culture, Albanian aspiration, attempted to cut the ties with the East (Kadare, 1999:58)

I argue that, historically, such operation of political, cultural and ideological denunciation has been viewed by the Albanian intellectual nationalist elite as a critical signifier in the discourse that would maintain the projection of the nation's Europeanness through the technique of its persistent reiteration and affiliation with the notion of 'progress'.

In the context of external depictions of the Balkans – and Albanians, for that matter – both accounts go very much along the lines of the advice by George Miller, a British historiographer from the 1890's, to his government in regard to the Balkans: that the Great Britain 'ought to seek the friendship of those (Christian) states which, in spite of their obvious faults, contain at least what Turkey does not contain, the germs of progress.'(in Todorova, 1997:110). Undoubtedly, the accounts listed above demonstrate a certain level of understanding—and acceptance—of Miller's observation and advice. In both cases, there is an obsessive trait for identifying as inseparable the notions of 'progress' and 'the west', inasmuch as 'the east' or 'Turkey' becomes inseparable from connotations such 'misfortune' and 'disaster'. Above all, I argue, both accounts manifest an obsessive trait to advertise the civilisational difference—and, differentiation—of Albanians with 'the East'. The preoccupations of the Balkan societies about external perceptions is also noted Sulstarova (2007):

Balkan intellectuals from the 19th century onwards were persistently worried about the manner in which their societies and nations would be seen and perceived by the westerners (. . .) Therefore, orientalist approach was employed by the local elites as a technique in applying the modernist reforms and in coining of new identities that would be compliant to western models (2007:20)

Moreover, the Balkan ethnonationalist ideologists, such as Sami Bey Frasheri, appear to have a significant degree of understanding that ‘Europe’ certainly represents a mere variant of cultural, political hegemony that—providing it succeeds in establishing its rule in the region—would inevitably influence the postulates on which one’s ethnic uniqueness is based. This is the period in the region’s history when greater powers such as Austro-Hungary and Tzarist Russia, as well as Italy, France and Great Britain had already made themselves critically present on the ground (Vickers (1983), Durham (1905, 1908)). ‘The international machinations associated with the Eastern Question deepened the mistrust between Serbs and Albanians during the last quarter of the 19th century’, writes Gallagher (2001:48) while pointing out the consequences of the Western ‘realpolitik’ approach to the emerging ‘ethnonationalisation’ of the Balkans. But, in the political and cultural context of the period, ‘the Europe’ had been already labelled as the vestige of ‘progress’ and modernity, with the institutionalized concept of nationhood seated at its core. Nationalism was an incoming, revolutionary novelty according to Vickers (1995) for it was ‘the first time the Ottoman Empire had encountered nationalism among Muslims. The growing Albanian movement directly challenged Ottoman rule and created conditions that invited foreign intervention’ (ibid:41).

In the case of Frasheri’s pamphlet, the language that was used for writing (and disseminating) the pamphlet is also indicative of the tendency to cultural distance from the Ottoman Empire. At the time, it was among the very few Albanian writings of the time that were written in a Latin alphabet – which was itself a novelty, considering the fact that the standardization of the written Albanian was yet to take place (1908). In the period when the pamphlet was produced, Albanian was written – if at all—using Ottoman or Greek alphabet. Therefore, its practical usage with the Frasheri’s pamphlet represents in itself a major component of its ethnonationalist content—as it connoted the reconstruction and the revival of a nation away from the cultural dependency on foreign hegemonies. As noted by Faik Bey Konitza, a renowned Albanian scholar and intellectual of the period:

Until 1877, very few Albanians had any idea that there should or could be a written language. It is true that in Northern Albania (. . .) a number of merchants did make use of the Albanian language in corresponding with each other; and the Roman Office of Propaganda had published a number of religious books in Albanian, but this

initiative did not pass beyond its own narrow scope, and was not related to any national idea²⁰.

Ever since, the adoption of the Latin alphabet by the Albanian elites of the 19th century has been praised as one of the major successes in the progressive and ‘modernizing’ attempts—an ultimate paradigmatic shift of the ways in which the young ethnonationalist ideology would be shaped with respect to perceived ‘eastern’ and ‘western’ models. Below is an illustrative account on the issue of the Albanian language and alphabet that comes from Albania of the 1930s and illustrates the importance with which such shift was perceived and demonstrates the type of internalisation of orientalism taking place:

A new page was introduced on 21 October and our history began to be written no longer in Arabic letters – but Latin. The band of Levantine mehmurs²¹ was sacked from the management and their place was filled by the group of youngsters led by a brightest and the most liberal elder that we have. Since that day, a harsh polemics has ensued between those who perceive Albania as an *Afghanistan* and those engaged to make a *Switzerland* out of it. (Maloki, in Sulstarova, 2007:67)

Also, an important feature to note is the applied degree of skilfulness through which the discursive construction of ‘Europe’s’ liminal definition enters the scene—as a generalized sociopolitical structure that differs substantially from its concrete manifestation through diplomatic and political actions conducted by its members. Pamphlets such Frasheri’s are quite blunt in applying a double-standardized representational strategy: on the one hand, they see no difficulty in reducing, personifying and epitomizing a complex, supra-ethnic content of the Ottoman Empire with the simple ‘Turk’; on the other, they demonstrate a somewhat irrational readiness to generalize ‘the Europe’, regardless of the fact that its political actions on the ground were accounting for a fragmented structure with the history of ethnic exclusiveness and national rivalries:

Albania is a part of European Turkey. Its existence today is linked to the survival of European Turkey. Will Turkey survive much longer in Europe? Either it is not possible to give an answer to this question or the answer is no. (...) We do not know

21 A Turkish/Osman name for overtly old and out-of-touch person.

how much longer it will survive in Asia, and it is beyond the scope of our deliberations to speak of this, but in Europe it will certainly not be for much longer. Albania itself has not yet laid its own foundations and taken hold. It is languishing in the crumbling foundations and rotten roots of Turkey (Frasheri, 1899 (1999):70).

As noted by Robert Elsie (1995), such views coming from a Balkan pathos are indicative of the awakening of Albanian national identity at the end of the 19th century: ‘The immediate goal of the manifesto was full autonomy with the Ottoman Empire, although it served to promote the ideal of full Albanian independence.’²² Such observation appears clearly with the first paragraph about Albania as part of the ‘European Turkey’: it is really not about a pre-meditated and already organised armed rebellion against a political establishment. Quite the opposite, a communicative strategy at work reveals for a certain difficulty of the author to construct the major ideological pillar for any similar manifesto: the component of hostility and brutality of the foreign oppressor. Here, it is not about ‘thousands of innocent victims’ or ‘massacres of women and children’; the reasoning behind the compilation of the pamphlet is clearly pragmatic, as it wants to justify the necessity of a smaller and weaker society to disassociate from the ‘inevitable’ destiny of collapse of the grand hegemony.

If the Albanians have always been so courageous and heroic, why do they have their hands tied and why do they allow their foes, who have neither might nor right on their side, to divide them and cause their downfall? They have their hands tied because the Turks are holding them prisoner and their foes are decimating them with the help and assistance of the Turks. But are the Turks strong enough to hold the Albanians down with one hand and assist their foes with the other? No, we know they are not, but they are cunning. Albania is being held captive by a sly and cunning fox. I would even go so far as to say that the Albanians have tied themselves down because of their ignorance and blindness. (Frasheri, 1899 (1999):76-77)

Frasheri’s logic at work is political and pragmatic; in his depictions, Albanians are ‘prisoners’, victimised by their foes who take advantage of their subdued position. Although he acknowledges the existence of the periods of ‘bygone glory’ under the Ottomans, ‘when Albania became richer than it had ever been’ (1999:29); when ‘over 25 grand Veziers’ were of Albanian origin—he justifies strongly the contemporary necessity to part with them. The

22 For further reading, please visit: http://www.albanianhistory.net/texts19/AH1899_1.html

ressentiment towards the ailing Empire increases in its intensity, thus beginning to shape the basis of the future ideological justification for disowning from its legacy. The abundance of earthly metaphors such those equalizing the Ottoman Empire with ‘the sly and cunning fox’ account for the pamphlet’s intended target audience—the common Albanian masses, the peasantry and remote mountaineers, the strata to be mobilised through the notions of ‘honour’, ‘bravery’ and ‘betrayal’, and to whom is also addressed the criticism on ‘ignorance’ and ‘blindness’.

Finally, it is the ‘the Turk’, not the Ottoman Empire: personification and personalization are employed here as the tools for discursive downplaying of the opponent’s relevance and worth. In time, such a label will become the major signifier in the orientalist practices in the Balkans, particularly in the process of application of its ‘nesting’ variation: ‘The Turk’ would come to mean (a) cultural backwardness (b) unworthy, ‘barbarian’ hegemonic power (c) anti-progressiveness, ultimately, anti-westernness. Here, it also represents the adoption of the label under the influence of the western discursive practice and its representational policy regarding the Ottoman Empire: ‘the Turk’ was specifically used in the political discourse of the Austro-Hungarian establishment of the times.

Who are the Turks? They are a savage folk come from the wilds of northern Asia with goads in their hands. In their savagery, they have seized the fairest and *most civilised countries* on earth. (...) Poor Albania is one of these countries that has been suffering for hundreds of years and putting up with tyranny, indeed with more suffering than the others due to the negligence of the Albanians. The Turks are like those ancient peoples who blotted out the dearth like a hailstorm or a snowstorm.

Where are the Huns, the Vandals, the Mongols, the Avars, the Goths and other savage peoples now, who once seized half the globe, marauding, pillaging and spilling blood? The Turks do not have any more right to live like this than these other savage peoples, yet even today they continue to live as freeloaders. They no longer have such rights. Up to now, they have created neither a state nor a government, as other countries have. They prefer to live in savagery. They will fall and must perish so that humankind can survive. (1999:76-78)

The pamphlet continues on the same note of highlighting the relevance of para-political notions of individual and collective worth of ‘pride’, ‘honour’ and ‘betrayal’—as it closes in

on the construction of ‘the Turk’ as the national and historical arch-enemy. Its—or *his*—comparison with the description of the ancient tribes accommodated within (western) colloquial lingo as ‘barbarians’ makes the point of their a-historical, anachronic existence in the region. ‘The Turk’ belongs to the barbarian history, there is no place for it/him in the new, upcoming realm of modernity and progress. The last paragraphs of this fragment become more concrete in revealing its ideological goal through placing a global emphasis on the necessity for the ‘perish’ of an empire that preferred to live in ‘savagery’, so that ‘the humankind can survive’; an alien hegemony from the remote ‘wilds of Asia’ with whom Albanians cannot relate to—for they belong to ‘Europe’ more ‘than any others’. Clearly, ‘the many others’ addresses the competing, regional nationalisms, at the time well into armed rebellions against the Ottoman Empire: the Serbs, Greeks, Bulgarians, Romanians. In the context of the pamphlet this allusion bears the hallmarks of a nesting orientalist approach which emerges during the juxtaposing exercise between ‘us’ (Albanians), ‘them’ (aspiring nationalisms of the region) and ‘Europe’.

Frasheri sees Albania as an indivisible part of the ‘civilised’ (or, civilising) societies subjugated under the wrath of the ‘savages’. The fact that the Ottoman Empire served as the only center of knowledge and development for the entire region for some 500 years (roughly from 1400-1900) is of no apparent value nor interest to this pamphlet or the author, himself coming from the ranks of Istanbul-educated Albanian intellectual elite of the time. The centuries-old tradition of co-governance and ‘millet’²³ are downplayed and ignored (Feraj, 1998:94-95) as Frasheri unfolds the political motives of this ideological denunciation of the Ottoman Empire. According to Jelavich (1984) ‘the millet system and the community governments allowed most Balkan people under Ottoman rule to run their own affairs on the personal and local level’ (ibid:135).

Frasheri’s discursive technology of retrospective rendering of its further presence as unwanted, useless and/or damaging to the region – even the world - bears particular importance, as it hints on the feature of its victimisation ‘for the protection of Europe’ as part of Albanian ethnonationalist discourse:

23 Turkish, for ‘population’ and/or ‘community’

Turkey cannot survive much longer, nor will it or should it. If the Albanians cannot tear themselves away from Turkey, they will perish with it. It is like a dead man. Although we must show respect for the dead, we must also bury them in the ground. If we cannot bring ourselves to say farewell to them, we have no choice but to jump into the grave with them. That which is rotting will decompose. We cannot hold it back, for its stench will poison the globe. (1999:72)

The dangers coming from ‘the Turk’ are no longer confined to Albanians only, according to Frasheri: ‘its stench’—if not halted immediately—will inevitably ‘poison the globe’. Here, the usage of the ‘dead man’ metaphor appears as a local variation of its more internationally acclaimed phrase about ‘the sick man of Europe’²⁴, a common, castigating definition of the Ottoman Empire during the 19th century. In his observation, Frasheri wants to project Albanians as aligning with the common, global, views on the empire which find it dysfunctional and decomposing. The Ottoman Empire, thus, is not to be considered part of the new, ‘progressive’ world that Frasheri aspires for Albanians. Moreover:

Albania cannot continue to exist as it did in the past simply because Turkey is dead and cannot be lived with. Even if the empire could be revived and continue on for a certain time, Albania would still not survive with it. The revival of Turkey means death for Albania (1999:73).

I argue that such uncompromising language itself represents a vestige of ethnonationalist—even, modernist²⁵--discourse that was domesticating within the Balkan national elites throughout the 19th century. A break-up with the old and ‘regressive’ was an imperative, and, as noted by Sulstarova, ‘the modernizing elites in the non-western societies demanded from their societies to engage in resembling the West’ (2006:20), as well as the perceived western discursive practices.

24 A description attributed to the Russian Tsar Nicholas I by the British envoy to St. Petersburg, Sir G.H. Seymour in 1853: ‘(the Tsar) is reported to have referred to the Ottoman Empire, not as legend has it, as the ‘sick man of Europe’, but as a ‘man’ who ‘has fallen into a state of decrepitude’; in de Bellaigue, Christopher, ‘Turkey’s Hidden Past’, *New York Review of Books*, 48:4, 8 March, 2001.

25 ‘Modernism’ is here employed in the context of revolt against conservative values with the broader reference to its definition as a term that ‘encompasses Western history from the Renaissance or the epoch that began with the 17th century scientific revolutions of Galileo, Hobbes, Newton, Leibniz and Descartes’, in Childs, Peter (2000:16)

Frasheri goes on unfolding—and escalating—his orientalist approach as he notes ultimately the impossibility of any further ideological compromise: there can be an either ‘dead’ Turkey or ‘dead’ Albania, for the revival of the former is projected as the ultimate perish of the latter.

In order to illustrate the enduring nature of such anti-Ottoman projection in the Albanian ethnonationalist discourse, I find it relevant to state here the content of a footnote in the edition of Frasheri’s pamphlet used for this research—an explanation by Odhise Grillo, editor with the 1999 publication—on the last sentence in the paragraph stated above:

Pay attention on the clarity and courage by S. Frasheri in his attempts to define things with their real name and to reveal to Albanians the road to their salvation (1999:73).

As mentioned earlier, the edition of Frasheri’s pamphlet used with this research is part to the obligatory literature – textbook – in the Kosovo Albanian elementary schools curriculum. In this context, I find the content of the footnote/clarification by the editor of the publication quite striking: its formulation about defining things ‘with their real name’ speaks out for a profound acceptance and undisputedness of Frasheri’s century-old views about Ottoman Empire—or, even more critical, the state of Turkey—that to-date continues to permeate the Albanian nationalist discourse in both Kosovo and Albania. It appears as a proof of a century old heritage of *naturalisation* of the discourse of castigating ‘the Turk’ and/or ‘the Ottoman’ through the binary opposition: ‘the Turk’ is thus constructed as the negative mirror, the absolute other to Albanian, Europe and ‘progress’ (see Sulstarova, 2006).

The logic at work in Frasheri’s discourse extracts the ideological strength through features of reiteration and excess: the more aggressive the process of othering – the higher the chances to project the Albanians to the West as a nation devoted to the principles of civility and ‘progress’. Here is a verse written by Naim Frasheri (1886), a renowned romanticist poet from the Rebirth Movement, a brother of Sami Bey Frasheri:

Hail, you glorious day (sun),
That rises from where it sets
You set that part alight
Why forget about us? (1886 (1986):184)

I argue that, in this short verse, Naim Frasheri encapsulates most of the key features of Albanian orientalist ethnonationalist discourse:

- the aspiration to ‘*progress*’ symbolized in the feature of the ‘day’—allusion to light/sun and, ultimately, Enlightenment;
- the Europe and ‘*the West*’ as the center of progress: the light/sun ‘rises where it sets’ entails a poetic analogy with ‘the West’;
- the emotion of *ressentiment* about the western rejection and abandonment – about ‘forgetting’ the Albanians.

Finally, the cultural and historical denunciation with ‘the Turk’ could only be fully achieved with the construction and projection of the pre-Ottoman ‘Europeanness’ of the Albanian history and culture. ‘The Albanian Rebirth (movement) has raised the issue of returning to Europe long before the final liberation of Albania from the Ottoman rule’, wrote the internationally-acclaimed Albanian writer Ismail Kadare in 2005, as he was referring to the period of publication of Frasheri’s pamphlet. I argue that it is the views such as Kadare’s that make the discursive intertextuality of orientalist ethnonationalism all the more relevant to the contemporary projections of national history and identity. For, as noted by Sulstarova, ‘to Kadare, the European identity of Albanians appears as a natural, primordial fact that is given and unchangeable’ (2008:75)—a fact that is easily detected with a simple glance through history and literature textbooks in all levels of Albanian education, either in Albania or Kosovo. As an illustration, I will provide below a verbatim translation of *the only* description of the Ottomans (or ‘Osmans’, as used often in Albanian) that can be found with the History textbook for the 5th grade of Albanian elementary schools in Kosovo:

Osmans (i.e. Ottomans) were ferocious Turkish tribes that descended from the Asia Minor. Their leader was called ‘the Sultan’ which had the meaning of the king. Their first Sultan was Osman, which afterwards became the name for both the state and the military. (2010:33)

Situated under the section ‘Albanian Lands Attacked by Osmans: The Battle of Kosovo’ this paragraph represents the only statement and explanation in the textbook that refers to the origin, content and influence of the Ottoman Empire in the history of the region and, specifically, Albanian society. The rest of the publication is devoted in its entirety to the

description of Albanians as a nation that originated in the pre-history ‘from the Pelasgians/Illyrian culture’—defined unequivocally in the textbook as the ‘most ancient peoples in the Balkans’ (2010:7-10)—and who began their ‘centuries-long’ struggle for national liberation since the arrival of ‘barbarians’, and ‘Slavs’ in the 4th and 5th century (2010:23-27). Subsequently, one-third of the book discusses at length the Albanian Rebirth Movement, biographies of its major exponents, the continuous struggle for national liberation and its influence on the Albanian national identity. Throughout the textbook, the hegemonic structure that Albanians fought against is referred to simply as ‘Osman government’.

I argue that such contemporary approach of castigating the historical presence and cultural influence of ‘the east’ – indeed, its thorough depreciation and de-personification—represents an enduring and aggressive feature of orientalist ethnonationalist discourse. As such, it has its origin in the discourse of the National Rebirth and, with the relevance to this research, the Frasheri’s pamphlet²⁶.

The feature of naturalisation of this discourse is revealed and accompanied by the views shared by Kadare and the majority of the contemporary Albanian academia from both sides of the Kosovo/Albania border: it engages in the construction of ‘undisputable’ historical ‘facts’ about the Albanian anti-Ottoman struggle as the mere outcome of the national aspiration to ‘return to Europe’, to defend the (Illyrian/Pelasgian) autochthonousness and, therefore, their original ‘Europeanness’. The work of the naturalisation of knowledge through this discourse appears three-fold:

- (a) it establishes the ethnic ancientness,
- (b) it ‘perennializes’ the national struggle against ‘the Turk’ and
- (c) through these two claims, it argues successfully for the Albanian commitment to ‘Europeanness’

Views such as Kadare’s that engage in the temporal displacement of major signifiers in the ethnonationalist discourse—such ‘nationhood’, ‘national aspiration’, ‘national culture’—

26 In more detail, the contemporary features of Albanian ethnonationalism will be discussed in the chapter 7 of this research that deals specifically with the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist narrative and its transformation through the internalisation of the orientalist discourse as an essential component of their political ideology in the period 1989-1999.

account for the ‘validating’ and ‘normalising’ capacity of the orientalist approach. They naturalise the discursive exercise of the reconstruction of both pre-Ottoman ethnic history and the anti-Ottoman sentiment through the claims about ‘undeniable’ and ‘perennial’ existence of a common ‘European’ legacy in the region in which—eventually—Albanians represent ‘the oldest of the old’ nations.

Such projections have often constructed and reduced the narrative of Albanian past into a perpetual quest for preservation of their ancient ‘Europeanness’ – a mere compilation of wars and conflicts that were waged on behalf of preserving the Albanian ethnic/national identity, as well as the European/western civilisation. Later in this chapter, I will return to analyse this specific discursive feature related to the history of struggles for ‘Europe’ in the Balkans in the context of the concept of ‘Antemurale Christianitis’ (the Bulwark of Christianity) and the defenders of Christian civilisation. But, let us return to Frasheri and observe his idealised projection of ‘modern’ Europe of independent nations:

If Albania should succeed in saving itself from the perils that surround it and in embarking upon the path of security and well-being, it could become one of the best and fairest countries in Europe. Though it is not a large country, it is not much smaller than Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, Denmark, Belgium, Holland or Switzerland, etc., which are all independent nations of their own. (. . .) It is on the threshold of Europe and is a neighbour of Italy and Austria. It could very soon become a civilised country and become part of Europe. It has everything it requires, as we have seen. The Albanians are clever and intelligent people. They have a great longing for civilisation and knowledge of all kinds (Frasheri, 1899 (1999):78-80).

Here, we go back to Todorova’s observation of a century-old Balkan feature of ‘going to Europe’ or ‘returning to’ it, in Kadare’s terms. The pamphlet draws developmental comparisons between the future state of Albania and the *existing*—western—Europeans (Denmark, Belgium, Holland), highlighting the potential and the hope for ‘becoming civilised’ due to its geographical vicinity and eventual political good fortune. I argue that Frasheri admits the existing sociocultural shortcomings of Albania and Albanians who have yet ‘to become’ civilised though apparently lagging behind in ‘progressive’ actions, as opposed to the immediate neighbors ‘which are all independent nations’(1899 (1999):79). Misha notes that, at the time, for various sociopolitical reasons, ‘Albanian national movement

remained embryonic at a time when most of their neighbors (after succeeding in creating their own national states) strove to extend their national territories' (2002:34).

The Albanians have no need to take to arms, to take up positions on mountain tops and in caves, to kill and ravage as other nations have done to gain their freedom. The Albanians are not as trodden upon and broken that they need to involve themselves in such ventures. They need do nothing but unite, swear a common oath to one another in manly fashion, keep their oath steadfastly, and demand their rights from Turkey and of Europe. Turkey will listen and will cede to their demands, willingly or unwillingly. Europe will help as it has helped other nations, and will compel Turkey to grant them their rights (Frasheri, 1899 (1999):78-80).

Aware of this disadvantageous situation, Frasheri makes a clear linkage between Europe, progress, nation-state and independence and projects them as the ultimate objectives that will ensure both its survival and legitimation by Europe through its engagement to 'compel Turkey' to grant rights to Albanians. This belief and expectation about the 'help' and the sociopolitical legitimacy that would be generated by (and through) Europe—namely, the west—has been a recurring ideological feature and political demand from Albanian political elites throughout the most part of the 20th century. In this respect, Vickers ironically notes that Albanians were repeatedly engaged in creating 'conditions that invited foreign intervention' (1995:41). Sulstarova takes a generalizing view on such narratives of expectation of a 'righteous' foreign/European intervention. According to him, this feature comprises the recurring topic in respective political programmes and nationalist ideologies in the Balkans during the first decades of the 20th century:

(This period) is deemed essential for the national identity of these peoples, because it is a time when the national and political and cultural elites in the new states of Eastern Europe were looking up to the West to provide legitimacy, moral inspiration and guidance, security and assistance to their countries. (Sulstarova, 2009:689)

Frasheri's fluctuating discourse between 'perennial' Albanian Europeanness and the anxiety of not being accepted as 'European nation' is striking. Simultaneously, he highlights both claims—which at first sound rather paradoxical. Quite the contrary, I argue; the reason to such paradox is Frasheri's attempt to utilize the emotion of resentment which is triggered here: according to him, Albanians *are* and have *always* been 'European': still, he hints, 'the Europe' remains in denial to such 'fact'. The next chapter of this research will also be

analysing this feature in the context of Greenfeld's (1992) 'ressentiment nationalism', as a recurring feature in the ethnonationalist narrative of Kosovo Albanians during the late 20th century.

Further, Frasheri's unbound optimism with respect to Albania's resources is openly marketed and offered in a prize-like manner, as an economic merchandise that possesses everything 'it' (Europe) 'requires'. Again, the ending conclusion clarifies that Frasheri shares no doubts that 'Europe' represents yet another, external and, inevitably, *hegemonic* order, but as it is commonly accepted as being on the expanding, 'progressive' end—as opposed to the 'savage' Ottoman Empire—he believes in the prudence of a modest, Balkan ethnicity engulfed in local feuds to rush forward to it and accommodate within the new, supreme rule. The matter of hegemonic struggle is well-explained in Mouffe (2006):

Hegemony is positive in the sense that, if we accept that there is no order, if we did not have any kind of hegemony, we would be living in complete schizophrenia. There would not be any form of meaning, any form of order. In other words, the question is not to get rid of power. Power is constitutive for the social; there is no social without power relations. Now, any form of order is a hegemonic order, but of course there are some forms of order that are more democratic than others. (2006:4)

I argue that Mouffe's 'schizophrenia' or a social 'anomie' and normlessness is precisely what Frasheri fears: he engages in establishing a 'common' understanding about the need of national re-positioning towards a new, progressive hegemony. According to him, such 'common understanding' and its naturalisation would be possible through the process of discursive denunciation of common heritage with the Ottomans, which is, in turn, followed by the projection of Albanians as a geopolitical victim of the Empire because of their 'perennial' western orientation. Through Frasheri's pamphlet these principles became an ideological imperative and a widely employed discursive practice in the ethnonationalist narrative. Below is another, complementing account that comes from the weekly 'Liri e Shqiperise'²⁷ (Eng. Albania's Freedom) written a decade later, in 1912, and which depicts the 'victimisation' argument as a means to justify the pragmatic decision on the ideological denunciation of Ottoman/Turkey rule:

27 'Mbi Aleancen Ballkanike' (On the Balkan Alliance), in 'Liri e Shqiperise' (Albania's Freedom), 12 October 1912, page 1.

This program of the four united Powers (United Kingdom, Austrian Empire, France and Russia) is a desirable one, therefore the Albanian nation must not unite with Turkey and fight together with the one who is sentenced to death. It should raise its voice and demand its rights from the Great Powers. It should be presented all over the world that the Albanian nation is under slavery and for four years now it has been fighting and asking for Albania's autonomy.

Albanians in the foreign eyes: the noble savages

The denunciation of the Ottoman empire at its deathbed – and, moreover, annulling the worth of its past legacy – appears as a common trait among foreign observers as well. I will focus specifically on those interested and involved in the affairs of the Albanian community. Such a historiographic account is of value not only because of their 'European' orientalist approach to the region and its societies—a common feature of 'outlandish' writings of the era—but for their local employment in the revival of ethnonationalist discourse well after their first publication.

The following blunt account by Edith Durham (1905, 1909) complements the demonizing tendency towards 'the Turk' as expressed through Frasheri's note on its 'savagery'. It embarks on personifying the diminishing empire through an illustration of individual, personal appearances of its direct subjects, such as a random ethnic Turkish family in Kosovo, as it compares negatively Turkish women with the native Albanian ones:

Being kept mainly for breeding purposes (Turkish women), their conversation was much like what that of a cow might be, could it talk. They were most friendly, plied me with coffee and pieces of all the eatables, and pressed me to stay the night - there was plenty of room for another - or come tomorrow. And I tore myself away with difficulty.

I give the above details because I invariably find that gentlemen of all nations are consumed with curiosity about the secrets of the harem. I thought of the bright, tidy Vlah women, of the civilised Serbs, of the poor (Albanian) Catholic women in Djakova, their clean rooms and intelligent questions; and I asked myself if they were

not after all right when they said, 'The Young Turk is the son of the Old Turk.' Islam has, so far, done nothing but evil in Europe.

Durham is clearly under the sentiment of the political momentum here, as she witnesses the fevers of upcoming national(ist) awareness of communities in a territory dwelling in fears of uncertain future. Such feature has been noticed by Vickers in her description of Durham as 'a friend of the Albanian cause with an attitude towards her chosen people that, though benevolent, could not conceal a typically European sense of superiority' (1995:54).

In line with the emerging orientalist discursive practices of the time—such as Frasheri's disparaging parallel between the Ottoman Empire and 'the Turk'—it is interesting to note here the intensity of Durham's expressive escalation. She starts the account with animalistic parallel about the Turkish women, continues with their comparison to their apparently more superior—therefore unjustly subjugated—local counterparts, wraps it up with the proverb on the futility of reforming the 'old Turk' into the 'young Turk' and concludes with a general, repudiating statement about the impact of Islam in Europe.

She, too, goes with the flow of the ever-popularizing local discourse of emphasizing—and, *naturalising*—respective ethnonational identity claims at the ultimate expense of a foreign, eastern hegemony at the deathbed. Similarly, an earlier account from 1878, written by Fanny Janet Blunt, regards the Ottomans as unworthy of oppressing the 'proud' Albanian:

The Mohammedan Albanians on their side deeply resent the loss of their liberty, and the forfeiture of their privileges, and reciprocate to the full the ill-feeling and abusive language of the Turks. The Turk calls the Albanian Haidout Arnaout! (Albanian brigand!) or Tellak! (bath-boy!). The Albanian regards the Turk as a doubtful friend, and a corrupt and impotent master (Blunt, in Elsie, 2000);

A number of British, French, German and Italian historiographers would publish accounts on Albanians as 'wild mountaineers', 'proud brigands', 'restless warriors' obsessed with the freedom—and its lack thereof. Similar accounts are produced by Hubert (1912), Durham (1905, 1909), Freundlich (1913), and earlier by Byron (1825) whose poem 'Child Harold's Pilgrimage' and various travelogues about Albania influenced heavily the external/western constructions about a race of 'fierce brigands'. Yet, in such similar romantic depictions,

Albanians were regularly attached the shortcomings and collective inability to comprehend contemporary, 'progressive' and 'modern' developments around them—and about them. As noted ironically by Vickers about Durham's 'typically European sense of superiority' the feature of 'naturalising' the Albanians' 'primitiveness'—and, thus, the unbound exoticism as a unique, un-discovered people—resonates with van Dijk's argument about ethnocentric and racist discourse:

Fluctuating between the emphasis on exotic difference, on the one hand, and supremacist derogation stressing the Others' intellectual, moral and biological inferiority, on the other hand, such discourses also influenced public opinion and led to broadly shared social representations. (1998:13)

In numerous, similar accounts and travelogues, Albanians were depicted as primitive, savage, unable, suppressed, exotic—even romantic—and thoroughly remote from any 'civilised' center or influence. Therefore, they needed help and—enlightenment. I argue that, in a simplified context, such an approach comprises the common denominator for most of the novels, travelogues and descriptions that dealt with the Balkans region and Albanian peoples of the times. I also argue that, in time, such external orientalist depictions have been naturalised through the hegemonic power of the discourse and became the major component in the process of the 'nesting' orientalist narrative among Albanians (see the next chapter). This approach was adopted and internalised with the ethnonationalist discourse through the reiteration of the external perception of the victim, as a 'fact' that was gaining 'international' legitimacy and recognition through accounts such as Durham's.

In addition to this, another reason that disabled foreign observers to define and 'classify' their projection of Albanians as either 'European' or 'eastern/Ottoman' was also the latter's sociocultural ambiguity: they represented an ethnicity from the Balkans that was dwelling at the crossroads of different—and often clashing—epistemologies, cultures and discourses. According to Todorova, such 'ambiguity' of the Balkans has been treated almost regularly 'as an anomaly' (1997:17). In this context, Albanians, their history and their sociopolitical situation represented no exception from the established 'orientalist/balkanist' stereotype of their geographic, cultural and historical 'liminality' and 'inbetweenness', as discussed in previous chapters. This inherited ambiguity assisted in their external perception as both 'exotic/romantic' and 'primitive/dangerous'. According to Todorova (1997), due to their

‘indefinable character, persons or phenomena in transitional states, like in marginal ones, are considered dangerous, both being in danger themselves and emanating danger to others’. (ibid:17)

In this respect, George Miller, a British historiographer from the period describes the Balkan Peninsula as ‘a land of contradictions’ where ‘everything is the exact opposite of what it might reasonably expected to be’ (in Todorova, 1997:18). Views such as Durham’s and Miller’s account for what van Dijk (1998) highlights as the features of the discourse on ethnocentrism, nationalism and racism. According to him, they often fluctuate between ‘the emphasis on exotic difference on the one hand, and supremacist derogation stressing the Other’s intellectual, moral and biological inferiority’ (1998:11).

In the context of external representation of Albanians, a handful of foreign historiographers and observers depicted them as the lost and ‘unsung heroes of the medieval Balkans’. Such descriptions and discourses would, in time, get a life of their own and naturalise within the pillars of the orientalist approach in the contemporary Kosovo/Albanian nationalist narrative. Above all, such accounts appear essential in the attempts to confirm and convince external audiences of the major merchandise of Balkan slaughter: the national victimisation.

Part of this pattern is the syndrome of 'historical victimisation' (. . .) which to this day constitutes an important element in the Albanians' vision of their relations with history. The use of history by nationalism to project the image of a people as permanent victims constitutes an obstacle to a critical confrontation with the past (Misha, 2002:44)

Yet, to many others, Albanians were seen as being the right nation in a right place but suffering from a constant failure to choose the right side. A community that, in the words of Konitza ‘is capable of showing great understanding, but incapable to understand anything at all’ (Konitza, 2000), and thus position itself more effectively in a broader political perspective within the great, ever-changing, constellations of power between the forces and cultures that were using the Balkans as their frontier battlefield.

As history shows, the retreat of the Ottoman Empire and the subsequent ethnic turfs in the Balkans brought severe political misfortune to Albanians. Torn between the centuries-old

Islamic heritage, the lack of ethnonational cohesiveness in political organising combined with the regional threats and the involvement of the Great Powers interests, Albanians ended up in establishing a short-lived nation-state (1912) surrounded by parts of Albanian nation whose territories were to remain in possession of the greater regional alliances, such as Serbia and Montenegro, Greece and the present Macedonia.

Europe loves us, Europe loves us not: the resentment

At least since the times of the Rebirth movement and the 1870s until the present, almost every written account on the Albanian national history – be it a textbook, a personal recollection or a newspaper article – would not miss an opportunity to resentfully cite two historical events that are to be considered decisive as to the national tragedy of partition and subsequent collective perish in the late 19th and throughout the 20th century: The Berlin Congress (1878) and the London Ambassadors Conference (1908). While the former, in its attempts to find a solution for the ‘Eastern Question’ (Vickers, 2001) remained indifferent to Albanian demands for unification of their provinces (Turk. *Vilayets*), the latter rubber-stamped the state of facts on the ground in the aftermath of the first Balkan War—thus partitioning the then-Albanian state:

Although it was agreed in principle to support the establishment of Albania as a new political entity, the (London Ambassadors) Conference nevertheless awarded the Balkan allies large areas of Albanian-claimed territory, regardless of its ethnic composition. A major part of northern and western Albania went to Serbia and Montenegro, while Greece received the large southern region of Chameria. (Vickers, 1995:70)

Ultimately, these events and their subsequent treaties are represented as inextricably linked with the calamities to follow. To Albanians, the post-Ottoman geopolitical reality of the Balkans was experienced as the major national calamity that reorganised irrevocably their perceptions about their position in the region and also about the external, western, perceptions of them. In the post-festum of Balkan wars, after the formation of the new nation-states and geopolitical partitions, Albanian ethnonationalist discourse would produce a strong sentiment of regional victimisation and western resentment, caused by the international betrayal and indifference.

In time, I argue, the widely distributed feeling of resentment assisted in radicalisation of the process of internalising the orientalist approach, as Albanians became convinced that their Ottoman/Muslim heritage was the major reason that caused the Western indifference towards their national aspirations. An account by Rexhep Qosja (1994), a renowned literary critic from Kosovo has summarized this sentiment as follows:

The ultimate reason that made Albanians experience the great, tragic, damage from the politics of the Great Powers is the fact that two-thirds of its population were of Muslim religion – that they were part to an empire that spread this religion through the sword and blaze. In the times when, for the Christian Europe, the religion and nationality meant one single thing, Albanians, under the grip of a practically Islamic empire, could not have been perceived otherwise, other than someone who does not belong to Europe neither by his religion, ethnicity, therefore neither by his destiny; he was to be treated as someone who has been expelled from Europe! (1994:8)

Similar accounts on the misfortune of western rejection of Albanian ‘national cause’ have been fuelling the Albanian ethnonationalist discourse throughout the most part of the 20th century. Often, they represent a mixture of confused sentiments towards the projected West—as both deeply resented and obsessively longed for. Also, a handful of works, writings by external observers went along the lines of constructing the idea of western indifference towards the ‘Albanian question’ along the lines of civilisational—east/west division—and religious differentiation. Below I will provide an account on the atrocities against Albanians from the early 20th century, written by Leo Freundlich in ‘Albanian Golgotha’, a compilation of news reports on aggression of Serbian army in Kosovo during 1911-1913:

A courageous people full of character is being crucified before the eyes of the world and Europe, civilised Christian Europe, remains silent!

Tens of thousands of defenceless people are being massacred, women are being raped, old people and children strangled, hundreds of villages burnt to the ground, priests slaughtered.

And Europe remains silent!

Serbia and Montenegro have set out to conquer a foreign country. But in that land live a freedom-loving, brave people who despite centuries of servitude have not yet

become accustomed to bearing a foreign yoke. The solution is obvious. The Albanians must be exterminated!

A crazed and savage soldateska has turned this solution into a gruesome reality.

Countless villages have been razed to the ground, countless individuals have been butchered. Where once the humble cottages of poor Albanians stood, there is nothing left but smoke and ashes. A whole people is perishing on Calvary cross, and Europe remains silent!²⁸ (1913)

The recorded history of the times bears sufficient data that can point to the rise of xenophobia and the sentiment of national victimisation. For the purposes of further illustration of accounts about Balkan slaughter, I have chosen an observation by Leon Trotsky written in 1912, while working as Balkans war correspondent. During his trip to the Balkans, Trotsky witnessed the turn-of-the century pillages of Albanian-inhabited territories in Kosovo, during the Serb military invasion in the aftermath of the demise of the Ottoman Empire from the region:

The atrocities began as soon as we crossed the old Serbian border (...) There were fires everywhere. Whole Albanian villages had been transformed into columns of flames – in the distance, nearby, and even right along the railway line. This was my first, real, authentic view of war, of the merciless mutual slaughter of human beings. Homes were burning. People's possessions handed down to them by their fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers were going up in smoke (1996:297-303)

I argue that that there are three significant psycho-social traumas generated during the difficult period of the shift of power in the region, and which were employed in the constitution of the orientalist trait within the ethnonationalist discourse among Albanians in general—whether in Albania, Kosovo or the territories they presently inhabit in countries such Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro or north-western Greece. In the context of modern history of the Balkans, they can be traced with the final days of the downfall of the Ottoman Empire and the subsequent period of the rise of ethnonational awareness, followed by ethnic conflicts, historically known as the Balkan Wars. The aftermath of the Balkan Wars introduced the new landscape of ethnic/nation states in the region which establishment was

28 Taken from *Albaniens Golgotha: Anklageakten gegen die Vernichter des Albanervolkes*. Gesammelt und herausgegeben von Leo Freundlich (Vienna 1913). Translated from the German by Robert Elsie. First published in R. Elsie, *Gathering Clouds: The Roots of Ethnic Cleansing in Kosovo and Macedonia*, Dukagjini, Balkan Books Peja 2002, p.11 -46.

made possible through political (but also military) interventions by greater, external powers. Such a major reorganisation of Balkan societies, fundamental paradigm shifts and redefinition of the notions of 'East' and 'West', 'Ottoman' and 'Christian', 'Progressive' and 'Primitive' would become part to the local epics, literature and storytelling. In a simplified categorisation they would highlight the following discursive features:

- the trauma of, externally induced, territorial partition of the 'homeland' the regional hatred towards their origin, language and culture;
- the failure of Great (Western) Powers to understand their history and situation, and act accordingly upon it;
- the failure to convince the European Great Powers to accept its calls for establishing a modern nation-state.

These features appear inextricably linked in the Albanian ethnonationalist narrative as they are reproduced at any stage of its historical evolution. I argue that the partition, the hatred of neighborhood and the western indifference to its 'European' determination became the hallmarks, the key signifiers of the discursive practice that constitutes to-date the ideological base of Albanian nationalism. Its usage in public communication, literature and other cultural products is calibrated to induce and reconstruct the feeling of immense, unifying grief that would initiate and enforce the call for political nationalist mobilisation. Devised in times of national confusion and inability to cope with the ruthlessness of regional feuds fought under the flags of competing ethnonationalism, it is manifested as a discourse of internal insecurity and external suspicion as it embraces fatalist connotations. It constructs analogous emphasis to its major ideological/programmatic epistemes, as it speaks about a nation thwarted by a disappearing empire, exposed to regional carnage and betrayed by the 'civilised' world:

The Great Powers, through the decisions of the Berlin Congress (1878), did enormous injustice to Albanian nation: they have treated as Ottoman property the ethnic and historical Albanian lands; they have acknowledged the results of the aggression by the Balkan neighbors – those conducted by Serbia and Montenegro upon Albanian lands (. . .) Under the slogan of Europeanization, the Great Powers have shown that they want to reorganise the Balkans according to their interests – or the interests of the some of them – and the interests of a handful of Balkan nations! (Qosja, 1994:54)

Similarly, the following excerpt focuses on ethnic partition, coming from the powerful epic poem 'Lahuta e Malesise' (1902), written by Gjergj Fishta (1871-1940), a renowned Albanian Catholic priest, scholar and author:

. . . The black bread of the Albanian
That he earned in blood and fight
The damned are about to tear apart
Piece by piece

The combination of fear from pogroms and partition, the difficulties of deciphering the new, western, 'power political', 'power cultural', 'power intellectual' and 'power moral'—to paraphrase Said (1978)—have undoubtedly ushered Albanians from each side of the Kosovan/Albanian border into hasty construction of the national cause and the nationalist discourse. Such hastiness, that in time initiated the state of recurring internal quarrel and division, improvised 'East/West' self-representation, unclear ideological allegiances with greater powers has been effectively accounted by authors, such as Hupchick (2002). He notes that 'without the very real threat of Greek, Serbian, Montenegrin, and Bulgarian territorial encroachment into their lands, Albanians most likely would not have adopted Western-style nationalism—at least not when they did. (2002:303)

I argue that such western-style Albanian nationalism carries a dichotomic condition of both *anxiety* towards a foreign rule as well as the recurring feature of *longing* to align with it. Such dichotomy has ultimately shaped and constituted the features of Albanian orientalist ethnonationalism as a variation of defensive, reactive nationalism. The *fear* from foreign hegemony appears to stream parallelly with a collective *demand* for it: such, seemingly absurd, narrative is rationalised through projections about 'progressive' and 'considerate' European/western rule which, once introduced, would prevent the destructive tendencies of neighbouring, competing ethnonationalisms. In other words, a common and larger (possibly, imperial) sociopolitical order imposed over the region would control and manage local inter-ethnic feuds, thus ensuring the preservation of a smaller nation's distinct existence. Ultimately, in Frasheri's terms, the 'Europe' would be projected as an incoming 'progressive' substitution to the outgoing and 'savage' Ottoman Empire. As the history of the early 20th century Balkans shows, Albanians failed to enter the realm of another, 'positive hegemony'

in Mouffe's terms (2006), and were thus destined to develop a schizophrenic ethnonational narrative under the new geopolitical reality of partitions and inter-ethnic atrocities.

Such form of a defensive narrative—often contradictory and inconsistent—has been devised as a protective ideological platform that would assist in generating a representation of Albanians as 'progressive' and 'European' so that, in Qosja's (1994) terms, they would not be expelled 'from Europe', and 'by Europe'. I argue that, as such, it represented a desperate attempt by the handful of its educated elite to react and respond to the developments in the region – the liberation struggles and independence movements in Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania and so forth. Frasheri, himself a major representative of that tiny elite of scholars, was very much aware of the difficulties in interpreting those developments to a society with a history of severe social and cultural isolation from what was perceived to be the 'western', 'European' civilisation. To Misha (2002), the 19th century found Albanians as one of the most backward and isolated peoples, 'with a number of disadvantages compared to their immediate neighbours' (ibid:36). He notes that Albanians were cut off from contacts with the rest of the world 'even if judged according to the standards of the Ottoman Empire' (ibid).

Albania continued to remain a mysterious country, an image that pursued it for a very long time. Even as late as 1913 the French journalist Delaisi wrote: 'I don't know of any other country which is so closed to civilisation: even the Sahara is better known to us, even Tibet I cannot say is more mysterious.' (2002:36)

Such a state of affairs in the society is referred to by Frasheri as the consequence of the internal, Albanian legacy of 'political ignorance' and 'historical blindness' which he lists among the 'greatest dangers' faced by the nation. Here, his aggressive orientalist approach should be analysed as inseparable from the emancipatory, enlightenment-based influences which at the time formed the basis of the Albanian National Rebirth (or, 'renaissance', for that matter). I argue that, indeed, the Albanian orientalist discourse represents the manner in which the ideology of enlightenment/modernity has been articulated. The former represents the discursive technique of disseminating the latter. 'This is now the war of the pencils and letters, of schools and nationhood', notes Frasheri in the chapter 'Albania's Dangers' (1999:54), thus assisting in the construction of yet another, critically important, binary opposition between the 'primitive East' and the 'progressive West'. To Frasheri and Albanian ethnonationalist elite of the time, Albania was facing a civilisational challenge, entrenched

between the two essentially different hegemonic structures that had essentially different demands from Albanians:

(Turkey) takes Albanians only for soldiers, tortures them, requires them to learn the skills of war. . . It does not educate the poor (Albanian), but mocks him; exploits him for three years, ten years, forces him under arms – away from his homeland. . . For five hundred years, the Turks as their masters, have not taught Albanians any crafts, skills or wisdom – they taught them only to fight and plunder. . . (1999:50)

According to Frasheri, this treatment ought to change, and Albanians ought to realise that qualities other than those that served ‘the Turk’ will be required by them from the incoming ‘progress’ and ‘Europe’. A useful illustration of this epistemological crossroad and challenge comes from Naim Frasheri:

Albanian men
Let us gain knowledge
For the past is no longer
Today is in a need of light (1986 (1995):88)

The main sentiment of the time was that a great civilisational dilemma was looming, and Albanians needed to understand and decide which hegemonic system they would to adhere to. I argue that the orientalist ethnonationalism of the 19th century has been constructed as a discursive practice that could induce public support for that national decision. As such, it came to represent both a cultural ideology and a programme of political action. It is the Frasheri’s pamphlet and the engagement of the educated elite with the Albanian Rebirth Movement that produced the analogy (even parallelism) between the definition of the ‘educated’, the ‘intellectual’ and the political activist. In the next chapter of this research I will try to analyse and underpin this claim about the inseparability of the ‘intellectual’ and political activist that was coined during the period of the National Rebirth and has resurfaced—specifically in the case of Kosovo, as sociopolitically distinct Albanian community—during the last decade of the 20th century and the dissolution of Yugoslavia.

Below, in Table 1, I provide a list of such parallelisms, presented through the orientalist logic in terms of causes and consequences—a juxtaposing of fundamental ideological postulates

about the Albanian national identity and the negative analogies/traumas acquired during various stages of region's history.

Table 6.1. Projection of causes and consequences in the narrative about Albanian national identity and the 'trauma of partition'

Key ideological epistemes	Negative analogies / traumas (what is presented as the cause or rationalisation)
Albanians are autochthonous and homogenous nation of the Balkans	Partition of Albanian lands and its nation by external hegemonies
Albanians are descendants of ancient Illyrians, part of the Christian civilisation before the Ottoman conquests	Constant regional hatred and hostility towards their origin, language and culture
Their predominantly Islamic heritage represents an involuntary consequence of oppressive past	Failure of Great Powers to understand their history and situation, and act accordingly upon it
Albanians belong to the realm of European/Christian civilisation	European realm of institutional power could continue to deny acceptance of this historical and ideological fact

The table aims to illustrate the symbiotic relation between the ideological epistemes and traumas, that to-date continues to remain an open-ended process: it reveals the quest for a decisive, external (western) authority that would legitimize Albanian ethnic victimisation by the immediate, competing neighbourhood and, subsequently, preside in its favor. Whether the Great Powers from the period of the London Ambassadors Conference, The Berlin Congress or the Versailles Treaties from the early 20th century, or the Dayton Accords (1995) and Rambouillet Conference (1999)—the orientalist ethnonationalist discourse manufactured a national political strategy based on pursuing local, ethnic goals through the identification and alliance with external sources of legitimation, perceived as capable of presiding over the deadlocked and irreconcilable history of regional feuds.

Here is an illustrative excerpt from the memoirs of Hasan Prishtina, another important figure from (Kosovo) Albanian nationalist movement from the turn of the 20th century:

While waiting for the reply of Mr Pavlof, I went to see the British Consul in Skopje and informed him of the following: 'In order to put an end to Turkish massacres in Albania and to overcome impediments in the alphabet question and issues of our

national culture, we Albanians have decided that the only way out is an armed uprising against Turkish rule. In this perilous situation, we are in great need of England's support. I would therefore ask you to inform the Foreign Secretary about this statement of mine.' (Hassan Bey Prishtina (1921) in Elsie, 2000)

Thus, the longing for 'the West'—for 'going to Europe' as noted by Todorova (1997)—was both the source of persistent ideological *envy* and *detestation* of Europe. Europe and the West have been persistently presented in a two-fold way: as a rightful place of civilisational (not only geographical) belonging, and as a source of their national plight. In their eyes, the West represented a set of former imperial powers with a history of turning a deaf ear to cries for cultural and political acceptance and legitimation. Such a perplexed perception is well explained by Misha (2002):

Nothing is simple when we speak of the relations between the Albanians and Europe. The Albanian collective imagery of these two entities (with the Orient close by adding a further complication) incarnates the numerous contradictions and ambiguities that characterise the Albanians' identity process. Europe is for Albanians the land of aspiration, the incarnation of civilisation, power the dream of wellbeing, the shelter in which to feel secure and protected. Yet, there are contrasting images of 'Europe the faithless', Europe the inimical cause of many wrongs done to Albanians including their partition, Europe the immoral, 'the old whore' etc. (2002:44)

Although the focus of Misha's study describes the general attitudes among Albanians in Albania at the outset of the 20th century, there is an abundance of studies and literature that confirm the existence of similar attitude among Kosovo Albanians as well. Below is one of the most popular verses from the Albanian folk epics 'Lahuta e Malcise' (1923) by Gjergj Fishta, referred to by Misha, and which became the major symbol in discursive manifestations of political resentment with the 'Europe':

Uh! Europe, you old whore,
Who turned its back on God and honor
Is this, then, the sign of civility:
To devour the land of Albania
And feed the hounds of Russia? (Fishta, 1991:211)

According to Misha, ‘Albanians were among the last to enter to enter into this scene of seething nationalistic passions and ambitions, combined with the intrigues and interest politics of the European Great Powers’ (2002:34). In particular, the intertwined, yet dialogic relation of admiration vs. resentment towards ‘The West’ and ‘Europe’ reappeared in Kosovo’s public discourse during 1990s and contained all of the major features of an orientalist or, for that matter, balkanist, discourse, as I will discuss in the next chapter.

‘Albanianess’: nation as religion

Another important feature of Albanian orientalist-ethnonationalist discourse relates to the construction of a historically validated irrelevance of the religious factor in the constitution of its national and political ideology. In the works of the authors of the Albanian Rebirth Movement, such approach was imposed as an ideological necessity, considering the religious divide between Muslims, Catholics and Orthodoxes that was permeating the Albanian ethnicity. In the period of ethnonational awakening in the Balkans, the religious belonging was an integral component of newly-adopted national identities with the Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian, Montenegrin and Macedonian mobilised under the support of the respective Christian Orthodox church. An important explanation on the intertwined nature of Balkan ethnonationalism and religious affiliation—i.e. the ethnoreligious national identity—is provided by Hupchick:

Among the Ottoman Balkan non-Muslims, Ottoman theocracy and its *millet* traditions which provided an Orthodox group identity to the illiterate masses, made religious affiliation an inescapably crucial component of their ethnonational identities. Imported Romantic ideals not only laid the foundation for their ethnic national identities but fired the intensity of national emotions in their liberation struggles against an (Ottoman) empire perceived as completely ‘alien’ in culture because of its different religion. By the time Berlin confirmed the existence of Balkan national states, the ‘nations’ in all of them were consciously self-identified as Orthodox Christian as well as ethnic (2002:279)

The internal religious divide between Catholic, Christian Orthodox and Muslim Albanians, coupled with the threat of incoming ethnoreligious mobilisation in the neighborhood as noted by Hupchick, pressed the leaders of the Albanian Rebirth Movement to construct the idea of

ethnic and national belonging as the supreme identity signifier in the ethnonationalist discourse. Albanians were thus primarily ‘Albanians’ while their religious affiliation ought to be considered of secondary importance. Such supreme value of supra-religious, national identity was projected as both historical and sociopolitical: its ethnic ancientness and perenniality spoke about its pre-religious origin, while, in contemporary terms the nationhood was projected as inextricably linked with the notion of ‘progress’—a key signifier of a modern society. To Frasheri, the religious divide would ultimately decrease the chances for any western legitimacy of Albanian nation and state:

Once they (Europeans) see us divided into three religions – and, chiefly, Muslim – they will not be convinced that we can comprise a united and common nation that can be able to govern itself (Frasheri, 1899 (1999):61)

Ultimately, it is the external projection of the nation—how are Albanians perceived by the west and Europe—that, Frasheri believes, will preside over the political destiny of Albanian nation in the time of turmoil. Their projection as a society which carries, ‘at least the germs of progress’—to paraphrase here George Miller (in Todorova, 1997)—was seen possible only through radical adoption of the orientalist approach in the ethnonationalist narrative. While the nationalist discourse was able to construct the base for a new collective identity, its orientalist approach was providing for its civilisational orientation: it was not about mere creation of a nation, but about the creation of a *western-modelled* nation as the only possible model, according to Frasheri:

Such (religious) divide has not caused any cost among Albanians. Religious quarrel which, not only in the countries of the East—but also in Europe and its enlightened countries—has many times caused great torment and murder; Albania has never known such quarrel between Muslims and Christians, between Catholics and Orthodoxes – or between sunnis or bektashis. Albanian is an Albanian before he becomes a Muslim or Christian. Whatever he was in the times of Pelasgians, he remained the same under Christians or the belief of Mohammad (Frasheri, 1899 (1999):45)

Nevertheless, the predominantly Islamic heritage of Albanians—approximately 70 per cent of Albanians are Muslim (in Kosovo, the percentage is higher, app. 90 percent)—constituted

them as the ‘easternmost’ in the eyes of their Balkans neighbors, and generated the internal sentiment about it as an obstructive feature in the process of displaying their ‘Europeanness’. Subsequently, the orientalist approach was adopted to reconstruct ‘their own image in interaction with an ideal vision of Christian, enlightened European civilisation that is a constant reproach to their backwardness and primitivism and does not recognise their contribution to history’, as noted by DiLellio (2007:25). I argue that, among others, to-date the wide perception of themselves as victims of the Ottoman legacy maintains collective feelings of lagging behind Europe, of anxiety and ambivalence about the level of their ‘Europeanness’ and—presently—low chances for institutional membership to contemporary structures such European Union. A harsh self-criticism on such ambiguous behavior comes from Mustafa Nano (2002), a journalist from Albania—a part of a longer, contemporary polemics on the subject of Albanian ideological ‘pro-westernness’ and alleged ‘anti-easterness’:

No other nation from this continent is more vocal in expressing such ‘strong’ European mentality (. . .) I have the feeling that such vocation is not natural; it is not derived out of the desire to confirm to the Occident our occidentalism. It comes from our weakness, insecurity, lack of awareness and the lack of national identity. Similarly, part of our predecessors, during the 17th and 18th century, due to their weakness, insecurity and low religious awareness chose to proclaim themselves Muslims, although they essentially remained crypto-Christians; today, we have chosen to proclaim ourselves western although we essentially remain crypto-Eastern (in Sulstarova, 2007:245)

In her analysis of the period before and after the National Rebirth, DiLellio notes that orientalism represents a ‘recurrent’ and ‘prominent’ trend in Albanian intellectual discourse and it presided over the ‘split of the society into west and east, defined as fundamental categories of modernity and backwardness’ (2007:32). Throughout the last century, this recurrent trend was taking place, with varying intensity, on both sides of the border and was characterized with downplaying of their overwhelming acceptance of Islam vis-à-vis their Islamic civilisation. Islam has been seen as an historical parenthesis – an adaptive strategy to difficult circumstances—but it appears secondary to the Christian/European essence of Albanians. According to DiLellio, the identification with Europe is elaborated through the recognition of an existing ‘lateness that needs to be overcome’ (ibid).

Were they to be considered ‘sufficiently European’? Was there a sufficient feature of some former, assumed ‘Europeanness’ still left in their social order now that a non-Western rule has departed from the region? Historically, such questions reveal a recurrent dilemma over the past century—for, according to Sulstarova (2006), the fears of being automatically attached the label of ‘oriental’ society by the Western Europe were well-based due to latter’s common pattern of defining the Balkans as ‘the Near East’ in its political discourse until the beginning of the 20th century:

While the Balkans, until the early 20th century was perceived as ‘the Near East’ by the Europeans, the national identities that were established in the region during the 19th-20th century were profoundly orientalist. This was due to the fact that their ‘other’ represented one or more neighboring nations which were supposedly located in the East and their elements defined as ‘oriental’: history, culture and tradition were to be cleansed from oriental elements. (Sulstarova, 2006:21)

In his pamphlet, Frasherri appears aware of the argument of ‘European’ Christianity as opposed to ‘eastern’ Muslimness that will, eventually, arise by the regional nations in the political competition of winning over the sympathies of the Great Powers. In the section ‘Albania’s Dangers’ he lists the threats that are posed by the rising ethnonationalisms in the neighborhood that were also influenced by the religious mobilisation: specifically, the Greek, Serbian/Montenegrin and Bulgarian nationalist movements and their encroachment tendencies. Frasherri takes into account the sociopolitical relevance of the Christian label of those nationalisms:

(Greeks) are trying to make them (Albanians) to forget their language; to learn to read and write in Greek – to become Greek. They think that, once they would become Christian Greeks, their lands, when the time comes, would become part of Greece – for Muslims would never be accepted by Europe. (Frasherri, (1899) 1999:56)

According to Todorova, ‘because of the crucial division between Islam and Christianity, ideas in the Balkans came exclusively from the Christian West and Russia’, notes Todorova (1997:179). In such a situation, Frasherri and ideologists from the National Rebirth Movement were compelled to produce an idealised depiction of Albanians as being *too ancient* and *too*

autochthonous to be identified with any religious belonging—although aware that, in their case, ‘autochthonousness’ also accounted for the legacy of political and cultural isolation; it could be interpreted as an indication of ethnic remoteness to any structured civilisation with a strong religious doctrine at its center.

‘It was only Albanians who preserved their nationality as they refused to mix with the foreigners and lived separated from the world – in the wild’ (Frasheri, 1899 (1999):54).

The challenges of religious divide were too strong; glorification of the nationhood was to be employed as the decisive action—indeed, seen as the only one possible—for the physical preservation of the community:

Albanian men! Join hands and arms together in the unity – for this will save you! Otherwise, you are lost. Do not look aside for religion and faith: Muslims, Orthodoxes, Catholics – all Albanians, wherever they are – are brothers. They must all unite under the sacred flag of Albania! (Frasheri, 1899 (1999):80)

Hence the myth of Albanian ‘indifference to religion’ which, according to Malcolm, represents one of the ‘essential characteristics imputed to the Albanians, that deserves special mention’ (2002:84). And, there is some truth in this, Malcolm notes, as he invokes observations by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu from 1717:

‘These people (Albanian soldiers)... declare that they are utterly unable to judge which religion is best; but, to be certain of not entirely rejecting the truth, they very prudently follow both, and go to the mosques on Fridays and the church on Sundays, saying for their excuse, that at the day of judgement they are sure of protection from the true prophet; but which that is, they are not able to determine in this world.’ (in Malcolm, 2002:291)

Downplaying religion and its impact in shaping the social order appears indivisible from the general discourse of national identity and their political strategy. As noted by Jelavich, obtaining of the independence by the Christian states of the region during the fall of the Ottoman Empire, compelled ‘some elements of the Albanian leadership to develop programs

that were more in line with the contemporary European nationalism' (1984:84). Their nationalist narrative and political programmes were 'emphasizing the cultural and linguistic unity, rather than religious divisions' (ibid).

In this context, the poem 'Oh, Albania', written in 1880 by Vaso Pasha²⁹ (Eng. Wassa Effendi, (1825-1892)) represents the cornerstone of the supra-religious discourse on the Albanian nation, written by another important exponent of the Romantic period of Albanian National Rebirth Movement. At the time, the poem was disseminated as a major work within the body of nationalist narrative and literature, as it complements Frasheri's pamphlet with its main emphasis placed on the damaging role played by the religious difference in the process of construction of ethnonational identity:

Albanians, you are slaying one another,
Some shout for country, some against sin,
One says I'm Turk, another Latin,
Others Greeks or Slavs profess to be,
Fools! You are brothers can't you see?
Priests and mullas have made you mute
To keep you split and destitute.
Foreigners sit by your fireplace,
Your wives and sisters they disgrace,
And if money comes knocking on your door
The faith of your father you ignore,
You become slaves of alien boors,
Whose race and tongue differ from yours (. . .)

Can we allow aliens to smother
And trample on our cherished Mother?

Awake, Albania, it's time to rise
And bind yourselves with brotherly ties;

29 See Vasa, Pashko: 'The Truth on Albania and Albanians: Historical and Critical Issues', by E. St. J. Fairman (ed.) B. Destani, London, LBTH Learning Design, 1999.

Look not to church or mosque for pietism,
*The faith of Albanians is Albanianism!*³⁰

Written in a Romantic, mobilisatory style this poem gained a life of its own as one of the most effective ideological texts as it places a unyielding emphasis on the supra-religious feature of nationalist discourse—as a major ‘disciplining’ component in the narrative. Clearly, the poem attaches two important negative connotations of the religion: (a) it is of an alien extract (b) it is the source of ethnic/national divide . Once again, the tendency of causing an immense, personal, grief about the fate of the imagined ancestry—the ‘Mother Albania’—is employed with a belief that the sacralization of the nationhood would induce ‘modernization’ of public’s perception of its sociopolitical condition in the context of geopolitical developments in the region. Undoubtedly, the practical reasoning behind such structure relates to specific religious history of Albanians, comprised of three religious belonging: Muslim, Catholic and Christian Orthodox. Placing the national belonging ahead of any religious belonging was a political act with the aim of popular mobilisation. Similarly, the following excerpt from Frasheri encourages the idea of Albanian national identity as both supreme and perennial:

In our eastern parts, people always place religion ahead of nationality; if a Greek, for instance, changes his religion – and becomes a Catholic – he will call himself a Frank; if he would turn Muslim, he will call himself a Turk. Only Albanians will put religion behind the nation. An Albanian, whether Muslim, Orthodox or Catholic, will always be an Albanian. (1999:53)

Repeatedly, Frasheri invokes the argument of ‘perenniality’ of the Albanian nation (for these concepts, see Anderson, 1983; Todorova, 2005) which is presented as both a modern, advanced feature of identity, but also as a timeless and supreme historical/biological quality of the community. The discourse that he employs constructs the sedimentation of ‘Albanian’ identities accordingly to the political requirements of the nation-building—with the emphasis on the supremeness of ethnic/national belonging as the overruling factor. In this context, I argue, the downplaying of the importance of the religion was employed as a *normalising* feature, in Foucault’s terms: ideologically, it was a quintessential ingredient for establishing

30 The English translation is provided by Robert Elsie in ‘History of Albanian Literature, East European Monographs’, New York, Columbia University Press, 1995

the national cohesion. Complementary to Frasheri's pamphlet, the political programme embedded in Wassa Effendi's poem closes in on several ideological goals that, ever since, remain as the major highlights of contemporary Albanian ethnonationalist discourse:

- (a) Albanians are autochthonous;
- (b) Nationhood is ancestry; Albanians are brothers;
- (c) Albanians have been divided through external hegemonies;
- (d) Religion and religious divide is an external, imposed condition;
- (e) Ethnic belonging is supreme;
- (f) Albanians must unify within a single nation-state.

This feature of downplaying the importance of religion in the nation-making process creates the major difference between Albanian ethnonationalist discourse and the rest of its regional, competing, counterparts. Specifically, it regards its manifestation among the Slav nations—Croatian, Serbian, Macedonian, Montenegrin—including the Greeks. The Slav and Greek nationalist narrative is seen indivisible from the Christian Orthodox religious fabric; it comprises its ideological core and provides for the interpretation of its political programme. And, whereas the Slav and Greek nationalist discourse highlights the feature of Orthodoxy as the civilisational evidence of its 'European' authenticity and antiquity—the Albanian variation places an emphasis on its 'secularist' tendency through diminishing the role of the religious fabric as anti-modern and anti-European. Here is another example from Fishta's epic, along the same lines of ethnonational, supra-religious mobilisation and unification:

I have joined the army, Sir
Not for Turks, but for Albanians
For they, be Christian or Mohammedan
Are jointly but one Albanian
Thus together we will stand
And fight 'till the very end
Until we all get torn apart
Priests, mullas and vicars

As noted by Gilles de Rapper, 'it is common in Albania to say that all Albanians, whether Christian or Muslim, are brothers, and that their only religion is their common Albanian

nationality' (2002:191). Historically, the dogma of national unity which is in direct opposition to religious heterogeneousness remained at the core of Albanian ethnonationalist narrative. Of specific relevance to this study is the analysis of its discursive technology of projecting and transforming the feature of its supra-religiousness into a valuable indication of 'modernity' and 'Europeanness': its alleged eclectic origin and inclusivist nature. Indeed, looked upon from this perspective, Albanian nationalist discourse has been devised as a 'secular' variation of the phenomenon, and could thus easily pass for—or, be confused with—a civic, north-western-European definition of it. However, as discussed previously, its specific focus on ethnic origin and bloodline ancestry—and its projection of Albanians as a society on the margins of 'Europe'—makes it differ substantially from the rest of the spectrum.

Scanderbeg: the epitome of ancientness, national cohesion and Europeaness

The downplaying of the importance of religious background as a means to establishing an overarching, 'Albanianist' identity as a supra-religious category has been a continuous political project of Albanian ethnonationalist discourse. And, as noted by Misha, as with almost every Balkan nationalist project, 'an episode taken from medieval history and mythology would become central to its ideological semantics'(2002:43). In the absence of a medieval kingdom—as opposed to historical narratives of the existence of medieval kingdoms in the neighbouring nations, such as Serbia, Croatia—Misha argues that the Albanian nationalists chose as their symbol the figure of Scanderbeg (also known as Georg/Alexander Castrioti (1405-1466)), 'who in his heroic tragedy had all the necessary ingredients for building up a myth' (2002:43).

Here, Scanderbeg's personal history was essential for the construction of national identity through overriding importance of the religious: Scanderbeg represents an acclaimed historical personality, a Christian-born ethnic Albanian who was by the age of 10 reportedly compelled to be recruited as a future servant with the Ottoman Empire. A skillful youth, he grew within the ranks of then-Ottoman army and reached the level of one of its major field commanders—after his subsequent conversion to Islam under the new name of Scander Beg (Turk. *Iskender Bey*; Eng. *Lord Alexander*). A significant number of historiographic accounts emphasize the moment when, at the height of his glory and power, Scanderbeg dramatically

switched the allegiance from the Ottoman to the Christian Vatican, as he proclaimed himself as ‘the avenger of his family and country’. As noted by a vast number of authors³¹ and historians of the medieval Balkans, his successful defence of the region from the Ottoman conquests (present day Albania, parts of Greece, Macedonia and Montenegro) earned him fame and acclaim with the Catholic church and the Vatican: Pope Nicholas V (1447–55) named Scanderbeg ‘Champion of Christendom’; Pope Callixtus III (1455-64) made him into a Captain General of the Holy See ; Finally, Pope Paul II (1464–71) promoted him into the ‘Athleta Christi’ (Defender of Christ).

Expectedly, the tales and the history of Scanderbeg would occupy the center role in the Albanian Rebirth/Romanticist literature and works. The figure and the myth of Scanderbeg had it all: it was able to merge all the historical, political and cultural requirements for producing an enduring Albanian ethnonationalist narrative. One of the major works on Scanderbeg from the Rebirth period comes from Naim Frasheri (1886), the ‘History of Scanderbeg’ (Alb. ‘Istori’ e Skenderbeut’), which, according to Sulstarova (2007), represents the ‘central figure of the National Rebirth due to the volume of the works, the popularity with the (Albanian) readership, the support in advancing of the Albanian literary language—as well as the nationalist-illuminist ideas that permeated his work’ (2007:44)³². Lubonja (1995) writes about the exercise of ‘retaking’ of this, essentially Christian hero, ‘by Albanian nationalists’ who reconstructed and redesigned his narrative for the purposes of producing a projection of Albanian national identity as both anti-Ottoman (his legendary struggle against ‘the Turk’), as well as pre-Ottoman (his Catholic childhood). Lubonja notes that ‘its deeds were gradually scraped their religious context and attached the struggle for the liberation of the homeland’ (ibid:35).

In this light, his figure was treated by Naim Frasheri in his epic ‘History of Scanderbeg’. I argue that this work of literature—a voluminous, versed epic—has been instrumental in the

31 Books and reference on the topic: Edward Gibbon, 1788, ‘History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire’, Volume 6, Chapter LXVII, ‘Birth and Education of Scanderbeg, Prince of Albania’; Frashëri, Naim; Cipo, Kostaq (1953) (in Albanian), ‘Histori e Skënderbeut’; Godo, Sabri (1983) (in Albanian), ‘Skanderbeg, a novel’; Hodgkinson, Harry (2005), ‘Scanderbeg: From Ottoman Captive to Albanian Hero’, I. B. Tauris; Drizari, Nelo (1968), ‘Scanderbeg: his life, correspondence, orations, victories, and philosophy’; Noli, Fan Stilian (1947), ‘George Castrioti Scanderbeg’ (1405–1468), International Universities Press; Barletius, Marinus (1508) (in Albanian), ‘Historia de vita et gestis Scanderbegi Epirotarum Principis’.

32 Quotation refers to Xholi, Zija: ‘Mendimtare te Rilidnes Kombetare’, 8 Nentori, Tirane, 1987. P.187-188.

process of naturalisation of the ancient, supra-religious narrative about the Albanian nation. ‘The History of Scanderbeg’ encompasses and defines the basis of the key claims of the Albanian ethnonationalist discourse, stated at the beginning of this chapter: the pre-Ottoman idyllic depiction of Albanian ‘European’ autochthonousness, the struggle against the ‘eastern’ oppression and the defense of the ‘European’ values and civilisation as a proof for contemporary worth of Albanian nation in the process of external, western political deliberations.

For the purposes of this research, I will confine the analysis of Naim Frasheri’s epic to highlighting the construction of the features of ethnonational autochthonousness – therefore, Europeanness – and the feature of Albanian sacrifice and devotion to Europe and ‘the West’ through Scanderbeg’s struggle. Naim Frasheri’s opening verses introduce Albanian ancientness and autochthonousness, as they engage in appropriation of, and self-identification with, the region’s glorified mythology:

When he spread the Universe
The true and great God
made the land Albania
and gave life to Albanians

It was the land of God
Albania, first of all
The homeland of wisdom
the heart of goodness
The Great and proud Alexander (Scanderbeg)
Matched by no man
Nor he will ever be
Pyrrhus the brave and many others
Who once were
And were never forgotten
Were all Albanians
Sons of Albania
They were no Greeks or Bulgarians
But came from the land of God. (Song 1, verses 65-80)

Frasheri gives a strong basis for the reinvention of ‘Albanianness’ as supreme identity in historical, cultural and ethnic levels. The operation of ethnic appropriation of the local, ancient mythology is swiftly employed in contemporary processes of national ‘differentiation’; there, the legendary heroes, the signifiers of the Albanian nationhood are ‘no Greeks or Bulgarians’—revealing thus the process of negative identification through ‘*what one is not*’ as a major feature of ethnonationalist discourse. Let us look into the manner in which Frasheri introduces the Ottoman conquest and the subsequent subduing of ‘perennial’ Albania:

And, as Albania was dwelling
Under the serene prosperity
the reign of goodness and peace
A fierce monster
Was rising from Asia
To spread like a darkness
And cover the world in a shadow
It was a nation cursed
With slyness on its tongue
the stern in the eyes
the demons in the heart

Civility sank in the seas
Darkness rose as a cloud
Ignorance beset upon the lands
Blood, death and desolation (Song I, verses 85-112)

Naim Frasheri’s Scanderbeg epics mark an important momentum in the manner in which the ethnonationalist discourse was coupled with orientalist features. The offensive introduction of the Ottomans as the ‘fierce’, ‘Asian’ ‘monster’ is constructed in the binary opposition to ‘the Enlightenment’ and ‘the west’. Xhaferi³³ notes that the Albanian Rebirth leaders have employed ‘with ingenious simplicity the major concept of national strategy which notes that for Albanians, ‘the sun rises in the West’(2004:65). Xhaferi was referring to Naim Frasheri’s verse about the sun that ‘rises where it sets’ (quoted earlier in this Chapter), a poetic allusion

33 Xhaferi, Arben: *Sfida e Identitetit*, in *Identiteti Kosovar*, Java, 2004, Prishtine.

to Enlightenment, west and modernity. Thus, ‘the rise’ of the Ottomans is displayed through the discursive logic of the binary opposition—‘goodness’ and ‘peace’ versus ‘slyness’ and ‘demons’; ‘civility’ and ‘prosperity’ versus ‘darkness’ and ‘ignorance’.

More importantly, through such apocalyptic depiction of the incoming ‘eastern’ hegemonic rule, Frasheri sets the scene and the tone for introducing the figure of Scanderbeg as the merging point between the Europe and Albanians; through his legendary struggle against the Ottomans, Scanderbeg will reveal the Albanians’ national sacrifice for Europe’s wellbeing, as well as the emphasize Europe’s worst fears from the ‘Eastern’ threat:

If there wasn’t for Albania
The whole, blind Europe
Would’ve been swept by Turkey
Nothing would be saved (Song 14, verses 265-268)

And also:

Europe, the poor, back then
In tatters and turmoil
Awaiting for Voltaire and Rousseau
To awake them from slumber (Song 4, verses 9-28)

In general, the Scanderbeg narrative provides for the sophisticated representation of the victimisation component: he devoted his life defending Europe and Christendom at its gates, fighting against its perpetual and civilisational archenemy. I argue that such trait of the ‘unsung’ heroic victim permeates the Albanian ethnonationalist discursive practice as it raises a specific condition of *ressentiment* towards ‘Europe’ for its failure to recognise such major—and historically critical—accomplishment by a small nation guided by a glorious personality, acclaimed and legitimized by the Holy Chair itself. Albania and Albanians were in the role of *Antemurale Christianitatis*, of martyrs and defenders of Christianity at its very borders – fighting and dying for its freedom, safety and welfare. Here is another, complementing view, in Sami Bey Frasheri’s pamphlet:

All European powers that were in existence back then were placing their hopes on Scanderbeg; they were expecting the salvation of Europe from Albanians. They were not as brave as Scanderbeg, nor had the faith of Albanians. Many a time, the Hungarians and the Pope sent Scanderbeg to combat – and then abandoned him, watching from the distance. Nevertheless, Scanderbeg endured: through him, Albania endured its decency with honor. (Fraseri, (1899) 1999:26-27)

To-date, the life and deeds of Scanderbeg are envisioned as the blueprint of the Albanian ideal: (a) his autochthonous, noble ancestry, (b) the cruel destiny of abandoning the homeland and servitude with the hegemonic Ottoman conqueror, (c) his decision to turn against it, driven by self-awareness about his ethnic (and, cultural) roots, (d) glorious defense of his people and country at the gates Christian/European civilisation from the Eastern, ‘barbarian’ conquest. To Misha (2002) ‘Scanderbeg’s myth became the argument proving Albania’s cultural affinity to Europe. This identity construction had a double function: on the one hand, it served to convince Albanians to turn their backs as soon as possible to their Ottoman past, where most nationalists saw the source of all evils had beset the Albanians’ (ibid:43). The figure of Scanderbeg was also meant to win the sympathy and support of the European Great Powers. Accordingly, Misha argues, ‘in the national narrative, Skanderbeg symbolized the sublime sacrifice of the Albanians in defending Europe from Asiatic hordes.’ (ibid)

The *Scanderbeg narrative* is of essential importance: not only that it tends to confirm the *European roots* of Albanians, but it also emphasizes their *martyrisation for Europe*. Again, there is a strong perplexion of analogies at work between the essential pillars of the Albanian ethnonationalist narrative and the highlights of the epitome of Scanderbeg, as I illustrate in Table 2:

Table 6.2: Discursive complementarity between ideological epistememes about Albanian national identity/origin and the narrative about Scanderbeg

Key ideological epistememes	Scanderbeg analogy, cohesion narrative
Albanians are autochthonous and homogenous nation of the Balkans	Autochthonous, noble ancestry
Albanians are descendants of ancient Illyrians, part of the Christian civilisation before the Ottoman conquests	Born as a Catholic Christian
Their predominantly Islamic heritage	Forceful servitude under the

represents an involuntary consequence of oppressive past	Ottoman
Albanians belong to the European/Christian civilisation	His life as the Defender of Christendom (and European civilisation)

The reconstruction of the Scanderbeg narrative through a combination of historical fact and a nationalist myth remains multi-faceted and, undoubtedly, multi-functional. The reproduction and maintenance of the narrative of Scanderbeg enables and justifies the pragmatic acts of downplaying the religious component within the nation-building discourse. The following verse from Fishta's epic illustrates this in a careful wording with respect to religious belonging—and its relativization thereof, whilst at the same time using a strong emphasis on Scanderbeg as a unifying signifier:

Maybe we are divided amongst ourselves
 But when the King calls upon us
 And when the Serb rises upon our soil
 For the God's word, the Albanian seed
 Turkish or Christ's – one must know
 Will gather at once – all as one!

Rise now, Sons of Scanderbeg
 Turkish, Christian – none divide
 Rise and die on the field of Truth
 Let your roar of thunder be heard! (1923:258)

Ultimately, it is the feature of 'progressiveness' that the figure of Scanderbeg is supposed to induce and highlight; for it is his capacity to choose the 'right' side and to fight against the 'wrong' that reveals the simplistic, yet 'modern' ideological binary opposition: Scanderbeg (i.e. Albanians) is right/good while the Ottomans (i.e. the Turk) are wrong/evil. The narrative leaves no doubt that Scanderbeg 'knew' where the 'right' side was: he recognised the face of 'evil' and 'goodness' and acted accordingly. Its life is a testimony of Albanians' capacity to recognise and accept *progress*, or so it is argued, thus pledging for their acceptance by its very producer: Europe and 'the West'. In this respect, Albanian national identity was to be constituted, among others, as the *other* of 'the Turk' (or, 'the Serb', 'the Slav', 'the Greek', dependently).

In the context of the ethnonationalist discourse that was produced in the works from the National Rebirth Movement, Scanderbeg represents the major signifier for the idealised (unified) Albanian state and, therefore, the primal producer of the narrative on the Albanian national identity. The myth of Scanderbeg represents the centerfold ingredient of the discourse about the nation, its history, culture and, specifically, its future political aspirations. Reinforcing this myth, Kadare writes: ‘Albania shares this western aspiration since the times of Scanderbeg, since the National Rebirth, since centuries’ (2001:86-87). Ultimately, the narrative of Scanderbeg as both a historical personality and as an ethnonationalist myth represents an enduring and highly versatile orientalist discourse—a *mythistorical* narrative of the nation, as defined by Aleksic (2006): it fulfils one of the major ingredients of the timelessness of the Albanian nation—its ‘perenniality’, its sacrificing struggle against ‘the East’—the very testimony of its unquestionable ideological ‘westernness’.

Of course, one should note here that the major point of religious downplaying regularly had the underlying message of downplaying specifically its *Islamic* heritage, rather than pre-Ottoman, Christian legacy. As noted readily by Plasari (1994) during a harsh polemic on the cultural identity of Albanian ‘Europeanness’, ‘the Latin Christianity represents the common denominator or all the peoples that claim to be Europeans’(1994:4). Plasari was thus himself accounting for an advanced orientalist view of Albanian identity—a more radical and reformed version from Frasheri’s supra-religious exercise. I argue that a simple analysis of Albanians’ social fabric accounts for two intertwined reasons to such claim:

- *Demographic*; Albanians are predominantly Muslim³⁴, particularly in Kosovo; in the context of contemporary ethnonationalist discourse, this fact has been often perceived as a difficulty in constructing a projection of Albanian legacy of ‘Europeanness’;
- *Ideological/political*; although the Islamic conversion gained pace as late of the 15th century, the ethnonationalist discourse projects it as a pre-meditated strategy of the Ottoman hegemonic force – ‘Albanians were forcefully converted’—as a process of their subjugation through violent imposition of an alien belief system. Such argument is in line

34 While there is no precise data on the percentage and profile of religious belonging, there is a commonly shared claim that Albanians—both in Kosovo and Albania are predominantly Muslim (app. 75%), followed by Christian Orthodoxes (south Albania) and Christian Catholics (in Kosovo and northern Albania).

with Plasari's view, that the Christianity—specifically, its Catholic extract—has been perceived as the ideological/religious basis of Europe.

While the feature of Christianization of the ethnonationalist discourse was insignificant during the period of the National Rebirth (1870s), it will emerge as a notable discursive practice a century-later, in the aftermath of the fall of the Communist system in Albania, as well as during the subsequent process of the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia, in the case of Kosovo. Such feature will be analysed at length in the next chapter of this research; however, here I will try to focus on analysing a sample-text from an intra-Albanian polemics that ensued in the period following the National Rebirth movement—on the ethnocultural content of the 'Albanianist' ideology. In this context, an article written in 1937 by Krist Maloki, a Kosovo Albanian Catholic priest and intellectual has been considered as one of the first, open, attempts to question the vagueness of the 'Albanianess' ideological discourse of authenticity, autochthonousness and – supra-religiousness. In his article with the title 'Oriental or Occidental', Maloki sets out to define the Albanian 'oriental', 'easterner' through analysing and constructing his/her sociocultural incompatibility with the notions of 'progress' and modernity:

Albanian 'easterner' (or, 'oriental') expects all the benefits for himself as granted – from others; to him, the world represents an endless source of means and pleasures that he will consume in every way and method. . . . Albanian easterner knows no shame; he is capable of any shameful act. He will sell his mother and father, his faith and honor. . . (2003 (1937):22-24)

In his long listing of vice and wickedness of the Albanian 'easterner', Maloki constructs a crucial religious/cultural analogy between the Islamic and Christian Orthodox concepts – defining them as hegemonic products of foreign extract that were forcefully imposed to Albanians and their 'European' culture. To Maloki, the Ottoman/Turkish/Islamic and the Greek/Slav/Orthodox bear the common denominator, for they originate from a single sociocultural and political construction: The Byzantine Empire.

Therefore, to Maloki, Balkan cultures and peoples who would adopt the civilisational traits of those hegemonies would, essentially, defect from the inherited 'Europeanness'. Specifically,

it is the Christian Orthodox base of the Byzantium that Maloki attaches profoundly negative civilisational characteristics:

It is wrong to say that ‘Easternness’ has reached us through Asia or the Mohammedan religion – or even the Turkish people. No. Our ‘easterness’ is a fatal consequence of Euro-Asian Christianity. Some six hundred years before the Turk stepped in our Homeland, Albania became a province of Byzantium. . . Even the Great Schism was not as devastating, as was the evil spirit of the Byzantine Administration that beset the Albanian nation like a shadow of black death. . .(2003 (1937):22-24)

Clearly, to Maloki the Europe, Enlightenment, modernity and progress are related entirely to its western hemisphere and, eventually, Catholicism – which, to Maloki is already embedded in the notion of ‘westernness’. Through employment of such binary opposition between the sinister, *Byzantine* East and the *Enlightened* West, Maloki provides an important tool to the Albanian ethnonationalist discourse: its capacity to widen, generalize—thus, ‘normalise’—the process of ethno-political identification through differentiation and othering. Views such Maloki’s would enable it to expand and – even more importantly – to *revive* the definition of the ‘eastern’ threat in the decades following the retreat of the Ottoman Empire. From now on, it will be the Greek/Slav/Orthodox ‘easterness’ that would become the major signifiers in the orientalist ethnonationalist discourse. Such features would gain in popularity particularly among Kosovo Albanians, in the period following the aftermath of the Ottomans when their territory was accorded through international settlements (such, Versailles Conference, 1919) to the newly established Kingdom of Serbia/Yugoslavia. From then on, the Kosovo Albanian orientalist ethnonationalism would modify the ideological base that enabled the identification and construction of the ‘eastern’ enemy; the values of ‘Christian Europeanness’ would be enshrined within the political demands for ‘freedom’, ‘democracy’, ‘human rights’ and ‘market economy’. On the other hand, the portrayal of the ‘eastern’ hegemony would be produced through an all-encompassing definition of ‘Slavic-communist’ rule, which, entailed not only the ‘orientalisation of the Soviet Union’ (Sulstarova, 2007:174)—common to Albania-proper anti-communist discourse in the 1990s—but also the orientalisation of the Slavic-Orthodox nations of the former Yugoslavia, perceived by Kosovo Albanians as both the carriers of the former Yugoslav communist rule and the anti-Albanian sentiment and ethnic hatred.

Chapter 7

Albanian Orientalist Ethnonationalism: Kosovo and the discourse of democracy (1980-2000)

And at once it seems that I clearly see this Eastern Europe. It sits at my table and we look at each other as if in a mirror. I see twisted old shoes, neglected skin, cheap makeup, an expression of servility and impudence on its face. It wipes its mouth with its hand, it speaks too loud, it gestures as it speaks, it talks with its eyes. I see a glow of despair and cunning in them at the same time; I see the desperate desire to be ‘someone.’ . . . My sister, my sad Eastern Europe

Dubravka Ugrešić,
‘Zagreb—Amsterdam—New York,’
Cross Currents, no. 11, 1992:251

Introduction: the discourse of democracy

The end of communism across the Eastern Europe by the fall of 1980s has been regarded as one of the most significant changes of the 20th century. It introduced major changes in the lives of its citizens as the Cold War ideologies were called into question. Societies from the communist states in the Balkans, such the former federation of Yugoslavia, were no different; there, calls for a change of regime were flagshipped under the notions of ‘democracy’, ‘going to Europe’ (Todorova, 1997)—or ‘returning to Europe’ (Galasinska & Galasinski, 2010:2-6).

‘Democracy’ and ‘going to Europe’ became the core signifiers of the new political ideology that was projecting itself into a society’s future and was serving as its discursive roadmap. A definition of such a political ideology would comply with what Van Dijk (2006:138) describes as ‘a system at the basis of the sociopolitical cognitions of groups’, a discursive practice that ‘organises group attitudes, consisting of schematically organised general opinions’. In this context, the notions of ‘democracy’ and ‘Europe’ were introduced as the key signifiers aimed at the ‘disarticulation of the official discourse’ (Salecl, 1994:207) of the communist regime and its hegemonic rule. Across the then-communist countries of Eastern

Europe and the Balkans, these notions entered the political discourse as a rearticulation of the demands for social change, drawing upon the categories such the ‘moral majority’, ‘citizens’ and ‘the people’—which were automatically presumed to be democratic and anti-totalitarian, with ‘its voice as an oppositional one’ (Salecl, 1994:226).

Subsequently, the individuals and groups who would employ them would rise up to personify and represent the vestiges of the social order of the future. At the time, virtually any discursive projection of the future would have the notions ‘democracy’ and ‘Europe’ embedded at the core of its operational meaning. Their usage in the discourse was meant to produce a two-fold effect: to highlight the shortcomings of the present (communist rule) and to signify its prosperous alternative—a western-modelled sociopolitical formation. The following is an observation by Galasinska & Galasinski (2010) on the Polish experience with respect to such exercise of ‘disarticulation’ with the official, communist, discourse as an exercise in epistemologic demarcation between the ‘bad East’ and ‘good West’:

Many (Polish) scholars have naively believed that plain acceptance of ‘Western’ patterns of behaviours and models of life will lead to desired positive changes, i.e. economic and social improvement. They perceived the world in a dichotomous way by drawing a picture in which (the eastern) socialism features as the epitome of economic backwardness and social anomy while (the western) capitalism as an ideal for human relations that inevitably leads to prosperity and happiness (2010:23)

According to Galasinska & Galasinski, to a considerable extent, the post-communist transitions have been taking place discursively. The social change was initiated through changing of the language used to describe and interpret the social reality; in the ‘new language’ of democracy the notions of ‘anti-communism’ or ‘post-communist transition’ appeared as ‘predetermined, fixed and almost always positive within the context of a triumph of liberal democracy’ (ibid:2). Such articulation of hopes, aspirations and anti-regime actions undertaken across the former communist societies were defined by Dryzek & Holmes (2003) as the ‘discourses of democracy’. According to their study, such discourses were varying from one society to another; ‘democracy’ was not perceived similarly in Ukraine and in Yugoslavia, in Moldova or in Kosovo. The discourses of democracy, they argue, were closely resembling Bourdieu’s ‘discursive fields’ and were ‘constituted by the positions that actors, often opposing one another, can occupy’ (2003:5).

‘Democracy’ became another name—a synonymous—for ‘Europe’ and ‘the West’ which, in turn, connoted the idea of free, welfare societies. The introduction of the signifier of ‘democracy’ as the embodiment of a political strategy of achieving the ‘going to Europe’ carried the mythical capacity of discursive elevation beyond the liminalities and despair of the present. Dryzek and Holmes call it an expression of the ‘hoped-for democracy’ (ibid:69), which, I argue, in the context of the former socialist Yugoslavia—bankrupted economies, massive despair and the legacy of the oppressive rule—produced a discursive practice with an unparalleled juxtaposing capacity to herald the possibility of accomplishing fundamental social change. Such emphasis on ‘the future’ connoted the reorganisation of the ideological aimlessness of the societies during the early days of the post-communist power vacuum, and the subsequent uncertainties that *that* future holds. As noted by Papanagnou (2010) in his analysis of the social power of political discourses:

Political discourses do not just describe social objects and reality in general. On the contrary, they construct it. They set limits to the possible, constitute identities, boundaries, and permissible pathways. They prescribe normative visions, promote certain (often vague) ideals and then set out in more detail the paths towards attaining these ideals. (2010:24)

I argue that, in the context of a ‘tainted form of knowledge’ (Cassels 1996:4), the discourse of democracy became an ideology—a formidable propagandistic vehicle that was invoked with the aim of accomplishing the public denunciation and ideological devaluation of the current sociopolitical order. In light of discussion about nationalism, orientalism and Balkanism in the earlier chapters of this research, I argue that the discourse of democracy was introduced through distinct orientalist interpretations—particularly in the societies of the former Yugoslav federation, namely Kosovo Albanians. Almost regularly, its production and dissemination was aimed at achieving of the ideological/cultural/political distinction of a particular nation or society from what was perceived as ‘the East’—while struggling to reinvent and re-interpret itself as ‘western’ or, at least, in the process of ‘westernisation’. Yet, in the context of the the former Yugoslavia and the subsequent armed conflict that put an end to that federal state (1991-1999), discursive practices of othering the ‘eastern’ backwardness in favor of the ‘western’ prosperity were abruptly reduced to denunciation of the worth of the rival ethnic community. Accounts such those by Ramet (2005), Vladisavljevic (2008),

Schuman (2004) and others offer a wide array of explanations, descriptions and deliberations about the phenomenon of the Yugoslav descent into wars and ethnic hatred, while at the gates of the political liberalization and the demise of the communist rule.

In the last decade of the 20th century, the usage of ‘democracy’ and ‘Europe’ was indivisible from the rest of the signifying arsenal within that political discourse: ‘human rights and liberties’, ‘civil society’, ‘civil disobedience’, ‘peaceful movements and protests’, ‘freedom of expression’, ‘objective journalism’, ‘independent media’, ‘UN charters and covenants’, ‘international community’, ‘international mediation’, ‘western practices’, ‘western models’, ‘western media’, ‘western experience’, ‘western democracies’, ‘western governments’ to name a few. They assisted in the constitution of a new communication practice—a distinct epistemic field—that was standing at the opposing end to the existing representational system of the communist knowledge. They were deployed as discursive weaponry in the anti/post-communist war of epistemologies as they would attempt to devaluate the social importance of the ideological signifiers of the ‘workers class’, ‘proletariat’, ‘people’s revolution’, ‘communist action’, ‘socialist practices’, ‘communist ideal’, ‘capitalist threat’, ‘imperialist hegemony’, ‘socialist welfare’, ‘class equality’ and so forth. Below is a table by Buchowski (2008:472) that illustrates the confrontation of such epistemologies. It reveals the binary opposition between the major signifiers—or the key epistemes, to paraphrase Foucault—that produced perceptions about socialism/despotism and capitalism/democracy in the post-communist discourse.

Table 7.1

Socialism vs. Capitalism and Post-Socialist vs. Capitalist Mentalities
 (source: ‘Specter of Orientalism in Europe’, Buchowski, 2008:472)

Socialism	Capitalism
Cynicism	Realism
Nepotism	Efficiency
Collectivism	Individualism
Egalitarianism	Subjectivism/Elitism
Diffused individual responsibility	Individual responsibility
Impotence towards destiny	Future oriented
Mysticism and escape from social affairs	Involvement in society via democracy
Learned helplessness	Learned resoluteness
Lack of trust	Trust
Apathy	Innovative adaptation
Waste of capital	Accumulation of capital

Lack of work ethic	High standards of work ethic
Criminal adaptation	Respect for the law
Low productivity	High productivity
Dishonesty	Honesty
Passivity (waiting for manna)	Activity
Homo Sovieticus	Homo Westernicus
anti-intellectualism	intellectualism
aversion to elites	respect for elites
double standards for public and private life	unified standards for any sphere of life
acceptance of meager performance	contempt for meager performance

As I will argue in this chapter, the discourse of democracy was constructed by the emerging Eastern European anti-communist political circles during the process of importation of western political paradigms and subsequent attempts of their implementation on the formally communist societies. Its distinctively ‘western’ content became part to the public image, social prestige and political influence of its articulators, interpreters and producers. They became ‘the ones holding power over the discourse’ (Foucault 1970 (1984); Fairclough 1992)—the ‘democrats’, a different breed in the legacy of the anti-communist dissidents and ideological revisionists. Unlike their predecessors, the emerging ‘democratic leaders’ wouldn’t stop at the symbolic opposition to the current regime and in offering the superficial corrections to the ideological flaws in the—otherwise acceptable—political system. This time, they were engaged in the thorough devaluation of its ideological base through rendering useless the logic of the communication practices that were underpinning it. They were to outlaw its knowledge-base through public discrediting of its display as an alien, foreign, unnatural—above all, an ‘eastern’ ideological derivation. Across the Eastern Europe and the Balkans, the ideological riffs and transformations were to be shaped and constituted accordingly.

‘Return’ to Europe

Similarly to the discourse on the ‘progress’ from the early 20th century—to paraphrase Todorova (1997)—the discourse of ‘democracy’ became the communicative practice of the upcoming sociopolitical ideology of democratisation and its emerging political elites by the end of that century. Here, I will examine the manner in which the political changes that occurred during the 1990s in the former-communist states of Eastern Europe and the former Yugoslavia—and, which produced a new political discourse based on the principles of

democracy, political pluralism and market economy—affected the ways in which the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalism constructed and represented the national identity, ideology and political aspirations.

Specifically, I will analyse the manner in which the introduction of signifiers carrying ideological importance in the political discourse, such as ‘democracy’, ‘human rights’, ‘Europe’, and ‘the West’, shaped and reorganised the communication practices of Kosovo Albanian society. However, in the broader context of the discourse of democracy in the Eastern European political wrangling of that period, I argue that the initial reasoning behind its importation and deployment was to inflict a great epistemological fissure—a rupture in the existing communication practices of communist rule. Its aim of ‘westernisation’ of the existing political thinking about the future of the society was perceived by the emerging political elites as the introductory phase in the process of legitimation and acceptance of such an ideological turn by the Western centers of political power: the final destination to social security and economic welfare. As noted by Galasinska & Galasinski (2010), for the context of Poland:

The ‘return’ to Europe meant a number of things. Politically, it meant the return to a family of democratic countries and the ability to lean westwards, rather than eastwards. (. . .) ‘We all’ knew that we wanted capitalism, that capitalism was the only viable alternative to socialism. We wanted the full shelves, big cars, televisions and houses. Just like we saw on TV watching *Dynasty*, *Columbo* or even *Kojak’s* Chicago. There was never any debate as to where to go, nor, indeed, was such a debate possible. (2010:2).

In this respect, the discourse of democracy engaged in inducing a transformation of the prism through which a society perceived itself. Such transformation of society was seen possible through the dissemination and accommodation of new knowledge inside a new discourse that would have the power to:

- (a) Defeat and render useless the existing epistemological prism (defined as ‘eastern’);
- (b) Introduce, promote, rationalise and justify the upcoming one (defined as ‘western’);

In simpler terms, the discourse of democracy represented the ideological platform through which the epistemological conflict was waged between the aspired capitalist/liberal ‘westernness’ and the communist ‘easterness’. It represented what Papanagnou calls the ‘conflict of political discourses’ (2010:24) where the definition of ‘friends’ and ‘enemies’ involved an exercise of internalised-orientalist representational system. And, as I will demonstrate later in this chapter, in the context of the Balkans and the former Yugoslavia from the end of the 1980s, the ideological generalisations in the discourse of democracy went beyond the strict anti-communist attitude as they entered the realm of ethnic and religious denunciation and segregation, where the ‘eastern’ connotation of communism was to be replaced—indeed, identified—with ethnoreligious backgrounds of clashing societies.

Across Eastern Europe and former Yugoslavia, the producers of the ‘democratic text’ grew into the very personifiers of the new discourse. Under the labels of ‘democracy activists’ or ‘liberal intellectuals’ their role was seen as pivotal in the process of discursive denunciation and degradation of the communist narrative. As mentioned earlier, the new language was aimed at assisting in internal bankruptcy of the ‘old’ knowledge underpinning the current political system, and external/international influencing of the ‘western’ political centers on the essential importance of their active support to the emerging category of the anti-communist ‘civil society’ through invocation of the argument of historical ‘strength of classical Enlightenment ideas’ (Tismaneanu 2010:4-6).

Let us name here a few of the personalities that left a decisive impact on the ways in which the discourse of democracy was constructed, promoted and presented in the early days of post-communist Eastern Europe and the former Yugoslavia:

- Former Czechoslovakia: Vaclav Havel, author, public intellectual and political prisoner.
- Poland: Lech Valessa, trade union activist and political dissident; Adam Michnik, journalist, public intellectual and dissident.
- Former Yugoslavia (Serbia): Milovan Djilas, former communist apparatchik turned dissident and political prisoner; Latinka Perovic, former communist apparatchik, author and political prisoner.

- Former Yugoslavia (Croatia): Franjo Tudjman, former Yugoslav Army general turned dissident and political prisoner; Stjepan Mesic, former communist apparatchik turned political dissident and political prisoner.
- Former Yugoslavia (Bosnia & Herzegovina): Alija Izetbegovic, political opponent, (Muslim) religious activist and political prisoner.
- Albania: Sali Berisha, physician and former communist apparatchik turned dissident; Ismail Kadare, author, writer and political dissident.
- Former Yugoslavia (Kosovo): Adem Demaçi, author, political activist and long-term political prisoner; Ibrahim Rugova, author, public intellectual turned political dissident and activist.

These personalities represent a few of the important figures who emerged by the fall of 1989 across the societies of Eastern Europe and the Balkans as vestiges—and, personifications—of the discourse of democracy. To paraphrase Foucault, they represented the ‘subjects’ who have been produced by the discourse, or, through the new discourse of democracy. They represented ‘the figures who personify the particular forms of knowledge which the discourse produces’ (Hall, 1997:56). Among others, the common denominator that they shared was embedded in the general public perception about them as essential signifiers of anti-communist action. I argue that such perception would, in time, translate into their definition of ‘westernised’ political activists through a simplified binary logic (democracy=west; communism=east). Their turmoiled biographies of former political apparatchiks, authors, poets, public intellectuals and political prisoners were to become the living testimony of the history of political repression and social despair in the societies of their origin. The public emphasis on their personal experiences of the regime’s brutality—confronting their (western) liberal views, unbound (western) intellectuality and (western) political opposition—would further enhance the signifying power of the new discourse, as it would assist in reshaping their societies’ collective memory into a compilation of sufferings under communism.

Tismaneanu’s (1998) thorough analysis of the eastern-European ideological narrative of post-communism and democracy examines the process of their construction into embodiments of their societies’ past victimhood and the future hope. In the early days of the construction of the discourse of democracy their public function became that of the dominant, chief-interpreters of the new knowledge—of what Foucault defined as the ‘regime of truth’

(1980:131). They visualised the future sociopolitical order, the ‘democracy’; their new public identities were to be constituted and modified through a tireless process of interaction between them and their diverse local audiences comprised—and the international centers of political power. They became the ideological interface between East and West, capable of Bakhtinian ‘dialogic engagement’ (in Dentith, 1995:15) during the process of interpreting each other’s ‘east/west’ specificities, often through highlighting the already stereotyped ideological and cultural differences. The newly-established discursive field of democracy would enable them an endless manoeuvring space for conceptual reinvention and political calibration of the operational meanings of its key epistemes, so that they would be able to:

- Articulate the flaws of the existing sociopolitical reality;
- Justify the opposition to the political establishment that was producing and governing that reality;
- Formulate and disseminate appropriate ideological remedies through (democratic) political actions.

The discourse of democracy endowed them with the capacity/power to transcend between the sediments of the rigidly differentiated ideological/political realms of the ‘democratic west’, the ‘communist east’ and the native audiences, the end-consumers of the ‘democratic text’. In line with the ‘pactist’ approach in the theories of democratisation (Pridham & Gallagher 2000) their emergence and operation was based on the belief that individual actions ‘by leaders of groups engaged in strategic calculations and pragmatic choices’, would achieve ‘elite settlements’ and thus enable regime’s ‘transition by transaction’ (2000:5).

There are numerous examples that point out the pattern of the reshaping of the ‘democratic’ social practices in accordance to the personal style, approach and ambition of such leaders of the democratic discourse. Whether from Walessa’s ‘politics of emotion’ and ‘perpetual confrontation’, Vaclav Havel’s or Andrei Sakharov’s moral idealism about the ‘politics of truth’ (Tismaneanu 1998:141-3)—or in the case of Kosovo Albanians, Ibrahim Rugova’s constructionist project of ‘the parallel state of Kosovo’ that was based on the strategy of ‘passive resistance’ against the Serbian domination (Clark 2000, Malcolm 1998, Judah 2008)—the respective sociopolitical movements opposing the Communist rule were attached appropriate personal imagery of their leaders.

I argue that such investment of personal imagery became a branding-formula for introducing, visualizing and interpreting the changing social realities in their respective societies. It gave a personal touch to the anti/post-communist ‘fantasies of salvation’ through ‘unifying the public discourse and provide the citizen with an easily recognisable source of identity as a part of a vaguely defined ethnic (political) community’ (Tismaneanu 1998:9).

Kosovo: From irredentism³⁵ to independentism

In the context of Kosovo Albanian discourse of democracy as the distinct orientalist feature of the ethnonationalist ideology, this research will focus specifically on two major events:

- The establishment of their first, official, political organisation in the fall of 1989 – The Democratic League of Kosovo (Alb. Lidhja Demokratike e Kosoves - LDK);
- The emergence of its first, democratic political leader, Ibrahim Rugova, as the chairman of the Democratic League of Kosovo and the major producer of the discourse of democracy in the Kosovo Albanian political communication practice (1989-1999).

I argue that the establishment of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) represents the point of departure for any analysis of the social conditions and discursive technologies that were employed to introduce the discourse of democracy among Kosovo Albanians at the outset of the 1990s. The events that led to its founding in December 1989 have been profoundly influenced by the dramatic political changes that occurred simultaneously in the political scenes of Eastern Europe and the former Yugoslavia. Those that set the scene and the tone for the new discourse were the waves of anti-communist movements across the Eastern Europe, symbolized with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the unification of the East and West Germany. In the context of the former Yugoslavia, such ever-popularising anti-communist sentiment quickly descended into the revival of ethnic politics and

35 Irredentism is about ‘reestablishing ethnic nations through the linking of all adjacent territories occupied by members of the ethnic group. Irredentism becomes an issue and a goal of ethnic groups and governments when national boundaries do not follow ethnic ones’, in Levinson, David: *Ethnic Relations: a Cross-Cultural Encyclopaedia*, 1994, ABC-CLIO Inc. page 135-6. Also, on the irredentist form of nationalism, please see the theoretical discussion on nationalism in Chapter 2 of this research.

nationalist/secessionist tendencies as a reaction to the hardline ethnonationalist takeover of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY) headed by Slobodan Milosevic, its hardline leader from Serbia, the country's largest federal unit.

Such dichotomic turn of events in the local and international scene had a decisive influence on the manner in which the Democratic League of Kosovo evolved from a 'cultural/political society' to 'political party' (Rugova 1991) and its final branding as the major 'political movement' of Kosovo Albanians in the 1990s (Agani 1996, Buxhovi 2010).

In this chapter I argue that the birth of the LDK induced a great discursive shift of the ideological paradigm of Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalism. It transformed the manner in which it was constructed as a communication practice, and the manner in which it was applied as the social practice. This political organisation took on the role of the dissemination and accommodation of the new political discourse of 'westernisation' of the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist ideology. Moreover, simultaneously, it engaged in the discursive representation of the 'westernness' (or 'Europeanness') of the Kosovo Albanian society and its political resistance to the political authorities of the 'international community'. I understand such exercises as distinct features of the orientalist approach in the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist discourse of the 1990s, as I place an emphasis on the conceptual inseparability between the notion of 'democracy' and the two major ideological components of the Kosovo Albanian political struggle from this period:

- The construction of the nonviolent civil resistance as the form of 'democratic' political action;
- The application of the project of the 'parallel State of Kosovo' as a symbolic social practice of democratic resistance.

However, prior to the analysis of the transformative effects that the establishment of the Democratic League of Kosovo induced on the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist ideology of irredentism, I will provide a brief historiographic account of its evolution during the post-World War II Yugoslavia.

In the period between 1945-1990 any political activity directed against the rule of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia was prohibited and severely punished. The former Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) was a one-party political formation and the outbursts of the political discontent—particularly those organised by Kosovo Albanian groups—were followed with heavy crackdown by its large apparatus of security forces. Countless accounts were written by the local (Kosovo) authors and scholars on the subject of Kosovo Albanian suffering under the Yugoslav state hegemony; here, I will mention a few coming from the ranks of historiographers, public intellectuals and former political prisoners whose contributions were employed with this research: Rexhep Qosja (1980, 1986, 1990, 1992), Shkelzen Maliqi (1995, 1998), Fehmi Agani (1996), Ibrahim Rugova (1991), Ethem Çeku (2005), Osman Ismaili (2001), Muhamet Kelmendi (1998), Selatin Novosella (1997), Syle Ukshini (2008), Mustafe Xhemaili (2009) and Jakup Krasniqi (2010).

Kosovo's position in Yugoslavia was that of an autonomous province—the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo. Its status was somewhat vaguely defined within the 1974 (SFRY) Constitution which defined Kosovo as both an equal constitutional unit on the federal level and an integral part of the Republic of Serbia, on the republican level:

Kosovo's Provincial Assembly could veto any decision made by the Serbian Republic Parliament, although Kosovo was still a province within Serbia. The Serbian Parliament did not have the same rights over decisions made in Kosovo. The unique Yugoslav patchwork seemed to function satisfactorily as the republics and provinces enhanced their influence vis-à-vis the federal government. (Nikolic in Bieber 2005:59-61)

Nevertheless, such ambiguity in the formulation of an—otherwise reformatory and liberal—constitution highlighted the major flaws in the system. As noted by Benson (2001:127): 'it conferred every right except the freedom of political association—the only thing that mattered.'. The Kosovo Report by the International Commission on Kosovo (2000) observes that the status of the autonomous province was 'almost the same as the status of republics', and that 'the main difference was that provinces did not have the right to secede from the federation and were not considered the bearers of the Yugoslav sovereignty (ibid:35-36). This legal limitation became the source of frustrations for both Kosovo Albanians and the Serbs: both felt discriminated. Kosovo Albanians could not accomplish any form of sovereignty—

not even within the federation---while Serbs could not govern Kosovo in its entirety, although it was legally part of Serbia. Such sentiments of frustration would fuel the rise of ethnic tensions which would, in time, incite the very dissolution of the federal Yugoslavia---and the subsequent descent in armed conflict and ethnic cleansing³⁶.



Figure 7.1. 1993: Political map, Kosovo in the former Yugoslavia (SFRY)³⁷

The political opposition in the Socialist Yugoslavia was subjugated to that of an illegality and clandestine organising. In the context of the Kosovo Albanians, such organising continued in parallel, underneath the formal communist rule and the social reality that was produced by it. Albanians in Kosovo were—specifically—compelled to operate under such constraints as they shared a restless history of political discontent with the formal Yugoslav communist regime (Çeku 2005, Kosumi 2004, Xhemaili 2008). Popular protests, student demonstrations, workers’ strikes—even a handful of armed clashes with the Yugoslav security forces—were organised periodically in 1950s, 1960s and particularly during the 1980s. Perhaps two

36 For further reading, please see: ‘Kosovo Report: Conflict, International Response, Lessons Learned’, a comprehensive political analysis on the topic, published by the International Commission on Kosovo, Oxford University Press, 2000.

37 Map provided by the website of the University of Texas, Austin. http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/europe/former_yugoslavia.jpg

significant moments in this context were marked by the organisation of the massive anti-establishment demonstrations by the students with the University of Prishtina in March/April 1981, and Kosovo-wide wave of protests organised by the fall of 1989. Regularly, the crackdown by the state security forces against such attempts was of a distinct brutal nature. According to statistics, in the period preceding 1981, over 620 persons were accused and sentenced on charges related to ‘various nationalist and irredentist activities in Kosovo’ (see Clark 2000:41)—while only between March and September of 1981 their number went beyond 2,000, mostly youth. By 1982, Clark notes, Yugoslavia police sources claimed to have uncovered the existence of at least 33 ‘illegal groups’ with two of them described as ‘massive’. On the other hand, ‘from March 1981 to November 1988, some 584,373 Kosovars—half the adult population—were arrested, interrogated, interned or reprimanded’ (ibid 2000:42-3).

The ideological base of such groups was diverse: they were ranging from hard line Marxist-Leninists—resembling the applied political doctrine of then-communist regime of the Republic of Albania under the dictatorship of Enver Hoxha—to outright national-democratic and ethnonationalist³⁸. However, regardless of their—at times, diametrically opposed—ideological views, virtually all of these groups shared a common perception about the ethnopolitical goal: the unification of Kosovo with the Republic of Albania. Again, common to all of them was the discursive definition of the latter as the ‘Motherland’ that entailed the central ideological paradigm. Although technically and politically inaccessible during that period, the projection of Albania was discursively constructed as the supreme centre of ideological emanation—an idealised homeland of Albanians. To all of them, the unification with Albania connoted the final destination of the Kosovo Albanians’ political resistance and their century-old journey through the political regimes of Yugoslavia. It was an unquestionable ideological principle and the core-idea of Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalism.

In terms of their volume and practical effects on the powerful and, internationally supported Yugoslav regime, the Kosovo Albanian irredentist groups were minute and rather ineffective. An exhaustive account on the size, nature and profile of such organisations is given in Çeku (2005). Their relevance to this research is limited to taking notice of their ideological

38 For further reading on the history, number, size, programs and ideological platform of Kosovo Albanian clandestine political organisations, see Ethem Ceku, ‘Shekulli i Ilegales - Dokumente’, 2004, Brezi 1981, Prishtine

programme based on the idea of unification of Kosovo with the Republic of Albania—the cornerstone of their irredentist goal. Let us list some of the most important:

- The Revolutionary Committee for the Liberation of Albanians (1960s);
- The Kosovo National Liberation Front (1974);
- The Kosovo National Movement for the Republic of Kosovo (reportedly established in 1982 through the merger of other illegal organisations, such the National Liberation Movement of Kosovo and Other Parts of Albanian Yugoslavia; the Kosovo Marxist-Leninist Organisation; the Communist-Marxist-Leninist Organisation of Albanians, and so forth).

I argue that the content of the irredentist programme of action has been shaped a great deal through the adoption and articulation of the concept of national trauma of ethnic partition that was developed in the early years of the 20th century—when the Ottoman retreat from the Balkans resulted in regional encroachment of then-Albania (see Vickers 1995, 1999, Kolev & Koulouri 2009, Malcolm 1998). By the end of the Balkan wars (1912-1913), the territory of the present Kosovo—along with other Albanian-inhabited regions in the present Montenegro and Macedonia—was officially deprived of becoming an integral part to the recently established independent Republic of Albania (1912).

Kosovo's position in Yugoslavia was ambiguous and, therefore, problematic. After the World War II, it evolved into an autonomous province under the rule of the Communist League of Kosovo, a branch of the federal communist organisation—the Communist League of Yugoslavia. By 1974 Kosovo had its own constitution which made it a constitutive unit of the federation; this also marked the culmination of its ambiguous status as it was both constitutive part of Yugoslav federation and the Republic of Serbia (for further reading, see Meier 1995, Singleton 1989, Benson 2001).

Ultimately, the decline of the communist rule in Yugoslavia was put in motion through the abolition of Kosovo's constitutional autonomy in 1989. It was conducted by the younger, upcoming nationalist elite of Serbia's communist apparatchiks, led by Slobodan Milosevic who utilized the Serbian constitutional discontent with Kosovo to create a completely different political momentum in the affairs of the federation: the convergence of the ethnonationalist narrative with the common, official communist discourse.

development of the discourse of democracy and led to the subsequent reformation of the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist ideology. As noted in the Kosovo Report (2000:41): ‘the revocation of the Kosovo’s autonomy spawned an increase in human rights abuses and discriminatory government policies designed to Serbianize the province’. Specifically, these included the closure of Albanian language newspapers, radio and television—and, later, by 1991, the closure of Albanian schools and the public University of Prishtina. This led to the severe deterioration of the sociopolitical situation in the Kosovo Albanian society: it was institutionally outlawed and ideologically aimless. Whereas the introduction of the discourse of democracy through the establishment of the Democratic League of Kosovo was seen by the Kosovo Albanians as a complementary attitude to the waves of the East-European processes of democratisation, the local situation of the Serbian state-oppression was making its usage paradoxical and anachronistic.

National victimhood, the road to statehood

The trauma of partition—or the inability of unification, thereof—combined with the deteriorating situation after the abolition of the autonomy, recreated the Kosovo Albanian self-projection of ‘historical victims’ of the Balkans. It had entered the ethnonational memory of Albanians in Kosovo as an essential discursive signifier of their ethnonationalist ideology. Its root-causes and effects on the content of the nationalist discourse were elaborated in the earlier chapter of this research which dealt with the period of the Albanian National Rebirth Movement (1880-1920). In the context of Serbian hegemonic interventions in the period between 1989-1990 such trauma was re-generating another ideological self-projection—that of the national victimhood, a powerful element of the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalism. In fact, as noted by Ingimundarson (2007) ‘it is perhaps the fundamental component, in that sense that the victimisation—chiefly at the hands of the Serbs—precipitated the development of the Kosovar (Albanian) identity as discrete from that of the Albanian group at large’ (see Ingimundarson, 2007:97).

The projection of the perception of the national victimhood as a recurring historical feature remains one of the essential mobilisatory concepts in the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist discourse. From Frasheri’s manifestos to Fishta’s poetry (see chapter 6) the idea of Albanians as a nation engulfed in tragedies and pogroms has been permeating the narrative about the

nation-building and national liberation. During the 1990s and the introduction of the discourse of democracy and independence, the concept of national victimisation evolved into a discursive practice aimed at enhancing the logic of the binary opposition between the victim as ‘good’ and the other, the perpetrator of such victimisation who is ‘evil’. As it will be discussed later in this chapter, the automatic ‘goodness’ of the victim in the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist discourse from the 1990s has been strongly related with the Christian—more precisely, Roman Catholic—religious connotations about moral imperatives of non-violence, endurance and peacefulness. I argue that in such context, the reiteration of the national victimisation ought to be analysed as an important component in the internalised-orientalist, ‘westernised’ communicative practice that was applied by the Kosovo Albanians in the 1990s during the period of political resistance against the Serbian/Yugoslav regime. The following is a quote by Dujizings (2000) which highlights the wide usage of such strategy by the Kosovo Albanian political representatives:

The horrors visited upon the Kosovars in the latter half of the 1990s accordingly provided a legitimate basis upon which Kosovar leaders ‘presented their people to the outside world as a wronged and victimised nation’—a sentiment shared pervasively by the populace (2000:203)

The projection of victimhood does not necessarily project the weaker element in the victim-oppressor relationship. As noted by Bieber (2003:326) ‘the victim also inevitably belongs to the group that is ‘just’. I argue that such self-projection of a ‘just’ and ‘proud’ victimhood further propelled the self-perception of Kosovo Albanians as ‘western’ and ‘civilised’ in the light of state-sponsored brutalities.

Although the victimisation and the ‘victim behaviour’ was evident throughout the warring nations of the former Yugoslavia during the 1990s—indeed, in as many forms of exclusive nationalism (Clark, 2000:135)—its manifestation and affirmation by Kosovo Albanians proved to be a successful propagandistic component in their reconstructed programme of *democratic* ethnonationalism. ‘Kosovo Albanians sometimes seemed to think ‘the more we suffer, the worse Serbs look, the better for us’ (2000:136-7). I argue that the popular engagement in projecting the image of oneself as a victim represented yet another addition to the orientalist exercise—for it enhanced the bi-dimensional definition of the *civilised*, (thus, western-modelled) notion of ‘us’ as opposed to the *brutal* (thus, eastern) ‘them’.

The narrative about the national victimisation was reinitiated through the Serbian state-sponsored violence against Kosovo Albanian population that was formally launched in the aftermath of the abolition of Kosovo's autonomy in 1989. I argue that such systematic operation of bringing down the entire grid of political, administrative, cultural and educational system of Kosovo (for further reading, see Meier (1995), Clark (2000)) initiated the reinvention of the irredentist base of its ethnonationalist discourse. Confronted with the severity of the situation on the ground and the rising awareness of the post-communist discourse of democracy across the Eastern Europe, the emerging representatives of the Kosovo Albanian political resistance engaged in discursive delineation of the ethnonationalist ideology within the temporal boundaries of the 'old' and the 'new'. As noted earlier (see chapter 6), whereas the irredentist strategy of action was considered as internationally acceptable norm at the time of its conception—the period of nation-building and geopolitical reshuffling after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire (1890-1913)—irredentism represented a highly unpopular political strategy in the post-World War II geopolitical reality of the western Europe. In a nutshell, *irredentism*—such as that of Kosovo Albanian form—carried all the ingredients necessary to worsen and elevate any internal conflict into a regional disaster: it was poised on the redrawing of internationally recognised borders (such as Yugoslavia's) through their forced dissolution and reconstruction. As mentioned in chapters 1 and 2 that discuss the theories of nation and nationalism, the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist narrative represented a combination of *irredentist* and *separatist* models—as presented by Hechter (2000). Therefore, irredentism—as well as separatism—were to be replaced with another ideal, deemed more 'realistic' and 'acceptable' to the political authorities of the 'international community': the independent state of Kosovo. It certainly included the separatist component—the independent nation-state entailed Kosovo's secession from Serbia/Yugoslavia—but it would not affect the internationally recognised borders and the geopolitical balance of the region.

Below I will analyse the discursive technologies that were applied in the Kosovo Albanian political discourse and accomplished the transformation of the key epistemes of the ethnonationalist discourse through the process of its internal revision and external dissemination, which was often called the 'internationalisation' of the Kosovo Albanian political cause (see Rugova, 1994).

I argue that such a process has been conducted as a premeditated exercise of ‘teleological action’ as defined by Habermas (1983):

The actor attains an end or brings about the occurrence of a desired state by choosing means that have promise of being successful in the given situation and applying them in a suitable manner. The central concept is that of a *decision* among alternative courses of action, with a view to the realisation of an end, guided by maxims, and based on an interpretation of the situation. (1983:85)

In short, the emerging ‘democracy’ elites saw the shift of the ethnonationalist paradigm as a necessary—in fact, the only one possible—action that would ‘rationalise’ its political demands in the context of ‘internationally-acceptable’ norms of political action. Habermas notes that such ‘teleological’ model expands into a ‘strategic’ model as it is ‘often interpreted in utilitarian terms: the actor is supposed to choose and calculate means and ends from the standpoint of maximizing utility or expectations of utility’ (1983:85). I argue that the transformation of the ethnonationalist ‘unification aspiration’ was an outcome of a deliberate, utilitarian-based approach by the democratic elites while entrenched between two groups of social actors with diametrically opposed viewpoints: the local Albanian legacy of irredentist discourse on one hand, and the downright rejection of this idea by the international community, unwilling to accept any change of borders in the region, on the other.

Through the analysis of an array of books, newspaper articles, interviews and additional public paraphernalia of the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist ideology from the era, I will describe and explain the discursive technologies that produced the messages of its political elite which led to the establishment of a new strategy of action through such ‘teleological’ action as the display of its internalised orientalist communication practice. I argue that the public dissemination and the accommodation of the discourse of democracy has been instrumental in the difficult process of reformation, reorientation and rebranding of the historical fundamentals of the ethnonationalist ideology and its strategy of political action.

In this respect, similarly to the ‘progressiveness’ of ‘going to Europe’ (Todorova 1997, Galasinska & Galasinski 2010) embedded at the birth of Albanian ethnonationalism from 1890s, a new, contemporary orientalist approach was seen as a sufficiently authoritative

component in the discourse that could induce and justify its ideological and programmatic transformation. Thus, ‘democratisation’ and ‘westernisation’ rose to become the notions of paralleling power, able to transport the identical demands from a century ago so that they complement with the new geopolitical realities of the West. They were the new words, carrying the old aspirations: the international acceptance, political recognition and legitimation of the reformed ethnonationalist ideology—and its strategy of action—by the presiding (western) international authorities.

Also, in terms of practical objectives, the discourse of democracy was employed to produce a new strategic scheme that would be capable of producing an ideological compromise that would appease to the two diametrically opposed groups/doctrines in the period of the imminent dismemberment of the Yugoslav federation (1990-1991):

- a) **International demands for a peaceful, non-violent solution** to local grievances and state oppression that would eventually pave the way to negotiated political transition and acceptable settlement for the region;
- b) **National strategy of armed resistance**, based on the historical experiences of territorial partition and political oppression and devised through the prevalent irredentist/ethnonationalist discourses that constituted the notions of ‘national cause’ and provided the ideological base of such action.

Table 7.2. The process of reformation of the ethnonationalist ideology through the ‘teleological’ action of the discourse of democracy

International Community Common position	Historically inherited discourse of irredentism	Discourse of democracy
Rejection of irredentist strategy of action	Demand for unification - the irredentist aspiration	Strategic action of transformation of irredentist principle
Objective	Objective	Teleological objective
Kosovo remains part of Serbia/Yugoslavia	Kosovo to secede from Yugoslavia and unite with Albania	Kosovo, an independent state
Action	Action	Teleological Action
Political, negotiated settlement	National liberation through armed struggle	Nonviolent resistance wins international support

The attempts by the emerging democratic elites to appease both the international and the local public with its new programme of political action, redefined the basis of the Kosovo Albanian orientalist ethnonationalist discourse during the 1990s. The reconstruction of the nationalist narrative was conducted carefully so that it would contain and deploy signifiers that would be relevant to both groups. In reality, it meant that the notions of ‘peaceful’, ‘negotiated’ ‘settlement’ had to be fitted within the traditional, ethnonationalist discourse that was based on ‘the legendary struggle’, ‘armed resistance’ and ‘national rebellion’. The outcome of such tactical exercise produced a highly ambiguous and unstable ideological construction which set out to transform the very content of the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist narrative:

- (a) **The key objective of the discourse:** The all-national aspiration/objective for *unification* with Albania (the irredentist/separatist option) was to be redefined into an aspiration for independence and political self-determination which final aim would be the formation of the independent, nation-state of Kosovo;
- (b) **The key signifier in the discourse:** the national liberation through the *armed struggle* was to be replaced—indeed, reinvented—through the signifier of *non-violent* resistance, introduced as the ultimate strategy of political action that would quickly garner international support and recognition.

Finally, such transformed ethnonationalist narrative would become in the words of Ibrahim Rugova—its iconic representative and leader during the 1990s—a genuine ‘philosophy of nonviolence’³⁹, a ‘non-violent struggle’ (Rugova, 1991), a peculiar combination of traditional ethnonationalism and the emerging discourse of democracy. It was to become a manifestation of a ‘democratic nationalism’ (Dvornik, 2009) that was meant to appeal to the already existing, prevalent irredentist narrative.

LDK, the philosophy of nonviolence

39 Widely used notion to describe the strategy of the non violent resistance in Kosovo (see Agani (1996)), conducted by the LDK and its leader Rugova. Naming of such strategy as a ‘philosophy’ is in itself quite indicative of the discursive tendency to present it as an elaborate and structured system of knowledge and social action.

As noted earlier, the dissolution of the Yugoslav federation was followed with an unprecedented outburst of military aggression, ethnic cleansing and mass killings (1991-1999). It has been the subject of a vast number of publications, books and studies of which I will mention only a select group of English works, employed as an external reference source to this research: Malcolm (1998), Judah (2008), Clark (2000); Lampe (1996), Ramet (2005), Kaplan (2005), Benson (2001); Singleton (1989), Lee (1983), Udovicki & Ridgeway et al (2000), Carmichael et al (2002), Kecmanovic (2002), Kostoviceva (2005), Pesic (2009), Vladisavljevic (2008), Petrovic (1997), Bieber & Daskalowski (2005), Dragovic-Soso (2004).

While I will try to avoid the extensive historiographic accounts and statistical data on the tragic process of Yugoslav dismemberment, I find it important to emphasize that virtually all of these studies listed here highlight the eccentricity of the introduction of the Kosovo Albanian non-violent political strategy in the face of diametrically opposed reality of conflict and aggression. A few of them (Malcolm 1998, Judah 2008, Clark 2000) point out its emergence as a 'rationalised' policy of action that was aimed at successful acquiring of international legitimation of the ethnonational programme. Others, such as the Kosovo Report compiled by the authoritative Independent International Commission on Kosovo (2000) admit that the introduction of the strategy of non-violence was 'something that was quite contradictory to Kosovo Albanian traditions' (2000:43). While I agree with this observation, I argue further that the Kosovo Albanian non-violent, civil resistance of the 1990s was aimed at the deliberate production of representational delineation between 'peaceful' (Kosovo Albanian) resistance and 'aggressive' (Serbian/Yugoslav) ethnonationalist discourses and actions. Such tactics were in line with the observation by Salecl (1994) on the opposing types of ethnic nationalisms in the process of the Yugoslav dissolution:

Two views of nationalism were, and have remained, predominant in official Yugoslav politics since the outbreak of national conflict. The first tried to distinguish 'progressive' nationalism (non-aggressive, defensive, civil) from 'regressive' nationalism (aggressive, promoting hatred, directed at the re-establishment of homogeneous national communities). (Salecl, 1994:210)

‘Nobody knows how or exactly when the Kosovo Albanians decided to adopt a policy of nonviolence’, writes Clark (2000:46) while describing their ‘unusual’ change of the strategy of political action in the early days of the post-communist Yugoslavia. Here, I argue that such structural change should be analysed as indivisible from the act of establishment of the Democratic League of Kosovo⁴⁰ (LDK), itself a unique political body in the context of its programmatic—and ideological—vagueness. Yet, before we proceed, I will provide below an account that I find relevant for illustrating the public communication strategies that were initiated during those early days of the formation—and formulation—of LDK as ‘something different’ to the earlier forms of ethnonational political organising:

Q: Recently, a different, unofficial political *association* was established: The Democratic League of Kosovo. Its appointed chairman is Dr. Ibrahim Rugova, a well-known Albanian scholar who will provide us with details about this initiative.

Rugova: At the moment (the LDK) is a political and cultural *society*. Once the Yugoslav legislation on political pluralism is regulated, it might evolve into a political or cultural *party*, and so forth... (VOA Albanian Service, 30th December 1989)

This is an excerpt from the interview conducted by the Albanian Service of the Voice of America (VOA) with the LDK’s chairman, Ibrahim Rugova. Whereas we will discuss and analyse at greater length the personality of Rugova later in the research, it is relevant to note that the selected fragment is extracted from his first-ever interview in the capacity of the LDK leader—in December 1989. What is relevant to the research here is the feature of semantic ambiguity—indeed, a communicative strategizing—that is revealed during the attempts to formulate and define this new entity.

What is LDK here? Is it a ‘political association’ or a ‘political and cultural society’ pending its transformation into a ‘political or cultural party’ through eventual institutional, legitimizing, permission by the Yugoslav institutions of power? I find such communicative strategy rather sympathetic in the confusion that it causes as it sets out to articulate an ‘acceptable’ definition of the object of discussion. A simplified Bakhtinian analysis of the

40 In Albanian : Lidhja Demokratike e Kosoves - LDK

‘historical moment of performance’ of such ‘utterances’ (in Dentith, 1995) tells us a great deal about the communicative strategy at work—for it encapsulates the point of departure of the long process of ideological reformation. Something new is just being introduced—whether a ‘society’, ‘association’, ‘political’ or ‘cultural’ party—and its coming to life will be subject to a complex relational process between social actors and the effects of sociopolitical transformations taking place around them. Here, a short historiographic account of the structural and ideological evolution of the Democratic League of Kosovo might serve as an appropriate illustration of such ‘dialogic engagement’ manifested in Rugova’s statements in the early days of its constitution as a future political organisation.

Founded in December 1989 by a group of members of the Writers’ Association of Kosovo, the LDK quickly became the centerfold political organisation that was considered an ‘alternative’ to the existing, dysfunctional, Kosovo branch of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia—LCY (Ismaili 2001:60-72). By March 1990, the LDK membership was estimated to have reached the astounding number of some 250,000 members (Clark 2000, Malcolm 1998) as it evolved into an ideological umbrella for individuals and groups from virtually all profiles of political activity. Former communist apparatchiks, former political prisoners, exponents of illegal irredentist/revolutionary organisations, hardline Enver Hoxha-modelled marxist-leninists, student youth, liberal intellectuals and general citizenry were massively enmembering the LDK in an act of revolt against the Serbian state-sponsored repression and political uncertainty of the moment. Over time, Ibrahim Rugova as its chairman would rise to become its cult-leader and the personification of its programme that was based on the discursive practice of the perceived ‘western-modelled’ democratic values—namely, civil, nonviolent political resistance.

I argue that, such an approach to political action—until then deemed utterly un-traditional—was interpreted by the LDK as the optimal course that would enable Kosovo Albanians to join the ‘European’ standards of polity. Moreover, according to the LDK such international standards demanded the rationalisation of ethnonational goals and their categorisation into ‘realistic’ or ‘unrealistic’. This entailed the ideological detour from the strategy of *irredentism* to that of *independentism*---and the LDK set out to achieve it through the application of a fierce monopoly over the interpretation of the ethnonationalist ideology:

The LDK exercised a dominance over Albanian political life that the LCY in Kosovo never had. Moreover it had assumed the position not only of rightful heir to the former authorities, but also to those outside the Party who had expressed the aspiration for a republic. Unfortunately, its style of operation was increasingly akin to that of other one-party states. As well as questions about the organising style of the LDK, and indeed the personal style of Ibrahim Rugova, this raises strategic issues about the role and structure of leadership in the conduct of a nonviolent struggle---especially in a context where self-restraint is so central (Clark, 2000:84)

The new, reformed Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalism spearheaded by the LDK was to continue to be based on the orientalist fundamentals of ‘going to Europe’ (or, ‘returning to Europe’)—rooted in the period of the National Rebirth Movement and Frasheri’s pamphlet from 1890s—but it was poised to achieve this through its strict repositioning in accordance to the routinized contemporary views of the western governments on the ‘internationally acceptable’ forms of political action. In the context of the early 1990s this entailed an essential transformation and the reconstruction of both its ideological goal and the strategy of action: ‘motherland’ Albania was to be replaced with the new-found ‘motherland’ Kosovo. The epic tradition of armed struggle, ‘mountaineer warriors’ and ‘Albanian brigands’ would be matched and replaced with that of the nonviolent resistance and a rather peculiar form of ‘political Gandhism that became interpreted as waiting’ (Clark, 2000:138). As mentioned earlier, its aim was to accelerate and emphasize the process of ideological othering on two levels:

- **Internal/local** level, implying the ideological reorganisation—i.e. reconstruction of the fashion in which Kosovo Albanians would ‘normalise’ the differing perceptions about the historical legacy of national liberation struggle. This entailed a discursive reconciliation of the narratives about the armed rebellion (past) and the nonviolent resistance (present);
- **External/international** level, implying the transformation of the Kosovo Albanian image of the political resistance—i.e. how were they to be seen from the external social actors in the region and in the ‘international community’.

Shkelzen Maliqi (1995), a Kosovo Albanian public intellectual and a ‘democracy activist’ of the period notes: ‘The key to the sudden shift (towards nonviolence) might be sought in the

process of structuring of an identity in contrast to ‘the Other’, in this case a rival and enemy nation’. I argue that this ‘sudden shift’ represented a direct impact of the nesting-orientalist approach in the manner in which the reformed ethnonationalist discourse was to be constructed and disseminated. Such an approach was aimed at both projecting and highlighting the differences between ‘us’ and ‘them’ (Kosovo Albanians/Serbian regime) in the fashion that would favor Albanians in the international political scene. The account below from the early days of displays of the nonviolent strategy invokes a similar reasoning. It is an observation about the hunger-strike conducted by Kosovo Albanian miners in 1989 in response to the abolition of Kosovo’s autonomous status:

Trepca miners – who inspired hundreds of thousands to repeat their brave deed in cold and snowy weather for five full days, so that the roads of Kosovo were day and night full of protest columns – in all aspects of their conduct, attempted to prove that the Albanians were not as the Serbs presented them and, still more importantly, that the Albanians were different and better than the Serbs. This entire manifestation, which involved the participation of some 400,000 people, went without a single incident, a single act of vandalism or destruction, and even without a single broken window. (Maliqi, 1998:140-141)

A retrospective analysis of the transformative logic of the (ethnonationalist) discourse of democracy in the context of distinct orientalist trait accounts for an ambitious reconstruction of social categories of morality, key principles of ethnonational ideology and strategies of political action. In this respect, Maliqi’s observation accounts for the ‘new’ approach in the ethnonationalist representational logic: the recategorisation of the morality of social actions within a simplified binary scheme:

peaceful => (internationally) acceptable => **right**
violent => (internationally) unacceptable => **wrong**

I argue that such moral categorisation in the context of the collective strategy of action represents an outcome of relational process of deciphering the external/international norms in terms of ‘acceptable’ form of display of political discontent – as opposed to what was locally perceived as ‘acceptable’ and necessary. Whereas such categorisation would appear as clearly self-evident to an external observer, it is noteworthy in the context of the Kosovo Albanian

legacy of anti-establishment opposition—in light of this legacy—this strategy was not necessarily the most obvious.

This is the reason why I find Maliqi's emphasis on the nonviolence important; its underlying message is ideologically charged in its praising tone as he sets out to encourage the nonviolent approach through illustrating its immediate benefit—it made Kosovo Albanians different (i.e. better) than the Serbs. The hidden syntax of Maliqi's statement is about the encouragement of the disconnection with the historical legacy of active/armed struggle, as it hints on the potential external representations of such acts as 'vandalist' and 'destructive'.

In short, the strategy of nonviolence was introduced as 'right' *because* of the external/international acceptance—it made Albanians more 'European'. On the other hand, an active/violent resistance was re-projected as 'wrong' *because* of its international rejection—it made the Serbs and their repressive state look less 'European'. Here, the scheme of such logical causality and judgement is intentionally presented in an overtly simplified manner: it is done with the aim to illustrate the essentially *utilitarian* core of a political strategy that was publicly marketed as a product of society's high standards of morality. I argue that, quite the contrary, rather than any moral consideration, the logic at the basis of this reconfiguring of 'right' and 'wrong' is the formal Western discourse on violence as an action that is politically unacceptable and morally/culturally deplorable.

Ultimately, I argue, it was the perceived external/international judgment on the image of Kosovo—the image of its emerging, 'democratic' elite and its actions—that presided over such re-categorisation of sociopolitical morality, not the local legacy of moral imperatives. A certain social action was only 'good' and 'right' if it was internationally recognised as such, and this is where I see the essential relevance of the internalised-orientalist discourse: it assisted in a 'top-down' imposed re-categorisation of the public morality of such actions, thus further simplifying its future definition. In short, this meant that from then on a certain action was 'right' and 'good' if defined that way by the 'international community', and the LDK claimed to be the only valid interpreter of such 'international' definitions. Such 'interpretative power' quickly elevated the LDK from the position of the communicative interface between Kosovo Albanians and 'the world'—to that of personification of both

Albanians and ‘the world’ (to Kosovo Albanians). It became both the producer and interpreter of the new knowledge.

Further, vested with such powers, it set out to project the historical value of its practice of nonviolence as the integral part of the legacy of the nation’s ideological fabric. The build-up of the new ethnopolitical imagery in the context of the ‘nesting orientalist’ approach (Bakic-Hayden, 1992) was also noted by Natasa Kovacevic (2008), as she describes the changes of the strategy of political action across the former Yugoslav nations before and during the period of conflicts in the 1990s:

The attempt to escape the backward Balkans and join Europe was articulated as a necessary disassociation from ethnicities seen as Balkan or Oriental (Serbs for Croatia, Moslems/Albanians for Serbia and Macedonia). The process of ethnic differentiation was encouraged both from the inside through openly racist narratives about ‘us, Europeans’, and ‘them, Orientals’ while, from the outside, through the more subtle narratives of cultural racism about, for instance, democratic, hardworking, tolerant Slovenians and authoritarian, shifty, corrupt, and narcissistic Serbs. (2008:163)

Thus, with the emergence of the LDK, the key battle between the political imageries was to be launched from its moral field: Kosovo Albanians were to be constructed as peaceful, nonviolent, rational, as opposed to the repressive, brutal and irrational Serbian/Yugoslav regime. The great patriotic aspiration of staging an all-national armed rebellion—until then considered as traditionally *preferable* and historically *expectable*—was discarded as damaging to the new ‘westernised’ imagery and, eventually, harmless to the regime. Moreover, to LDK and its leader, Ibrahim Rugova, a matching strategy of action to that of the firm security grip conducted by Serbian authorities against Kosovo Albanian political opposition was considered as outright disastrous—both in the context of failing to achieve an ‘internationally acceptable’ image, as well as in its practical uselessness. The military presence and might of the Serbian/Yugoslav security apparatus was overwhelmingly more superior to virtually powerless Kosovo Albanian civil groups.

‘It was not pacifism (principled rejection of lethal force) but strategic nonviolence—a practical alternative to war or submission’, notes Garton-Ash (2009:280) in his observation

on the Kosovo Albanian nonviolent resistance during the 1990s. Below are three excerpts from different interviews of Rugova that illustrate the discourse adopted within this approach:

We (the LDK) believe that this must be resolved through political means. Our people, understanding the positions of Euro-American public opinion, have faith that the problems will be solved through democratic means (. . .) Its politics of patience and peace is being acknowledged from international diplomatic circles. ('Flaka e Vellazerimit'⁴¹ in Rugova, 1991:148-157)

We are not certain how strong the Serbian military presence in the province actually is, but we do know that it is overwhelming and that we have nothing to set against the tanks and other modern weaponry in Serbian hands. (. . .) We would have no chance of successfully resisting the army. In fact the Serbs only wait for a pretext to attack the Albanian population and wipe it out. We believe it is better to do nothing and stay alive than to be massacred. (Rugova (1992) in Judah 2008:71)

By means of this active resistance based on non violence and solidarity, we 'found' ourselves. Today, we have succeeded in touching this point of the spirit of the Albanian people . . . Oppressed, but organised . . . this is the first time (Kosovo Albanians) feel that they have a power. . . that they feel citizens despite the occupation. (Rugova (1994) in Garton-Ash 2009:281)

Here, in a chronological fashion (1991, 1992, 1994) Rugova's discursive strategising accounts for the efforts to sustain a 'dialogic engagement' between the challenges to which the Kosovo Albanian society is exposed—as it displays the employment of the 'democratic imagery' of political action as a consequence of a mere compromise with the unfavorable reality of power-relations on the ground. Certainly, I argue, this does not account for anything unusual in the history of civil resistance of smaller ethnicities that were up against much larger and powerful autocracies. However, its dubious position—entrenched between minute possibilities of action and ambitious demands—threatened to weaken the viability of the discourse of democracy as an effective strategy of representation. Therefore, its strengthening was dependent on the ability of the new discursive practice to reorganise the collective

41 'Flaka e Vellazerimit', Albanian daily from Skoplje, Macedonia. At the time of the interview, Macedonia was a constituent republic of the Federative Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia.

memory of national resistance, for, the strength of any political ideology can only be measured by its capacity to reconstruct its ‘ancientness’. As mentioned earlier, the challenge of the new political discourse was its ability to:

- Project the nonviolent resistance as a **historical continuity** of Albanian ethnonationalist strategy of action. Whereas the strategy of non-violence was introduced as ‘internationally acceptable’ mode of action, its projection into the nation’s past was deemed necessary for gaining the popular support. It was an exercise of the naturalisation of the transformed ethnonationalist discourse.
- Project the idea of independence—the independent state of Kosovo—as a **historically underpinned aspiration** of Albanians. Whereas the unification with Albania was introduced as an ‘internationally unacceptable’ demand, projection of independent Kosovo into the nation’s past was also seen as crucial for gaining the popular support. Again, the projection of a newly-constructed ideological aspiration as ‘perennial’ accounts for the naturalisation power of the discourse.

Below, in table 7.3, I illustrate the chronological impact of such orientalist trait from the period of the birth of the modern Albanian ethnonationalism at the outset of the 20th century to the period of its revival and revision—a hundred years later--and its subsequent transformation from an *irredentist* to an *independentist* model.

Table 7.3. Irredentist/Independentist model

Key ideological epistemes	Negative analogies / traumas	Strategy of action (until 1990s)—Irredentist	Strategy of action (in 1990s)—Independentist
Albanians are autochthonous and homogenous nation of the Balkans	Partition of Albanian lands and its nation by external hegemonies	Unification of all ethnic Albanian territories within a one, single nation-state (irredentist ethnonationalism)	<i>Establishment of the independent state of Kosovo as a rational choice in line with the standard of political self-determination</i>
Albanians are descendants of ancient Illyrians, part of the Christian civilisation before the Ottoman conquests	Constant regional hatred and hostility towards their origine, language and culture	Active resistance, armed struggle against foreign and regional occupiers (waves of rebellions between 1890-1945)	<i>Peaceful, nonviolent resistance to contrast the regional aggressiveness of political and military domination (1989-1998)</i>
Their predominantly Islamic heritage represents an involuntary consequence of oppressive past	Failure of the Great Powers to understand their history and situation, and act accordingly upon it	Political exposure and building of alliances with the Great Powers as a strategy for successful pursuing of ethnopolitical strategy	<i>Internationalization of political struggle in the context of 'international community', European Union, US Government, NATO, etc.</i>
Albanians belong to the realm of European/Christian civilisation	European realm of institutional power could continue to deny acceptance of this historical and ideological fact	Deciphering, adoption and internalisation of key European demands of 'civilised' polity	<i>Advertising of political, cultural and historical 'Europeanness' through the non-violent resistance and independentist strategy as a rational compromise.</i>

The table 7.3 offers a chronological illustration of the historical periods which induced the transformation of the ethnonationalist discourse—indeed, its epistemological ruptures—and which account for the effects of the orientalist features in shaping the representational system of the ethnonational identity, political ideology and programme of action. Also, the table reveals the coincidental occurrence of the 'sudden shift' from the tradition of *armed struggle* to the strategy of *non-violence*, and the ideological alteration from the *irredentist* paradigm (unification with Albania) to the *independentist* (Kosovo, a nation-state). I argue that such swift and essential transformation of the key principles of a political discourse with a history dating since

the period of Albanian National Rebirth Movement (1878, see previous chapter) produced a yet another trauma in the public perceptions about the ideological goal of the nationalist political resistance. Subsequently, it resulted in the construction of a new—and utterly different—landscape of power operations inside the Kosovo Albanian society.

However, at the time of its conception, the strategy of the nonviolent resistance was prevalently adopted by the major exponents of the Kosovo Albanian political elite. I argue that such readiness for complete reorientation of the core of the ethnonationalist programme confirms the powerful effect of the employment of the orientalist approach. The concept of the peaceful resistance was introduced in the Kosovo Albanian political discourse as the ‘only one acceptable’ by the international community which was fearful of any critical geopolitical change in the region and/or redrawing of administrative/state borders along the ethnic lines. On the other hand, the ‘international community’ was introduced as the entity with the supreme political power that was able to preside and decide over the destiny of small Balkan societies—an ultimate point of reference to the ethnonationalist discursive practice. Therefore, the strategy of political communication with the international community—and/or its representatives—entailed the presentation of political actions and ideology that would be defined acceptable and supportable. Here, the concept of peaceful resistance was perceived and introduced as the major component of the new, reformed Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist programme of action: its primary value was embedded in the belief that it represented an approach that will be acknowledged and appreciated by the international community. Be this the case, it would qualify the Kosovo Albanian political leadership to interact with its exponents and representatives, and thus be able to construct a new, democratic imagery of Kosovo’s movement for national liberation and political self-determination. The possibility to sustain contacts with the (western) international community was perceived as a critical achievement to the new political movement. As noted by Judah:

In this period, the problem was that Yugoslavia enjoyed huge prestige around the world. Calling for its destruction and the creation of a Greater Albania was hardly the way to win friends and influence people, nor for that matter an idea that sounded anything other than simply crazy. (2008:76)

‘Initially a counsel of realism’, the discourse of democracy and nonviolence ‘became not only a necessity but also a choice’, Garton-Ash cites Rugova (2009:281) and the latter’s explanation on the ways in which the non-violent resistance made Kosovo Albanians to ‘find themselves’ and mobilise. It was accepted as an ideological novelty of enormous relevance and support among the Kosovo Albanian public, because from its outset it was capable to produce two major political effects:

- Attract attention of the international community about the political oppression of Kosovo Albanians, and;
- Avoid direct, armed conflict with the Serbian regime.

The nonviolence—or ‘passive resistance’, as noted by Clark (2000)—was interpreted as the ultimate formula of the strategy of action that would, in time, achieve the international recognition and western acceptance of the seceded, independent state Kosovo as a geopolitical fact on the ground. Above all, it functioned as the discursive breakout from the ideological deadlock imposed by the ‘unification aspiration’ that was maintaining an impossible relation between the triangle of (a) Kosovo Albanians’ historical demands, (b) the overwhelming political/military power of Serbia/Yugoslavia and (c) the prerequisites of the ‘international community’ for peaceful conflict resolution and political settlement. Ultimately, it became a useful justification for the new political elite to curb the unrealistic ethnonationalist goal and avoid the confrontation with the hardline groups that were functioning based on the legacy of armed struggle and clandestine organising. It was now able to construct the public perception of Kosovo Albanians’ readiness, political maturity and civil complementariness with the perceived ‘European’ standards of civilised polity.

In the period following the establishment of the LDK, ideas of democratisation, nonviolence, ethnic/religious tolerance, self-determination and independence became the core signifiers of the reformed ethnonationalism. Their usage and popularisation

amidst the ever-increasing Serbian state repression on Kosovo was also aimed at producing a countering imagery, believed to be decisive for acquiring a favorable interpretation of Kosovo Albanian political struggle—as that of a civilised *victim* of a chauvinistic hegemony. Specifically, the practice of nonviolence within the discourse of democracy served ‘to validate the self-worth of Kosovo Albanians at a time when they were being vilified’ (Clark, 2000:68). I argue that adoption of the strategy of nonviolence and its linkage to the notion of a ‘civilised’ act of political resistance was also meant as a practical opposition to the stereotyped depiction of the Kosovo Albanians in the Serbian culture, as is outlined in Salecl:

In Serbian mythology, the Albanians are understood as pure Evil, the unimaginable: that which cannot be subjectivized—beings who cannot be made into people because they are so radically Other. The Serbs describe their conflict with the Albanians as a struggle of ‘people with non-people’ (Salecl, 1994:212).

By 1991, the establishment of The Democratic League of Kosovo was quickly followed by the emergence of an abundance of additional entities: political parties, trade unions, human rights councils, women party branches and cultural clubs—a whole network of societal engagement aimed at enhancing further the image of a ‘westernised’ vitality of an ethnic community in the face of state-sponsored repression. Let us name the most important ones, as listed in Ismajli (2001):

- Albanian Demo-Christian Party (PSHDK);
- Kosovo Socialdemocratic Party (PSDK);
- Kosovo Parliamentary Party (PPK);
- Albanian Popular Party (PPSH);
- Popular Movement for National Unification (LPSHBK);
- Kosovo Democratic Action Party (PSDAK, gathering Muslim Bosnian minority);
- Kosovo Peasants Party (PFK);
- Albanian Party of the Democratic Unity (PSHBD);
- Albanian National-Democratic Party (PNDSH);
- Kosovo Green Movement (LGJK);

- Albanian Liberal Party (PLSH);
- Albanian Republican Party (PRK).

The non-political segment was also impressive:

- The Union of the Independent Trade Unions of Kosovo (BSPK)
- The Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms (KMDLNJ)
- The Forum of Albanian Intellectuals (FISH)
- Kosovo PEN Club (Writers Association)
- Mother Theresa Charity Organisation

At least during the first half of the decade, the social and political grid that was produced through the emergence of these organisations was aimed at supporting and widening the political logic and discourse that was spearheaded by the LDK. Regardless of their formally different names and programs, these political and civic-society groups were following in their entirety the basic principles of the new discourse of democracy, non-violent resistance and demand for the independent state of Kosovo.

The period from 1989 until 1998 marked the chapter of such intense performative-level actions conducted by Kosovo Albanian political actors. The establishment of a large array of organisations and associations—often existing only in the form of published communiqués—was an attempt to formally apply the essential principles of the discourse of democracy and the ‘westernised’ ethnonationalist ideology in the context of society’s daily routines. It was a rather unusual and controversial practice, considering the fact that by the fall of 1990, Kosovo Albanians were systematically expelled from virtually all walks of public life through an orchestrated campaign by the Serbian authorities, aimed at paralyzing society’s functionality.

Accounts in Kostoviceva (2005), Clark (2000), Malcolm (1998), Judah (2008) and others provide detailed description on the firm security grip over Kosovo by the Serbian authorities. Hundreds of thousands lost their workplaces; schools and university were closed down for Albanian students, while the handful of Albanian

media outlets such as national radio-television (RTP), Albanian daily 'Rilindja' (Eng. Rebirth) were shut down and their publication officially banned. While such actions damaged severely the living standard of the community, they also resulted in amassing of the newly proclaimed 'democratic' political organisations, seen as public sanctuaries to an outlawed nation. In a matter of months, this turn of events would usher Kosovo Albanians into establishment of a distinct social practice—coronated through the formal proclamation of a semi-clandestine, self-governed system of political organising, schooling and education—a genuine landscape of parallel structures or what has been commonly called during the 1990s: the 'parallel, independent Republic of Kosovo'.

I argue that the establishment of such institutional parallelism represented a combination of the effects of indiscriminate repression by the Serbian regime and an effort by Kosovo Albanian political elites to practical demonstration of the adoption of the discourse of democracy and nonviolent resistance to the international/western audiences. Moreover, the establishment of such an institutional grid was necessary for enabling the wide, multi-dimensional social practice that would enforce, naturalise and normalise the new discourse and political strategy. Such a grid was essential for inducing what Jorgenson and Phillips (2002) call the 'hegemonic intervention', necessary to confront the collision of discourses—in this case the discourse of irredentism and that of independentism.

'Now a virtual state, the Republic of Kosova came into being', notes Tim Judah, 'existing in a weird, parallel form to the Serbian authorities who were very much in charge' (2008:69). As the ultimate demonstration of practical, political readiness to accept democratic norms of 'European' behavior and action, the idea of the (parallel) state of Kosovo remains the essential object of the analysis in this chapter, as its construction and application embraced the key orientalist traits of the 'democratising' Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalism, such as:

- a) The establishment of the **cult of the national leader** whose image would embed and personify the reformed concept of a 'westernised' and internationally acceptable ethnonationalism.

- b) The systematic and thorough detachment of the Kosovo Albanian community from the structural dependence to the opposing, ruling regime—deemed anti-western, anachronic and repressive. This entailed the introduction of the **‘parallel State of Kosovo’** which formal functioning would highlight the repressive reality through the nesting orientalism juxtaposing exercise.
- c) **Internationalisation** and advertising of the imagery of nonviolent, democratic resistance through the adoption of the ‘parallel state’ as a signifier and a tangible product of the great internal ideological shift of the strategy of action. Here, the emphasis is placed on the Kosovo Albanians’ readiness to demonstrate the *internalisation* of required international standards and norms of ‘acceptable’ political organising – with the ‘parallel state’ serving as the performative level dry run of their institutional maturity.

The parallel political structures of the so-called ‘Independent Republic of Kosovo’ lasted for the most part of the 1990s. Their existence and development never went beyond symbolical, performative-level display of a moderate opposition and quickly became reduced to one major engagement—schooling/education⁴² and, partially, a ring of humanitarian makeshift clinics ran by the local charity ‘Mother Theresa’ (Demolli 2007). A large network of clandestine high schools, including the faculties and the Rectorate of the banned University of Prishtina was set up in private houses across Kosovo and its capital, Prishtina (Malcolm 1998, Kostoviceva 2005). The education received in these parallel structures ‘was rudimentary but it was a system that worked’ (Judah 2008:73).

Such an unusual exercise of political opposition in the context of the former Yugoslav conflict has been both heavily criticised and praised while it lasted, since 1991 until 1999. Whereas widely praised in the international political scene as the evidence of political rationality and patience of Kosovo Albanians, to exponents of the more radical, irredentist camp the ‘democratic performance’ that was staged by the emerging elite was seen as the mere maintenance of the negative status-quo with the Serbian regime through a damaging compromise to Kosovo Albanian society.

42 For a detailed account on the ‘parallel education system’ in Kosovo between 1991-1999, please see Kostoviceva, Denisa: ‘Kosovo, The Politics of Identity and Space’, Routledge 2005.

(‘Unrealistic’) Irredentists Vs. (‘Realistic’) Independentists

The exponents of the Kosovo Albanian democratic political discourse took on the role of the producers of the ‘democratic text’—guided by the belief that construction of the image of a peaceful popular resistance in a region engulfed by the ethnic mobilisation and hatred could enhance its external perception as that of an ‘acceptable’ representation of a ‘westernised’ rationality and societal logic. They were driven by interpretations that the breakup of the former Yugoslav federation was to be officially—and, specifically—recognised along the administrative borders of existing republics. Therefore, any potential separatist/irredentist action from provinces such as Kosovo would be confronted with an outright rejection by the international political authorities. In that case, they feared, the whole discursive exercise of projecting the national will for independence-through-democratisation could bankrupt, while the national struggle would be reduced to the definition of the ‘internal issue’ of Serbia/Yugoslavia and dealt with in accordance with the limited context of human rights and civil liberties (Wodward 1995:395-9).

Therefore, the unification aspiration was to be presented to the local public as a demand that was already rejected as ‘unrealistic’ and ‘maximalist’ by the major actors of the international community. On the other hand, to the latter, the project of the independent Kosovo was persistently presented as both the major political concession by the Kosovo Albanians—and, indeed, the only ‘realistic’ solution to Kosovo in light of the break-up of the Yugoslav federation. Such representational tactics created an unstable and misty political landscape that was lingering between the diametrically opposed local and international concepts about what exactly are the ‘maximalist’ and ‘realist’ demands. I argue that such strategy reached the point of a genuine communication deadlock between parallel epistemologies, in which the discourse of democracy was entrenched in attempts to construct a communicative middle-ground that could reconcile such opposing views (see also the earlier discussed Table 7.3). The following excerpt from Krasniqi (2010) illustrates the local, post-festum, sentiment of ‘independence’ as a ‘historical compromise’:

Throughout these years, the Albanian nation went through numerous injustice in all walks of life; it has given up many demands—political and social—as it patiently awaited the establishment of the Sovereign, Democratic and Independent State. (2010:108)

Clearly, to Krasniqi, the independence of Kosovo is ‘the least’ that could be done for ‘the Albanian nation’ which has given up many demands—a direct allusion to the ‘unification aspiration’. According to him, the statehood of Kosovo is a non-debatable issue, a historical compromise that demands ultimate esteem by the international community. However, Clark (2000) offers a completely different and problematic observation of slightly different positions shared at the time by the ‘international community’ with respect to such ‘historical compromise’ of Kosovo Albanians:

For some, independence was a step towards the unification of Albanians. For others, it was the natural consequence of the break-up of Yugoslavia (. . .) However, internationally, this was seen as a maximalist demand (. . .) In Washington in May 1993, the foreign ministers of the USA, Russia, Britain, France and Spain stated their determination that Kosovo should have a high level of autonomy within Serbia. Foreign powers refused to accept that---if FRY continued to refuse international mediation and continued to abuse the Kosovo Albanians---they should reconsider the insistence that Kosovo remain inside FRY. (2000:92-95)

However, during the early days of the formation of the independentist discourse, the deep ideological divisions occurred within the Kosovo Albanian political community confused by the swiftness of the discursive transformation of the major ethnonationalist principles. Almost overnight, the new political discourse of democracy, non-violence, self-determination and independence generated the temporal delineation of the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ knowledge. The ‘sudden shift’ found political activists in a difficult position: while eager to continue the pursuing of the ethnonationalist programme, they were unsure about which political strategy of action they should embrace. In the wider, regional context it was the period of disintegration of the former federal Yugoslavia, as well as the entire former Soviet bloc; Albania’s communist dictatorship was nearing its demise and the region was in a confused state, torn between the re-emergence of ethnonationalism, armed conflict and adoption of

the social practices of democratic behaviour. The below account by Muhamet Kelmendi (1998), a Kosovo Albanian former political prisoner and activist, echoes the discontent among the traditional/irredentist block with respect to the new ideological course:

The all-national mobilisation has been declared as alien to those political entities (LDK) which emphasize the theories that ‘Europe does not allow the unification’, or ‘the CSCE⁴³ and Helsinki are against the forceful change of borders’, that ‘the United Nations is now the supreme authority’ and so forth. In fact, what they did was to sanction the partition and the occupation of our nation, as they justified their existence through phrases such as ‘Europe is helping us in our ‘peaceful’ struggle’, ‘the EU will never allow an armed conflict in its soil’; they even go as far as to claim that this or that international organisation ‘will award the Albanians for the patience that they demonstrated’ (1998:22)

In his statement, Kelmendi encapsulates the ideological discontent with the manner in which the orientalist features have been re-introduced into the ethnonationalist discourse of national liberation. ‘The rejection of territorial totality of Albanian nation by the new political parties is conducted through the ideas of ‘democracy’ (ibid:111), notes Kelmendi as he attaches the anti-patriotic connotations to the emerging discursive practice and its threatening, hegemonizing power. To Kelmendi, all of a sudden, a certain type of knowledge—and sociopolitical power that it produced—became outdated in Kosovo. An invisible hand was at work among Kosovo Albanians, and it was set to reorganise and reinvent the norms of ‘acceptable’ and ‘unacceptable’ behavior and thinking. The new discourse of ‘democratic’ ethnonationalism was threatening the fundamentals of political hierarchies that were produced in the decades of anti-Yugoslav clandestine organisation. Another similar and slightly earlier account comes from the National Movement of Kosovo (LPK):

‘If we, Albanians, will not take the matter in our hands, as for the foreign entities (international community) our nation is already divided and

43 CSCE – Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe; the earlier acronym of the contemporary OSCE – the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

partitioned. We must not allow for this situation to get out of control. It needs to be utilized so that our nation will unite and liberate itself (. . .) Therefore we need to organise professionally and to employ all forms, methods and means of combat – including the national liberation struggle. (2008 (1993):116)

My understanding of his blunt account on the manner in which the emerging ‘democratic’ elites are ‘justifying their existence’ reveals the very action in which ‘knowledge is put to work through discursive practices in specific institutional settings to regulate the conduct of others’, as noted by Hall (1997:47). As an active witness of the period, I found such effects striking in terms of communicative powerfulness as I was stunned with the practical impact that they exercised on the structural transformation of social hierarchies and political elites. Views such Kelmendi’s, calling for national unity and liberation struggle through rejection of the dependency on the vague definition of the ‘international community’ were increasingly—indeed, abruptly—becoming isolated and outdated for they were no longer part of the ‘new’ knowledge about the nation and its political cause. Let us recall Foucault here:

‘Each society has its regime of truth, its ‘general politics’ of truth; that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true, the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned... (1980:131)

To-date, the effects of the discourse of democracy as a semantic interface—invoked as a means of reconciling the international ‘expectations’ and ‘limitations’ with the local ‘aspirations’ and ‘demands’—continue within Kosovo Albanian political communication practice. Much of its content and approach is still permeated by the discursive practices that were introduced more than two decades ago, when such dramatic shift of the course of action (and thinking) was applied swiftly, almost overnight, during the last days of the year 1989. Back then, a seemingly different landscape was forming on the global scene: it was the time when the ‘Spring of Nations’ and the revival of nationalist politics was bringing to an end the ‘Autumn of the People’ and the communist discursive paraphernalia of non-class, supra-national

ideas of society (Dryzek 2009; Tismaneanu 1998). Political organisations carrying the ‘democratic’ adjectives were mushrooming all around the region, impacting profoundly the logic of action of Albanian political elites. They set out to establish the independent state of Kosovo through the new strategy of action: the nonviolent resistance and political appeasement of the ‘international community’.

As Clark observes, even ‘without foreign support for independence, the Kosovo Albanians nevertheless decided to internationalise the issue’ (2000:93)—while, at the same time, the process of dissemination and adoption of the new discourse of democracy and independence was already causing severe misunderstanding across the social strata. The ideological confusion and collision presented above highlights the radical transformation of the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist discourse and, subsequently, its political strategy of action. Whereas the components of ‘international acceptance’ remain intact, the strategy of action takes a completely different turn: rejection of the major principle of *unification* with the ‘motherland’ Albania, as well as the rejection of the epic ingredient of armed struggle. Below is a rather blunt account on this volatile ideological departure: it is an excerpt from the communique issued after a meeting of the Kosovo Inter-party Council (1993), a makeshift surrogate of a national assembly that was gathering the representatives of newly-established Kosovo Albanian political parties:

We, as the Council are officially abandoning the option of the unification of our nation—which we invoked as a possibility in the case of the dissolution of Yugoslavia—because the international factors are not in favor of the Albanian question (. . .) Our nation is unprepared for war (. . .) Nevertheless, through our peaceful politics we will accomplish the realisation of our national aspirations. (Rilindja/Bujku, 12 February 1993:3)

This was an uneasy task, considering the fact that the irredentist/unionist trait of Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalism was at least a century old, dating from the trauma of the Ottoman retreat at the turn of the century. One should note that the rejection of the ideology of unification of Kosovo with Albania has been a matter of numerous debates and political quarrel: Qosja (1992), Kelmendi (1998), Nushi (1992), Vinca (1997), Stavileci (1995) to name just a few of the texts that were consulted during this

research as points of reference to this ideological division. To most of them, the great shift of ideological paradigm was perceived as fundamental disruption of the ‘order of discourse’—to paraphrase Foucault (1970)—which constituted the Kosovo Albanian society; such disruption/rupture would, eventually, affect the power relations inside the Kosovo Albanian community and the social hierarchies that were devised through them. The rejection of ‘unification with the motherland’ accounted for two critical ideological contingencies that would confront Kosovo Albanians:

- Abandonment of the ‘Motherland Albania’ as the ideological center of reference
- Construction of concept of ‘the independent state Kosovo’ as the ethnopolitical/ideological principle of reference for any future political action.

Abandonment of the ‘Motherland’

in the irredentist ethnonationalist discourse, perception of ‘Albania’ connoted the ultimate signifier, address and goal of the struggle for secession/liberation from the former-Yugoslav rule. Within such teleological exercise, ‘Kosovo’ and ‘Kosovo Albanian’ entailed the notion of the ‘separated’, ‘partitioned’ part of ‘the center’. The irredentist discourse, in this context, represented an ethnonationalist discourse of the periphery – the discourse of the ‘peripheral nationalism’ (see Hechter, 2000:16)—aimed at the ‘reunification’ and not the acceptance of partition as a geopolitical *fait accompli* and a starting point for a new political ideology of national independence. This an account by Rexhep Qosja illustrates how this was at the centre of the discourse:

We have allowed, in our attempts to internationalize the Kosovo Albanian cause, to reduce ourselves into being presented as merely a group of associations: political parties, institutions, provinces and territories; as ‘Kosovo’ Albanians, ‘Montenegrin’ Albanians, ‘Macedonian’ Albanians—indeed, as ‘Albania’ Albanians—but never as a one nation of 9 million people (1998 (1992):21)

Views similar to Qosja's were based on the idea that the damage to the territorial and national unity of Albanians was being inflicted through radical epistemological change that was conducted through a new discursive practice. As such, they could lead to termination of the sociocultural and sociopolitical dependence from the perceived 'center' that was formally and historically aspired through the ethnonationalist discourse—the state Albania. I argue that, whether 'real' or 'perceived', such dependence has been an essential ingredient in shaping the Kosovo Albanian national identity throughout the 20th century; the interpretation of 'Albania'—language, culture, history—formed the basis of the 'national knowledge' or the knowledge on the nation. At the heart of that knowledge was the definition of Albanians as a single, 'homogenous and autochthonous' nation with common ancestry, common past, language and common political aspirations. In Kosovo, the chief interpreters of such national knowledge were coming from the ranks of academics, intellectuals and ethnonationalist political activists and dissidents who were placing such—often idealised—representation of 'mother Albania' at the very core of the ethnonational ideology and discourse.

'Albania' represented the unquestionable teleological objective of Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalism—the very reason of its existence: any alteration of that key ideological signifier would inevitably cause the dilution and castigation of the entire body of knowledge on the 'nation' and the 'national cause'. Subsequently, it would affect and alter the positions of those 'holding power over the discourse'. In this context, the great 'discursive turn' from *irredentism* to *independentism* entailed a great, internal sociopolitical reorganisation of Kosovo Albanian society: it entailed the formation of new elites, of a new political leadership based on the discourse of democracy and on the demise of the 'old', traditional that was based on the irredentist/separatist/peripheral ethnonationalist narrative. The discontent with such dramatic change is voiced clearly in Qosja (1998):

We have allowed to see our new political elite that was derived after 1981⁴⁴ to articulate our national cause through the language of our oppressors. On

44 Qosja refers to the landmark events of massive anti-Yugoslav demonstrations organised by Prishtina University students and youth in March/April 1981 (for further reading, see Clark, 2000).

behalf of what principles is this taking place? On behalf of what justice?! On behalf of the principles and the justice that is thrown in the archives of history or those who appear in the international political scene? On behalf of the New World Order! On behalf of New Europe! (1998 (1992):20)

The feeling of *ressentiment*—in terms of its definition employed by Greenfeld (1992, see discussion on Nationalism, Chapter 1)—appears clearly in Qosja's argument. As I mentioned earlier in the theoretical discussion about nationalism, such combined sentiment of *envy/hate* has been permeating the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist narrative in the period following the 'sudden shift' of the ideological discourse, specifically in the years following 1990 and the establishment of the Democratic League of Kosovo as the institutional flagship of the discourse of democracy and independence. To Qosja, Kosovo Albanians performed a grand sacrifice, by abandoning the century-long unification aspiration as the major signifier of their nationalist (and, nation-building) narrative. However, now that such sacrifice is not being compensated—direct reference to the international community's rejection to recognise the independence of Kosovo—Qosja openly questions the worth and validity of the totality of western political actions in the post-communist Europe. The phrases 'New World Order'⁴⁵ and 'New Europe' are invoked as metaphors and an allusion to such actions which Qosja sees as insignificant and insufficient, as weighed against the national(ist) sacrifice; yet, above all, Qosja addresses his criticisms on the 'importing party' of the New World Order discourse—the LDK and its personification, Ibrahim Rugova. It is a parallel critique of both 'orientalist' approach by the West and the 'internalised orientalism' by LDK and Rugova.

Construction of 'the state Kosovo'

⁴⁵ 'New World Order' a notion that was revived through the speech held by the former US President George Bush Sr. on 6 March, 1991. Although the speech was focused on the US-led action against Iraq invasion of Kuwait (1991), the fact that it represented the first such multi-national military action against a political dictatorship in some decades became a reason for enormous optimism in societies such Kosovo Albanians—who were drawing parallels between the Iraqi dictator, Saddam Hussein and Serbia's Slobodan Milosevic. Here's one of the most important quote from the speech:

'We will succeed in the Gulf. And when we do, the world community will have sent an enduring warning to any dictator or despot, present or future, who contemplates outlaw aggression. The world can therefore seize this opportunity to fulfill the long-held promise of a new world order - where brutality will go unrewarded, and aggression will meet collective resistance.' (<http://www.al-bab.com/arab/docs/pal/pal10.htm>)

The notion of the ‘independent state of Kosovo’ became the point of departure of the new discourse of democracy and ‘independentism’. Through the process of acceptance and adoption of the perceived requirements of the ‘international community’ on the limitations of geopolitical aspirations of the nations of the former Yugoslavia—with the rejection of redrawing of administrative borders along ethnic lines being at the top of the list—the new democratic elite set out to reorganise the teleological objective of the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist ideology. An excerpt from an interview with Ibrahim Rugova, LDK’s leader, illustrates such new objective which places the idea of an independent Kosovo at the center of the political action:

(We demand) that Kosovo is recognised as an independent, neutral and demilitarized state under the protection of the United Nations, or NATO; it should become an international protectorate that would be open to both Albania and Serbia (. . .) Albanians in Macedonia should be defined as a constitutive component/nation (of the Republic of Macedonia) (. . .) Albanians in Montenegro should be entitled to a political and territorial autonomy (Rilindja/Bujku (April, 1995), in Kelmendi 1998:23)

The independent state of Kosovo was to become the main signifier with the ethnonationalist discourse and, thus, elevated to its major teleological objective. I argue that the major effect of this shift was the termination of the ideological dependency on the projection of the ‘motherland Albania’ and, subsequently, termination of the discourse of the ‘peripheral nationalism’. The process of coupling some of the major ingredients of the historical ethnonationalism—the independence of Albania, the perception of the nation as a ‘modern’ identity, the importance of the power of the international political actors—with the post-communist discourse of democracy and internationalization, produced the projection of ‘modern’ Kosovo which could only be independent. As mentioned earlier, such a new vision of the future of Kosovo Albanians affected heavily the power-relations, social hierarchies and ideological viability of the irredentist elites in society. This new discourse was producing a new knowledge on the state of the society, a new approach to defining the national identity, as well as a new iconography of independence and a western-modelled nation state of Kosovo. This delicate exercise has been spearheaded by the

Democratic League of Kosovo, LDK, whose political ideology was relying heavily on the intertextual relation with the historical legacy from the period of the Albanian National Rebirth from 1878, as noted by Ismajli (2001):

The founding members of the LDK have thought hard with respect to the name of this political organisation. Its name—the ‘league’— accounts for their aspiration to muster as many members as possible within its ranks: the ‘league’ was meant as a general, massive ‘movement’ for democracy. However, the idea also draws its roots from the Albanian League of Prizren from 1878. (2001:62)

According to Ismajli, the political ambition behind establishment of the LDK was to resemble similarities with the League of Prizren from 1878 (see chapter 6) that subsequently produced the National Rebirth Movement. While the Rebirth Movement from the 19th century concluded with the proclamation of independent state of Albania, the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) was aspiring the realisation of the independent state of Kosovo a century later. It is important to note that the discourse of ‘democratic’, orientalist ethnonationalism that was pursued by the LDK engaged also in the re-interpretation of the Kosovo Albanian political history, which had to be re-presented in a manner that would justify and comply with its modified, ‘independentist’ demands. Its current political strategy was articulated through a set of ideological signifiers borrowed from the National Rebirth period namely ‘the League’, ‘the Movement’, ‘independence’ as well as the ‘self-determination’ (or self-governance) which were highlighted as the major programmatic points from the 1878 (see Chapter 6). More specifically it re-engaged in producing a personification of the new ideological iconography which would be able to produce and disseminate the modified ethnonationalist narrative: a modern, ‘westernised’, political leader, found in Ibrahim Rugova.

Ibrahim Rugova: the cult of the ‘westernised’ leader

Similarly to the exercise of Albanian ‘Europeanness’ at the turn of the 20th century through Frasheri’s pamphlet’s, Fishta’s epic poetry or the reconstruction of the Scanderbeg mythology, the new parallel state of Kosovo was to project its existence

deep into the historical past of the region. The notions of ‘democratic’ self-determination, independence and statehood were to be redefined as ancient ethnonational demands while the region’s history was to be reinterpreted to accommodate the present political actions as the evolutive outcome of past activities.

However, first and foremost, the power of the new discourse was to be amplified with the construction of its personification. The introduction and appointment of a new leader of the new strategy was considered essential and was found ‘almost by accident’ (Judah 2008:72) in the personality of a low-profiled, public intellectual and literary critic—Ibrahim Rugova (1942-2006). As noted earlier in this chapter, by early 1990 Rugova was appointed the chairman of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) and this move marked an essential momentum in the representational evolution of the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalism. It was the first time in the society’s recent history that two essential political aspirations were seemingly converging: that of having a massive, internationally complacent political organisation, headed by an internationally acceptable intellectual figure.

Rugova’s image as the major signifier with the Kosovo Albanian discourse of democracy during the period of the ‘parallel state of Kosovo’ bears essential relevance to this research. His biography of a literary critic, author and poet quickly earned him the necessary aura of a contemporary ethnonationalist leader. He seemed to make both worlds meet: his knowledge of Albanian literature and history made him sufficiently ‘patriotic’, while his personal style of a ‘westernised’ modernizer made him sufficiently ‘collaborative’ to the political authorities of the international community.

‘We have learned that nonviolence is the modern European preference’, Clark quotes Rugova and his elaboration about the existence of linkage between the nonviolence and modernity in the minds of the younger generations of Kosovo Albanians ‘in their aspirations towards being contemporary Europeans’ (Clark 2000:67). His image of a fragile, chain-smoking, scarf-wearing, coffee-house moderniser—and, in particular, his dependency on the views of the ‘international community’ about Kosovo’s position—influenced profoundly the manner in which his role as a political leader was seen. Moreover, it shaped the manner in which Kosovo Albanians would engage in

reconstructing their new, nonviolent ethnonationalism in accordance with the imagery of its proclaimed leader, as this image painted by Bujku indicates:

‘With one step into the future and the other into the abyss – digged by our ancient enemies – with the legs of every Albanian who walks freely and thinks boldly for the return of his people’s dignity, raising the firm demand that the Albanian under the foreign yoke will also voice the precious words: ‘Kosovo, Homeland’ – Ibrahim Rugova starts his heroic journey of liberation...’ (Bujku, May 25, 1992:3)

This is an excerpt from a solemn commentary about Ibrahim Rugova with a heavy poetic emphasis, published in ‘Bujku’, a makeshift semi-daily (4 days a week) newspaper that informally succeeded the traditional 45-years running ‘Rilindja’ that was prohibited in early 1990. It demonstrates an unreserved support to Rugova’s ‘quest’ as it accounts for a combination of popular fears and hopes surrounding the unclear course of political resistance and the ever-deteriorating situation in the region.

Ultimately, Rugova’s image was that of a complete antipode to the traditional ethnic heroes such as the medieval Scanderbeg, or legendary rebels from the more recent past such Issa Boletini (detailed account of his ‘brigand’ personality in Herbert (1908). I argue that precisely this anti-warrior imagery—and its persistent affirmation—illustrates a great deal the logic behind the ‘sudden shift’, as defined by Maliqi (1995), of the ethnonationalist discourse and its internalised orientalist approach. His stature was the personification of the great rupture in the ethnonationalist discourse and its signifying practices. Now, there was a soft-spoken, fragile, French-speaking intellectual that was to push further the limits of the national cause. Inasmuch as such an image ran against the traditional ethnonationalist pattern, it was also looked upon as a hopeful portrayal of a new, ‘westernised’ paradigm of the nation’s political ideology. Here is an account by Judah (2008) that highlights the peculiarity and controverse surrounding Rugova’s image:

Especially after he was elected president of Kosovo in 1992⁴⁶, Rugova's life settled down into a very strange pattern. His office was a small wooden bungalow close to Pristina's football stadium. He was driven there in a black presidential-style Audi, and his office issued daily communiqués about whom the 'President of the Republic' had seen and what he had done. Ordinary people came to pay court and ask favors of the man they increasingly came to regard as the father of the nation. Oddly for a national figure, he was extraordinarily boring to talk to or to interview, and his lack of charisma made his popularity all the more unusual. (2008:72)

Nevertheless, in time, Rugova's personality grew into that of an unquestionable political personality with a charisma that continues to-date, five years after his death in 2006. Criticised heavily by some for his 'do-nothing politics' and the 'policy of inaction' (Surroi 2006, Kelmendi 1998, Maliqi 1995), yet simultaneously praised by many others for placing Kosovo on the international political map, Rugova spent his political career with the label of the 'legendary' President of the Republic of Kosovo since 1992. Whether during the 'parallel' period or after the Kosovo conflict in 1999 and subsequent international administration, he remained a widely acclaimed 'presidential' figure to the majority of Kosovo Albanians until his death in 2006.

To this research, Rugova's personality is primarily important in terms of a discursive 'vessel' through which the reformed orientalist feature was visualised within the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist discourse. In his numerous interviews and press-conferences conducted in the combined capacity of the nation's political and intellectual leader, Rugova gave countless accounts of his preoccupation with the reconstruction the Kosovo Albanian history and presentation of its origin as rigidly compatible with the realm of the (western) European civilisation. Himself prone to social constructionism and aware of the role of the myth in the ethnic identity—a

46 The first clandestine parliamentary (and presidential) elections for the institutions of the Independent Republic of Kosovo were held on May 24th, 1992 across Kosovo (Judah, 2008:72). The turnout in the voting process was immense; reportedly, Rugova, the only candidate for the Kosovo's future President, won with 98 per cent of votes. The response of the Serbian government to such parallel, clandestine elections organised by the Kosovo was ambiguous: they were tolerated but not recognised. I argue that Belgrade saw their tolerance as a means to ensure the popularity of Rugova's policy of non-violence in Kosovo, which would, in turn, maintain a peaceful situation in then-province. On the other hand, the 1992 elections cemented Rugova's personality as the President of a new country—a position that he held unquestionably until his death in 2006.

former MA student of Roland Barthes in Paris (Rugova, 1991:203, Judah 2008:72)—he engaged in institutionalisation and political promotion of three major claims which he saw as essential for the ‘westernisation’ of the Kosovo Albanian civilisational image:

- Christian (more precisely, Catholic) legacy of Kosovo Albanians. Until his death, Rugova maintained a peculiar relationship with the Vatican and the Catholic Church. He was a frequent visitor to the Holy Chair and met with the Pope John Paul II on a few occasions. The topic of ‘catholicization’ of the ethnonationalist narrative will be discussed at length in the next section.
- The construction of the myth of ‘Dardania’ as an ancient-Illyrian distinct province situated in the territory of Kosovo. To Rugova, this claim ought to be underpinned with scientific/archaeological evidence that would, in turn, enable the projection of the current political demands for Kosovo’s independence—and not unification with Albania—as a historical continuity of ancient aspirations; Dardania was to be introduced as the primordial culture and spiritual homeland of contemporary Kosovo Albanians as its direct descendants (see Judah, 2008).
- Introduction and maintenance of the practice of the ‘parallel Republic of Kosovo’. Rugova believed that an internationally-convincing image of Kosovo Albanians’ readiness and maturity for self-governance was a matter of their routinized, symbolical exercise of statehood. His answer to the dilemmas about the practical viability of the ‘parallel state of Kosovo’ became anecdotal: ‘Kosovo needs only a formal recognition by the international community for it already exists and functions as an independent state.’ (Maliqi 1995:56)

Catholicism, signifier of ancient Europeanness?

The image of ‘Christianised’ civility of the political resistance during the Eastern European waves of the anti-communist ‘velvet revolution’ left deep impression on the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist elite of the 1990s. ‘The idea of a parallel system or a ‘shadow’ government was deeply influenced by the notions of autonomy and self-organisation developed among Central European intellectuals, and especially Polish Solidarity’, notes the Independent International Commission on Kosovo in its

‘Kosovo Report’ (2000:44). Media depictions of the ‘the moral crusade’ of the Catholic Church during the 1980s for the ‘reconquest of Poland’ in order to ‘wrench the country from the hands of leftists (Tismaneanu 1998:61), and the employment of the Catholic church clerics and religious paraphernalia during the Croatian revival of ethnopolitics in 1990 became the distinct images of a new, civilised and, thus, westernised approach to communist opposition.

I argue that there are several reasons that induced the former Yugoslav secessionist movements (including the Kosovo Albanian nationalist elites with the LDK) to add the ‘catholic’ connotation to their renewed ideological narrative. As mentioned by Perica (2002), the conflict in former Yugoslavia—launched in 1991 through military aggression of the Serbian-controlled Yugoslav army against Slovenia and Croatia—evolved into a ‘war of the churches’ (2002:145). Within the post-communist discourse of the times it was described as the war between the ‘western/European’ Catholic/Protestant church (Croatia, Slovenia) and the ‘eastern/communist’ Christian Orthodoxism (Serbia). The below illustrative excerpt comes from a paper by Dimitrij Rupelj, former Slovenian foreign minister and one of the main leaders of the anti-Yugoslav political movement in Slovenia during 1990s:

The most visible politicians in contemporary (1989) Yugoslavia are the Serb Slobodan Milosevic and the Slovene Milan Kucan. . .Milosevic who comes from the Orthodox Christian background. . .(and whom some journalists have called an outright fascist) believes in a strong (Serbian run) state. . .In Slovenia, Kucan (whom some journalists have called the Slovene Gorbachov), and who comes from a Protestant background initiated a debate about political pluralism a year or two ago, and he even proclaimed the (Comunist) Party’s secession from power (1992:10)

As mentioned earlier in this chapter (and in Chapter 4), across the eastern European anti-communist and post-communist political discourses, the term ‘communism’ has been equalled to the label of ‘easterness’; in the context of the former Yugoslavia—and, specifically, in the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist discourse—the communist ‘easterness’ was swiftly replaced with the ‘easterness’ of the Serbian Christian Orthodoxy which was during the 1990s was being introduced as the new, post-

communist ideological backbone of the Serbian ethnonationalism (for further reading, see Gavrilovic et al, 2009)

On the other hand, Kosovo Albanians were accused by Serbia for their assumed Islamic ‘fundamentalism’, due to their predominant Muslim background—which, in turn, they saw as an obstruction in their attempts for ‘westernisation’ and ‘Europeanization’. The following observation by Perica (2006) provides a brief chronology about such religious divide during the last years of the former Yugoslavia, which was, I argue, later on developed along the binary opposition logic of Orthodox/East and Catholic/West:

The Kosovo crisis (. . .) widened the rift between the Serbian Orthodox Church and the other two major Yugoslav religious institutions. Both the Islamic Community and the Catholic Church came under the Serbian barrage. The orthodox clergy, Belgrade media, and Serb scholars argued that Islamic fundamentalism was the driving force of Albanian separatism (. . .) The Kosovo crisis also affected Catholic–Orthodox relations negatively. The Croatian church press, Radio Vatican, and some Catholic churchmen expressed support for the 1981 Kosovo movement and backed the Albanian quest for greater autonomy in Kosovo. In 1982 Vatican Radio broadcast a series of programs in the Albanian and Croatian languages supportive of the Albanian struggle against the Serbs. (Perica, 2006:145-6)

The Democratic League of Kosovo and its leader, Ibrahim Rugova, demonstrated great zeal in the efforts to reconstruct the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist discourse along the Catholic religious traits introduced and represented as the civilisational legacy of the place. In the early stages of the affirmation of the orientalist features of the discourse of democracy, the promotion of the Vatican as a global political center of power and the personality of the Pope John Paul II as the ‘crusader of democracy’ were considered as an effective countering exercise to the rising Christian-Orthodox ethnoreligious mobilisation in Serbia under Milosevic’s dictatorship. I argue that such ideological ‘catholicisation’ was considered by Rugova and the LDK as a discursive exercise of *othering* the Kosovo Albanian society from Yugoslavia’s ‘eastern’ legacy of communism. Here, an observation by Clark holds relevance in describing the prevailing mood among the new Kosovo Albanian political elite from the era:

In 1990, some Kosovo Albanian Muslims even discussed the idea of a collective conversion to Catholicism as a demonstration of their Western orientation. They rejected the suggestion as opportunistic, but repeatedly the movement rallied around Catholic symbols, above all Mother Theresa (herself an Albanian), observing Catholic holy days and attending Catholic ceremonies, forming a Christian Democratic Party (with a majority membership of Muslims) – a demonstration that they were not the Muslim fundamentalists portrayed in Serbian ‘hatespeak’ (2000:66).

In her observation on such ideological deliberations of the Albanian political elites from the 1990s, Todorova points out the ‘naiveté and straightforwardness of new Albanian political discourse that had not yet mastered the ennobling façade of the pluralist vocabulary’ (2002:46). However, there seems to have been a ‘sound political instinct’ in place: the emerging ‘westernised’ politicians—including Rugova—were doing ‘what others before him had practiced: externalising undesired qualities on some imputed Balkanness’ (ibid). Although, as noted ironically by Bakic-Hayden (1992) ‘the association of Roman Catholicism with industriousness and economic development might have surprised Max Weber’ (ibid:11), the views about Catholicism as the central narrative of ‘Europeaness’ appeared not only inside the former Yugoslavia, but also in the international press. Bakic-Hayden cites a New York Times article⁴⁷ that referred to the political dispute in Yugoslavia in the following manner:

(Slovenes represent) an industrious Roman Catholic Slavs whose culture was shaped by centuries spent under Austrian rule and to whom southern Yugoslavia where the religion is either Muslim or Eastern Orthodox, is a foreign country—strange and threatening. (1992:10)

In the new landscape of the ‘democratising’ societies of the former Yugoslavia, no one wanted to be seen as ‘eastern’. More specifically, in the context of the New York Times article, association with Islam or ‘Eastern Orthodox’ was becoming highly unpopular for aspiring republics of slovenia and Croatia. And, as the Serbs were

47 New York Times, 6 April 1990, A8.

comfortable within their re-emerging ethno-religious narrative, the Kosovo Albanian political elites with the LDK believed that the new political momentum could enable them to apply profound changes on their assumed external image of ‘Muslim’, i.e. eastern, image. The simple binary logic at work that was underpinning such nesting orientalist trait among the Kosovo Albanian political elite was based on the perception that ‘Christianity’—specifically, Roman Catholicism—equals to ‘the West’ while ‘Islam’ and the Christian Orthodoxy equal to ‘the East’, a perception enforced further by views such Samuel Huntington’s theories about the ‘clash of civilisations’ and the new, cultural divisions (as opposed to ideological) in the aftermath of the Cold War and the collapse of the communist ‘Iron Curtain’:

The Cold War ended with the end of the Iron Curtain. As the ideological division of Europe has disappeared, the cultural division of Europe between Western Christianity, on the one hand, and Orthodox Christianity and Islam, on the other, has reemerged (Huntington, 1993:35)

I argue that this logic describes the core of an internalised-orientalist pattern of representation that I will describe as the ‘aspirational model’. Intentionally simplistic, it illustrates the discursive strategy of action by Kosovo Albanians that was aimed at the practical deployment of ‘westernising’ signifiers within a simplified orientalist-ethnonationalist ideological scheme (Catholicism => west => democracy). Below is an illustration of what I call ‘the aspirational model’ which defines the simplified logic within the Kosovo Albanian orientalist ethnonationalist narrative, driven by the binary opposition mode of elucidation:

Aspirational model⁴⁸:

If: Christianity => Catholicism => the West

If: The West => Democracy

Then: (Kosovo Albanian) Catholic imagery => Democracy

Then: Discourse of Democracy => Western acceptance

Therefore: (Kosovo Albanian) Catholic imagery + Discourse of Democracy => Western acceptance

48 The sign ‘=>’ is intended to mean the causal/logical implication; i.e. ‘implies’

I argue that the effects of such ‘aspirational’ discursive strategy, introduced by Rugova and the LDK, were two-fold:

- Such strategy induced the discursive reformation of the ethnonationalist ideology by attaching to the notion of ‘the West’ the visible and concrete signifier of the catholic religion. Such a definition was a representational novelty in itself as it enabled a necessary simplification of Kosovo Albanians’ understanding of ‘the West’ as a political entity with a clearly delineated ideological/cultural/religious agenda.
- It reduced the speculative, facultative definitions of ‘the West’ by a largely politically illiterate population of Kosovo Albanians in terms of practical comprehension of emerging signifiers such ‘international community’, ‘advanced democracies’, etc. The discursive ‘catholicisation’ of ‘the West’ would reduce the endless debates on what the notion of the West ‘really’ represents; also, such finite definition would assist in discursive re-orientation of the ethnonationalist strategy of action which, from then on, should be introduced as a catholic-compatible ideological set.

On the other hand, such odd importation of the feature of Catholicism within the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist system of representation would not go unnoticed by the Serbian counterparts. Its ethnoreligious exponents such as Milorad Ekmecic considered such representations in Croatia—but, also in Kosovo—as outbursts of ‘Catholic nationalism’ which he believed to stand for the ‘Serbs’ worst enemy in the history’ (in Popov, 1993:89). Amfilohije Radovic, a Serbian Orthodox metropolitan was also quoted as saying that ‘the lightning and thunder of the Catholic and Protestant West and the Ismaelite Islamic Middle East clash over the Serbian people’ (ibid:89-90). Moreover, Bowman (2005) notes that according to Slobodan Milosevic, then-Serbia’s president, Kosovo Albanian political resistance was exposing itself as the ‘Vatican-Comintern conspiracy’ which he presented as a linkage between ‘the communist state (which had ‘stolen’ the Serbian homeland of Kosovo from Serbia) with the Catholic Church (which was said to have sponsored the Ustasha)’ (in Panizza, 2005:136)

I understand the introduction of the ‘aspirational’ model and its representational strategy as an attempt by Rugova to challenge and oppose the ‘Balkanist’ approaches to defining the nature and identities of the nations of the former Yugoslavia within the pejorative generalisation of ‘the Balkan people’ (Todorova 2002:38-45). Such discursive strategy is in line with the attempts aimed at the ‘essentialisation of religious differences’ which were, eventually, considered as necessary steps towards ‘internalisation of the cultural code of politically correct liberalism’ (ibid:152). Therefore, such an ‘aspirational model’ of the ‘western-compatible’ representation of the nation supposed to confront another, diametrically opposed system that I call ‘the stereotypical model’:

Stereotypical model:

If: Islam/Muslim => East

If: Albanians = Muslim/Islam

Then: Albanians => Eastern

If: Christian Orthodox => East

If: Serbs => Christian Orthodox

Then: Serbs => Eastern

The ‘stereotypical model’ clearly envisages the representational inseparability of Albanians and Serbs as it categorises them within the generalized interpretation of the Balkans as ultimately ‘East’. Such constructions rely heavily on the ‘balkanist’ system of representation discussed in the earlier chapters of this research. And, in line with the technologies of the discursive construction of ‘historical’ and ‘civilisational’ differences as the process of differentiation with the ‘immediate other’, I argue that the confrontation between the two models illustrates the logic of application of the ‘nesting orientalism’ (Bakic-Hayden 1995:917-931) by the Kosovo Albanian political elites. In short, it represents the process of establishing differences with ‘the Balkans’ which could, in turn, highlight the similarities with ‘the Europe’. The stronger the differences with the rivalling ‘neighborhood’, the greater the likelihood of international acceptance or rejection.

As discussed in Chapter 4, a similar logic gave birth to the discursive strategy of ‘orientalisation’ of the imminent ethnopolitical rival during the conflicts in the former

Yugoslavia. In the context of the discursive technologies that were employed in the transformative process of the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalism, its political elites set out to project the validity of such claims as part of the nation's civilisational legacy. I argue that such a process was conducted in line with the Kolakowski's observation on the reconstruction of the 'collective memory' by the 'young nations' through the 'invention of ad-hoc artificial relations to the past without the existence of the real, verifiable connections' (quoted in Wodak, DeCillia et al 1999:25). To Rugova and the political leadership of the LDK, such historical revisions were essential in the process of ideological justification and 'scientific' institutionalization of its strategy of action. This is where the concept of 'Dardania' as a distinct, ancient, geographical location of the primordial Kosovars/Albanians enters the discourse as an additional signifier.

Described as the prehistoric state of the Dardans—allegedly an ancient tribe of the Illyrian civilisation—their existence and contemporary affirmation would assist in reconstructing a major claim on the historical roots that led to the great ideological shift from irredentist to the independentist model. Moreover, such claim would have an added value due to the prevalent assumption that 'the Dardans' were among the first populations of the region to embrace the Christian/Catholic religion. A relevant account comes from Tim Judah (2008):

(Rugova) toyed with the idea of renaming Kosovo 'Dardania,' after the ancient Illyrian tribe supposed to have lived in Kosovo in antiquity. Hence while the official flag of the president of Kosovo has at its center Skanderbeg's double-headed eagle it also has the name Dardania emblazoned across it (...) As far as partisans of Dardania are concerned this theory has an added historical cum political advantage. They argue that the ancient Dardanians were the ancestors of the Albanians but more important in this context, Roman Catholics. Thus, they argue, Albanians were historically part of Western civilisation and their churches were usurped and turned into Orthodox ones by the invading Slavs, who were not. (2008:31)

In the period of the LDK and Rugova, a large number of Kosovo Albanian Catholic clerics rose to become personalities of high political importance with the Kosovo

Albanian movement of nonviolent resistance. Alongside, a vast number of publications was disseminated and followed with the organising of conferences and round-tables in which the Catholic legacy of Albanians was widely discussed and reconstructed. The subsequent visit to Albania by the Pope John Paul II in April 1993 was followed with unprecedented attention by the Kosovo Albanian media and its political elite. The excerpt below from an interview of Dom Lush Gjergji (1991), a Kosovo Albanian Catholic bishop, on the occasion, accounts for a clear attempt to ‘perennialise’ both ethnic (Albanian) belonging as well as its assumed catholic ancientness:

Q: Can you tell us about the Christian tradition among Albanians?

A: A letter sent by the Saint Paul to the Church community of Rome in 320 a.d. wrote: ‘From the Jerusalem to Illyria I have been spreading the Gospel of Christ’. This explains that Christianity has been among Albanians since the early days of its revelation’ (quoted in Bujku, 6 July, 1991).

The linkage between the catholic religion/church and the process of ‘democratisation’—i.e. westernisation—has been voiced with similar fervour in the Republic of Albania during the early 1990s. Sali Berisha, the key exponent of Albania’s new anti-communist political leadership portrayed the Pope John Paul II as ‘the Pope of the East’, who in Berisha’s views connoted ‘the Pope of martyrism, of resistance and human suffering’ (Rilindja Demokratike, 10 April, 1993)’. I find Berisha’s ‘eastern’ analogy as particularly important in terms of the revelation of the tendency of contextualizing the cultural/religious division: in his formulation the ‘Catholic west’ was the subject of oppression by the ‘East’. That analogy, uttered as part of the solemn speech in the massive rally, held in Tirana on the occasion of the Pope’s visit, accounts for a logic which appeared rather common in the Balkan political discourses of the time. It is about the strategy of constructing the existence of ‘oppressed’ parts of the ‘west’ in the ‘east’; more precisely, the projection of existence of historically—indeed, perennially—‘western’ societies which were enduring the ‘eastern’ oppression. As noted by Todorova, ‘with exception to the Turks . . . all other Balkan nations have renounced what they perceive as East and think of themselves as, if incompletely Western, certainly not Eastern’ (2002 (1997):58). According to this logic, Berisha constructs the Pope as the representative

of the eastern-terrorised 'west'—thus establishing a clear analogy with Albanians, their perennial 'westernness' and their undoubtedly rich historical portfolio of 'eastern' sufferings.

Berisha's formulation is relevant for it broadens the definition of the ethnic/political victimhood into a cultural/civilisational category. This is where Berisha's claim converges with Rugova's emphasis on the *catholicisation* of the nationalist legacy. They both appear to share a common belief that such exercise could enhance further the projection of 'the Albanian victim' in the Balkans: this time, it would no longer be about an *eastern ethnicity* (Albanians) suffering from the *eastern hegemony* (Serbs/communism). On the contrary, the aim of such orientalist exercise was to present the Albanian/Serbian conflict as an indiscriminate terror conducted against a *western ethnicity* (Albanians) by an *eastern hegemony* (Serbian/communist). According to this logic, once formulated in this context, the state-sponsored terror upon Kosovo Albanians would be explained through the prism of *civilisational* conquest and brutality: the west should rise in defence of Albanians as its next-of-kin rather than extending its support because of the apathetic universalist principles which would never compel it to undertake any concrete intervention.

Here, it is important to note that the discourse of democracy through the imposition of distinct orientalist feature in the 1990s was shared by Albanian elites from both sides of the border, in Kosovo and Albania proper. In fact, the timing of the popular upheaval for change coincided on both sides albeit with diametrically opposed effects: while the overthrowing of Hoxha's regime in Albania (1990) put an end to the harsh dictatorship, Kosovo was sinking into a dangerous period of confrontation with the Serbian regime and the threat of the 'spill-over' effect of war raging in the region. Yet, to Albanian societies on both sides of the border, the affirmation of 'Christian values' was perceived as an *acceleration* of their 'Europeanness' and, thus, the acceleration of their political *legitimation* by the western authorities. I find the analysis of such public communication practices from this period particularly interesting due to the fact that their promotion was taking place in a society that was resting on the cultural heritage of the half-a-millennium long Ottoman presence. Moreover, I argue that such orientalist exercise by the new elites that brought about the ideological shift of ethnonationalist paradigm received a wide support by the

majority of Muslim Albanians, particularly during the early days of its conception. An ironic observation by Malcolm (1998) appears useful to describe such, rather bizzare, manifestation of collective self-orientalisation:

Indeed, so untroubled are the Kosovars by religious politics that no one there thinks it strange to have a ‘Christian Democrat’ party in which the overwhelming majority of the members are Muslims. (1998:351)

To-date, the photograph of Ibrahim Rugova meeting the Pope John Paul II remains as the main artefact at the former headquarters-turned-museum of the LDK in Kosovo’s capital, Prishtina. That photograph (image 7.1), taken during his first visit to the Vatican in 1992 became among the most widely used posters and – to paraphrase Barthes – visual ‘myths’ of Kosovo’s ‘Europeanised’ ethnonationalism: its dissemination in the form of cards, newspaper posters, conference placards and party gatherings made it into a graphic trade-mark of the new social practice.



Image 7.1. Ibrahim Rugova with the Pope John II, on a visit in the Vatican during 1990s. This photo in a larger-size version continues to hang in the premises of the former LDK headquarters in Prishtina.

Nevertheless, at this point I will have to disagree with the Malcolm’s observation (1998:351-2) on Albanians’ ‘untroubledness’ with the ‘religious politics’. I argue that, quite the contrary, Kosovo Albanians’ premeditated self-orientalisation of the

ethnonationalist discourse informs a great deal about their critical interest and active engagement in the religious politics. In fact, both Rugova's personal investment in its *catholicisation* coupled with the—by any means, odd—feature of Muslim (Kosovo) Albanians' membership with Demochristian Party of Kosovo (the key local ally to Rugova's LDK throughout the 1990s), or the local Mother Theresa Charity, speak clearly about the strategic employment of the religious politics. The only difference here lies with the *transformation* of the historical phenomenon of their abandoning or downplaying of the Islamic legacy, as discussed in chapter 6. While the component of downplaying the religious belonging during the National Rebirth Movement of 1880s involved an 'equalised' castigation of all religious doctrines in favor of the newly-founded idea of nation, Rugova's period of 'catholic preference' over the existing prevalent Islamic cultural legacy—or even secularist, for that matter—represents a quite different momentum, which I understand as an outright act of religious politics.

What else could it be, considering that we deal here with social practices of deliberate adherence of individuals and groups within organisations (deliberately) carrying religious insignia and ideological imagery. Further I argue that such practices represented premeditated acts aimed to produce certain representational effects, namely the collective zeal for 'westernisation'. I argue that Malcolm's conclusion about Kosovo Albanians' 'untroubledness' itself confirms the already achieved ideological effect of such practices. His external depiction of Kosovo Albanians as a population 'untroubled' with the religious belonging and politics has been the very aim behind such symbolics of the orientalist ethnonationalist strategy. Yet, I argue, it is about the *manipulative* manner of engagement in the 'religious politics'—rather than an *untroubledness*—that was guiding Kosovo Albanians to such, seemingly out of the ordinary, acts.

Therefore, I think it was essential to analyse more carefully the aspects of 'intertextuality' which are often employed during the historical juxtaposing of ideological features of a given Balkans ethnicity, for it is very likely that representations of Kosovo Albanian contemporary ethnonationalist discursive practice along Malcolm's lines carry their roots from past accounts such those of Durham (1905), Herbert (1912) or even Frasheri's pamphlet and Wassa Effendi's supra-religious poetry. However, as noted earlier, the feature of *downplaying* the religious

background introduced at the outset of the 20th century represents a different phenomenon than the Rugova's and LDK's 'catholicisation' tendency. Going beyond the existing religious landscape is one thing, but the downplaying of one and affirmation of the other is a completely different thing. 'Albanianism' as 'the religion of Albanians' (Wasa Effendi 1912) or the Kosovo Albanian religious 'fluidity' as a daily routine (Dujzings, 1995) should not be equalised with the programmatic principles deriving from Rugova's period. Neither should the latter be confused as a repetition, a display of the continuity of the former.

Rather, I argue that the religious politics should be seen as a major component of the orientalist feature of Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist discourse. It represented a deliberate *manipulative* practice perceived as a social practice that would trigger the acceleration of the international/western legitimation and its subsequent intervention in the local political conflict. In reality, the period following Rugova's demise and the solution of the Kosovo conflict through the international military intervention confirms the ultimate ineffectiveness of such symbolic exercises. Moderate Islam remains the predominant religious trait among Kosovo Albanians to-date, and there are no reports about any event of religious conversion. The idea of 'christianisation' of the ethnonationalist ideology was dropped a few years after—together with the practice of nonviolent resistance and the 'parallel state'—as Kosovo was brought to the point of launching an armed struggle against the Serbian security forces by the late 1998.

Academia and the 'scientification' of Europeaness

In the period concerning this research the rediscovery of the Christian-European origine has been a major focus of the Kosovo Albanian academic circles. During the 1990s, a vast number of Prishtina University teachers, members of the Kosovo Academia of Sciences and Arts, authors, writers and scholars from all profiles have offered their contribution to the construction of the new, 'European', Kosovo. Below, I will focus on the analysis of a number of selected publications that employ these references to the 'scientific' and historical 'truths' in the marketing strategy of the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist discourse of democracy:

- The excerpts from a four-days academic conference *'Europe and Albanians: Past and the Present'* (translation of the Albanian original is 'Europe and Albanians: Yesterday and Today'), held between 24-27 May, 1991. Presentations and discussions with the event were, at the time, regularly published in the local Albanian daily 'Bujku'.
- Fragments from a compilation of presentations and essays on the state of the Kosovo Albanian political strategy and programme, *'National Cause and Critical Awareness'* published in 1998 by members of the then-Forum of Albanian Intellectuals (time span of the writings encompasses the period 1991-1998).
- Analysis of major highlights from a pseudo-historical/anthropological/linguistic textbook *'The Albanians—a Divided Nation'*, a compilation of analysis and discussion by three authors: Giuseppe Catapano (Italy), Nermin Vlora-Falaschi (Italy) and Skender Rizaj (Kosovo), published in 1996.

These publications have been selected for two reasons: first, in a condensed format, they encapsulate a large number of then-major Kosovo Albanian scholars and experts in the fields of Albanian culture, literature and history; second, the period of their publishing made them into influential texts as they exercised a substantial influence in the context of a 'scientific' underpinning of the new discursive practice on Kosovo Albanians' 'Europeanness'.

Here, the discussion about the scientific accuracy of such presentations is not the object of this study; rather, it is the logic that guided their semantic construction, the historical context of their articulation and the manner of their publication that represent components that I find essential for the nature of this research. Moreover, I argue that—whereas they inform about the logic that assisted in the reconstruction of the key postulates of the contemporary Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalism—such texts have also assisted in the processes of epistemological 'disciplining' of public criticism, as well as in the 'normalisation' of the public validity of its postulates. I argue that this Foucauldian process of establishing a separate, specific 'regime of truth'—perceived as a means to confronting similar exercises coming from a

repressive (Serbian) hegemony—has had a critical effect on the manner in which, to-date, Kosovo Albanians continue to project their historical and political existence.

Europe and Albanians: From Frasherri to Qosja

The first relevant gathering of Kosovo Albanian academic circles that was aimed at providing a ‘scientific’ contribution to the major claims of the new ethnonationalist discourse and political movement from the early 1990s took place in May 1991. It was organised under the title of ‘Scientific Symposium: Albanians and Europe – Past and Present’ by the Kosovo Academy of Sciences and Arts, the Institute for Albanian Studies (otherwise known as The Albanological Institute) and then-existing Albanian Cultural Association ‘Migjeni’ with its seat in Ljubjana, Slovenia.

Each of the organising institutions carried a specific weight and intellectual authority in the context of Kosovo Albanian political thought of the time: Kosovo Academy of Sciences and Arts represented the supreme scholarly body of Kosovo; the Institute for Albanian Studies was the workplace of the new political leader, Ibrahim Rugova, and the charismatic ideologist Rexhep Qosja, a widely acclaimed public intellectual, author and literary critic of the era. Finally, the Albanian Cultural Association ‘Migjeni’ from Ljubjana, Slovenia played an important role in the early days of the political movements (1989-1990) through the publication and dissemination of a monthly magazine ‘The Albanian Alternative’.

The academic symposium was given special attention with in the then only Albanian newspaper, ‘Bujku’ and went on for two days under the headlines ‘Life at the Edge of the Two Worlds’ and ‘the Albanian Cause is Wider than the Status of Kosovo’ (May 24-25, 1991). The event was introduced with a voluminous opening speech by Qosja who set the ideological tone of the symposium and highlighted the major postulates of its public message:

Although it was geography that linked the Albanian nation with the Europe, it was the Turkish conquests in the 15th century that compelled it to secede from its realm. The Ottoman Empire built a wall between Albanians and Europe, primarily through the Islamic ideology as its state ideology. The Turkish yoke

damaged severely the natural development of the Albanian nation – it caused the destruction of the ties that were linking it with the Europe. (Qosja quoted in Bujku, 24 April, 1991:10-14)

To Qosja and the rest of the speakers the symposium was seen as an appropriate point of departure for highlighting the conceptual ‘intertextuality’ of the ideological text as a ‘tissue of quotations’ (Barthes in Allen, 2000) designed to resemble heavily the major principles stemming from the Albanian Rebirth Movement from 1870s. In fact, the majority of presentations at the event were calibrated to re-invoke and reiterate the historical continuity of (a) the national liberation struggle, and (b) the national plight and victimhood. I argue that the importance of reconstruction of such historical continuity reinforces the validation of the definition of national victimhood which, in turn, creates a political and legal base of historical injustice done to Kosovo and Albanians. The following quote provides a common depiction of such a historical continuity:

Never in their history did the Albanians accept their forced partition from Europe. They have proved this through their continuous struggle and rebellions since the times of the glorious leadership of Scanderbeg. The Movement of Albanian National Rebirth reveals its leaders’ inspiration with the national ideology and with the philosophical ideas of the great French Revolution. (ibid)

Whereas the discursive continuity of the national struggle is stated as necessary for the institutionalisation of the collective victimhood as a historical constant, the linkage of ‘national ideology’ with the ‘philosophical ideas’ of the ‘great’ French Revolution represents an effort to attach it the distinct ‘European’ connotations within the realm of Enlightenment. Albanian inspiration with it is presented as a testimony of that historical linkage. Finally, the contextualisation of the position of the ethnonational political strategy of the moment is presented as follows:

The Communist ideology which is also of a foreign extract deepened further the distance between Albanians and Europe. To them (Albanians), this ideology is projected and understood as an anti-western ideology. As a state

ideology (of Yugoslavia and Albania) the communist ideology brought Albanians at a stage that does not represent their natural development. (ibid)

Qosja creates a clear analogy between the ‘easterness’—or, at least, anti-westerness—of the Ottoman Empire and the Communist ideology. In his presentation, they are ‘of Asian extract’, ‘based on domination’ and ‘restriction of freedoms’. According to him, communism—employed here as a parallel to Ottomanism—was unwanted, imposed and fought against on both sides of the Albanian border. It is important to observe that the notion of ‘foreign extract’ specifies the exercise of orientalist othering at work as it assists in the process of *identifying* and *locating* ‘the east’ and ‘the west’. To Qosja and his colleagues from the Kosovo Academy of Sciences, Albanians are *not* Eastern: they represent an ancient western nation that fell prey to the Eastern hegemonies that ranged from the Ottoman conquests, to Communism and, presently, the Serbian Christian-Orthodox ethnoreligious nationalism. Their ethnic ancientness accounts for their ‘Europeanness’, therefore ‘westernness’. Finally, the conclusion of Qosja’s presentation follows with the discursive construction of the future and its ‘ideology of democracy’:

The revival of the ideology of democracy within the Albanian nation comes with the retreat of the Communist ideology. The principles of this ideology pave the way to a historical process inspired by the freedom-loving ideals: the ideal of the life in freedom and democracy across the Albanian lands; here, in Kosovo, it represents the ideal of national independence. (ibid)

In short, Qosja manages to encapsulate here all the major components of the great ideological shift of paradigm within the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist discourse: according to him, it’s about ‘the ideology of democracy’ which is undergoing its ‘revival’ (i.e. it existed before and is not a novelty) with the ‘retreat of the communist ideology.’ This formulation entails its previous existence among Albanians—at least, the previous existence of conditions that would have enabled it, if the communist hegemony wouldn’t have happened. Nevertheless, to Qosja, democracy is now being re-introduced and revived across the Albanian societies and—while based on the ‘ideal of the life in freedom’—the various shapes of its manifestation across the

Albanian ethnic body should be considered natural. He devises a multi-functional definition of democracy in attempts to justify the irredentist/independentist paradigmatic shift: to the state of Albania, democracy is about the ‘life in freedom’; to Kosovo, it’s really about ‘the national independence’. The invention of ‘democratic’ tradition—to paraphrase here Hobsbawm (1983)—as the historical legacy of Albanian struggle for liberation appears a common trait among the Kosovo academics and historians. Similarly, the following quote of Stavileci (1993) from an excerpt from a communiqué/paper presented at the roundtable titled ‘Albanians Today’ accounts for a direct attempt to ‘traditionalize’ and invent the present aspiration towards ‘democracy’:

Although descendants of a democratic tradition of the National Rebirth, Albanians failed to preserve and cultivate it sufficiently. The enlightened tradition of our Rebirth forefathers—who were so democratic and tolerant that they could be easily defined among the classics (of democracy?—my remark)—could not be cultivated due to a set of internal and external circumstances (Bujku, 25 May, 1993:12)

Let us return to Qosja’s presentation: I find it of particular importance because the act of its articulation formalised all the major components of the reformed, future ethnonationalist discourse. Moreover, the logic, the style of its construction and the historical moment of its presentation—at the sunset of the communist regime---produced powerful analogies with Sami Bey Frasheri’s pamphlet ‘What Will Become of Albania?’. This ideological *intertextuality* with Frasheri—a patriotic resemblance of Kosovo academia with Stavileci’s paper on ‘Rebirth forefathers’ of Albanian nation—has been a recurrent feature in texts of Kosovo Albanian academics and public intellectuals for decades. Therefore, not only the bare meaning of statements and utterances in Qosja’s presentation, but the very moment of their performance carries a ‘historical and social significance’ (Bakhtin/Medvedev (1978:120) in Allen 2000:17), as it enables the respective audiences to construct a historical and conceptual fusion with its ethnonational ideological text. To Kosovo academia of the time it marked the point of departure of the new (Kosovo) movement of national rebirth. The present state of the nation carried all the ingredients and necessary

conditions for such parallelism: a hegemony (Ottoman/Communist) was at its deathbed and the nation's future was submerged in fears from the unknown.

FISH: Intellectuals, the self-evident democrats

The establishment of the Forum of Albanian Intellectuals (Forumi i Intelektualeve Shqiptarë – FISH) in May 1992 marks an attempt to institutionalise the mobilising enthusiasm of the local academia for contributing to the Kosovo Albanian political movement of the 1990s. Founded by university teachers, historians and literary critics gathered around its intellectual leader, Rexhep Qosja, the FISH membership saw itself as the academic base for ideological interpretations of the current state of the political resistance and its strategy of action. Although its practical political influence in Kosovo's political arena was modest throughout the period of its existence, the ideological logic that guided its operation appears relevant to this research. In this context, due to the limited space, I will focus on describing and analysing a few excerpts from its 'Programme'—a compilation of definitions of the national grievances and projected principles of the strategy of action—because of its specific, candid belief about the historical and enlightening role of intellectuals in political struggle.

FISH members 'aim to focus on their creative, intellectual potential on the general national, political, economic, social, cultural and spiritual emancipation.' (Programme, FISH 1998:7). I argue that such tendency of *sacralization* of the category of the 'intellectual' stems directly from the National Rebirth Movement which itself represents the Albanian occurrence/variation of Enlightenment/Illuminism (as referred to in Qosja's presentation with the 'ideals of the French Revolution'). In this context the FISH programme draws heavily on the conviction about the historical necessity of the 'revival' of ethnonationalist *Illuminism* through contemporary revisions of its strategy of action. Here are few opening statements from the Programme:

The Albanian nation today is confronted with two major historical challenges: the unresolved national issue and the historical aim for comprehensive integration in western civilisation. Its historical destiny depends on the resolution of these two national strategic questions. (1998:9)

The orientalist feature here is blunt and unquestionable: the national salvation and the western integration are to be seen as indivisible from one another: one cannot happen without the other. Moreover, they represent a one single thing. In this view, the resolution of the national question equals to the integration in the western civilisation. It is statements such as this that I consider essential in the process of application and *concretisation* of the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist discourse of democracy during the 1990s. The logic of producing the inextricable link between the historical legacy of Albanian ethnonationalism and the ‘historical aim’ of western integration comprises the basis of the communication practices that evolved in the period of the nonviolent resistance.

The section in the Programme titled ‘The Modern Civilisation’ reiterates the ‘historical aim’ of Albanian nation for ‘comprehensive integration with the western civilisation, to which it belongs geographically, historically and spiritually (1998:8)’. Again, the bluntness of equalizing the ‘western’ with ‘modern’ reveals the trait of intellectual *unquestionability* of the validity of claims. A more careful reading of these passages accounts for an interesting—yet, familiar—confusion. On the one hand, Albanians aspire ‘comprehensive integration in the western civilisation’ while on the other, they belong to it ‘geographically, historically and spiritually’. This would, indeed, sound slightly confusing to an uninformed reader; however, I argue that such semantic dichotomy is premeditated and goes along the lines of the logic about a ‘western nation under eastern domination’, as discussed earlier. Remarkably, such seemingly paradoxical statements are almost identical to those in Sami Frasheri’s pamphlet from 1899, about ‘perennial’ Europeanness of Albanians and the anxiety of not being accepted as Europeans.⁴⁹ The feature of intertextuality here appears quite striking, as it accounts for similar—if not, identical—challenges to Kosovo/Albanians in the context of European/western rejection.

One can easily note the painstaking tactics of formulation at work—for, the political message at stake must encapsulate the essence of ‘liminal’ (see particularly Bjelic 2002, Fleming 2002) existence in/of the Balkans. I find this as an exemplary

49 See the chapter 6: Albanian Orientalist Ethnonationalism: The National Rebirth (1870-1930)

illustration of the hidden syntax of ‘Balkanism’ as it adheres to the understanding of its societal being as dwelling in a state of civilisational ‘inbetweenness’ and uncertainty. I argue that, to-date, such feature remains one of the major utterances with the Kosovo Albanian (and Balkan) ethnonationalist discourse which performance at a certain historical moment accounts for a domestication of a ‘heteroglotic’ or a ‘double-voiced discourse’ (Bakhtin, in Allen 2000:22) in the process of defining its social being. Indeed, there is a certain communicative strategy at work here which I argue to have been induced by internalisation of external perceptions about oneself (‘We are what *They* say we are’). On the one hand, such communicative strategising is aimed at producing the impression of a civilisational ‘complementarity’—‘Albanians belong to the western civilisation’—while on the other, it admits that the ultimate verification of such complementarity depends on an unstable, dynamic category and political action: the ‘comprehensive integration with the western civilisation’.

Finally, the very name of the association deserves analysis: *The Forum of Albanian Intellectuals*. The employment of the ‘intellectual’ as a noun with distinct meaning—almost ideologically engaged—accounts for romantic/illuminist attitudes of its members. I argue that in Albanian political communication practice—as in most of the former Yugoslavia and/or Eastern European societies throughout the 20th century—the notion of the ‘intellectual’ had the overlapping meaning with that of ‘dissident’ accompanied with an allusion to an underlying anti-establishment attitude. More commonly, in time it acquired the connotation of a ‘westernised liberal’ (Tismaneanu 1998:4) and as such became a signifier of specific ideological potency. In the context of Kosovo Albanian political discourse, the history of the evolution—or politicisation—of its meaning appears indivisible from the ethno-political effect that was produced through the founding of Albanian educational institutions. Here, it is important to note an observation by Kostoviceva (2005) that, historically, ‘the struggle for Albanian education has been a struggle for Albanian national identity’ (2005:29). Therefore, the usage of the ‘intellectual’ in the Kosovo Albanian political discourse of the 1990s encapsulates a range of ideologically-charged meanings: that of a westernised, liberal, educated, illuminist, patriotic and a qualified interpreter of the ‘national cause’ narrative. I argue that the latter is specifically important, for as noted by Vaclav Havel, author, former Czech president and celebrated anti-

communist dissident: ‘politics and intellectuals can be linked, but the responsibility for the ideas, even when advocated for by the politician, remains with the intellectual’ (in Jennings and Kemp-Welch, 1997:13). I adhere to the view that such a definition reflects a great deal the logic employed by the FISH members whose usage of the word signifies, in an almost self-evident manner, their belief in their role as the patriotic elite of the nation carrying the burden of ideological responsibility.

From Etruscans to Europeans

Finally, the last piece of analysis in this chapter is reserved for a publication with – to put it mildly – a rather estranged content described as a ‘monograph’ of historical, ethnographical and anthropological works of three authors: Giuseppe Catapano and Nermin Vlora-Falaschi from Italy, and Dr. Skender Rizaj from Kosovo. The compilation bears the title ‘Albanians – a Divided Nation’ and was published in 1996 by a local branch of the Forum of Albanian Intellectuals. Whereas the publication contains the versions in English and Italian, there is hardly any note of personal or professional biography of the authors: Dr. Skender Rizaj was a professor of history with the University of Prishtina while Giuseppe Catapano and Nermin Vlora-Falaschi are stated as ‘Albanian writers and scholars from Italy’. However, the latter’s family origin accounts for an added value in the context of ethnonationalist discursive paraphernalia: Nermin Vlora-Falaschi is highlighted as the last surviving relative, the niece of Ismail Kemal Bey (Alb. Ismail Qemali) the founder of the Independent Albania (1912, see Chapter 6) and therefore a personality of essential importance to the ethno-political symbolics. Although the publication has been, over time, downgraded to the level of ‘obsolete theories’ of ‘delightful ingenuity’ (Malcolm, in Schwandner-Sievers & Fischer 2002:70-87) its content at the time of its publication was a matter of a wide public acclaim and academic discussion in Kosovo and Albania.

In short, the publication focuses on the exercise of demonstrating the ultimate ancientness and, therefore, invaluable sociocultural worth of the Albanian origine and culture. Whereas its radical pseudo-scientific approach may account for some severe

academic profanity, it by no means represented an exception in the region.⁵⁰ As in the earlier analysis, the historical/scientific accuracy of its content is not the object of this research. Rather, I engage in understanding the logic behind the technology of its formulation within the context of intensified revival and reproduction of alike ethno-political myths across the former Yugoslav societies of the period. Below, I will start with an excerpt from the introductory chapter which, among others, sets the tone and informs about the rest of its content:

The study of the (Arberesh)⁵¹ scholar Giuseppe Catapano confirms that the Albanian language is the mother of all the languages: it is the language of prophets since the times of Adam (derived from ‘ad’ or ‘at’ which in Albanian means ‘father’ and ‘am’ or ‘amë’ which means ‘mother’) – and all the way to the Jesus. According to this internationally acclaimed author, all other languages in existence represent the direct descendants of the ancient Albanian language (1996: 24).

In short, the compilation in the ‘monograph’ revolves around three basic theories whose discussion is underpinned by an abundance of historical ‘evidence’ and ‘scientific’ verification:

- Albanians are the most ancient race on Earth;
- Albanians are the ‘primordial’ Europeans;
- Western civilisation is a mere legacy of Albanian language and culture.

The abundance of theories and ‘findings’ that underpin these claims—formulated as the monograph’s axiomatic pillars—are listed in the form of an endless presentation of ancient hieroglyphs, alphabets and deciphering exercises. Albanians are rediscovered as descendants of ‘Pelagians’—an alleged ancient civilisation stated as precursory to the Hellenic culture (1996:72-79)—who, in turn, gave birth to an equally ancient and somewhat mysterious ‘Etruscan’ culture. Quotations from ancient

50 For an exhaustive analysis and comprehensive account on the ethnonationalist mythologies in the former Yugoslavia (Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia), see Gavrilovic, Despotovic, Perica: *Mitovi Nacionalizma i Demokratija*, 2009.

51 Arberesh – Albanian name denoting a member of ethnic Albanian community in the southern Italy (regions in and around Calabria).

historiographers such Herodotus, Seneca, Titus Livius—followed by a range of ‘internationally acclaimed’ scholars such as Von Hahn, A.V. Pearson, I. Benlow, Norbert Jokl—are listed and referred to at a tireless rate. References to their works and essays are invoked as irrefutable pieces of a larger historical discovery poised to confirm a single goal—the ancient Albanian ‘Europeanness’.

I would argue that the true inventive zeal of the compilation lies elsewhere. The directness of its claims and discursive rigidity is aimed at accomplishing a yet more ambitious goal: that of introducing a new epistemological system that would render useless the very necessity of applying the nesting orientalist approach as the representational weapon in the regional competition on the issue of ‘who is the real European?’ Through ‘scientific’ proclamation of Albanians as the unquestionable center of the civilised universe, their participation in such orientalist olympics would no longer be necessary—for they ‘are’ Europe. Here is another illustration:

Etruscan words can be found in Basque language, in Hebrew and other languages (...) Philistines, another expanding Illyrian tribe, after stopping in the Island of Crete, finally settled in the land of Cannan which was called Palestine after them (...) In fact, looking at the map of Israel there can be spotted names with a meaning in Albanian. (1996:102)

The logic of the ideological build-up of the content of the publication appears to have a well-premeditated pace: it is introduced through a combination of detailed etymological comparisons and anthropological ‘findings’. Subsequently, once the issue of ‘Europeanness’ and cultural/political legitimation is resolved by the ‘western’ contributors (Catapano and Vlora-Falaschi) through meticulous employment of a colorful spectrum of profanities, the stage is set for the introduction of a more calibrated approach to the ever-popular Balkan narrative of emphasizing the ‘self-sacrificing’, historical duty of the ‘defence of Europe’ from ‘the eastern hordes of panslavism’, by the ‘ancient Albanian nation’ (Rizaj 1994:180-8).

The Kosovo contributor to the publication, Prishtina University historian, Dr. Skender Rizaj, takes on a more contemporary issue—that of the Serbian political threat to the Albanian national existence—with his work titled ‘The Degeneration of the

Pelasgian-Illyrian-Albanian Philosophy or Panslavism—the Key Factor of Albanian Self-Assimilation’ (1996:182). Meant as an ultimate blow to the current political domination of the Serbian state over Kosovo, Rizaj’s contribution represents a combination of a pseudo-factography and an ideological pamphlet in which an almost catechist-modelled listing of repudiating statements about the ‘other’ are a frequent occurrence. Here, Rizaj focuses on his understanding of ‘pan-slavism,’ a term coined during the 19th century anti-Ottoman uprisals by Slavic ethnic communities, specifically Serbs and Macedonians (see Perica, 2002). He classifies the pan-slavism as a hegemonic, hostile pan-national organisation of ‘eastern’ derivation, and goes on to illustrate its destructive tendencies towards Albanians, as well as the rest of the ‘Europe and the world’:

Panslavism is the annihilation of Muslim and Catholic Albanians, of Bosnians and Muslim Turks – as well as Catholic Croats

Panslavism is the Asiatization of Europe and the world

Panslavism is an opium to the people

Panslavism is primitivism and barbarism

Panslavism is hegemony, dictatorship and despotism

Panslavism is slavization of non-Slav peoples

Panslavism is the falsification of history

Panslavism is demagogy, intrigue, hypocrisy, egoism, defamation, lie, amorality and careerism

Panslavism is about penetration of Russia to the Egean Sea, Mediterranean and Adriatic

Panslavism is usurpation of Albanian historical personalities

Panslavism is usurpation of Albanian churches and monasteries

Panslavism is conquest and plundering of the territories and wealth of others
(1994:186-7)

This type of construction of the relation between the Serbian state-sponsored oppression and the historical projections of premeditated, ‘pan-slavist’ invasion from ‘the East’ towards the western world is a very common feature in the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist discourse during the 1990s. As in Rizaj’s colorful illustration, the pan-slavist threat was regularly attributed to states and societies that were ‘historically’ opposed to Albanians’ statehood and independence—specifically,

the alliance between Russia and Serbia. In Rizaj's context, the 'pan-slavism' represents a direct reference to the threat that is emanated through assumed Serbian/Russian expansionist tendencies against the Albanians, the Balkans and the 'west'. Here, the 'panslavism' is employed as a powerful and negative signifier in the discourse with the aim of depicting the ultimate threat to the national existence, a label for the perceived, premeditated strategy of annihilation of Albanian nation—and should therefore serve as a mobilisatory wake-up call for all-national resistance and struggle.

To illustrate the variety of usage of 'the Slav' as the ultimate projection of national enemy, I will provide here an excerpt from a political essay by Kelmendi titled 'The Annihilation of the Albanian Nation in former Yugoslavia, the Aim of the Slav Occupiers':

The Annihilation of Albanians and the Serbization of areas inhabited by this ancient nation has been part of pan-slavism since their settlement in the Balkans. They came to this area from the east, the Carpatian Mountains of the present Russia (. . .) As organised barbarians that they were, they immediately set out to expand their territories on the expense of Albanian lands who began their withdrawal to the southeast of the Peninsula. (1998:60)

Indeed, similar accounts of senseless exercises of civilisational othering and demonization of the imminent political rival appear frequently across the region during the 1990s. Studies such those by Gavrilovic et al (2009), Perica (2002) produced an extensive compilation of the radical ethnonationalist myths of the Balkans with the specific focus on Serbian features. My argument here is that, other than aimed at cultural elimination and moral humiliation of the imminent regional ethnic rival, such constructions, by all means 'delightfully ingenious' practices of nesting orientalism, uncover a trait of severe and generalized *ressentiment* with the surrounding world—namely with the cultural and political rejections by the 'west' and Europe. They demonstrate the perception of the self (the nation) as undergoing a state of deep civilisational subjugation in relation to dominant, western' narratives of modernity and rationality which '*disciplining and normalising*' capacity—to

paraphrase Foucault—is seen as a discriminatory act against minor ethnic cultures for it reduces them into a sum of worthless periphery of civilised societies.

I argue that the overpowering feeling of imposed political powerlessness, social helplessness, cultural worthlessness—indeed, a bitter resentment as defined by Greenfeld (1992)—assisted in the constitution of such rejective, sarcastic traits of ultimate othering and stigmatisation of ethnic rivals. In the context of the ethnonationalist/ethnoreligious discourses in the former Yugoslav conflicts such depictions have often assisted in escalation of brutalities and the practices of ethnic cleansing making the ‘mythical discreditation of the enemy an integral component of media war’ (Despotovic et al 2009:26).

Ultimately, going back to the Kosovo Albanian discursive landscape in the 1990s, I argue that such ‘mythic style of thinking’ (Malcolm 2002) had the role of acceleration and escalation of the disseminating capacity of the ethnonationalist discourse. The abundance and bluntness of such claims were aimed at eliding the difference ‘between the ancestral past and the present’ where the role of etymology is reduced to a mere tool for implying ‘the eternal present’ (2002:79).

Conclusions

‘Nationalism is in this sense like a class,’ Terry Eagleton (1990) paraphrases a character from a novel in his discussion about nationalism. ‘To have it, and to feel it, is the only way to end it. If you fail to claim it, or give it up too soon, you will merely be cheated, by other classes and other nations’ (ibid:23).

Today, Albanians from both sides of the Kosovo/Albania border live in recognised states which bear the imprints of their political ideology of nationalism. The year 2012 marks the first centennial of the state of Albania (1912) and the Republic of Kosovo is four years old. The narrative about the nation, distinct national identity, Albanian language and ethnic autochthonousness was the discursive engine that produced, shaped and constituted their knowledge about the congruence between the concepts of ethnicity, nation and state. In the formal Albanian ethnonationalist narrative, the nation retained the position of a genuine religion of Albanians. It became their supreme identity signifier, entrenching a range of conditions which induced the sense of belonging, collective understanding, familiarity and nearness. It produced the feelings of unquestionable ethnic brotherhood, cultural sameness, victimised past and a common political ideology.

Today, on both sides of the border, Albanians cherish the myth about themselves as the forgotten Europeans, the ancient members—even, the very co-founders—of the ‘western civilisation’; its defenders and disciples. In the contemporary, modern (western) sense of the term, the Albanian ethnonationalism remains distant and exclusionist to the concepts of supra-ethnic, civic nationalism that constitutes the nation states of the western-European civilisation. Its particularist, ethnic variant struggles with the acceptance and adoption of notions of multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism—the major requirements of contemporary western-European political discourse. On the other hand, as shown through the chronological analysis of its narrative in this research, its ideological core—as exclusionist as it may seem—has been coined through a long exercise of internalisation of principles and norms of nationhood that were emanated by the western sociopolitical and sociocultural

narratives. The ‘talking about the nation’ among Albanians has been triggered and codified through adoption—often, through mere simulation—of the projected western discourse about it.

In simpler terms, at the core of Kosovo/Albanian nationalism lies the feature of ‘westernisation’ as a narrative behind its very construction, its driving idea. Through the adoption of the concept of the ‘nation’, the Albanian elites from the 1870s National Rebirth Movement believed that they could produce a normative complementarity in terms of a westward-looking, ‘modern’ social contract that would bind together their society. It was a process of importation and—often—simulation of formal application of such norms which in the Albanian micro-cosm produced illustrative societal demarcations between the ‘regressive’ ‘a’la Turca’ and the ‘progressive’ ‘a’la Franca’ (i.e. the ‘Turkish way’ and ‘The French way’). The ‘nation’ became just another word for ‘modernisation’ while the latter became just another term for ‘westernisation’. Over time, a nationalist came to mean a social ‘moderniser’—a vestige of the western civilisation touched by the epistemological flames of the Enlightenment.

In general, the discourse about the nation enabled an endless playground for historical constructions about its origin and history. The great thing about the nation was that, to paraphrase Anthony Smith (1981), it could be projected as both ancient and modern—as ‘perennial’. Its ancientness provided for ethnic dignity, historical continuity and cultural tradition; its modern resonance produced a sentiment of attachment—even, participation—with the idealised western sociopolitical and sociocultural developments. To-date, the tale about the nation has the capacity to unite all social strata: from those who hold on to the past fearing the future, to those who disregard the past in their obsession with the ‘modern’ future. Thus, the meaning of the nation differs accordingly in the eyes of the nationalist beholder: it remains an open-ended project, able to mirror one’s already established preconceptions about belonging, origin, purpose and worth. Above all, in the context of this research, the discourse about the nation appears essential against the immediate vicinity: it constituted one’s ethnocultural difference, authenticity and uniqueness as opposed to the immediate neighbor. It became a way to demonstrating one’s assumed ethnically inherent

‘westernness’ and thus expose other’s assumed inherent ‘anti-westernness’, or simply—‘easterness’.

Hence, I feel obliged to reiterate what the idea of ‘nation’ was *not*, whether in the case of Kosovo/Albanians and/or the rest of the former Yugoslav societies: until now at least, it was never about a civic, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural construction. The demise of the formally supra-ethnic federation of Yugoslavia through armed aggressions and ethnic wars remains a testimony to the inability of its ethnonationalist narratives to project the idea of the nation beyond the confines of ethnic kinship. Moreover, in practice, their axiomatic claims about nation’s ‘organic’ association with ‘the West’ hardly went beyond a mere political rhetoric, invoked solely for the purposes of pursuing local feuds based on inter-ethnic delineations and racial othering. Yugoslavia failed to produce ‘Yugoslavs’ and, as the ensuing wars have demonstrated, the nationalist rhetoric of its ethnic communities became reduced into a bizarre practice of denigrating the ethnic ‘other’ in the name of the ‘western’ and ‘European’ ideals.

What then—if anything—was lost in this process of importation and internalisation of the assumed ‘western’ principles of nationhood and democracy? What and how made possible such coexistence between the exclusionist, ethnic—even, ethnoreligious—nationalisms and the projected ‘western’ norms of democracy, inclusion and multi-ethnicity? What sort of narrative could manage to introduce, reconcile and maintain such seemingly diametrically opposed social concepts?

In the period of writing of this research, in the confined context of Kosovo Albanian sociopolitical reality, such ideological dichotomy continued to persistently raise a question: can they sustain and develop a multi-ethnic state and a multi-cultural society which—as paradoxically as it may sound—has been constituted through distinct, exclusionist, ethnonationalist discourse? Can such narrative, historically built on traumas of territorial partition, on fears from competing neighborhood, internal religious diversity and idealisation of ‘the West’, be capable of drawing a difference between the ethnic nation, citizenship and the institution of the state as a poly-ethnic, political construction?

In this research I argue that the Kosovo/Albanian ethnonationalist discourse accounts for a *selective* adoption and internalisation of the western discursive practices about the nation, statehood, democracy and independence. And, indeed, it has been this ‘selective’ part that triggered the idea behind the launch of this painstakingly ambitious study. Risking to sound essentialist and foundationalist, I admit that it was this personal impression—or, rather, a personal apprehension—about the possibility that something was persistently being ‘lost’ in that process of translation and internalisation, that drove me to analyse the ways and means through which certain knowledges are projected, transformed, exported and imported. And, as an aspiring discourse analyst, in time I became more and more gripped with the question as to ‘why’ and ‘how’ rather than ‘if’ that loss in epistemological translation occurred and recurred across the turmoiled 20th century Balkans of subsiding empires, succeeding nation-states, advent of Communism and the ‘new’ order of pluralist, democratic societies.

Certainly, there is no licence on the ways and means how a knowledge or a representational system will be adopted, interpreted, internalised and naturalised by an individual or a society at large. One can hardly insist on the ‘right’ and the ‘adequate’ manner in which a certain social condition, such as ‘nationhood’, ‘democracy’ or ‘independence’ is to be comprehended and deployed within a society’s discursive and social practices. In this respect—and, in the context of Kosovo/Albanian ethnonationalist narrative—the dilemma as to whether Albanians have ‘adequately’ understood the ‘normative’ implications of such conditions appears virtually pointless. In the research, I argue that it is within the liminal ‘epistemic field’ of such discrepancy—found between the normative expectations (i.e. how things ‘ought’ to be) and the factual exertion (i.e. how things actually ‘are’)—that one should attempt to detect and study the logic of discursive technologies that produced the current, by all means dichotomous, state of sociopolitical and sociocultural affairs within the Kosovo/Albanian societies.

Again, risking the danger of generalisation, I adhere to the view that Albanians do not differ substantially in their ‘normatively distorted’ discourse about nation and state from their immediate, competing neighborhood. Similarly with the most of the south-western Balkans nations, Kosovo Albanians live within an ‘ethnocentric democracy’,

predominantly articulated and constituted through ethnonationalist discourse, while formally reiterating political and cultural adherence to the European/western standards of a modern and democratic society. To-date, such formal, collective, longing ‘to go to Europe’, in Todorova’s (1997) terms, remains paradoxically coupled with pursuing of ethnic politics which runs parallelly (and, against) with their ‘historically’ aspired ‘Europeanness’. And, it is here that Mocnik’s (2002) theory about ‘horizontal antagonisms’ (with the neighborhood) and ‘vertical cooperation’ (with the idealised Europe/west) comes to light in its entire ambiguity. As the research highlights, the exercise of internalisation of a system of knowledge is almost regularly ‘contaminated’ with the local ethnocultural heritage and the sociopolitical objectives of the ‘internalising’ society. I argue that, in the context of Kosovo/Albanian exercise of ‘internalised orientalism’, this process represented a slightly more pragmatic and utilitarian process than it would initially appear to the eye of a scholar on post-colonial studies, immersed into detecting the influences and consequences of western political, cultural and moral hegemony onto the smaller and weaker societies under its realm. I argue that it was the pragmatic logic of societies deemed ‘peripheral’—Huntington’s (1993) ‘frontier guardians’—with a track record of preservation of their ethnocultural traits during centuries of foreign rules. It is a dichotomous logic of communities with a developed proficiency to reproducing and maintaining parallel discursive practices—that of external ‘normative’ formality (towards the supreme, imperial rule), and that of local ethnic rivalry (towards the immediate other). Ultimately, it is about a discursive ability to produce and emanate such ‘double-talk’ conducted on parallel communicative levels where, dependently on the level, the same object of discussion is constituted and articulated differently: a discourse about one’s external acceptance aspired through one’s renunciation of resemblance with locality.

The chronology of its Albanian variation —whether in Kosovo and/or Albania proper—accounts not so much about the mere existence of such external/internal dichotomy: much more, it accounts for the ‘reconciliatory’ and ‘naturalising’ capacity of that discourse, able to structure such dichotomy within the local definition of communicative ‘normality’. The orientalist ethnonationalist discourse makes both the formal/external ‘Europeanness’ and the internal /ethnic exclusionism cohabitate side-by-side—for over a century now. I argue that such inherent discursive dualism speaks about the cultural and political specificities to which the region—Albanians included—

has been exposed throughout its difficult history. It is a discourse that speaks about the local feuds, collective anxieties toward the external unknown and the common distrust about the preservation of one's ethnocultural identity under the realm of a larger—imperial or neo-colonial, if you wish—imposed sameness and uniformity. Ultimately, it speaks about perpetually conflicting sentiments of the so-called 'rational', 'modern' need for inter-ethnic and inter-national association, and the 'irrational' entrenchment within the persisting local canons of ethnonational, exclusionist micro-cosm.

In many ways, such inherently dualist (orientalist) ethnonationalist discourse accounts for Bjelic's (2002) sociocultural definition of the Balkans as a 'liminal' place, as a condition of in-betweenness which, be that the case, creates its own sense of 'centrality'. I argue that such centrality and 'authenticity' has been acquired through the endemic tradition of non-belonging and the discursive flirting with external, structural systems of knowledge. In this respect, the Balkan orientalist ethnonationalisms—including the Kosovo/Albanian variation—account for a social mosaïque of Foucault's 'subjugated knowledges' which find their way to articulation through the adoption of such discursive parallelism. Local ethnic histories and national mythologies of the Balkans may not mean more than a discursive circus to a western outsider, but they continue to reproduce and maintain the local/regional systems of representation, social hierarchies and political norms that preside over one's individual and national/ethnic worthiness—or worthlessness.

The competitive manner in which Albanians continue to discursively construct their 'Europeanness' adds further flames to their assertive and particularist discourse about the nation's cultural uniqueness and political significance. While there is no licence over the ways in which one will construct and internalise one's idea about 'Europe' and 'the West', I argue that, nonetheless, there seems to exist a broadly defined common denominator of what it *represents* in the local ethnonationalist narratives. It stands for a cultural and political imperative, the idealised final destination in a nation's long journey to safety and welfare—away from a tumultuous existence and participation in the history of regional slaughter and local tragedies. The research reveals that the orientalist ethnonationalist discourse was utilised as a means to prevent the possibility for conceiving of this imagined 'road to Europe' as an

endeavor shared by all—in this particular case, by all of the former Yugoslav ethnicities. According to such narrative, ‘the Europe’—more specifically, the European Union—was only possible through denying it to the immediate other; in the orientalist ethnonationalist discourse ‘Europe’ has been conceived and defined as *internally inclusive* and *externally exclusive*, an elite club open only to the chosen. Therefore, the rite of passage to ‘Europe’ was both simple and brutal: one’s ‘Europeanness’ is to be demonstrated through ‘de-Europeanising’ the other.

Even today, the EU narratives about federalism and ‘enlargement criteria’ continue to stimulate and reproduce Bakic-Hayden’s (1992) competing, ‘nesting’ orientalist discourses across the region—thus perpetuating the entrenchment of its societies within the mutual feuds aimed at hindering each-other’s prospects for EU candidacy and membership. To-date, the narratives of ‘Eurocentrism’ continue to construct the Balkans as the Europe’s ‘internal’ other (Petrovic, 2011) and, thus, to reproduce its ‘easterness’—the same ‘primitive’ and alien ‘East’, the memories of which continue to vividly shape the Balkans ethnonationalist narratives. The research shows that, dependently on the historical period, in the eyes of the west, the ‘face of the East’ in the Balkans has been evolving accordingly: from that personifying the ailing Ottoman Empire to that of the Communist regime and, ultimately, to the savagery of ethnic cleansing and mass-graves. On the other hand, internally, in the recent and tragic post-communist history, the demonised ‘East’ is still projected in the form of assumed local ‘remnants’ of the Ottoman, the Communists, and, ultimately, the ethnoreligious chauvinists from the 1990s. To-date, the projection of such ideological posterity of the Balkans ‘eastern evil’ continues to remain the focus of its competing ethnonationalist narratives which have, for over a century now, grown specialized to regularly detect it in the eyes of their immediate ‘other’.

In this respect, most of the contemporary violence in the region—particularly during the last, so-called ‘Yugoslav wars’—has been pursued on the grounds of adoption of ‘Europeanness’ that was, simultaneously, denied to the immediate ‘other’. Albanians do not make an exception here: in the Balkans micro-cosm, the projections of western ‘progressiveness’ opposing the eastern ‘primitiveness’ have constituted the simplified ideological signifiers that constructed and shaped the ways in which a particular ethnicity would be defined, referred to and—dealt with. Conflicts were fuelled and

maintained through projections of the other as an obstacle on one's road 'to Europe' and western recognition. To paraphrase Bakic-Hayden, nobody in the Balkans desires to be seen as 'eastern', for only the immediate 'other' is to bear the 'eastern' imprint. In the research, I argue that such exercise of detection and exposure of imprints of 'easterness' in the immediate other comprises another significant feature of the 20th century ethnonationalist discourse in the Balkans. The research reveals the discursive technologies through which the common 'eastern' enemy from the outset of the 20th century—'the Turk'—has been transmuted within the local ethnonationalist narratives, poised to detect and identify 'the Turk's posterity' among the succeeding ethnic nations and states. The 'Asian hurdles' of 'Muslim fundamentalists' or the 'Slavo-Carpatian hurdles' of 'pan-Russian Orthodoxy' (see Gavrilovic et al, 2009) represent only a few of the commonly used pejorative signifiers from the recent history of the former Yugoslav conflicts, illustrating the profound ethnocultural hatred towards the immediate 'other'. Such discursive war on 'easterness' has been waged both *between* and *within* the Balkans societies: the local orientalist ethnonationalism has been pursuing the 'internal' eastern 'other' with the equal zeal with which it maintained the societal fears about the 'eastern' other from the immediate vicinity.

However, there is a certain feature that made the Kosovo/Albanian orientalist ethnonationalism differ significantly with that of the rest of the immediate neighborhood: it was not strictly ethnoreligious. In fact, as discussed in this research (see specifically chapters 6 and 7), it projected religious affiliation as an obstacle in its attempts to produce a coherent ideology of national unity. Moreover, the emphasis of the religious component—specifically, the dominant presence of Islam among Albanians—has been systematically constructed as the nation's major obstacle to demonstrating its aspirations towards 'progress' and 'modernisation' thought to embed the driving ideas of 'Europeanness'. I argue that although, formally, the religious belonging *in general* has been viewed as an impediment to the unity of the nation, a closer analysis of the ethnonationalist discourse reveals that it was specifically directed against the dominant presence of Islam—constructed as the least popular, alien and 'eastern' legacy of the Ottoman conquests—and, to a much lesser degree, the Greek Orthodox. Enter the 'catholicisation' of the Kosovo Albanian political resistance discourse by the end of the 20th century (1990s), the birth of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) and the discursive influences by then-Eastern

European anti-Communist movements. Briefly, during the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the discursive linkage between ‘the West’ and ‘Christianity’ in the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist discourse became reduced into equating the Holy Chair/the Pope and the sociopolitical definition of ‘western Europe’. It is at this point that I began to realise the degree to which the self-orientalising discourse was able to transmutate and naturalise the ‘Muslim/East’ and the ‘Christian(Catholic)/West’ binary opposition through ideological intertextuality during the process of re-interpreting the narratives from the National Rebirth period in the context of the 1990s Kosovo Albanian anti-Yugoslav/Serbian political resistance.

In this respect, I have often asked myself whether Albanians have been blessed or condemned to a formally secularist—at moments, even religiously ‘manipulative’—ethnonationalist discourse. I can only imagine that, a hundred years ago, a similar dilemma was battling the minds of their founding fathers from the National Rebirth Period, compelling them to devise the amorphous ‘Albanianism’ as the religion of all Albanians. One could argue that the legacy of the intra-Albanian religious diversity—or, of what Duijzings (1999) rightly defines as the feature of ‘religious fluidity’—compelled the elites from the National Rebirth period to search for an authentic concept of social contract: a unique ideological fabric which would produce, define and keep the Albanians together. Indeed, since then the discourse about ‘Albanianism’ persevered as an ideological construct about a nation of ancient ‘Europeanness’ which is older—and beyond—any contemporary religion. It was devised to serve as an umbrella to every kind of Albanian: Ottoman Muslim, Roman Catholic or Greek Orthodox. The tale about the nation represented the epistemological ‘glue’ that kept the community together through overruling and castigating its internal religious differences. It unfolded as a revolutionary and authoritarian novelty, based on the idea of ‘progress’ and ‘modernisation’—the dignifiers of the idealised vision of ‘the West’.

As such, the Kosovo/Albanian ethnonationalist narrative was in stark contrast with the rest of competing counterparts from the immediate vicinity, where the congruency between the ethnic and religious belonging represented the foremost nation-building principle. Nowadays, similarly to the early days of 19th century nation-building exercises, it is virtually impossible to be an ethnic Serb and not be a Christian Orthodox; it is impossible to be a Croat and not be a Roman Catholic; it goes without

saying that to be a Bosnian Muslim—or, a ‘Bosniac’—requires one’s affiliation with Islam. Again, it is almost impossible to be a Slovene and a Christian Orthodox; one can call himself a ‘Macedonian’ but the term would only signify a mere citizenship until one does not admit his/her mother-tongue which will, in turn, make him a Macedonian ‘Orthodox Slav’, Macedonian ‘Muslim Albanian’, Macedonian ‘Turk’ or ‘Roma’. Ethnic codification and classification along the lines of religious belonging represented the defining features of the majority of the Balkans ethnonationalist narratives during the key periods of the fall of the Ottoman and the fall of Communism—except for the Albanians. In both cases, I argue, it was about the resurrection of the ‘subjugated’ ethnoreligious knowledges in the light of departing order of domination—whether in the form of the imperial Ottoman Islam or the Communist secularism streaming from the doctrine of ‘class-struggle’. Correspondingly, in the ensuing ethnonational upheavals the religious flags were regularly waving alongside ethnic/national ones. Moreover, in both processes, the religious clergy was as much part of the ideological and political struggle as were the proclaimed national warriors and political leaders.

But what about Albanians, both in Albania and in Kosovo? How did their supra-religious ethnonationalist narrative manage to produce a common sociocultural and sociopolitical project that would provide for all-national unity and homogeneity? The history of the region shows that, at least during the first round of the Balkan Wars (1912-1913)—it certainly did not. The long list of unresolved questions that Albanians confronted during the lengthy period of the Ottoman retreat from the region hampered significantly the efforts of their minute nationalist elites to establish a unified political discourse and ‘awareness’ about the nation. The delays in timely construction and collective acceptance of the new, mobilisatory, narrative about the nation. i.e. the ‘national rebirth’, resulted in their political unpreparedness for what was to follow: annexation of parts of their ethnically homogenous territories by the the new, ‘nationalising’ nations. It was only in the aftermath of the pogroms from the Balkan Wars that, I argue, ‘Albanianism’ became the most important ideological signifier in the ethnonationalist discourse. And, far more than in the state of Albania, the idea of ‘Albanianism’ as an all-encompassing, supra-religious identifier was to take hold in Kosovo and in other Albanian-inhabited parts of the former Kingdom/Federation of Yugoslavia. Ironically, it appears that, to a certain degree, the

enabling environment for the production and maintenance of such rigidly secularist discursive practice was to be found within then-existing variants of communist regimes in both Socialist Yugoslavia and Albania—dwelling on the outright prohibition of any religious display (Albania under Enver Hoxha) or on the relativization of its social importance (Yugoslavia under Tito). In this respect, as the research shows, the post WWII Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalist narrative fluctuated between the predominantly ‘marxist-leninist’/irredentist discourse (until 1990s) and ‘nationalist-democratic’/independentist (1990s onwards). As a profoundly defensive discourse about the ethnic preservation and survival, the Kosovo Albanian ethnonationalism retained its distinct ‘secularist’ feature through its embedded orientalist fabric; the imperative of a ‘genuinely non-religious nation’ survived through (or, perhaps, because of) the Communism and was capable of utilizing its inherent ‘religious fluidity’ during the post-communist decade of ethnic conflicts. Specifically, the chapter 7 of this research analyses the Kosovo Albanian post-communist ethnonationalist discourse of religious ‘untroubledness’—as noted by Malcolm (1998)—focusing on the orientalist exploitation of its ‘Christian roots’ that were projected as an indication of the nation’s ancient ‘Europeanness’ and its inherited cultural complementarity with the perceived ‘Christian West’.

Finally, at this point I will return to Eagleton’s remark from the beginning of this section, in the context of the possibility of ‘ending’ of the nationalist sentiment only through obtaining and ‘feeling’ the belonging to a nation. This remark has a specific importance for me, as today I live in a state which came to life through a combination of ethnonationalist political resistance and the international/western military intervention and administration. Now that the defensive, orientalist ethnonationalism has finally managed to produce a complementary social reality of institutionalised westward-oriented political strategy, one question remains lingering: what does it mean to be an Albanian, today? For, as every day goes by, it becomes more and more difficult to answer this solely through Benhabib’s (1999) ‘negative’ identity construction—i.e. through what one is *not*. In other words, today it appears hardly sufficient to note that to be an Albanian primarily means not to be a Serb, a Croat or a Turk. Rather, a different identity quest is emerging in the nowadays Kosovo: the introduction of the individual, the return of the religious and the dilution of the idealised projection of ‘Europe’ and ‘the West’. More often than not, as I am writing

this, the public debates within the Kosovo Albanian society focus on the religious rights and identities, and acknowledgment of existing religious diversities which, among others, affect the manner in which the ‘nation’ is perceived and ‘talked’; more often than not, on the other hand, the post-independence resurrection of visions of the ‘unification with the Motherland’ are edited their internalised orientalist features as they are poised to head for an ideological collision with the ‘western’ standards of acceptable political action in the region. In the period of writing this research, the newly emerging and competing identity narratives in the post-independent Kosovo Albanian public discourse, demonstrate the societal unease with the internationally-brokered project of the state of Kosovo as a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious construction. According to that project, Kosovo is certainly not a part of Serbia, but it is not Albanian either. Moreover, it is not based on the idea of an individual citizen as the primary carrier of its statehood. Instead, the complex post-conflict process of political negotiations that led Kosovo to its formal independence was compelled to cite the ‘communities’ rather than ‘citizens’ as the formal holders of political and institutional legitimacy⁵².

In this respect, the discourse of ‘Albanianism’ lies at the heart of the Kosovo’s nation-building narrative. It was and continues to remain an idea, an aspired imperative, a tale about the nation—but still far from a meticulously compiled set of principles that would organise social life among Albanians. By the day, one can see how its narrow and rigid definition becomes ever more challenging to adhere to, as it, at least formally, continues to consist of requirements which appear difficult to be met in a contemporary social reality of individual, civic and religious freedoms. Formally, ‘Albanianism’ continues to require abandonment or at least, relativisation of the importance of religious belonging and tradition which, on the other hand, is experiencing its postwar re-emerging as an important factor in organising one’s social life through pre-established principles, rituals, but also worldviews. As I often remark ironically, it is at the weddings and funerals where one will find Albanians endlessly quarreling about what rite would be the most adequate to apply: a religious/traditional, or the so-called ‘national’ which regularly entails a clumsily applied set of customs and procedures, imported hastily from popular western culture. It is a society—

52 See <http://www.unosek.org/unosek/en/statusproposal.html> and The Comprehensive Proposal for Kosovo Status Settlement.

indeed, societies—in which the holy month of Ramadan or subsequent Bayram feasts⁵³ often collide with Christmas holidays; when the traditionally Muslim tea-serving ritual is done in spaces decorated with Christmas trees and other traditional paraphernalia from western/Christian popular culture.

In this context, I argue that, as a nation-building narrative of a religiously diverse community, ‘Albanianism’ ought to signify a political ideology, a dynamic act of political will rather than an assumed, static category of kinship legacy and ethnic tradition. It is here that I see its great normative ‘flaw’ of definition, for the narrative that brought it to life struggled for transforming and naturalising such act of political will—adherence to the idea of ‘Albanianism’—into an invariable category of genealogic, even genetic, heritage. All along, I argue, since the National Rebirth, ‘Albanianism’ has been about a political/civic nationalism, much more than about an ideological signifier of an ethnic nation. Inasmuch as Albanians proved historically willing to support the formal principles of the narrative about themselves as members of a large—in Herderian terms—extended, ethnic family, they were unwilling to effectively abandon and uproot their inherited, diverse religious/cultural identities. Throughout the 19th and 20th century, they remained Muslim Albanians, Catholic Albanians and Greek Orthodox Albanians. Ultimately, I see their readiness for internalisation of the narrative about the idealised ‘west’ and ‘Europe’ as entirely complementary with their nation-building discourse—for I understand them both as socially constructed categories, devised and shaped through complex historical processes of the Balkan region.

To-date, the project of ‘Albanianism’ continued as a discursive exercise of marketing a political act of nation-building as a static, ethnic category of traceable genealogical ancientness and unique heritage. I argue that in the contemporary context of liberal society, governed by the principles of the freedom of choice and diversity, such definition risks to produce an internal sociopolitical/sociocultural collision as to who and what specifically qualifies for being labelled ‘Albanian’. In this respect, I remain

53 Eid-ul Fitr, or ‘Bayram feast’ (Arabic for the ‘Ramadan Bayram’ a Muslim holiday that marks the end of Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting). Also, there is the Eid-al-Adha (Arabic for ‘Kurban Bayram’, another religious holiday that commemorates the willingness of Abraham/Ibrahim to sacrifice his son Ishmael/Ismail as an act of obedience to God.

hopeful that this research might assist as a modest contribution to initiating a wider debate about rethinking and redefining the idea of common national belonging through its acknowledgment and adoption as a major act of will that gave birth to the nation as a ‘community of opinion’ rather than as a static and vague signifier of genealogical legacy. Inasmuch as I adhere to Anthony Smith’s claim about the potential presence of at least traces of an ‘ethnie’ at the core of every nation, I argue that one is not inherently born as an Albanian; rather, one becomes an Albanian as he/she adheres to the principles, the history and the aspirations that its narrative would continue to produce and regulate. I find such new understanding—indeed, revision—of the very definition essential for loosening of its rigid normative boundaries which should discard exclusionist—indeed, ‘sociobiological’—claims that have insofar constituted the notion of Albanian national identity. I remain firmly convinced that the adoption and naturalisation of ‘Albanianism’ as an act of will rather than a signifier of one’s assumed genealogical ancientness would assist in increasing the awareness and chances for sustaining a free, diverse, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society of today.

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