

Shinichi Yamazaki

**CHARACTERISTICS
OF NATIONAL
HISTORY IN HISTORY
TEXTBOOKS OF
THE YUGOSLAV
SUCCESSOR STATES:**

**Territoriality, Minorities,
Yugoslav Experiences**

In this analysis, we present a comparison of history textbooks of the Yugoslav successor states from the viewpoints of territoriality, minorities and common Yugoslav experiences. In all three categories, several joint characteristics as well as several differences clearly emerged.

1. TERRITORIALITY IN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

At first, I would like to argue the importance of territoriality in the context of the nation-building process and national history. George White argues in his book *Nationalism and Territory* that a nation is constructed in two contexts, the temporal and the spatial. He emphasizes the importance of territoriality in the nation building process and states that the national territory of a specific nation emerges on the bases of natural resources and cultural landscape. According to White, there are three factors crucial to this process. The first is the sites of important organizations or historical events. Secondly, landscape that was celebrated in national literature or national music. And thirdly, strong aspirations toward specific territories. He also mentions that the importance of national territory isn't of uniform nature among territories, and that there exist core, semi-core and peripheral territories within its context. The subject of his investigation centered on the cases of Hungary, Romania and Serbia. In the case of Serbia White states, the core national territory consists of Serbia proper (Šumadija and the Morava Valley), Montenegro, Vojvodina and Srem, and Old Serbia (Raška and Kosovo). Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Dalmatia, Northern Albania, Central Banat and the western part of Bulgaria are classified as semi-core territory, and finally, the southwestern part of Bulgaria, Northern Greece, Central and Southern Albania, Croatia-Slavonia and the Pannonian plain are regarded as peripheral.¹

Inspired by his discourse, I would like to discuss territorial elements or territoriality in history textbooks, as a nation's view of its own history can be expected to be embodied in its history textbooks.

A comprehensive and systematic analysis was not possible due to the limited availability of such textbooks at the time of this study. Resultantly, I was unable to make a detailed analysis of the changes through time in the descriptions of history in these textbooks over the last twenty years. Rather, I chose to focus on several topics concerning the territoriality in history textbooks, including a number of common characteristics in their structural aspects. An analysis was made of the primary school and/or high school history textbooks of the former Yugoslav states of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia in the 1990s and 2000s. For Bosnia-Herzegovina, both the textbooks published in Sarajevo as well as the ones of Serbian publication were analyzed. Some of these textbooks were published in the 1990s when the war in the Yugoslav lands was in progress, and others were published in later years.

In all the history textbooks of the former Yugoslav states, general (i.e. world) history and national history are described one after the other. Thus, the general

1 George W. White, *Nationalism and Territory*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000.

history of a specific period is followed by the national history of the same period. Some textbooks, however, contain an additional, regional element under the heading of South Slavic or Balkan history. This is possibly a legacy of Yugoslavia. The Serbian and Slovene textbooks of the 1990s have this three-layered structure of general, regional and national history. However, in the case of Macedonia, we find the structure of general, Balkan and Macedonian history, but the descriptions they contain are not interlinked – i.e. they are almost completely divided and there is no organic connection. Subsequently, it was interesting to find that the descriptions of the Balkan states (Serbia, Greece, and Bulgaria) in the time of the Balkan Wars and that of Macedonia were treated separately. In the textbooks of Croatia published in 2009, the above described three-layered structure had already disappeared. In the Serbian textbooks from 2010, this structure was partially maintained concerning medieval history under headings such as “Serbs and Their Neighbors” or “Serbs and Their Surroundings”, which, in this case, were almost exclusively related to Bosnia or Dubrovnik, respectively.

In Macedonian textbooks, ancient Macedonia is treated as a part of national history also in regard to the territorial aspects. The territory of ancient Macedonia in the textbooks is almost identical with that of the 19th century or today.² One might say that they have a very solid view of their national territory. Nor is Ancient Macedonia treated as a part of Ancient Greece. The relation between the ancient Macedonians and the Slavic peoples is described as follows:

But, the greater part of the ancient Macedonians was assimilated into the great body of the Slavic peoples. Subsequently, the Ancient Macedonians accepted the language of the Slavs, but they brought with them their own culture, customs, the Christian religion, and, first and foremost, the tradition of the name - MACEDONIA and MACEDONIANS.³

The emphasis here is on the historical continuity of the Macedonian nation from ancient times until today. In short: the Ancient Macedonians and Slavic peoples were amalgamated into the Macedonian nation which has existed up until this day.

After the Balkan Wars, Macedonia was divided into three parts, and during the Second World War, it was divided by another border. However, the Macedonian national territory is depicted in the textbooks as being very stable,⁴ and in texts covering events after World War II, not only the creation of the Macedonian

2 See maps. Ѓорѓи Павловски et al., *Историја за I година реформирано гимназиско образование*. Скопје: Просветно дело, 2002, p. 44, 81.

3 Ibid., pp. 101-102.

4 See maps. Ѓорѓи Павловски, et al., *Историја за II година реформирано гимназиско образование*. Скопје: Просветно дело, 2002, p. 79; Блаже Ристовски et al., *Историја за трета година реформирано гимназиско образование*. Скопје: Просветно дело, 2003, p. 107.

state within Yugoslavia, but also the struggle for national liberation in Pirin and Aegean Macedonia is described.

In the Slovene textbooks, the Slovene ethnic boundary (*slovenska narodnostna meja*) after the 15th century is described as a very concrete one. Its creation is explained as follows:

Until the 15th century, the Slovene ethnic boundary moved southwards, after which it became fixed at approximately where it is today. In the 19th century, further change occurred only in Koroška, which experienced an additional loss of Slovene ethnic territory.⁵

We can see this territory in historical maps.⁶ It is interesting that in most of these maps, only the current territory of Slovenia is colored and the map of the current situation of Slovenia no longer includes an ethnic boundary. On the one hand, the southern reach of this “Slovene ethnic boundary” is almost identical with the present-day border, whereas on the other hand, the importance of Kozler’s Map of Slovene lands is mentioned⁷ - which includes the whole of Istria as well as some of the Kvarner Islands.

In Bosnian Muslim descriptions, national territory is not mentioned. Rather, the statehood of Bosnia or the historical continuity of its integrity is underlined.

Serbian textbooks and the textbooks of the Bosnian Serbs are almost identical as regards the aspect of territoriality. Not only Serbia proper, but also Bosnia, Montenegro or the Serbian lands during the time of the Habsburg Monarchy are treated as national territory. Here we can confirm the argument put forward by George White.

In the Croatian Textbooks, Bosnia is treated implicitly as Croatian territory. It is interesting that, in addition to Croatian Slavonia and Dalmatia, it is also often stressed that Istria in its entirety is Croatian national territory.

In some cases, territoriality is used to denote the aspirations of other nations, and to legitimize their right to defend themselves. For example, in the Bosnian and Croatian textbooks, the territorial concept of the Serbian ideologist Stevan Moljević is mentioned.⁸

In every textbook, especially the Macedonian and Slovene ones, the fixed image of national territory is noticeable. I believe this is because the modern concept of national territory in the 19th and 20th century is projected retrospectively into the past, rather than stated as historical fact.

5 Ivan Grobelnik and Ignacij Voje, *Zgodovina 2*. Ljubljana: DZS, 1996(7), p. 32.

6 See maps in *Zgodovinski atlas za osnovno šolo*. Ljubljana: DZS, 1999. See also the map in Grobelnik and Voje, *Zgodovina 2*, p. 33.

7 Janez Cvirn et al., *Novi vek: Zgodovina za 8. razred devetletke*. Ljubljana: DZS, 2001, p. 106.

8 Moljević’s maps in Muhamedo Ganibegović, *Historija za 8. razred osnovne škole*. Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 2003; Krešimir Erdelja and Igor Stojaković, *Tragom prošlosti 8: udžbenik povijesti za osmi razred osnovne škole*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 2009(2), p. 132.

In creating this fixed image of national territory in the past, “medieval kingdoms” play a significant role - and in the case of Macedonia, the concept of an ancient kingdom serves the same purpose. In each case, the medieval state is described as a state which has a direct connection with nationhood. In the Macedonian textbooks, as already mentioned, the continuity of Macedonians is emphasized – also using this approach. It may seem to be nonsense, but this fact also paradoxically gives us an insight; namely, that continuity from the medieval kingdom is not an obvious fact.

As regards the descriptions of Ottoman rule in the Balkans, it is described as conquest and oppressive rule in all the textbooks except those of the Bosnian Moslems. It is also interesting to compare the descriptions in the Croatian and Serbian textbooks regarding Dubrovnik.

In the Croatian textbooks we find the following:

Gradually, the Croats had mixed with a small Romance population, which accepted the Croatian language and customs. By the end of the 15th century, Dubrovnik had become a Croatian city.⁹

But in the Serbian textbooks, not a single mention of Croatia is made. Rather, they state:

Dubrovnik’s hinterland was inhabited by a large Serbian population, and the very inhabitants of Dubrovnik felt that they were “Slavs” and believed that they were native to the region. The land in and around the city was inhabited by Serbian Catholics.¹⁰

Needless to say, the two descriptions are contradictory. Judging by these cases, we can safely say that different meanings are given to territory. So much so as to render its character arbitrary.

Now, I would like to move on to ascertaining the subject of history description. In almost every case, it is the history of the nation, which is thought to exist continuously from the past. It is not the history of the people who lived in the territory of the present-day state. In some cases, most typically in that of Macedonia, description is based on the continuous existence of the nation.

The key elements of the historical continuity of the survival and the development of the Macedonian nation were the Macedonian language and the Macedonian culture, with its history spanning the millennia. Their own culture and tradition, and the Archbishopric of Ohrid with its own eight centuries old church and monasteries functioning as cultural centers have maintained Macedonian national continuity through the

9 Željko Brdal and Martita Madunić, *Tragom prošlosti 6: udžbenik povijesti za šesti razred osnovne škole*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 2009(3), p. 116.

10 Radoš Ljušić, *Istorija za sedmi razred osnovne škole*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike, 2009, p. 51.

centuries. In this environment, the process of the birth, development and affirmation of Macedonian cultural-national thought and action began.¹¹

In other cases, like in the Croatian textbooks, the creation of the nation is argued from a European perspective, but the phenomenon is tied to the “national renaissance (*narodni preporod*)”. Thus, the process of nation-building is referred to as the renaissance or rebirth of the existing nation, and not its creation.

Next, I want to argue how national territory is treated in history textbooks. In most cases, the national territory is described as very homogenous territory, and very few texts mention the diversity of the respective nation’s territory, while, when they are present, such descriptions tend to be sporadic, i.e. not comprehensive. In a Slovene textbook, I came across the following description:

Within these ethnic boundaries, covering a territory of approximately 24000 km², the peasant population was, with rare exceptions, almost exclusively Slovene. All that eventually rose to the higher strata of society followed the German mannerisms of these circles in their way of living and in language. The entirety of the clergy originated from the peasant population, but leading positions within the Church were in the hands of noble sons and foreign immigrants.¹²

Here, the German elements are treated as foreign elements, and not native to the “Slovene ethnic territory.”

In both groups of textbooks from Bosnia, namely the Moslem and the Serbian, ethnic or religious diversity is mentioned, but the evaluation of this diversity is very different.

In one Moslem textbook, it is described like this:

For centuries, in the territory of present-day Bosnia-Herzegovina, people of different religious affiliations had lived together. This was also the situation during fourth-century Ottoman rule. People worshipped according to their own religious affiliations, keeping their cultural customs and traditions. On the whole, these different groups respected each other. In this way, the concept of *komšilik* gradually grew in these territories, an attitude which can be understood as respect for the different religions and social customs of all those living together in the same social environment. Such a situation was present also in the 19th century.¹³

On the other hand, a Bosnian Serb textbook from the same period describes the situation as follows:

The status of the *raja* (the peasants or the commoners), especially of the Christians, was continuously undermined. Moslem *agas* and *bejs*

11 Ристовски et al., *Историја за трета година реформирано гимназиско образование*, p. 76.

12 Grobelnik and Voje, *Zgodovina 2*, p. 33.

13 Fahrudin Isaković and Enes Delidija, *Historija za 7. razred osnovne škole*. Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 2003, p. 132.

endeavoured to make their *spahiluks* into inherited feudal possessions, so called *čitluks*. By means of this demotion to *čitluks*, the legal and economic status of the commoners deteriorated significantly.¹⁴

As you can see, the same period of history has been described completely differently.

Despite some contradictions amongst the textbooks regarding individual issues, we can, however, find many common characteristics in their structural perspective, for example, the fixed concept of national territory, the importance of the medieval or ancient states for the creation of a territorial concept and the homogeneity of national territory, all of which are characteristics of national history.

2. MINORITIES IN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

Here I argue how minorities are treated in the textbooks of the former Yugoslav states. The subject of my analysis is the history textbooks in use now; namely, for the school year 2010/2011. These textbooks are quite different from the ones of the 1990s. Not only is the quality of paper better, but also the contents are different. They are colorful, with many pictures and maps, and many pages are devoted not only to political history, but also to social history and cultural history as well.

The former Yugoslavia was a multinational federation in which Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, Bosnian Moslems and Montenegrins all enjoyed the status of constituent nations. Other groups such as the Albanians and the Hungarians and so forth were treated as national minorities. Both Serbia and Croatia after independence are also multiethnic. According to the newest census, there are about 10% of non-Croats in Croatia, and 17% of non-Serbs in Serbia. A comparison of the census of 1991 and the one ten years later also shows significant demographic changes caused mainly by the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the war following it. One important factor we find is the change in the character of each respective state. Croatia in socialist Yugoslavia was defined as the state of Croats and Serbs as constituent nations, but in 1990, this was changed to the state of Croats and other citizens. Serbs in Croatia had a constituent status not only in Yugoslavia as whole, but also in Croatia, but they lost both in the course of Yugoslavia's disintegration. In the case of Serbia, Albanians, Hungarians, Slovaks and several other nations had constituent status in the two autonomous provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina, but by the de facto abolition of the autonomy of these

14 Milutin Perović et al., *Istorija za osmi razred osnovne škole*. Srpsko Sarajevo: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 2003, p. 118.

two provinces, their constituent status in both provinces was also practically annulled.

In the Serbian textbooks, the subject of history description is almost exclusively the Serbian nation. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, Serbia proper, Southern Serbia (or Old Serbia), Montenegro, Southern Hungary (later Vojvodina), Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia-Slavonia and Dalmatia including Dubrovnik are conceived as national territories. It is interesting to note that, for the regions where Serbs didn't have a majority, there are descriptions on their historical rights to, or on their numerousness in the territory. For example, in the case of Dalmatia one account states:

After these settlements were established, the Serbs constituted one third of the population. In part, this population has maintained Orthodox faith, while a portion of it has accepted the Roman Catholic faith. These were the Serbian Catholics, which are small in number now, since they have been Croatized.¹⁵

And in the case of Croatia:

The Serbian population constituted almost one third of the inhabitants in these territories. The territories of the former Military Border were the most densely populated.¹⁶

And as for Bosnia-Herzegovina:

It (Serbian public opinion) was not reconciled to the fact that Austria-Hungary claimed the right to occupy Bosnia-Herzegovina, a province in which the Serbian population constituted the majority at that time.¹⁷

In the Croatian cases, the situation is similar. Croatia-Slavonia, Dalmatia, Istria and Bosnia-Herzegovina are conceived of as being Croatian national territories in Croatian textbooks. One of the descriptions for Istria is as follows:

The rural population of Istria was for the most part Croatian, while some Slovenes inhabited the northwestern parts of Istria. In the coastal cities and inland towns, the population was predominantly Italian. Newly settled Croats were Italianized in the course of time.¹⁸

There is no comprehensive description of minorities in the Serbian textbooks. It can be said that minorities are almost excluded from the historical narrative. When they are mentioned (sporadically), it is in a negative context. For example, for Albanians, there are descriptions like these:

On the 17th century:

15 Radoš Ljušić, *Istorija za sedmi razred osnovne škole*, p. 50.

16 Đorđe Đurić and Momčilo Pavlović, *Istorija za osmi razred osnovne škole*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike, 2010, p. 37.

17 *Ibid.*, p. 22.

18 Brdal and Madunić, *Tragom prošlosti 6: udžbenik povijesti za šesti razred osnovne škole*, p. 221.

Serbs from the regions of Macedonia, Kosovo and Metohija and Raška led by the Patriarch, crossed the Sava and the Danube and settled in regions of Southern Hungary, extending all the way north to Arad and Szentendre. It is assumed that more than 60,000 souls immigrated. Albanians later settled into these heartlands.¹⁹

And for the latter half of the 19th century:

The violence worsened after the formation of the League of Prizren, created by Albanian feudal lords and landlords with the aim of creating a Greater Albania.²⁰

For the Second World War:

Yugoslavia was not only divided, but nations also pushed each other into fratricidal wars. The Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija carried out acts of terror against the Serbian population, as did the Hungarians and Germans in Vojvodina who killed thousands of Serbs. The Bulgarians in Southern Serbia organized the deportation of the Serbian population from Macedonia.²¹

And for Socialist Yugoslavia:

In Kosovo and Metohija and some cities in Macedonia, demonstrations of Albanians broke out at the end of November 1968. Their demands were for Kosovo to be made a republic, a new constitution, secession, and the unification of all regions where Albanians lived.²²

For the disintegration of Yugoslavia:

The first signs of the destabilization of Yugoslavia appeared in Kosovo. In the spring of 1981, nationalistic and separatist demonstrations broke out in Kosovo. Although they were crushed by the action of police forces, the situation in Kosovo was not stable. Albanian pressure on Serbs, the destruction of property, and murder due to national hatred continued. Along with the economic factors, this strengthened the emigration of Serbs, which, in fact, was ongoing since 1945. Subsequently, the number of Serbs in the complete population of Kosovo and Metohija was reduced to 13.2%.²³

For the conflict in Kosovo:

The daily armed actions of Albanian terrorist groups under the name of the Kosovo Liberation Army, banditry and conflicts with the security forces considerably intensified the situation in Kosovo. Ultimately, the

19 Radoš Ljušić, *Istorija za sedmi razred osnovne škole*, pp. 46-47.

20 Đurić and Pavlović, *Istorija za osmi razred osnovne škole*, p. 44.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 137.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 181.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 184.

Western countries - in particular the USA - also intervened, giving open assistance to the Albanians.²⁴

The Croatian textbooks take a more moderate, or, if you will, sophisticated approach than the Serbian ones. In the Croatian textbooks, there is a section named "National Minorities in Croatia" within the context of the "Nation Building Process" and the "Croatian National Renaissance". Here, the Serbs and Italians are mentioned as minorities.

National minorities in Croatia

A national minority is a group of people in a certain country which does not belong to the majority nation. So, for example, in Germany, Germans are the majority nation, while the populations of Turks (or Croats or members of whatever nations live in Germany) constitute the national minorities.

Among the national minorities in Croatia, the Serbian is the most numerous. Serbs settled within the territory of present-day Croatia in large numbers in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, as part of massive resettlements brought on by the Ottoman Wars. National aspirations and anti-Ottoman battles in the Principality and later Kingdom of Serbia exercised a partial influence on the development of the national consciousness of the Serbs in Croatia, and also equally on the Croatian (Illyrian) national renaissance, which went hand in hand with that of other South Slavic nations. Although supporters of the South Slavic idea (amongst them also Ljudevit Gaj) expected a national unification of the Southern or even all Slavs, this never came about.

In the middle of the 19th Century, a polemic took place between the Serbian linguist Vuk Karadžić and the Croatian politician and writer Ante Starčević. To Karadžić's claim that all native speakers of the *što* dialect (subsequently, also a large part of the Croats) were in fact Serbs, Starčević replied by asserting that the Serbs were of uncertain origin, and in fact should be termed Croats.²⁵

Serbs in the Second World War are described as follows in Croatian textbooks:

The center of the Chetnik movement was in Serbia, but Chetnik units were created also among the Serbian population in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina (i.e. on the territory of the ISC). In these regions, Chetnik units perpetrated horrific crimes against the civilian population, burning and destroying numerous Croatian and Moslem villages and

²⁴ Ibid., p. 186.

²⁵ Krešimir Erdelja and Igor Stojaković, *Tragom prošlosti 7: udžbenik povijesti za sedmi razred osnovne škole*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 2009(3), p. 91.

exterminating their inhabitants. The ethnic cleansing that was carried out against Croats and Moslems was in accordance with the plan to create a "Greater Serbia" that would, among other territories, contain also the whole of Bosnia-Herzegovina and large parts of Croatia. To this end, it was deemed necessary to simply exterminate all non-Serbian nations in this territory in order to strengthen Serbian dominance.²⁶

Or, regarding the integration of the "occupied lands" in 1995, the account is as follows:

In response to the appeal of the leadership of the Republic of Serbian Krajina, partly also because of the fear of being confronted with the results of the crimes committed, the majority of the Serb population abandoned the territory and emigrated to Serbia. Their return continues even now. During and after operation "Oluja", a number of the houses of the Serbs who had fled were burned, and several murders of Serb civilians took place. Individuals were accused of the above quoted crimes, and some trials are in progress even now.²⁷

The interesting point is that, for the general definition of the term minority, the example of Turks in Germany is mentioned. The Turks in Germany are ordinarily not classified as an indigenous minority and it is to be feared that such a definition could further the image that minorities are newcomers to their national territory, and therefore not entitled to equal rights.

When we compare the descriptions of each group of textbooks on the same issue, we can find significant difference between them. I have already mentioned the case of Dubrovnik as one of the overlapping points of both national territories. Such differences are numerous, and they exist, particularly in contemporary history. Along with the differences concerning the characteristics of the internal structure of the Kingdom of SCS and Yugoslavia, and regarding the Second World War, the character of the Croatian Spring in 1971 is portrayed significantly differently as follows:

The description in Croatian textbooks, for example, is:

Partial openness to the West left its mark. More and more intellectuals and institutions like Matica Hrvatska participated in political discussions. The Economic and political position of Croatia within the Yugoslav federation was debated.

(...)

Tito initially supported the demands for reform and for more democracy, believing it was in the interest of Yugoslavia. After a while, however, he

²⁶ Erdelja and Stojaković, *Tragom prošlosti 8: udžbenik povijesti za osmi razred osnovne škole*, p. 132.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 237.

changed his stance - most likely because of the fear for his own position - and resolved to stop the movement.²⁸

While in the Serbian textbooks one finds:

In Croatia in 1971, the MASPOK (massive movement) arose. It emphasized that Croatia was endangered within Yugoslavia and economically exploited by Serbia, and so independence was sought. ... It emphasized that Yugoslavia was a prison for Croatia. Persecution of the Croatian language and the plundering of the Croatian economy were mentioned. Steps were taken by Croatia to establish a National Army and an independent economy and the secession of Croatia and its admission to the UN were sought.

The emergence of Croatian nationalism disturbed the Serbs. After Tito's decisive intervention (in the autumn of 1971), the Croatian leadership was forced to withdraw and resign.²⁹

As we can see, not only the name of the event (the Croatian Spring or *Maspok*), but also its characterization is significantly different.

Regarding the beginning of the war in the 1990s in Croatia, the differences are as follows:

In Serbian textbooks, appearing under the heading of "Civil war", we find:

The formal disintegration of the SFRY started on June 25th 1991, when the Slovene parliament voted for the independence of the Slovene republic based on the results of a nationwide referendum conducted earlier in the republic. On the next day, the Croatian parliament, which previously, on December 25th 1990, had declared a new constitution by which the Serbs in Croatia had lost the status of a constitutive nation, followed suit. The increasing hatred among the nations and the public show of nationalism gave rise to fear and the memory of crimes committed by the Ustashi during the Second World War.³⁰

In the Croatian textbook under the heading of "The War for the Homeland", we find:

Already before the announcement of the referendum, on January 1991, the mostly Serbian population in the region of Knin declared their secession from the Republic of Croatia and created the Serbian Autonomous Region of Krajina (SAO Krajina). Rebellion had already taken place several months earlier through the placement of barricades (logs) on Croatian roads with the help of the Yugoslav Army (JNA-Yugoslav People's Army). This rebellion

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 217-219.

²⁹ Đurić and Pavlović, *Istorija za osmi razred osnovne škole*, p. 182.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 184.

was the result of several factors. Greater Serbian nationalists advocated the idea of creating a Greater Serbia, whose western border would extend from Virovitica, via Karlovac to Karlobag. By that, they hoped to unite all Serbs in one country. The Serbian media and agitators from Serbia had launched a campaign to frighten the Serb population in Croatia into believing that the Republic of Croatia was becoming more and more like the Ustashi ISC, and that it was imperative that they take up arms in order to survive.³¹

Both textbooks lack some important aspects. In the Serbian textbook, the intervention of the Yugoslav Federal Army is not mentioned. There is also no description on the role of the media. In the Croatian textbooks, the description lacks the change in the constitutional status of the Serbs and only the media propaganda launched by the Serbian side is described, as though there was no such propaganda being conducted by the Croatian media.

We also find that descriptions regarding minorities are very rare and sporadic and in some cases, minorities are exploited to justify the rights of the mainstream nation. Some of the contradictions between the Croatian and Serbian textbooks may also be due to such treatment of minorities. This may only be natural, one might argue, since history textbooks are written on the basis of national perspectives on history. However, the problem does not lie in the individual descriptions alone. Rather, it is a problem in the structure of the historical narratives. In the textbooks that I analyzed, it seems that a multiethnic and multicultural character of a nation is, in itself, conceived as a negative factor.

3. YUGOSLAV EXPERIENCES IN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

In this section, I analyze how the Yugoslav experiences are described in primary school history textbooks of the Yugoslav successor states. One of the aims in this is that I intend to argue whether common experiences in socialist Yugoslavia can be a connecting factor, rather than a dividing factor in the history textbooks of the successor states and in each national history which is embodied in the textbooks. An analysis was made of the narratives of history textbooks on the experiences held in common by the states and on the values that embodied socialist Yugoslavia.

The target of the analysis was recent primary school history textbooks of seven Yugoslav successor states, namely, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Kosovo. In some of these countries, primary education continues for eight years, while in one of them it lasts for nine. In some

31 Erdelja and Stojaković, *Tragom prošlosti 8: udžbenik povijesti za osmi razred osnovne škole*, p. 233.

of the countries, more than one textbook is in use, in which case, I focused on the representative textbook of each country. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, I analyzed three kinds of textbooks: the primary one published in Sarajevo and mainly used by Bosnian Moslem pupils, the primary one published by a Serbian entity, and the primary one published in the western part of Mostar and used by the Bosnian Croats.

In all the textbooks, general (or world) history and national history are described one after another. In some of the textbooks, an additional segment is inserted between these, which is dedicated to regional history. The treatment of Yugoslavia in the historical textbooks varies greatly. In the Croatian and Bosnian textbooks, Yugoslav history is described in the sections of national history which come under headings such as "Croatia in the Second Yugoslavia", or "Bosnia and Herzegovina in Socialism", respectively.³² In the Serbian textbooks, the corresponding chapters bear titles such as "Yugoslavia after World War II", yet although the titles are not nationally colored, Yugoslav history is interpreted in the context of Serbian national history.³³ In the Slovene and Kosovar textbooks, the general situation of Yugoslavia is treated in the general history section, and the situation of Yugoslavia concerned with Slovene or Kosovar history respectively is described in the national history section.³⁴ In the Montenegrin textbook, the period in question is divided into three parts, namely, general history, Yugoslav history and national (Montenegrin) history.³⁵ In the Macedonian textbook, the period is divided into three parts: general history, European or Balkan history and Macedonian history. Yugoslavia is treated in the section for Balkan history as regards general descriptions, and separately in the section for national history too.³⁶

As we can see, there are differences at the point of how to treat Yugoslavia in textbooks. In some cases, Yugoslav history is completely united with the national history or treated as a part of national history. In other cases, Yugoslav history is not incorporated into the national history at all. In the latter cases, Yugoslavia is treated in the sections on general history, to the extent that there is a danger of pupils gaining the impression that their nation was never a part of the Yugoslav federation.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the education system and textbooks are divided between the three predominant nations. The textbooks used by the Serbian and

32 Ibid.; Zijad Šehić et al., *Historija/Istorija/Povijest: udžbenik i čitanka za 8. razred osnovne škole*. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Publishing, 2009.

33 Đurić and Pavlović, *Istorija za osmi razred osnovne škole*.

34 Jelka Razpotnik and Damjan Snoj, *Raziskujem preteklost 9: učbenik za zgodovino za 9. razred osnovne škole*. Ljubljana: Rokus Klett, 2008(2); Fehmi Rexhepi, *Historia 9*. Prishtinë: Libri shkollor, 2010(4).

35 Slavko Buzanović and Jasmina Đorđević, *Istorija za deveti razred devetogodišnje osnovne škole*. Podgorica: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 2009.

36 Владо Велкоски, et al., *Историја за 8 одделение*. Скопје: Просветно дело, 2009(4).

Croatian pupils are almost identical to those of their homelands, Serbia and Croatia, respectively. The textbook used mainly by Bosnian Moslems, however, is a little bit different. It is titled "Historija/Istorija/Povijest" - the Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian word for History. The chapters are written in Latin script and Cyrillic script one after another. The subject of historical description is Bosnia and Herzegovina as a region, but with a significant amount of description on the national history of Bosnian Moslems. Therefore we can conclude that in the case of Bosnia, the textbooks are mutually very contradictory.

In the history textbook used by the Kosovo Albanian pupils, the subject of the national history is Albanians as a whole. Subsequently, in the national history sections, events in Albania are described first, followed by the histories of Kosovo and the other Albanian regions of Yugoslavia. Kosovo is defined as a multinational state, and not an Albanian nation-state according to its Constitution, but, in contrast to the Bosnian Moslem case, such a multinational character of the state is not present in the Albanian history textbooks. Rather, the history of the Kosovo Albanians is presented as a part of Albanian national history as a whole, and lacks descriptions on the topic of the Kosovo Serbs and all other Kosovar minorities. The character of the structure of the Kosovar Albanian textbook in that priority is given to the national history of their homeland, is similar to the textbooks of the Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats, which describe mainly the history of Serbs in Serbia, or Croats in Croatia, with additional descriptions in each on the respective nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the textbooks of Macedonia and Montenegro, there are specific small sections containing descriptions of the Albanians in their countries. These descriptions are rather independent and not incorporated into any of the other descriptions, but are nonetheless very specific, since in the textbooks of many of the other countries - as described above - the minorities are almost completely ignored.

Another specific point is that, in some cases, special accounts are given of the histories of members of specific nations who live beyond the state border. For example, in the Macedonian textbook, several pages are devoted to the history of the Macedonians in Greece or in Bulgaria, and in the Slovene case, the Slovenes in Austria.

Let us now move on to the analysis of the period from the creation of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia to its disintegration, where several other topics also come to light.

A. The Resistance Movement during WW II and Its Characterization

In some textbooks, several resistance movements are treated and World War II is characterized as a civil war. In the Slovene textbook, along with the Partisans, the Vaška staraža (Village Guard) and the Domobranstvo (Home Guard) are also mentioned. Similarly, in the case of Serbia, the Partisans and the Chetniks, and their mutual conflict are treated. In other textbooks, such as the Macedonian, Bosnian or Montenegrin textbooks, only the Partisans are mentioned – i.e. the Partisan movement is given precedence. This may be so because the Partisan movement and the following establishment of statehood are treated positively in their national history. In the Kosovar textbook, though, the Kosovar Albanian Partisans and pro-Fascist nationalist movement such as the Second League of Prizren are also mentioned.

B. Evaluation of Tito

As regards the leading political figure Tito, special attention is paid to his biography in the textbooks from Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro and all three textbooks from Bosnia. The descriptions are along these lines:

The Croatian textbook:

Following the end of WWII, Tito assumed key political positions, and remained at the head of Yugoslavia until his death. Over the 35 years of its existence, the single-party communist system was built on the model of the USSR, but with certain differences.³⁷

The Bosnian textbook:

After the occupation of Yugoslavia, Tito focused on raising a liberation movement and an uprising, and became commander-in-chief of the National Liberation Army. At the Second congress of AVNOJ in Jajce, he was elected Marshal of Yugoslavia, and after the first general elections, he was declared president of the new state.³⁸

The Slovene textbook:

Josip Broz - Tito was a leader of the Yugoslav resistance movement and a national hero. Songs were sung about him and tales of his heroic exploits elaborated upon in a folkloric way. In 1943, he led the Yugoslav Partisans in the two biggest battles of the National Liberation War, the Battles of Neretva and of Sutjeska.³⁹

37 Erdelja and Stojaković, *Tragom prošlosti 8: udžbenik povijesti za osmi razred osnovne škole*, p. 131.

38 Zijad Šehić et al., *Historija/Istorija/Povijest: udžbenik i čitanka za 8. razred osnovne škole*, p. 171.

39 Razpotnik and Snoj, *Raziskujem preteklost 9: učbenik za zgodovino za 9. razred osnovne škole*, p. 67.

Serbian textbook:

From 1945 to 1948, he followed the Soviet model of society building. After the Yugoslav Communist Party's conflict with Stalin, he turned to the West. He was one of the founders of the Nonalignment Movement. He died in 1980 and is buried in Belgrade in "The House of Flowers".⁴⁰

The Bosnian Serb textbook:

Tito became an eminent international figure ("statesman of the contemporary world") who gave great international reputation to Yugoslavia. Eleven years after his death, Yugoslavia was faced with a series of economic problems and escalating tensions amongst its constituent nations. The conflicts led to Yugoslavia's disintegration in a horrible civil war which engulfed five of its former republics, all of which are now separate countries.⁴¹

The Montenegrin textbook:

During the period of Tito's rule, Yugoslavia enjoyed significant reputation in the world. Yugoslavia was a country of open borders. This contributed to its successful development for several decades.⁴²

As we can see, Tito is mainly treated neutrally or even positively. It is interesting to note that, while the character of the socialist regime is critically described, Tito himself is not criticized.

C. Evaluation of Yugoslav Socialism (Self-Management)

Next, let us see how the system of self-management is characterized in the history textbooks. It is also interesting to mention that self-management socialism is not treated as negatively in its initial phases as in its later days. In some cases, economic development is depicted as being linked with the self-management system.

D. Popular Culture, Especially Popular Music in Yugoslavia

Let us now move on to popular culture, by which we mean the music which was especially popular in socialist Yugoslavia. Popular music was one of the rare cultural fields which seems to have had a more Yugoslav rather than a national basis. In the Serbian textbook, the popular music groups of socialist Yugoslavia

40 Đurić and Pavlović, *Istorija za osmi razred osnovne škole*, p. 141.

41 Ranko Pejić et al., *Istorija za 9. razred osnovne škole*. Istočno Sarajevo: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 2009, p. 130.

42 Buzanović and Đorđević, *Istorija za deveti razred devetogodišnje osnovne škole*, p. 122.

such as Bijelo dugme, Riblja čorba, Smak, Leb i sol and Parni valjak are mentioned. Two of these groups were from Serbia, while the other three were from Bosnia, Macedonia and Croatia. In the Slovene textbook, among the groups, Mladi levi, Kameleoni, Bele vrane and Helioni are mentioned, all of which are from Slovenia. In the description of the 1980s, Laibach and the cultural movement Neue Slowenische Kunst is also mentioned. In the Bosnian Textbook, the Sarajevo-based groups of Indexi, Crvena jabuka and Bijelo dugme are mentioned, while in the Croatian one, groups such as Grupa 220, Bijelo dugme, Azra, Film, Haustor, Paraf, Parni valjak, Prljavo kazalište, Metak and Stidljiva ljubičica are mentioned. All of these, with the exception of the Bosnian Bijelo dugme, are from Croatia. Therefore we can conclude that the popular culture of Yugoslavia is interpreted mainly within the framework of the national discourse.

E. Reason of Disintegration

At last, I we come to the analysis of the descriptions on the cause of the disintegration of the Yugoslav federation. In all the textbooks, the economic crisis of the 1980s is more or less mentioned. However, the evaluation of national tensions differs significantly. While in the textbooks from Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Montenegro and Kosovo, the negative role of the nationalist intellectuals in Serbia or the regime of Slobodan Milošević are mentioned, in those from Serbia, the main topics are Albanian nationalism and the decrease of the Serb population in Kosovo.

The Kosovar textbook states:

The Disintegration of Yugoslavia

The death of Tito (May 4th 1980) and the March-April demonstrations of 1981 in Kosovo were the first signs of the beginning of the collapse of the Yugoslav federation. Serbia suppressed every desire of the Albanians and of Kosovo for independence fiercely with the help of federal organs. At the beginning, the other republics of Yugoslavia didn't yet grasp that it was Serbia's aim to create a unitary state, where Serbs would dominate in the name of Yugoslavia. The Serbian political and state leadership was also supported by the Serbian Orthodox Church and Serbian Academy of Science.

Under such circumstances, the relations between the Republic of Serbia on the one side, and the Yugoslav republics, on the other side, worsened more and more. The latter decided to separate from the Federation and declared their independence.⁴³

43 Rexhepi, *Historia* 9, p. 138.

The Slovene textbook:

Yugoslavia: The Bloody Patch in Europe

Yugoslavia was an unusual socialist state and consisted of six nations (Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Moslems, Macedonians and Montenegrins) and many other ethnic minorities. The differences between them caused friction, which in many cases (for example between the Croats and the Serbs, and between the Serbs and the Albanians) had its roots in the past. For decades, socialism had attempted to smooth over the differences with the slogan “brotherhood and unity” and in some cases, also by means of violence. In 1980, Tito, the popular state leader who had actually united the separate states of Yugoslavia, died. After his death, the defects of the system surfaced in the form of a bad economic crisis (in 1980, inflation reached a record 2,500%). As a result, labor strikes rocked the state. Towards the end of the 1980s, national tensions increased. The Serbian President Slobodan Milošević demanded that the leading role be given Serbia in Yugoslavia. The republics of Slovenia and Croatia resisted most emphatically against these Serbian tendencies.⁴⁴

The Macedonian textbook:

The Pluralistic and Democratic Processes in Yugoslavia

After the death of Josip Broz Tito (1980), the disintegration of the Yugoslav community of nations began with the emergence of long latent national issues and the long upheld illusion of the functionality of this community came to light.⁴⁵

(...)

The Disintegration of the SFRY

The development of the SFRY in the period from 1950 to 1980 showed great disagreement between the federal units, nations and national minorities it was comprised of. The difficulties in the political and economic relations which had existed in the SFRY, also held the seeds of its disintegration – a process which went on for a long time. These difficulties came to light mostly at the end of the 1980s and at the beginning of the 1990s.⁴⁶

The Serbian textbook:

The Disintegration of Yugoslavia

The First signs of the destabilization of Yugoslavia appeared in Kosovo. In the spring of 1981, nationalistic and separatist demonstrations broke out in what was then the Autonomous Region of Kosovo. Although

44 Razpotnik and Snoj, *Raziskujem preteklost 9: učbenik za zgodovino za 9. razred osnovne šole*, p. 116.

45 Велкоски et al., *Историја за 8 одделение*, p. 132.

46 Ibid., p. 140.

these demonstrations were crushed by the actions of the police force, the situation in Kosovo was not stable. Albanian pressure against the Serbs in this region, the destruction of property and murders sparked by national hatred continued. Together with the economic factors, this strengthened the emigration of Serbs from Kosovo, which had in fact been ongoing since 1945, and led to a situation in which the portion of Serbs in the total population of Kosovo and Metohija was reduced to only 13.2%.⁴⁷

The Croatian textbook:

At the end of the 1980s, communism as a system fell into a crisis throughout Europe, and subsequently also in Yugoslavia. The Slovene leadership sought more autonomy and democratic freedom. The Albanians in Kosovo demanded the status of a republic for Kosovo. The Serbs in Serbia attacked the 1974 Constitution, by which the two autonomous provinces Kosovo and Vojvodina had been established within the territory of Serbia. These two autonomous provinces enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy separate from the republic's authority in Belgrade. Those against the Constitution maintained that the position of Serbia in Yugoslavia was weakened by this autonomy. Serbian intellectuals gathered in the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SANU) and in 1986 drafted a Serbian national program – i.e. a document known as the Memorandum of the SANU.

The situation in Yugoslavia was additionally complicated by the emergence of Slobodan Milosevic at the head of the Serbian communists. Milosevic stirred up the dissatisfaction of the Serb nation and appointed himself leader of the Serbs.⁴⁸

The Bosnian textbook:

The center of nationalistic disorder which destroyed Yugoslavia was located in its the federation's leading center, in Serbia. While the Croats and Slovenes rightfully condemned the Serbian bid for dominance, the Serbs regarded themselves as the main victims of difficulties brought about by Tito's regime, and as victims of a "Croat-Slovene" alignment that deprived Serbia of the rights it saw itself as justly striving to ensure for itself within the federation. In fact, as Serbia saw it, Tito's federal constitution which gave member republics sovereignty, deprived Serbia of its leading position in the country and as a result it was no longer a dominant force in the federation, but only one of six republics with equal

47 Đurić and Pavlović, *Istorija za osmi razred osnovne škole*, p. 184.

48 Erdelja and Stojaković, *Tragom prošlosti 8: udžbenik povijesti za osmi razred osnovne škole*, pp. 228-229.

rights. Nor was Serbia the richest of the republics. Serbian politicians adopted the stance that Serbia was the only republic which didn't have complete sovereignty within its territory, owing to the two provinces of Vojvodina in the north and Kosovo in the south keeping their autonomy according to the Federal Constitution, which made them practically free from the control of the Belgrade government. Furthermore, they argued that Serbia, which had borne the brunt of the liberation efforts in World War II and suffered the highest death toll, had been reduced to second class status by this situation. These accusations were far from the truth, yet the repercussions they created were nonetheless devastating.⁴⁹

The Montenegrin textbook:

The Crisis of Yugoslav Society

The political and intellectual elites formed programs in which separate national interests were put forward, and ways of realizing these were proposed. In the autumn of 1986, the program known as the Memorandum of Serb Academy of Sciences and Arts was published. In it, the unification of all Serbs into one single, national state or entity within a centralized Yugoslavia was emphasized as the primary aim of the Serb nation. At the beginning of 1987, the Slovene intellectuals also formed and published their own national program – for the creation of an independent Slovene state. As part of this program, they also supported the introduction of a multiparty system.⁵⁰

As we have shown, the experience of socialist Yugoslavia is mainly interpreted and described in such a way as to be in accordance with each nation's own view of its national history. Such a tendency exists not only within the sphere of political history but also with regard to cultural history. However, some elements which could be termed as being in common to all the historical descriptions also exists in all these descriptions of the history of socialist Yugoslavia. Namely, the anti-fascist movement during World War II is interpreted more or less positively in all the textbooks. Also, the role of popular culture in Yugoslavia could be seen as something held in common by all the nations of the former Yugoslav countries. It seems that all of them listened to the same music, watched the same movies and TV programs and consumed the same goods.

49 Zijad Šehić et al., *Historija/Istorija/Povijest: udžbenik i čitanka za 8. razred osnovne škole*, p. 240.

50 Buzanović and Đorđević, *Istorija za deveti razred devetogodišnje osnovne škole*, p. 128.

4. CONCLUSION

There are some similarities in the primary school history textbooks of the Yugoslav successor states. In every country, the subject is named as "History", and world (or general) history and national history are treated together in one textbook. But the descriptions are not integrated. Rather, in almost all the textbooks, the general history of a certain age is followed by the history of the respective country. In some textbooks, the regional history such as Balkan or European history is inserted between them. The overall structure of the history textbooks is by and large common to all these publications, and in the narrative itself, as the analysis has shown, a significant amount of similarities can also be found. Almost all the textbooks embody an ethnocentric view of their nation's own history. This is evident not only with regard to the territorial perspective, but also in the interpretations of the Yugoslav experience that was common to all the countries of former Yugoslavia. The subject of historical narrative is also each separate nation, whereby the narrative either almost completely ignores minorities, or descriptions about them are at best sporadic. One exception is the textbook used by the Bosnian Moslems which is an amalgam of a Moslem ethnocentric view and an emphasis on the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

There are however also some differences. The degree of ethnocentricity is not equal amongst all the textbooks. The descriptions in the Slovene textbooks are more multifaceted than all the others. The Slovene textbooks also devote more pages to social and cultural history, while the Macedonian, Serb or Bosnian textbooks are centered on political history. Some of the Croatian textbooks also share these characteristics.

It seems that the countries which have stabilized politically and socially tend to have a more liberal and multi-aspectual view of history, as is the case for Slovenia, whereas in the countries which are not socially or politically stable and have ethnic tensions, the national narrative seems to be more radical, as for example in Serbia, all three textbooks of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Macedonia and Kosovo.

There is a tendency to think that a historical education which is not based on ethnocentricity and has a multifaceted view can bring about national reconciliation within a country or between a country and its neighboring nations. There is also a belief that this leads to a more mature civil society. Yet, what we found in the cases of the Yugoslav successor states, was that textbooks without ethnocentric views were available only in the countries which already were stable socially and politically and didn't have ethnic tensions. Maybe, the achievement

of a mature civil society and reconciliation through historical education mutually encourage each other.

In our analyses of the history textbooks, we also recognized the limitations of textbook analysis. Studies of institutional aspects, such as the procedures of the various ministries of education or the publishing houses, the systems of textbook approval, the selection of textbook writers and so on would also have to be made in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture. We can however conclude that the textbooks in the former Yugoslav states are very much affected by political circumstances, especially the sections on the states' contemporary history. Sometimes, history textbooks are objects of political debate, as was the case in Serbia concerning the debate over the additional educational materials for history education between the author Dubravka Stojanović and nationalist historians. It seems to me that history textbooks and history education in general should be more independent from politics. To that aim, the introduction of plural textbooks or so called alternative textbooks would undoubtedly be effective.

As already stated before, the subject of historical narratives in history textbooks is mainly the individual nation that published them, and not the people living there. It may be difficult to make a radical change in this area, but I think that the subject of historical narratives should be the people who are living now and who lived there in the past - including minorities. It should be regarded as a good sign that there are several pages in Macedonian and Montenegrin textbooks on the cultural movements of Albanians in each country. The next step should be the integration of descriptions on this topic into the entire text. The viewpoints of minorities can be a key concept to relativize the strong existence of the nation as the subject of description in history textbooks. And not only present day minorities, such as Serbs in Croatia or Albanians in Macedonia and Montenegro, but also minorities in the past, for example, Turks in Serbia or Germans in Slovenia, could be the target of description.

The second point is that the nation building process in the 19th and in some cases, 20th century should be taught. We historians all know that the modern notion of nation was created (or invented) and the nation as such was forged within the modernization processes taking place at this time. But, in the history textbooks of former Yugoslavia, the historical continuity of each nation from the Middle Ages or the Age of Antiquity is more or less emphasized, and the nation building process is ignored or treated as a national revival process. The description of the constructed character of the nation in history textbooks should contribute to relativizing such a fictional continuity of the nation.

The third method that seems to me effective in relativizing national history is the history of local communities, namely the history of the cities or villages where

these nations live. It may be difficult to incorporate such into textbooks, but local history should be an effective means of gaining a deeper and more concrete understanding of the lives of one's ancestors or people who lived there in the past, being, as it is, independent from the myth of national history.