

**Intellectuals as spokespersons
for the nation in the post-Yugoslav
context. A critical discourse study**

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Abstract

In contemporary post-Yugoslav societies, the ongoing processes of nation-building interact and intersect with the manifold challenges of post-socialist transition, post-conflict reconciliation, democratisation and European integration. Amid growing uncertainty and insecurity, public intellectuals may play a key role in ‘making sense’ of these complexities, in particular by shaping shared representations of the nation and by defining national identities in public discourse. Engaging in symbolic practices of nation-building, however, also enables intellectuals to legitimise their own authority and social status, as reflected in the concept of *national intellectual practice* elaborated by Suny and Kennedy (1999).

This thesis explores the multifaceted power dynamics underlying post-Yugoslav intellectuals’ engagement in nation-building from the perspective of the Discourse-Historical Approach to critical discourse studies (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009; Wodak, 2011). Using an innovative methodological framework based on the original notion of *intellectual spokespersonship for the nation* (drawing on Pels, 2000), I examine a sample of published opinion pieces addressing three key recent events, i.e. Kosovo’s declaration of independence from Serbia in 2008, Croatia’s accession into the EU in 2013, and the anti-government protests in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2014.

Detailed analysis of the patterns of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation that are distinctive to each case leads to the following conclusions. The Kosovo issue seems to have led Serbian intellectuals to refurbish their attitude as ‘saviours of the nation’, similarly to what had happened during the crisis of Yugoslavia. Croatian intellectuals, on the other hand, appear to be engaged in an effort to (re)define the role and place of the Croatian nation within the volatile context of European integration. Lastly, the ambivalent stance of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s intellectuals concerning the potential of the protest movement to undermine the status quo suggests that their involvement is chiefly aimed at strengthening their influence over the country’s public opinion.

Declaration

I hereby declare that the thesis is my own work, and has not been submitted in substantially the same form for the award of a higher degree elsewhere.

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Nobody knows how much this work means to me better than Tijana. I would like to express my love and gratitude to her for easing my worries and embracing my playfulness, and for her unwavering support. I can only hope to be as generous and supportive to her, particularly now that she is doing a PhD herself.

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1. Introduction

There is a widespread belief that public intellectuals have lost much of their relevance and credibility in the contemporary world, and this belief is often invoked to justify attitudes of indifference, mistrust of, or even hostility towards intellectuals and intellectual pursuits.¹ This thesis, however, arises from the opposite conviction, namely, that public intellectuals still play an important role in shaping public perceptions and forming public opinion; in short, that they actually do *matter*.

A striking illustration of the power of intellectuals to influence and transform society is provided by the process of disintegration of Yugoslavia. The crisis of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia began in the 1980s, when it became clear that the political system could no longer accommodate growing demands for greater national autonomy, and culminated in the 1990s with a series of wars that led to the final dismemberment of the federation into new independent states. The entire process was accompanied and sustained by intense intellectual activity. National themes and motifs had become prevalent in literature, theatre and art already in the 1980s, thus contributing significantly to the emergence (or the revival) of national and ethnic consciousness in the constituent republics. As the situation deteriorated, intellectuals, academics and artists became ever more prone to nationalist and chauvinistic rhetoric, often fostering resentment and hatred among the various ethnic communities. Eventually, many of them openly supported the war efforts of their country or ethnic group, and some were even ready to justify the mass atrocities and war crimes committed in the name of ethnic nationalism.

The Yugoslav case is frequently cited as a key instance of how intellectual elites can be instrumental in creating animosity and division within or among communities, thus paving the way for future conflicts. “It started with the writers”, gravely notes Ramet (2002: p. 153) about the war between Croatia and Serbia, which broke out in 1991 after nationalistic themes had dominated literary and theatrical production on both sides already for several years. Most accounts of the break-up of Yugoslavia focus

¹ The thesis of the decline of the public intellectual has emerged with particular force in the USA, where rampant anti-intellectualism, especially directed against the university, has been explained as a consequence of academic over-specialisation and professionalisation (Jacoby, 2000; Posner, 2001).

specifically on the responsibilities of national academic circles, who were often crucial in translating popular grievances into fully fledged nationalist programmes. In this regard, the *Memorandum* issued by the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts in 1986, which provided the ideological underpinning of Serbia's 'national project' and the rationale for its subsequent involvement in the Yugoslav wars (see § 2.1 for details), stands as a dramatic example of the dangers associated with the public exercise of intellectual authority.

As the example of Yugoslavia clearly suggests, one of the most important ways in which intellectuals may affect and transform society is by promoting specific national identities, and by mobilising the masses around the idea of the nation as a distinctive cultural and political community. Indeed, a cornerstone of contemporary nationalism studies is the notion that modern nations are the product of sustained material and symbolic practices of *nation-building*, which require a specialised intellectual elite in order to be effectively administered and enforced. This point has emerged from prominent studies conducted within modernist approaches, which have highlighted the key role of the national intelligentsia in the dissemination of a homogeneous and standardised high culture (Gellner, 1983), the creation of national consciousness through the promotion of a shared national imagination (Anderson, 1983), the invention of national rituals and traditions (Hobsbawm, 1983), as well as in investing the nation with symbolic significance and emotional content (Smith, 1998).

Since the break-up of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, the new post-Yugoslav countries have undertaken nation-building projects with the goal of establishing themselves as sovereign nation-states each with its distinctive national culture and identity.² Broadly speaking, nation-building processes are ongoing in all nation-states around the globe, because, as shown above, nationhood and national identity need to be continuously reproduced and performed in order for the nation to remain the hegemonic point of focus of social, cultural and political identification. The post-Yugoslav context, however, has some peculiar features that make it particularly interesting for the investigation of the complexities of nation-building in the contemporary world. To begin with, the new post-Yugoslav states have emerged from the violent disintegration

² In the specific case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, nation-building projects have been pursued to a greater or lesser extent by each of the three major ethnic groups living in the country (see Chapter 2 for details).

of a larger polity, as a result of which their individual national identities are largely built upon the rejection of previous common forms of identification (i.e. Yugoslav identity and its ideological baggage) as well as on the exclusion or suppression of otherness (i.e. erstwhile enemy nations but also internal ‘traitors’). In this regard, most post-Yugoslav societies (particularly Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Kosovo) are still affected by the long-term impact of the atrocities and human rights violations committed during the wars, which makes post-conflict reconciliation an extremely difficult objective to achieve. Secondly, all post-Yugoslav societies have undergone a process of radical political and economic transformation in the context of the post-socialist transition to liberal democracy and the market economy. This has generated widespread economic uncertainty and profound social insecurity, which in turn have often fuelled inter-ethnic animosity and anti-minority attitudes among the people. Thirdly, the prospect of membership of the European Union (EU) has served as a powerful incentive for democratic reform and economic progress, but has also raised concerns over the potential loss of national sovereignty and the erosion of national identity involved in the process. Moreover, the uneven impact of the EU’s transformative capacity across the region has further deepened existing discrepancies among the post-Yugoslav countries, thus creating new sources of tension.

This thesis approaches this complex scenario from a critical discourse-analytical perspective. The purpose of the research is to shed light on how the symbolic practices of nation-building interact and intersect with the overarching processes of social, political and cultural transformation that characterise the post-Yugoslav societies. In particular, the study seeks to illuminate the role that public intellectuals play in this regard, focusing on how they use their discursive authority to ‘make sense’ of complex social realities by articulating shared representations and visions of the nation and by promoting them in public discourse.

The reasons I have chosen to address this challenging topic from the perspective of critical discourse studies (CDS) are manifold. The first, and the most profound, is that the former Yugoslavia, to me, has always represented something of a language to be deciphered. This was literally the case in my childhood, when I would spend our family holidays at the seaside in Yugoslavia asking my grandmother to teach me new words in Croatian, her mother tongue. In my teenage years, my attention was drawn to

the virulent war situation, which I strove to decipher on the basis of television coverage and occasional first-hand news from our relatives there. As I grew up, I became eager to know more about the history, culture and social dynamics of the ‘new’ Yugoslavia; this motivated me to spend several years in Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Belgrade (Serbia), where I met people who nurtured my curiosity and desire for further discovery, and made me fully aware of the tremendous influence that powerful actors (be they political, military or religious leaders or, indeed, intellectuals and writers) can have on the lives of all the rest.

Secondly, I have chosen to work within the framework of critical discourse studies because I assume that investigating the complex interplay of intellectual discourse and nation-building practices (in the post-Yugoslav context as well as elsewhere) requires not only a focus on language as the medium of such practices, but also a critical perspective on the specific power relations that underlie intellectuals’ involvement in nation-building. In fact, as Suny and Kennedy (1999) have pointed out, the intellectual elites entrusted to establish and operate the cultural infrastructure of the nation often use this platform to legitimise their own authority and entrench their social status. Therefore, studying the ways in which intellectuals engage in discursive practices of nation-building necessarily implies a critical examination of how intellectuals strategically use their discursive power to assume specific roles vis-à-vis the nation, and thus strengthen their own position in society, which is something critical discourse analysis is well equipped to do.

Thirdly, I believe that, by introducing a specific focus on intellectuals, the present study can make a significant contribution to the existing critical discourse-analytical research on nationhood and national identities. In the scope of CDS, the exploration of the discursive aspects of nationalism and national identities has emerged as a prominent research programme within the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) elaborated by Wodak and Reisigl (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009; Wodak, 2011). Drawing on the seminal research into the discursive construction of Austrian national identity conducted by Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl and Liebhart (2009), the DHA has been, and continues to be, used to investigate how national identities are constructed, perpetuated, negotiated and transformed through discourse in a wide range of geographical, socio-political and communicative contexts (see § 3.1.3 for details). To

date, however, no DHA-based studies have systematically examined the specific role of public intellectuals as crucial agents in the discursive articulation of nation-building projects.

In order to bridge this gap, and, I hope, pave the way for further research in this direction, I elaborate an original interdisciplinary framework grounded in the DHA. The framework integrates existing critical discourse-analytical approaches to the discursive construction of national identity (particularly Wodak *et al.*, 2009) with concepts and insights derived both from recent studies of nationalism and from sociological and philosophical accounts of the role of intellectuals in society. Specifically, I propose to operationalise the notion of intellectual spokespersonship elaborated by Pels (Pels, 2000) into a heuristic methodology for exploring the manifestations of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation in discourse. The methodology is based on the following three empirical research questions:

1. What discursive strategies do public intellectuals employ to position themselves as such?
2. In what ways do they discursively construct and perform the role of spokespersons for their national communities?
3. How do they represent the nation in public discourse, i.e. what discursive strategies do they use to construct, emphasise, perpetuate or transform specific aspects of the nation?

Using this framework, I address three case studies that relate to three events of national importance that occurred in different post-Yugoslav countries. The events are Kosovo's declaration of independence from Serbia on 17 February 2008, Croatia's accession into the EU on 1 July 2013, and the anti-government demonstrations that took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the early months of 2014. The analysis focuses on opinion pieces (i.e. editorials, columns and interviews) published in the aftermath of each of these events in the national press of the relevant country. More specifically, it considers a limited sample of opinion pieces (12 per case study) chosen among those published in a selected set of daily newspapers and weekly magazines within 30 days of the relevant event (in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, of the first day of the protests). Detailed qualitative analysis of the 36 opinion pieces included in the final sample is conducted in the original language on the basis of the

integrated methodology presented above, in order to identify i) salient discursive strategies of intellectual self-legitimation, ii) prominent discursive strategies of spokespersonship for the nation, and iii) recurrent themes in the discursive representation of the nation.

Subsequently, the results obtained from the empirical analysis are brought together in order to identify the relevant intersections between the discursive strategies pertaining to the three above-mentioned levels of analysis (I refer to such intersections as *patterns of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation*) that are distinctive to each of the examined cases. The discussion of the findings is oriented towards answering the following questions:

- A. What do these patterns reveal about the specific national contexts they refer to? What is their significance in terms of intellectuals' involvement in nation-building practices and the underlying power relations?
- B. Are there any salient similarities or differences across the cases, and what can be concluded from this in regard to the broader post-Yugoslav context?
- C. What are the main conceptual and methodological implications for the critical study of the relationship between intellectual activity and nation-building in public discourse?

Besides extending knowledge of the specific social, cultural and political processes that shape contemporary post-Yugoslav societies, the insights provided by this kind of analysis may have broader applications across multiple disciplines and fields of research. In particular, they might help researchers to generate new hypotheses regarding a number of crucial issues, including, but not limited to, the emergence of re-nationalising tendencies both in Western and Eastern Europe, the relationship between nationalism, post-socialist transition and the process of European integration, the role and significance of the nation in the face of local and global challenges (such as migration, poverty, growing social inequalities and recurrent economic crises), as well as the evolving place of public intellectuals in contemporary societies.

The dissertation consists of nine chapters, including the Introduction. Chapter 2 introduces the reader to the complexities and diversities of the post-Yugoslav context, focusing in particular on the changing position of public intellectuals in the process of

dissolution of Yugoslavia and the emergence of independent nation-states in its place. The chapter begins with a historical overview of the Yugoslav project from its inception through its embodiment in socialist Yugoslavia, to its crisis in the 1980s and final demise in the internecine wars of the 1990s. The subsequent discussion focuses on the striking ‘conversion’ from Yugoslavism to ethno-nationalist ideologies undergone by large sectors of the Yugoslav intelligentsia in the late 1980s and early 1990s, providing an in-depth examination of the motives, interests and power struggles underlying this extraordinary shift. Then, the chapter highlights the main challenges facing post-Yugoslav societies nowadays, pointing out the need to investigate how local nation-building practices are discursively shaped by, and in turn shape, the overarching processes of post-socialist transformation, post-conflict reconciliation, democratisation and European integration, and what the role is that public intellectuals play in this regard.

Chapter 3 is devoted to the elaboration of an interdisciplinary framework for the study of intellectuals and nation-building in public discourse grounded in the DHA. After elucidating DHA principles, notions and methods, the chapter provides a brief overview of relevant DHA-based research addressing the discursive construction of national and supra-national (particularly European) identities from a variety of perspectives. Subsequently, I review definitions of the ‘intellectual’ and accounts of his or her role in society offered by prominent sociological theories, suggesting that the specific nature of intellectual activity is best captured by the notion of intellectuals as spokespersons (Pels, 2000). I then examine the relationship between intellectuals and nation-building practices, both historically and in the contemporary world, and formulate the concept of *intellectual spokespersonship for the nation*. Building on this concept, I elaborate an interdisciplinary discourse-analytical approach for investigating the discursive strategies that intellectuals employ to legitimise their own authority, assume various roles vis-à-vis the nation, and promote certain representations of the nation in public discourse.

The design of the study is laid out in Chapter 4. The chapter begins by explaining why opinion pieces published in print media such as newspapers and magazines are a relevant genre for the exploration of intellectual discourse in general. Then, I present the rationale for using a case study approach, and provides a brief contextual overview

of the three selected cases (see above). The second part of the chapter details the data gathering process. It first describes the procedure employed for obtaining an initial dataset that is representative of the broader media landscape of each country (Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina). Then, I elaborate how the initial dataset has been downsized through keyword and thematic analysis into three narrow samples, one for each case study, in such a way as to preserve representativeness. The chapter concludes by providing a cursory thematic overview of all of the opinion pieces included in the three final samples.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 present the results of in-depth qualitative analysis of the opinion pieces from each of the three case studies. Each chapter is divided into three sections: the first examines the salient discursive strategies that the authors of the opinion pieces employ to legitimise their own intellectual authority; the second explores the roles that they assume and perform in relation to their national community; the third identifies the most recurrent themes concerning the way in which the relevant nation is discursively constructed and represented. I illustrate each strategy and theme with examples taken from the sample texts, which are discussed in great detail.

In Chapter 8, I synthesise these empirical findings in order to identify the most prominent patterns of intellectual spokespersonship within each of the case studies. I then discuss the significance of these patterns for each specific national context, drawing both on the considerations about the post-Yugoslav context made in Chapter 2 and on the theoretical insights into the social role of intellectuals expounded in Chapter 3. On the basis of this discussion, I advance the following claims: firstly, the issue of Kosovo's independence appears to have led Serbian intellectuals to refurbish their attitude as 'saviours of the nation', similarly to what had happened during the Yugoslav crisis in the 1980s and 1990s; secondly, the analysis of the positions assumed by Croatian intellectuals suggests that they are largely engaged in an effort to (re)define the place, role and identity of the Croatian nation within the broader European context, which is perceived both as offering great opportunities for national progress and as posing significant challenges to national integrity and sovereignty; thirdly, the ambivalent stance of Bosnia and Herzegovina's intellectuals concerning the potential of the protest movement to undermine the hegemony of the ethno-

political paradigm suggests that their involvement should be regarded as an attempt to strengthen their own influence over the country's public opinion.

Finally, Chapter 9 provides a synthetic recapitulation of the main findings of the study, and offers some conclusive answers to its guiding research questions. Specifically, I put forth some general observations, based on a cross comparison of the results from the three case studies, about the interplay of intellectual discourse and nation-building practices in the contemporary post-Yugoslav context. Then, I offer some reflections on the contribution that the present study can make to broader scholarly debates on the relationship between national and supra-national identities, the power struggles underlying intellectual activity, as well as the social role of public intellectuals in an increasingly globalised world. I conclude by pointing out the study's key methodological implications for critical discourse studies and the DHA in particular, and suggest directions for future research.

2. The post-Yugoslav context: intellectuals and nations in transition

In order to understand, and hence be able to examine, the complex relationship that exists between post-Yugoslav intellectuals and their national communities, some knowledge of the historical and socio-political context is required. The questions that shall guide our inquiry are the following: what were the key aspects of Yugoslavia as a social, political and, especially, as a cultural project? What has been the impact and legacy of the violent disintegration of Yugoslavia, and of post-communist transition, on the communities involved? What are the main challenges that post-Yugoslav societies are facing nowadays, in the late 2000s and early 2010s, particularly in regard to post-conflict reconciliation, democratisation and European integration? This chapter seeks to address these points by focusing in particular on the role(s) of intellectuals in influencing and shaping these developments, as well as on the changing meanings of the nation as a form of political, social and cultural organisation.

2.1 Origins and crisis of the Yugoslav project

I begin this inquiry by providing a brief historical overview of the emergence, evolution and eventual crisis of the Yugoslav project, which found its fullest expression in the establishment of the socialist Yugoslavia after the Second World War.

The idea that the South-Slavic peoples could be peacefully brought together into a single political entity based on a common culture and language has its roots in the pan-South-Slavic movement (also known as Yugoslavism), which emerged in the early nineteenth century under the influence of German romanticism. The movement was led by prominent writers, academics and other intellectual figures who were committed to laying the foundation of a common Yugoslav (or South-Slavic) national consciousness by standardising the vernaculars spoken across the region and by creating a canon of shared literary references (Wachtel, 1998). Yugoslavism gained momentum at the beginning of the twentieth century, when the collapse of the Habsburg empire (1918) created the conditions for South-Slavic peoples to achieve

political unity under the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, which in 1929 changed its name to Kingdom of Yugoslavia. However, the project of creating a Yugoslav national identity through a synthesis of all local cultural traditions soon proved difficult to accomplish. As Wachtel (1998) notes, Serbia's hegemony among the member states of the new Kingdom led the other national intellectual elites to retain control over cultural policy, which prevented the emergence of an overarching Yugoslav culture.

The idea of Yugoslavism found a new embodiment in the socialist Yugoslavia (i.e. the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, hereinafter SFRY), which was established in the aftermath of the Second World War. The impact of the war had been devastating: the Kingdom had been conquered by Axis forces and partitioned between Germany, Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria and client regimes; subsequently, the communist-led Yugoslav Partisans had fought a liberation war against the occupying forces and their puppet regimes, such as the Independent State of Croatia and the Government of National Salvation in Serbia; simultaneously, a civil war had been waged between the Partisans, the Serbian royalist Chetnik movement, Croatian nationalist Ustaše and Home Guard, as well as Slovene Home Guard troops. Tito and the leadership of the victorious Partisan movement soon realised that the deep cleavages of a war-torn society could be overcome only by fostering a unitary (and 'unproblematic') Yugoslav identity, which would form the basis for creating a common polity. In this sense, Yugoslavism was conceived and deployed as an instrument to promote pacification and solidarity among the Yugoslav peoples. Initially, anti-fascism and the achievements of the partisan movement served as the founding mythology of the new state, while controversial war memories were conveniently suppressed in what Judt (2007) calls a 'collective amnesia'. In fact, since the recent war history of mutual antagonisms and ethnically motivated killings was a potential source of social conflict, the so-called *ethno-national question* was soon turned into a taboo. Subsequently, the communist elites elaborated a fully-fledged model for the social and cultural development of Yugoslav society, which hinged on the principle of *brotherhood and unity* among the Yugoslav peoples. The newly established communist intelligentsia, made up of civil servants, intellectuals and educators, had the duty to articulate, promote and disseminate this model among the masses.

Already in the late 1940s Yugoslavia had departed from communist internationalism, led by the Soviet Union, by successfully taking a 'national way to socialism'. This led to Tito's break with Stalin in 1948, which led to Yugoslavia's isolation from the communist mainstream. As a result, throughout the 1950s the Yugoslav regime pursued its unique project of modernisation in a climate of ideological radicalisation: pro-Stalinist dissent was fiercely repressed, while workers' self-management, a form of decision-making in the workplace that empowered workers to manage their own labour, replaced the Partisan war as the new founding myth of the SFRY (Wachtel, 1998). Once again, the state intelligentsia was mobilised, and called upon to institutionalise and disseminate the new doctrine. As Malešević notes,

Yugoslav intellectuals took an active part in the apparatuses and the policies of the state. They shaped and articulated its laws, they led discussions on the direction of its development on the party boards and in the media, they published literary works, produced paintings and sang operas praising the existing order. In other words, Yugoslav intellectuals were indeed the ideological power-holders. (2001: p. 70)

The rigidity of the system, however, was soon to be undermined by growing pluralisation, especially in the cultural field. Already in the 1960s, arenas for intellectual debate emerged in which conflicting viewpoints could be expressed. The appearance of dissenting voices and centrifugal forces, both within and outside the communist system, generated a climate of disjunction of the intelligentsia from the regime (Privitera, 1998). The situation was further aggravated by the widespread disillusionment with communism that followed the Soviet repression of the 1956 revolution in Hungary (Judt, 2007). In the 1960s, criticism towards the regime still came predominantly from within the official ideology, in the sense that it was still grounded (sometimes tendentiously) in the Marxist tradition.³ In the 1970s and 1980s, however, many intellectuals became increasingly disengaged with the Yugoslav regime, and began to voice the concerns of their respective national groups, often in an unprecedentedly outspoken manner. It became clear that the existing political arrangements could no longer accommodate the growing tensions between the

³ The most prominent among these currents was the Praxis school, a Marxist humanist philosophical movement that originated in Zagreb and Belgrade in the SFRY during the 1960s. Important figures among the school's founders include Gajo Petrović and Milan Kangrga of Zagreb, and Mihailo Marković of Belgrade.

national and the supranational levels, and that Yugoslavism as a project of cultural synthesis and homogenisation had clearly lost its impetus (Wachtel, 1998).

In the absence of a shared political vision, the Yugoslav intellectual elites became increasingly fragmented, aligning themselves into three distinct groups. The first was the state intelligentsia, i.e. the keepers of the official doctrine, made up of ideologues working on the communist party boards as well as in state-sponsored academic and research institutions. The second group included left-wing (Marxist) critics of the regime, who disagreed with the official party line but nevertheless supported workers' self-management and promoted anti-nationalism, albeit from different and sometimes diverging viewpoints. The third group included right-wing intellectuals, who often promoted particularistic, ethno-nationalist agendas that were incompatible with Yugoslavism and explicitly opposed to any form of supranational centralisation (Malešević, 2001).

Until the mid-1980s, advocates of ethno-national viewpoints were much less effective than left-wing critics in voicing their objections to the Yugoslav regime, for two main reasons. The first was that the 'ethno-national question' was still taboo in communist Yugoslavia, so that any activities aimed at stirring up ethnic consciousness and divisionism were met with repression: books and leaflets published by right-wing intellectuals were often confiscated or banned, and their authors put under house arrest or even imprisoned. The second reason is that the conflicting and mutually exclusive character of the national ideologies that they propagated prevented them from constituting a unitary opposition front at the federal level (Malešević, 2001). In such a climate it is not surprising that critical intellectuals were mostly inclined to address the crisis of the SFRY in partnership with the actors of the regime rather than in opposition to them (Ramet, 2002).

In the mid-1980s, however, the situation changed. The crisis of the Yugoslav paradigm had become so deep that the communist party leaders were forced to acknowledge it publicly. As a consequence, intellectual dissent became harder to silence or marginalise. As Bernik notes, "[f]or the intellectuals [...] the crisis opened up new opportunities, particularly because of the declining ability of the increasingly internally divided political elite to keep intellectual non-conformism under control" (1999: p. 109). At this point, a steady process of defection was well underway, as

some nationalist intellectual circles were quietly working to reorganise, and possibly overturn, the system (Ramet, 2002).

The first to speak out against the shortcomings of Yugoslavia's federal political system were Serbian historians: in 1986, a commission instituted by the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Art issued a *Memorandum* which portrayed the Serbs as the great victims of communist rule and accused Croats and Albanians of pursuing genocidal policies against them. The publication of this document by prominent Serbian intellectuals triggered a response from their Slovenian counterparts, who in early 1987 drafted a similar document, i.e. the Contributions for a Slovenian National Programme (also known as *Nova Revija*). As Dević (1998) points out, the almost simultaneous formulation of two opposing nationalist agendas by leading intellectuals marked the final rupture between the Yugoslav republics' cultural institutions, indicating the culmination of parochial visions and interests vis-à-vis the problems of the Yugoslav state. However, she maintains, "the content of these two agendas would have never reached the level of popular discourse if political leaders in Serbia and Slovenia had not pursued their own agendas of conflictual ethnic mobilization" (1998: p. 405). In Serbia, in particular, the *Memorandum* set the direction for the ethno-nationalist doctrine of the 'Greater Serbia', i.e. the irredentist ideology aiming at creating a Serb state which would incorporate all regions of traditional significance to Serbs (including Serb-populated regions outside Serbia), which the Milošević regime later pursued in an attempt to broaden Serbian control over the disintegrating Yugoslav Federation.

These developments in Serbia and Slovenia soon triggered similar attitudes in the other Yugoslav republics, particularly in Croatia. What ensued over the next few years can best be described as a widespread national revival across all of the constituent republics, which encompassed many spheres of public life. Almost everywhere, local thinkers, academics and artists undertook to 're-discover' and promote their particular national literature, history and traditions, stressing their unique and distinctive character and emphasising differences from other nations or ethnic groups. Some intellectuals were even ready to translate these efforts into politics by forming alternative, nationally-based political parties, especially in the course of 1988-1989 (Ramet, 2002). These tendencies fostered the emergence of shared narratives, values

and social aspirations that were centred around the idea of autonomous and sovereign national communities, and therefore in open contrast with the declining all-Yugoslav ideology. By the end of the 1980s, Yugoslavia had become so culturally fragmented that the idea of Yugoslavism could hardly inspire any viable unitary political or cultural initiative.

In this light, it is reasonable to assume that the demise of the Yugoslav project (and of its derivative and reformed versions) was certainly among the factors that laid the ground for the outbreak of the Yugoslav inter-communal wars in the 1990s. Of course, scholars have advanced a variety of hypotheses to account for the violent disintegration of Yugoslavia, focusing on factors such as the system's loss of political legitimacy (especially after Tito's death in 1980), the inability of the ethnically-based federal system to accommodate growing demands for autonomy, severe economic deterioration, as well as concrete decisions taken by specific political leaders.⁴ However, as Wachtel (1998) contends, it is precisely the earlier disengagement of both political and cultural elites from the project of building a unitary Yugoslav state that created the conditions for the aforementioned predicaments to escalate into a series of armed conflicts.

Between 1989 and 1992, the entire Yugoslav political landscape underwent dramatic developments and ruptures, which undermined the stability of the federal institutions and led the constituent republics of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia to unilaterally declare independence from the Yugoslav Federation. However, not only was this process of partition fiercely opposed by the rump Yugoslavia – now under the hegemony of Milošević's Serbia – but it also exacerbated issues of ethnic minorities (chiefly Serbs living in central parts of the country and Albanians living in the South-East) which could no longer be managed at the federal level. These animosities gave rise to a series of wars that affected most of the former Yugoslav republics over a period of ten years. After an initial short confrontation with Slovenia, Serbian forces moved on to a larger and more deadly war with Croatia, which lasted from 1991 until 1995. Another war erupted in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992, as Bosnian Serbs (one of the three main ethnic groups living in the country, along with Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats) rejected independence from

⁴ For a comprehensive and critical overview of this debate see Ramet, 2005.

Yugoslavia and mobilised their forces in order to secure Serbian territory inside the country. This led to a four-year war between the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the self-proclaimed Bosnian Serb and Bosnian Croat entities (led and supplied by Serbia and Croatia, respectively), which was accompanied by the ethnic cleansing of the Muslim and Croat population. According to estimates from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the total number of casualties in the Bosnian War is around 100,000. In 1998, after Kosovo's autonomy was quashed by the Serbian government, Kosovar Albanians started an insurgency that escalated into armed clashes with the Serbian army, and which was ended through a NATO military intervention against Serbia in 1999 (see § 4.2.1 for details). Lastly, in 2001 the Republic of Macedonia experienced a short conflict between its security forces and the National Liberation Army, which was seeking greater autonomy for the Albanian minority living in the country. Overall, the Yugoslav wars claimed several hundred thousand victims, produced masses of refugees and internally displaced people, and resulted in the complete dismemberment of the Yugoslav Federation (the dramatic social consequences of the wars are dealt with in § 2.3.2).

As seen above, intellectuals played a decisive role in the prelude to the Yugoslav wars, as they shaped the various emerging national consciousnesses and often fostered resentment against other national or ethnic communities. Many continued to be vocal also during the conflict, using the media as a platform to propagate and legitimise opposite ideological and political views. Television and the press had already undergone a process of fragmentation along national lines before the beginning of the hostilities, and had thus played a crucial role in 'forging the war' (Thompson, 1999). With war and violence flaring across the Yugoslav space, the media were consciously used by political leaders to gain support for their aggressive policies and stir up the masses against the enemy (Thompson, 1999). Several intellectuals actively participated in this kind of propaganda, by disseminating hatred and fear in support of the national cause (Malešević, 2001). According to Huttenbach (2004), their engagement was often cynical and opportunistic, as most of them tended to instigate inter-ethnic hostility and would oppose the violence only when their own national group succumbed. In such a climate of intense popular mobilisation, of course, dissenting voices had little or no resonance, as they were largely marginalised or even

suppressed by the establishment; as a result, several nonconforming intellectuals were forced to relinquish their posts, and many decided to emigrate abroad.

2.2 (Post-)Yugoslav transition: the unique trajectory of intellectuals from Yugoslavism to ethno-nationalism

As shown above, the aggravating crisis of the Yugoslav project and the rise of nationalist rhetoric was accompanied by intense negotiation over intellectual identity that culminated in the late 1980s and the 1990s, when most intellectuals who had previously been loyal or at least unopposed to the Yugoslav regime widely embraced ethno-nationalist standpoints, in an apparent mass ideological conversion. The proliferation of anti-Yugoslav ‘dissidents’ in the new post-Yugoslav states is even more striking if compared to what happened elsewhere across the Eastern bloc, where dissidents, who were rather prominent and vocal under communist rule, were relegated to low status positions in the course of transition. Hence, I begin this section with a brief overview of the marginalisation of intellectuals during the post-communist transition in Europe; then, I turn to the post-Yugoslav case to discuss possible explanations for the Yugoslav intellectuals’ unique trajectory from Yugoslavism to ethno-nationalism.

2.2.1 Post-communist transition in Europe: intellectuals from a position of primacy to marginalisation

The transition from communism to post-communism in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe is often described as a revolutionary process, because the changes undergone by the societies involved have been radical, far-reaching and often of a systemic nature. As in the case of Yugoslavia (see above), the impetus for the *great transformation*, as Ramet (1995a) dubbed it, came from the inability of the communist regimes to cope with the gradual repluralisation of society that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s, when various social currents alternative to the official ideology began to gain public support and recognition. Over time, due to widespread dissatisfaction with the status quo, various social sectors such as trade unions, civil and religious organisations, human rights defenders, as well as individual writers and artists came to identify themselves as a single group, i.e. *the people*, struggling against a common enemy, i.e. the communist nomenklatura. This antagonism culminated in the popular upsurges of 1989, which caused the fall of all European communist regimes and their

replacement with freely elected governments. Although they have often been described as a conscious yearning for freedom and democracy, these uprisings were rather a reaction against communist oppression, with no clear-cut ideas regarding the positive content of the future post-communist political systems (Ramet, 1995a).

Indeed, everywhere (with the exception of Serbia) the transition process unfolded as a categorical rejection of communist ideals and an enthusiastic appropriation of Western European models and standards. In the political sphere, state communism was rapidly dismantled and replaced with multiparty and parliamentary liberal-democratic systems, aimed to guarantee the enforcement and protection of human rights, particularly civil and political freedoms. The planned economy was converted into a free-market capitalist economy, through the privatisation of state-owned enterprises and the liberalisation of the market. Furthermore, Eastern European countries embarked on a gradual but steady process of integration with Western European supranational institutions such as the European Communities (nowadays the European Union, EU) and NATO. Lastly, for multi-ethnic and federal countries such as the Soviet Union, Germany, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, the transition also led to the redefinition of borders on the basis of the principle of national self-determination.

In conclusion, the transition to post-communism came to coincide to a great extent with a relentless and pervasive process of Europeanisation, which was (and still is) largely perceived as the guarantee of long-term prosperity and stability (Galasińska & Krzyżanowski, 2009). As Judt points out, Europe was not regarded as an ideological alternative, but rather as the political norm; the overarching goal of transition, in fact, was not to replace communism with North-American capitalism, but to join the ongoing European project of political, economic and cultural integration. This is why the transition was commonly framed in public and political discourse as a *return to Europe* (see Judt, 2007: p. 630).

A crucial role in the discursive articulation of transition as a much yearned-for return to Europe was played by the dissident intellectuals of pre-1989, who were also among the ones who had fought the communist regimes most strenuously and led the movements that brought about their eventual collapse (Bozóki, 1999). It is for this reason that the historian Garton Ash, among others, has defined the 1989 revolutions as *revolutions of the intellectuals* (1995). However, in spite of their central role, most

dissidents were unable to capitalise on their reputation and become prominent political or public figures in the post-1989 societies.⁵

The reasons for their marginalisation are manifold. Most importantly, intellectuals were largely unprepared to cope with the messy political and technical issues connected with building viable social, political and economic institutions. As Ramet (1995a) notes, their previous elaboration and promotion of freedom, political pluralism, human rights, free market economy and national self-determination was scarcely focused on how these values could be concretely implemented and protected. In consequence, it was the technocrats from the old regimes, i.e. the communist nomenklatura and the bureaucrats, who eventually led and managed the processes of transition (Judt, 2007). In addition to this, several intellectuals and opinion-leaders were forcibly ousted from the political arena by post-communist ‘guardians of nostalgia’ and rising nationalist forces (Bauman, 1992). According to a more skeptical viewpoint, many dissenters were taken aback because they did not really believe that change was possible, their criticism of communist power being but a sort of gratuitous and self-complacent game (Mungiu-Pippidi, 1999). Finally, it has also been argued that the advent of mass democracy somehow marked the end of the public intellectual as such, since the young generation was ready to turn away from traditional sources of authority and guidance, in the East and the West alike (Judt, 2007; Körösiényi, 1999).

As discussed above, the trajectory followed by Yugoslav intellectuals during the transition differs quite substantially from the rest of the post-communist world. In broad terms, while in the countries of the Eastern bloc anti-regime intellectuals went from prominence to marginalisation, in Yugoslavia they went from marginalisation to prominence. This point has been made with great force by Malešević:

When observing Yugoslav intellectuals before and after communism one can immediately notice a striking paradox – whereas the rest of the communist world had well-known and prominent dissidents, communist Yugoslavia had very few. Whereas with the disintegration of the communist order, dissidents have either disappeared from countries across Eastern Europe by becoming professional politicians or by returning to their previous academic or artistic professions, the new post-Yugoslav states have witnessed the proliferation of their first proper dissidents. (2001: p. 55)

⁵ With the notable exception of Václav Havel, who became the first democratically elected president of Czechoslovakia.

The Yugoslav ‘paradox’, as Malešević calls it, that is the striking ideological conversion from Yugoslavism to ethno-nationalism undergone by large sectors of the Yugoslav intelligentsia since the mid-1980s, has attracted the attention of many scholars, who have offered various explanations for it. In the following, I will discuss three such accounts, in an attempt to shed some light on different aspects and contradictions of this rather complex scenario.

2.2.2 Uncovering the Yugoslav ‘paradox’

The first account has been elaborated by Malešević himself in an attempt to answer the two key questions: “why did Yugoslavia not have proper dissidents and why has the great majority of Yugoslav Marxist intellectuals become so suddenly ethno-nationalist?” (2001: p. 56). By bringing together Gramsci’s and Bauman’s theories of the intellectual (which I discuss in greater detail in § 3.2), he characterises the abrupt ideological reversal of the Yugoslav intelligentsia as a transition from the position of *organic legislators* to that of *organicistic interpreters*, which was largely determined by its members’ social origins.

When it was founded in the 1940s, the Yugoslav state had virtually no intellectual class as such. On the one hand, the majority of the population consisted of illiterate or semi-illiterate peasants, and academic life was confined to the three major cities, Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana. On the other, the triumph of communism had led most non-communist intellectuals to relinquish their posts or even migrate to the West. Hence, the only active intellectuals were the few leftist thinkers who had been integrated into the apparatuses of the new state, thus constituting an embryonic state intelligentsia. In the next three decades, however, the Yugoslav elites engaged in a large-scale modernisation programme, promoting industrialisation, urbanisation and the creation of an extensive academic and cultural infrastructure. These advancements, coupled with the growing cultural pluralisation described by Wachtel (see § 2.1 above), fostered the emergence of a very lively intellectual scene. As Malešević notes,

In the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s Yugoslav society was characterized by a fairly rich academic, literary and political life. Cultural and informational production was impressive. Although controlled by the party-state apparatus, the newspapers, journals, radio and TV stations could not but facilitate ever-increasing and lively

discussions and conflicting viewpoints of the newly emerging intelligentsia. (2001: p. 63)

As already discussed above (§ 2.1), the Yugoslav intellectual landscape came to be structured around three distinct groups: the state intelligentsia, the left-wing Marxist critics (such as the Praxis School), and the right-wing opponents.

In Malešević's view, all three groups were made up of intellectuals who were organic in the Gramscian sense and legislators in Bauman's terms. They were all organic – and not traditional – intellectuals because they did not perceive themselves as being autonomous and independent from the dominant social class, in this case the Yugoslav communist establishment. In fact, they were either the pure product of its policies (the state intelligentsia) or their 'unintended surplus' (left-wing critics and right-wing opponents). Furthermore, all three groups were legislators – and not interpreters – because each of them held a legislative worldview in its own right: while the Marxist-Leninist intelligentsia and the left-wing critics saw themselves as the holders and administrators of the 'true' communist doctrine, the right-wing thinkers (usually) acted as defenders of the ethnic principle, pursuing ever greater autonomy for their respective national communities. This characterisation reflects the fact that Titoism, i.e. the brand of socialism promoted by Tito's regime after Yugoslavia was expelled from the Cominform in 1948, was far more liberal as compared to the Eastern bloc (although it did not avoid censorship and political persecution, which were achieved more through implicit threat than through direct intervention). Hence, unlike elsewhere across the Eastern bloc, the Yugoslav intellectuals were not radically opposed to the holders of power, and were also usually allowed to voice their opinions, so their status and authority were a function of their relationship with the regime and not of their opposition to it.

This insight is fundamental to understanding the reasons behind the dramatic shift that occurred in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when the great majority of the intelligentsia rejected socialist Yugoslavism to become committed nationalists. As discussed above, the crisis of Yugoslavia had a profound impact on the very conditions of existence of its communist intellectuals. On the one hand, their common state had suddenly begun to collapse under the pressure of separatist forces. On the other, the fall of communism in the Eastern bloc in 1989 had generated widespread

disillusionment with Marxism-Leninism in general. As a result, the Yugoslav intelligentsia lost much of its political power, and also its hegemonic position in the social and cultural spheres. In such circumstances, argues Malešević, most Yugoslav intellectuals had no better alternative than to commit themselves to their respective ethnic and national communities in order to recapture some form of authority and maintain their social privileges. In Malešević's terms, from organic legislators they became organicistic interpreters.

Organicism is here understood as the worldview that conceives of the nation as an organic body in which individual lives are subordinated to the collective, in the same way as organs exist only to maintain and serve the whole organism (see § 3.3 and 3.4 about this conception of the nation). The shift from organic to organicistic worldviews, Malešević continues, was certainly facilitated by the dominance in Yugoslav society of the traditional and collective values associated with patriarchy, authoritarianism and rural life, which many intellectuals readily drew upon to glorify their own national communities. The shift from legislators to interpreters, on the other hand, was triggered by the fact that Marxist-Leninist doctrine had lost its appeal in the new world of post-communism. This forced intellectuals to give up their pretension to articulate universalist perspectives, and led them to redefine themselves as representatives of the particular prerogatives claimed by their own communities. Their commitment to a single community and a single tradition, he concludes, soon became absolute and exclusive, thus paving the way for the affirmation of ethno-nationalist ideologies.

Another insightful account of the ideological reversal undergone by the Yugoslav intelligentsia is Dragović-Soso's comprehensive study (2002) of the specific trajectory followed by Serbia's intellectual opposition. The purpose of her inquiry is "to explain why nationalist concerns came to overshadow all other aspects of [the opposition's] political agenda, leading many former dissidents to betray the humanist principles that were initially at the core of their activism" (2002: p. 2). The Serbian case is particularly salient because, as she explains,

[t]he Belgrade critical intelligentsia's choice of 'nation' over 'democracy' [...] shows how individuals whose self-defined social role is based on their defence of universal

principles can be seduced by particularist – in this case, nationalist – ideology. (2002: p. 2)

Through detailed analysis of the intellectual debates that took place in Serbia from the 1960s to the 1980s, Dragović-Soso concludes that many thinkers did not start off as nationalists, but came to that position due to structural and contingent reasons, primarily related to the political, social and economic problems facing Serbs in the 1980s.

As a matter of fact, during the 1960s and 1970s the Serbian critical intelligentsia had firmly, if unsuccessfully, defended political pluralism and civil rights. After the death of Tito in 1980, Dragović-Soso maintains, the possibility emerged for this group to establish alliances with intellectuals from the other republics, particularly Croatia and Slovenia, and thus form a common opposition front. Yet, all attempts made in this direction, such as the creation of a solidarity fund to protect civil activists, were systematically thwarted by the Yugoslav federal authorities. Furthermore, initiatives with an all-Yugoslav dimension were met with suspicion by key non-Serbian politicians, writers and academics, who believed that “they [the Serbs] were merely hiding their ‘Serbianism’ behind the facade of ‘Yugoslavism’” (Dragović-Soso, 2002: p. 172). In such a climate of institutional rigidity and professional distrust, Serbian critical intellectuals became increasingly frustrated, and hence more prone to be persuaded by particularist ideals.

In order to identify the reasons that led this movement to adopt distinct Serbian nationalist positions, Dragović-Soso focuses her attention on the most salient scholarly and historiographical debates of the 1980s, namely, the questioning of the dominant meta-narratives of the Titoist period, the controversies regarding political pluralism in the Yugoslav state, and the concern for the difficult situation of the Serbian minority in Albanian-majority Kosovo, and finds the latter to be the crucial one. She demonstrates how the Serbian intellectuals were particularly keen to amplify claims of Serbs being mistreated by Albanians, as well as to affirm Serbian national rights to Kosovo. As seen above (§ 2.1), these views were largely incorporated in the 1986 *Memorandum*, which then prompted prominent Slovenian intellectuals to publish a national programme which challenged the Serbian proposal of re-

centralisation arguing that Slovenia's interests would rather benefit from a loosening of ties between the republics.

The incorporation of these two documents into the political agendas of Slobodan Milošević and Milan Kučan, leaders of Serbia and Slovenia respectively, provoked a "spiral of radicalization" (Dragović-Soso, 2002: p. 257) that hastened the process of disintegration of Yugoslavia. Caught up in this spiral, Serbian intellectuals experienced a sort of national rejuvenation, coming to see themselves as *saviours of the nation*.⁶ This also explains why they failed to question Milošević's subsequent rise to power, although it involved manipulating state institutions and passing illegal amendments to the Constitution. Many of them, in fact, were ready to condone such actions because these reflected and legitimised their own stances on Serbian victimhood.

The third and last account of the Yugoslav intellectuals' nationalist turn is Dević's analysis (1998) of the social and professional space of the Yugoslav academics, which seeks to challenge commonplace assumptions about the supposed proneness of East European intellectuals to adhere to nationalist causes:

It is commonly accepted that the speeches and writings of nationalist academics and writers incited the (resurgence of) inter-ethnic hatreds in the minds of their attentive audiences. I would insist, however, that the 'nationalization' of academic knowledge in former Yugoslavia must be examined as a part of the disintegration of cultural and academic institutions of the federal state, rather than as an enchantment of East European and other 'peripheral' intellectuals with the idea of being the builders of their ethnic nations' states. (1998: p. 376)

How come, Dević asks, that in the 1980s so many members of an older generation of established sociologists, historians and writers steered away from all-Yugoslav economic, political and social issues, promoting instead the demands and remonstrations of specific ethnic groups? In her view, this shift was not driven by opportunism as much as by their propensity to define their professional and personal identities within the boundaries (also ethnic) of their republics. Such a propensity, in turn, was but the expression of their being embedded in a system that had become increasingly fragmented. Research institutions and the corresponding funding

⁶ This expression appears in the very title of Dragović-Soso's book.

agencies, in fact, were organised around what Dević calls *academic and cultural enclaves*, whose horizons largely corresponded to those of the individual republics in which they were situated.

In such circumstances, it is not surprising that many academics, writers and journalists began to actively participate in the public debate on the ‘civilisational differences’ existing between the Yugoslav republics, and on how aspects of ‘ethnic injustice’ could be corrected through political, administrative and constitutional reforms. As Dević notes, almost all intellectuals engaged in this kind of rhetoric in their public and media appearances, while those who advocated political pluralism and human rights became increasingly marginalised. Once again, such widespread politicisation should be interpreted “as a defense of the *parochial* professional and cultural establishments against the pressures for re-integration in the Yugoslav political, economic and cultural space” (1998: p. 402). In a similar vein, however, the regional political elites were interested to support only those aspects of the intellectuals’ work that could be strategically used to legitimise their own nationalist agendas. Hence, Dević concludes, the supposedly strong relationship between intellectuals and ethno-nationalist politics should rather be considered as “an ‘elective affinity’ between the interests of the political elites and the status aspirations of the academics” (1998: p. 376). The contingent and transitory nature of this alliance is apparent from the fact that already from 1993 ethno-nationalist intellectuals had started to withdraw from the political arena and the mass media, thus abdicating their public role.

Taken together, the three accounts exposed here provide a rather exhaustive overview of the structural and contingent reasons behind the unique trajectory of (post-)Yugoslav intellectuals from Yugoslavism to nationalism. Malešević and Dević identify the intellectuals’ organic links (Dević speaks of embeddedness) with the deteriorating and increasingly fragmented Yugoslav political and cultural system as the key element underlying their predisposition to adopt nationalist viewpoints. Dragović-Soso also takes into account structural factors, such as the imperviousness of the regime to early attempts by Serbian critical intellectuals to promote all-Yugoslav pluralistic agendas; her focus, however, is rather on contingent aspects, such as the involvement of prominent Serbian intellectuals in the debate on the Kosovo

question, and the subsequent ‘political fortune’ of their (predominantly nationalist) viewpoints on the matter.

A useful summary of the reasons why the Yugoslav intellectual elites were ready to dismiss the Yugoslav project in favour of ethno-nationalist views has been proposed by Privitera (1998). He identifies four main reasons, which also includes some of the aforementioned points made by Malešević, Dragović-Soso and Dević. First, as mentioned above (§ 2.1), the Yugoslav political-intellectual leadership was generally unprepared to cope with the growing pluralisation and to accommodate the demands of the regime’s constituencies. Secondly, the intellectual class soon realised that it could not maintain its power unless it turned to speak in the name of the emerging national communities. Thirdly, many intellectuals were keen on becoming leaders of their respective nations as a way to ‘refurbish’ their declining messianic role. Fourthly, the very ideal of democracy was largely re-appropriated in nationalist terms, that is, as the expression of the freedom of individual national groups.

2.3 Unfinished transition: contemporary challenges facing post-Yugoslav societies

In this section, I discuss the main characteristics of the post-Yugoslav transitional context, focusing in particular on issues of post-conflict reconciliation, democratisation, European integration and the social consequences of transition. The purpose of this overview is to illuminate those aspects of the context that are relevant to understand the contemporary significance of the nation in post-Yugoslav societies, and hence to clarify the social role(s) of intellectuals in that respect, which is the main goal of the present study.

2.3.1 Post-communist transition: an unfinished process

The dramatic social, political and economic transformations that took place in Eastern European countries from the late 1980s prompted the formulation – in the 1990s – of various *theories of transition*, intended both as analytical tools for explaining the situation and as blueprints for guiding the elites of those countries towards achieving specific objectives. The notion of transition, however, was not new to political science, as it had already been used in relation to the shift from authoritarianism to democracy that occurred in Southern American and Southern European countries in

the late 1960s and early 1970s. The transition theories elaborated at the time, particularly after the publication of an influential article by Rustow (1970), had marked a turn away from mainstream political science. Since their focus was on the micro-level of political action rather than on the macro-level of structural trends, they challenged the idea that the development of societies is fundamentally linear and ultimately predictable (being determined by structural trends), placing emphasis on uncertainty and unpredictability instead. Consequently, the purpose of analysis was retrospective rather than predictive.

The events of 1989 presented new and unique challenges to this established field of political research. Taken by surprise by the swiftness and relative peacefulness of the collapse of communism in Europe (Schöpflin, 1993), scholars responded mainly by seeking to identify commonalities among various transitional contexts, including Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and Latin America, thus developing an approach that has become known as *transitology* (Tórkés, 2000). As Jović (2010) points out, this involved a fundamental shift of paradigm, from *transition from* (authoritarianism) to *transition to* (democracy). While previous theories were predominantly retrospective, i.e. focused on explaining the past, the new theories of post-communist transition were anticipatory, i.e. forward-looking. Even more importantly, they were largely normative, in the sense that the collapse of communism was regarded as the beginning of a long age of certainty in which there were no alternatives to liberal democracy. Specifically, post-communist transition was envisaged as a positive, fixed and quasi-teleological process of modernisation with a predetermined goal, namely, integration into the global capitalist system of western liberal democracy (Buden, 2010; Galasińska & Galasiński, 2010; Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2009).

Within this paradigm, theoretical and empirical efforts were redirected from examining the past to constructing the future of evolving societies. Proponents of this approach, in fact, were primarily interested in identifying the objective factors that determine the course of democratisation. The purpose of the new theories of transition was to make reliable predictions about the prospects for democratisation of any given society in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, and also to advise local and international decision-makers on how to consolidate democracy through specific policies or actions. As Jović (2010) notes, most of these theories were built on the assumption

that democracy was not only the ‘natural’ end of political evolution (in a Darwinist sense), but also the product of collective action driven by rationally recognised interests. By constructing western liberal democracy as a universally desirable model of society, transition theorists implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) asserted that Eastern European countries were backward and needing to ‘catch up’ with Western Europe, and that their deflecting from the prescribed path towards liberal democracy would be irrational and counterproductive.

Within a decade of the fall of the Berlin Wall, however, this paradigm began to attract serious criticism. On the one hand, its normative character and claimed universality made it unfit to adapt, or even account for, the specificities of East European societies, which severely limited their explanatory and predictive power (Jović, 2010). On the other hand, the actual transition proved to be much less linear and smooth than it was expected. Processes of economic and political restructuring, in fact, appear to have been distorted by corruption, nepotism, and widespread reluctance to comply with the precepts of fair economic competition and democratic culture (Judt, 2007). Faced with the fact that ordinary people and leaders alike tended to act counter to the calculations of western economists and policy-makers, social scientists and analysts gradually relinquished the dominant notion of transition as a progressive pathway towards liberal democracy. Instead, they began to think of it as a condition marked by a high level of *social, political and economic uncertainty*, and which produces innovation only insofar as old values and interests can be articulated within the new normative framework (Burawoy & Verdery, 1999; Fraser, 1997). Furthermore, much more attention was paid to the micro-level, which enabled the identification of elements of continuity with the communist regimes and concrete forms of resistance to change (Galasińska & Galasiński, 2010).

The strongest criticism of the transition paradigm, however, came from those scholars who did not simply see it as a set of misplaced expectations about the development prospects of post-communist societies, but denounced it as the ideology underlying western hegemony over Eastern Europe. For instance, through an inquiry into the ideological function of metaphors in the dominant discourses of transition, Buden (2010) shows that a key feature of the post-communist condition is the repressive infantilisation of societies, in the sense that people inhabiting transitional contexts are

often treated by western agencies, as well as by their own rulers, as children who have to learn the fundamentals of democracy and market capitalism under the guidance of external (that is, western) authorities. For Buden, this relationship of power is best described as *tutelage*. Its force, he argues, lies in the fact that it relieves transitional subjects of all responsibilities connected both with the communist past and with the new challenges of post-communism itself, which explains why this ideology has been so easily and widely internalised.

In conclusion, the reality of post-communist transition has turned out to be far more laborious and complex than was anticipated by both scholars and policy-makers. In this light, one could say, following Jović (2010), that if the 1989 revolutions had marked a shift from *transition from* to *transition to*, the current disillusionment with the process of democratic consolidation and the capacity of the market economy to bring about prosperity, especially in South-Eastern European countries, justifies speaking of *unfinished transition*, that is, of transition as a sort of permanent state of political instability and economic uncertainty with no clear alternative in view. In the post-Yugoslav context such volatility is particularly acute, because societies are confronted with challenges related to the post-conflict situation, the processes of democratisation and European integration, and the current social and economic hardships. In the following, I discuss each of these aspects in detail.

2.3.2 The post-conflict situation

The disintegration of Yugoslavia was an extremely violent process. The Yugoslav wars collectively extended over a period of ten years, from 1991 until 2001, and involved several armed conflicts between the secessionist republics and the central Yugoslav state, as well as between distinct factions both within and across the borders of the newly independent states.⁷ Approximately two hundred thousand people were killed (although estimates vary quite considerably) and about two million civilians were forced to leave their homes. Moreover, the conflicts involved systematic recourse to violence against the civilian population (including systematic rape) usually motivated

⁷ Namely: the Ten-Day War in Slovenia (1991), the Croatian War of Independence (1991–1995), the Bosnian War (1992–1995), the Kosovo War (1998–1999), including the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia, the insurgency in the Preševo Valley (1999–2001), and the insurgency in the Republic of Macedonia (2001).

by strategies of ‘ethnic cleansing’, which resulted in a dramatic record of human rights violations, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Dealing with the long-term impact of atrocities and human rights violations is a common challenge in all post-conflict societies, but this is particularly the case in the former Yugoslavia, where a “decade of internecine war in the region [...] left behind not only a terrible legacy of human losses and material destruction, but also an unprecedented level of traumatization among the population at large, which contributed to a widespread and generalized sense of victimhood on all sides of the conflict” (Sisson, 2010: p. 172; in regard to Serbia see also Kanin, 2011). Furthermore, the politics of hatred and fear used by wartime leaders in order to achieve consensus, along with the direct involvement of large sectors of the population in the hostilities, have generated deep-seated rivalry, antagonisms and mistrust among members of the different communities. Additionally, the ethnic cleavages exacerbated and cemented by the conflicts have been largely carried into the institutional (and in some cases even constitutional) arrangements established through the peace settlements, which has further entrenched ethno-political divides either between majority and minority groups or, in the specific case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, among the country’s ‘constituent peoples’ (Bosniaks, Serbs, Croats).

The societal efforts to come to terms with the consequences of armed conflicts include a variety of practices, policies and institutional mechanisms aimed at establishing durable peace and facilitating reconciliation among the communities affected, especially in deeply divided societies. Due to the aforementioned reasons, in the post-Yugoslav context such efforts are particularly critical. The major challenges in this regard concern the effective operation of transitional justice, on the one hand, and the set of practices that are typically subsumed under the rubric of *dealing with the past*, on the other.⁸ Transitional justice is an approach to achieving justice in post-conflict societies, which aims to ensure accountability and obtain redress for war victims (for instance through reparations); its broader purpose is to promote civic trust, the rights of victims, and the democratic rule of law, by facilitating a process of collective healing through seeking out the truth (Subotić, 2009). Dealing with the past, on the

⁸ On the topic of how democratic societies cope with traumatic events in their past through the construction of historical narratives, see Heer, Manoschek, Pollak & Wodak, 2008; Wodak, 2006; Wodak & Martin, 2003.

other hand, includes activities and projects of fact-finding, raising awareness of the past, reconciliation and peace education (Franović, 2008).

In recent times, the transitional justice framework adopted in the post-Yugoslav context has been criticised as being inadequate to confront the collective political ideologies that made mass atrocities and human rights violations possible in the first place. Subotić, a prominent scholar in the field, has argued that in order to achieve full political accountability the existing framework should be extended beyond individual and state responsibility to include *societal* responsibility for past violence (Subotić, 2011b). This requires embracing a broader dealing-with-the-past approach to balance conflicting memories and competing historical narratives.

In addition to this, post-conflict reconciliation has also been established as a key requirement for the post-Yugoslav countries to join the European Union (in the scope of EU conditionality, see below). Specifically, candidate countries have been required to create institutions for ensuring the respect for and protection of minority rights, to commit to judicial prosecution of war crimes both domestically and internationally (i.e. through cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia), and finally to foster reconciliatory efforts by facilitating the return of refugees, by developing regional cooperation, by establishing truth and reconciliation commissions, and also through public apologies by political leaders (Petričušić & Blondel, 2012). Despite the great emphasis placed on reconciliation by the EU, however, the political divergence among post-Yugoslav countries in terms of advancement towards EU membership has seriously hampered discussion, to the point that in the course of the 2000s reconciliation has virtually disappeared from public debate, the media and the educational process (with the exception of a few high political figures and civil society organisations).

2.3.3 Democratisation and European integration

As mentioned above, the question of post-conflict reconciliation and transitional justice is deeply intertwined with processes of democratisation and European integration, which also shape the post-Yugoslav context in very complex and profound ways. Broadly speaking, the democratic transition of the successor states of Yugoslavia has followed a rather belated and uneven development. In fact, although the first multi-party parliamentary elections were held in each of the republics already

in 1990 (as the Yugoslav Federation was on the brink of dissolution), it was not until a decade later that most post-Yugoslav countries (with the notable exception of Slovenia) entered a comprehensive and substantial democratisation process. In Croatia and Serbia, this shift is best epitomised by the death of Franjo Tuđman in 1999 and the fall of Slobodan Milošević in 2000, which marked the end of authoritarianism and the advent of democracy in both countries (Ramet & Soberg, 2008). In Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, tentative democracy became possible only after the wars had ended and elections were resumed in 1996 and 2001, respectively. In Macedonia, democracy had begun to develop already in the aftermath of independence, but the process stalled in the late 1990s mainly due to growing tensions between the state and the sizeable Albanian community living in the country. Finally, Montenegro began democratising only after reformist forces came to power in the late 1990s.

In the period between 1996 and 2001, the state of democracy across the post-Yugoslav space improved quite rapidly, as earlier authoritarian or only formally democratic structures were replaced by more effective, accountable and legitimate public institutions, and new political elites emerged who shared (at least declaratively) a consensus on establishing fully consolidated democracies. However, differences in democratic performance among the post-Yugoslav societies are still quite marked even now. While Slovenia is regarded as most advanced and Croatia is quickly developing into a stable democratic state, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro are widely considered as fragile democracies. Viewed through the dominant paradigm of consolidation of democracy (Linz & Stepan, 1996), the type of democracy that exists in most post-Yugoslav countries is best described as unconsolidated (especially if compared to Western European countries and the USA). This approach, however, has been criticised as ill-suited to accounting for the deeply embedded constraints on democracy that exist in the post-Yugoslav region, which make consolidation (as traditionally understood) a particularly difficult goal to achieve. For example, Bieber and Ristić (2012) have proposed considering the post-Yugoslav case as a specific model of democracy with distinctive features, which they have termed *constrained democracy*.

Of course, developments in democracy and state-building in the post-Yugoslav context cannot be considered separately from the overarching process of European

integration, which has become widely recognized as the key strategy for achieving stability and prosperity in the region. European involvement in the ‘Western Balkans’ – as the former Yugoslavia has come to be referred to in European institutional discourse, being thereby reinvented politically as a region – began with the attempt to address the violent dissolution of Yugoslavia in the 1990s. As Belloni (2009) points out, it is precisely due to the disillusionment with the failures in managing the Yugoslav crisis, and later with the difficulties faced by international peacebuilding missions (especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina), that European integration has gradually emerged as a comprehensive strategy of conflict prevention and management. Thus, “since the end of the Kosovo war the goal of international intervention has shifted gradually from one of managing the consequences of the Yugoslav Succession Wars to that of integrating the Balkans into Europe” (Belloni, 2009: p. 319).

Within this framework, the EU has emerged as the central and most influential player, particularly since 2000 when it offered the entire South-Eastern European area the prospect of membership. Indeed, such a prospect has been the main driving force behind a number of reform activities, and has quickly become the key political priority for most (if not all) governments in the post-Yugoslav states. Moreover, in countries like Slovenia and Croatia, European identity has become a widely shared social value, and this process of identity convergence has further consolidated the European perspective of the two countries (Subotić, 2011a).

EU influence in the region has followed two main pathways, namely EU conditionality (whereby aspiring members states are required to align with EU standards in terms of democracy, rule of law, human rights, respect for and protection of minorities, and economic capacity, i.e. the so-called Copenhagen criteria) and the social learning approach (i.e. the long-term redefinition of interests and identities of domestic players). According to Belloni (2009), the EU enlargement approach has clear advantages but also limits. On the one hand, it provides a long-term and coherent vision for South-Eastern European countries, favours domestic ownership and institutional development, fosters stability and regional cooperation, and contributes to softening nationalist identities. On the other hand, however, the varying ‘absorption

capacity' of the EU has turned the goal of membership into a moving target, thus undermining its function as an incentive for domestic reform.

On the whole, the role held by the EU in the development of democracy in the post-Yugoslav context has been described as contradictory (Bieber & Ristić, 2012). If, on the one hand, EU conditionality has been effective in promoting legislative reform and driving party systems towards a more democratic form of government, on the other the impact of the EU's transformative capacity has been uneven across the region. This is reflected in the discrepancies that exist among the post-Yugoslav countries in terms of integration into the EU. Slovenia was the first to join the Union in 2004, while Croatia became a EU member-state only nine years later, in 2013. As of mid-2015, Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro have been granted the status of candidate countries, while Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo are still potential candidates, meaning that they have been promised the prospect of joining when they are ready (i.e. when they meet the aforementioned requirements).

The reasons behind such discrepancies in democratisation are multifarious and depend to a great extent on the specific situation of each country. According to contemporary scholarship, two broad factors that help account for these differences are the poor or contested legitimacy of domestic governments, on the one hand, and the challenge of diversity management, on the other. As Bieber (2011) claims, the ineffectiveness of EU-driven state-building in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Kosovo partly depends on the fact that these are *minimalist states*, i.e. their political orders are not based on a consensual arrangement and therefore lack popular legitimacy. This is reflected in the widespread distrust of public administration and formal institutions that affects most post-Yugoslav societies (Marčić, 2015). The other factor mentioned above concerns the difficulties arising from the need to accommodate ethno-national, religious and cultural pluralism within the framework of liberal democracy. In so diverse (and often divided) societies such as the post-Yugoslav ones, in fact, this challenge is particularly acute, as it involves elaborating mechanisms and policies for managing ethnic relations, for protecting minorities, as well as for preventing and managing crisis and conflict (Žagar, 2008). The critical interplay of these two factors is most evident in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, whose unique political system, based on power-sharing among ethnic elites (of the three 'constituent peoples', i.e.

Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats), is both highly dysfunctional in terms of democratic performance and suffers from the distrust and disaffection of large sectors of the citizenry.

2.3.4 Transition and its (social) discontents

As seen above, the interrelated processes of post-conflict reconciliation, democratisation and European integration shape the post-Yugoslav context in profound and distinctive ways. The challenges connected with these processes are further exacerbated by the climate of social instability and economic insecurity that has characterised most post-Yugoslav societies since the beginning of transition, and which has become particularly acute in recent years also due to the global economic and financial crisis.

The wars of the 1990s were especially detrimental for the economies of the post-Yugoslav region. In the aftermath of the Yugoslav breakup, the economic situation in the seceding states was therefore extremely precarious: economic activity had fallen, while inflation and unemployment had reached alarming rates. Economic recovery resumed only in the 2000s, when efforts at rebuilding production capabilities and restoring trade links began to yield the desired results. The major challenges to economic development, however, came from the transformation of the socialist planned economy into a market-oriented economy. As soon as the process started, income disparities among the population began to grow considerably. This, in combination with rapid economic decline, the chronic lack of employment opportunities, and the radical transformation of the structure of social capital, contributed to severe social stratification, and brought about the spreading of poverty (Stambolieva, 2011). Indeed, economic restructuring was carried out at enormous social costs for the majority of the population, who experienced a drastic and long-term fall in living standards (Lazić, 2011).

Among the above-mentioned consequences of economic transition, social stratification is probably the one that has left the deepest mark on contemporary post-Yugoslav societies. Since the beginning of economic restructuring, in fact, income disparity has continued to grow, leading to an ever-widening gap between the small, rich and powerful elites and the impoverished masses (Lazić, 2011). Moreover, this process has unfolded in an extremely unruly way, leaving most people at the mercy of

the arbitrary use (and abuse) of power by public authorities and private employers. This is best captured in the popular distinction between *winner*s and *loser*s of *transition*, which emphasises the aleatory and unpredictable nature of socio-economic development in transitional contexts, particularly in regard to the labour market. As Stambolieva remarks, “unless a person landed on the ‘winning’ side in the process of capital transformation and managed to secure other sources of income, apart from the one obtained from the employment status, an unemployed person and their family were at a high risk of poverty” (2011: p. 356).

Such concentration of wealth in the hands of a few occurred at an unusual speed and scale because it did not involve gradual accumulation of newly created value, but rather the predatory appropriation of existing state and collective property (Lazić, 2011). As a matter of fact, in most post-Yugoslav countries the most frequent process of privatisation of formerly socially owned enterprises turned out to be through management take-over, as a result of which a large number of workers were stripped of their ownership rights, while some even lost their jobs (Stambolieva, 2011). According to Bartlett (2008), the socially adverse consequences of privatisation have been particularly severe in cases in which the privatisation process has led to the monopolisation of the market and where the institutions of public accountability have been weakened by conflicts and slow democratisation. Indeed, the perpetuation of economic instability, coupled with the lack of reforms and investments, have strained the financial viability of the entire social security structures inherited from Yugoslavia. Consequently, depending on the specific country, smaller or larger parts of the population, particularly those belonging to vulnerable groups (such as the Roma), have become victims of social exclusion (Stambolieva, 2011).

The chronic inability of governments to counteract, or at least mitigate, the detrimental consequences of transition has led to rising social discontent and mobilisation. In recent years, such discontent has sparked a wave of protests across the post-Yugoslav space (and also in other parts of South-Eastern Europe), over a range of issues including the poor provision and privatisation of welfare and public utilities, poverty and social exclusion, corruption, bureaucratic inefficiency, environmental concerns, and also authoritarian tendencies. Although many protests have been triggered by tangible issues, they have frequently served as platforms to

convey broader social and political dissatisfaction, and to advance demands for fundamental political and social transformation. A clear illustration of this is the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 2013, the government's failure to resolve a problem related to the allocation of identification numbers to citizens triggered unrest across the country. One year later, as workers from several factories which had been privatised and then gone bankrupt united to demand action over their jobs, unpaid salaries and pensions, the movement resumed its momentum. Students, political activists and ordinary citizens joined the workers' protests countrywide and organised popular assemblies (plenums) calling for the resignation of the government and demanding concrete measures against corruption, and social and economic injustice.

In conclusion, the contemporary post-Yugoslav context is characterised by a high degree of uncertainty and volatility in the social, economic and political spheres. Issues of post-conflict reconciliation, democratisation, European integration and economic restructuring continue to affect post-Yugoslav societies in complex ways that are hard to understand and very difficult to manage. In such a climate, the categories of nation and national identity seem to acquire new meanings, as they constitute powerful resources that people can draw on to cope with the hardships of everyday life, and which political elites can use to mobilise the masses and secure consensus (the place and significance of the nation in the contemporary world, and in the post-Yugoslav area specifically, are discussed in more detail in § 3.3.2). In this respect, the relationship between post-Yugoslav intellectuals and their own national communities has probably undergone significant change since the 'mass conversion' to ethno-nationalism that reached its peak in the early 1990s, as Yugoslavia was disintegrating. Shedding light on the new ways in which contemporary post-Yugoslav intellectuals position themselves in relation to the nation and engage in nation-building discourses is precisely the objective of the present investigation.

3. Intellectuals and nation-building: towards an interdisciplinary critical discourse-analytical approach

In this chapter, I elaborate an interdisciplinary and context-specific approach to the analysis of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation in public discourse. I begin by elucidating the main principles and methods adopted in the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) to critical discourse studies (CDS), and by reviewing relevant DHA research on discourse and national identity (§ 3.1). Then, I discuss the nature of intellectual practice and the ‘intellectual condition’ drawing on prominent theories and accounts (§ 3.2). Subsequently, I examine the relationship between intellectuals and nation-building practices, both historically and in the contemporary world, developing the notion of *spokespersonship for the nation* (§ 3.3). In the following section (§ 3.4), I explore the representation of the nation in public discourse, identifying a range of salient macro-topics. Finally, I draw together all these insights to elaborate a comprehensive framework to study the concrete manifestations of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation in public discourse (§ 3.5).

3.1 The Discourse-Historical Approach: principles, methods and existing research on discourse and national identity

In order to elaborate a viable discourse-analytical approach to intellectual spokespersonship for the nation in media discourse, it is necessary to review the main ontological and epistemological assumptions of critical discourse studies, and to look closely at how the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) incorporates these premises within a general framework for linguistic analysis. It is worth pointing out, as an opening remark, that critical discourse studies as a field of research includes a variety of strands and approaches, which share some (though not all) fundamental assumptions but differ in how these are translated into methodological approaches and concrete analytical tools.

3.1.1 Critical discourse studies: key notions and principles

Although different approaches in CDS conceptualise discourse in slightly divergent ways, there is general agreement that discourse is to be conceived as social practice (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997), in the sense that discourse, far from being a mere ‘reflection’ of reality, is always materialised and has therefore tangible effects upon social structures. Hence, discourse can contribute to social continuity as well as social change. In other words, discourse is conceived of as a set of semiotic practices that are both socially determined and socially constitutive (Fairclough, 2001). This means that there exists a dialectical relationship between discourse and the situations, institutions and social structures in which it is embedded (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). For instance, according to van Leeuwen (2008) discourse is best understood in terms of the recontextualisation of social practices.

Furthermore, discourse is seen as a way of constructing aspects of the world from a particular perspective that can be related to the different positions of social groups within a social structure (Fairclough, 1995, 2009). The underlying assumption is that discourse is inherently dialogical, that is, always oriented towards what others have said or written in other times and places. In order to capture the interplay of different and often opposing discourses, also at the textual level, critical discourse studies have drawn on Bakhtin’s notion of heteroglossia (1981) to develop the concepts of intertextuality and interdiscursivity. Both notions refer to the fact that texts and discourses are interconnected and overlap, as they always relate to other texts or discourses, in the past as well as in the present (Wodak & Weiss, 2005). Strictly connected with these is the notion of entextualisation as “the process by means of which discourses are [...] decontextualised and metadiscursively recontextualised, so that they become a new discourse associated to a new context and accompanied by a particular metadiscourse which provides a sort of ‘preferred reading’ for the discourse” (Blommaert, 2005: p. 47).

Since discourse is the medium in which social structures and practices are not only established, but also constantly negotiated and often contested by social agents, the relationship between discourse and power cannot but occupy a central place in critical discourse studies. Broadly speaking, language and power are inescapably bound together, insofar as language expresses power and is invariably involved whenever

power is challenged or appropriated (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Thus, discourse is inevitably shaped by power relations, but it may also affect them in various ways (Fairclough, 2001). As Lukes (2005) has argued, power is relational and multi-dimensional, and the high complexity of the nexus between discourse and power is clearly reflected in the variety of ways in which this relationship has been linguistically defined by prominent scholars: Fairclough (2001) has spoken of power in and behind discourse, Wodak (1996, 2011) has examined power in, over and of discourse, Holzschleiter (2011) has focused on power both in and of discourse, while van Dijk (1993, 1996) has foregrounded the power struggle involved in obtaining access to discourse. The overarching idea behind these rather subtle distinctions is that discursive practices, just like material practices, can be instrumental in the creation and reproduction of power relations in society (see also Jäger & Maier, 2009; Lemke, 1995; Wodak, 2011).

In this light, critical discourse analysts are well aware that social actors may engage in discursive practices that contribute to establishing, maintaining or reinforcing unequal and oppressive power relations among individuals and social groups. Discourses, thus, sustain certain ideologies, broadly understood as systems of social domination grounded in particular beliefs, values and attitudes. In critical discourse studies, ideology has been defined in manifold ways (see Wodak, 2013). These range from narrow views of ideology as the systematic process whereby existing unjust power arrangements become seen as natural and commonsensical (Fairclough, 2001) to broader conceptions that conceive of ideologies (in the plural) as coherent and relatively stable sets of values or beliefs (Wodak & Meyer, 2009) or as basic representations of social groups (van Dijk, 2001). In any case, ideology is linked with power and domination in two fundamental ways: first, ideologies always work to favour some and disadvantage others, thus exhibiting directionality (Purvis & Hunt, 1993); second, ideologies can help maintain unequal power relations between social agents by obfuscating or dissimulating the real nature of those relations, particularly in and through discourse.

The commitment of critical discourse scholars to investigate how language is used to reproduce and legitimise forms of power that sustain social inequality, injustice and domination, and how powerless groups and individuals may discursively resist them

(Wodak & Meyer, 2009), is at the core of the discipline's critical vocation (see Forchtner, 2011). Moreover, it has been argued (Chilton, Tian *et al.*, 2010) that critique involves two additional aspects: firstly, critical discourse analysts are expected to be open about their ethical standpoints and take responsibility for the social impact of their work; secondly, self-reflexivity is greatly encouraged, in the sense that the discourse produced by critical discourse analysts should itself be the object of critical scrutiny. Such a far-reaching conception of critique poses significant challenges to scholarship, and indeed the capacity of critical discourse studies to live up to its own critical commitment has been called into question. For instance, Billig has pointed out cases of intra-discipline inconsistency (2008) and the risk that the growing institutionalisation of critical discourse analysis may result in the emergence of a 'critical orthodoxy' (2003). Moreover, Sayer (2006, 2011) has argued that critical discourse studies can hardly be critical unless research focuses on how discourses impute and interpret moral significance, and how this relates to human well-being and flourishing.

3.1.2 The Discourse-Historical Approach

Among the existing approaches to CDS, the present study is largely based on the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) elaborated by Wodak and Reisigl (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009; Wodak, 2011). According to its proponents, the DHA as a research strategy has the following general characteristics: it allows for the elaboration of analytical frameworks that are specifically tailored to the research problem (problem-orientation) and the broader context in which the latter is embedded (context-specificity); it is suited to exploring a very wide range of social practices, discourse genres, as well as intertextual and interdiscursive relationships; it is open to theoretical and conceptual contributions from other areas of research in order to better understand the phenomenon under investigation; finally, it encourages researchers to make their findings available both to practitioners in the relevant field and to the general public.

In the light of its clear commitment to eclecticism, flexibility and interdisciplinarity, the DHA appears to be very well equipped to inform the present research project. In addition to this, there are also more specific reasons for choosing this particular approach to critical discourse analysis over others. One is that a careful examination of the ways in which post-Yugoslav public intellectuals perform the role of

spokespersons for the nation requires taking into account the broader socio-political and historical background that characterises the post-Yugoslav context (which has been discussed in Chapter 2). In this regard, not only does the DHA allow researchers to incorporate aspects of the broader context in their investigation, but it explicitly focuses, as its name suggests, on the historical and socio-political context as a fundamental dimension of analysis (see below: the four-level concept of context elaborated within the DHA). The other reason is that topics related to nation-building and national identities are at the centre of the DHA research agenda, as attested by the seminal research on the discursive construction of Austrian national identity conducted by Wodak *et al.* (2009), upon which this study draws extensively.

As stated above, the notions of power, ideology and critique occupy a central place in critical discourse studies. The DHA also considers these notions as constitutive of its own approach, and conceptualises them in specific ways. With regard to the relationship between discourse and power, the DHA assumes that power, which relates to asymmetric relationships between different social actors, is constantly legitimised and de-legitimised in discourse. Therefore, the analyst is expected to approach texts as potential sites of struggle, looking for linguistic traces of ongoing ideological confrontations and fights for dominance and hegemony. Furthermore, the nature of the social occasion in which a certain text is produced and consumed should also be explored, particularly in terms of the constraints and affordances related to specific genres, and how access to the text is regulated across various public spheres. According to the DHA, the establishment and reproduction of unequal power relations through discourse is a key expression of ideology. Ideology is defined as “an (often) one-sided perspective or world view composed of related mental representations, convictions, opinions, attitudes and evaluations, which is shared by members of a specific social group” (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009: p. 88).

The reason why scholars working in the DHA are particularly concerned with how language and other semiotic practices sustain and reproduce certain ideologies across social spheres and institutions is that ideologies function as a means of transforming power relations, for instance, by framing hegemonic identity narratives or through gate-keeping. Thus, the DHA seeks to demystify the ideological character of specific discourses by unveiling how language is used to establish, perpetuate or contest

various forms of dominance. Doing critique, according to the DHA, consists precisely in making explicit the implicit relationship between discourse, power and ideology. More specifically, the very notion of critique has been systematically conceptualised into three interrelated aspects: i) discourse-immanent critique, which aims to detect contradictions and inconsistencies at the textual level; ii) socio-diagnostic critique, which involves drawing on theoretical and contextual knowledge to interpret discursive practices and unveil their potentially manipulative character; iii) prospective critique, which consists of drawing on analytical findings to suggest ways to improve communication in relevant areas of social life.

As an established approach to critical discourse analysis, the DHA has elaborated a set of principles and concepts intended to guide the analytical process. To begin with, discourse is defined as a cluster of context-dependent semiotic practices related to a macro-topic (discourse *about* or *on* a macro-topic X) and situated within specific fields of social action. Moreover, it is seen as being linked to argumentation in the sense of conferring validity on certain truth or normative claims upheld by various social actors with different perspectives. Since discourses never occur in isolation, but are in fact dynamic and hybrid entities open to constant reinterpretation and recontextualisation, the DHA also embraces intertextuality and interdiscursivity (discussed above) as key analytical principles. Furthermore, the notion that texts and discourses are always linked to other texts and discourses, both in the past and in the present, requires treating context as a specific analytical category. According to the DHA, context includes four different levels: i) the immediate co-text and co-discourse; ii) the intertextual and interdiscursive relationship existing between utterances, texts, genres and discourses; iii) the extralinguistic social variables and institutional frames; iv) the broader socio-political and historical context. Such a comprehensive notion of context, which stresses the interconnectedness of discursive practices and extra-linguistic social structures, enables the DHA to explore all four levels in a recursive manner on the basis of the principle of triangulation (see Cicourel, 1969), which implies taking into account a whole range of empirical observations, theories, methods, as well as background information, in order to gain a better understanding of the discursive events at hand and also as a bias-reduction strategy.

As stated above, the DHA is inherently interdisciplinary, due to its propensity to integrate theoretical contributions from other disciplines in order to produce a synthesis of conceptual tools that is tailored to the specific problems under investigation. Indeed, interdisciplinarity, theoretical openness and conceptual pragmatism are key characteristics of critical discourse studies in general (Weiss & Wodak, 2003), to the point that it is practically impossible to identify a uniform theoretical foundation being used consistently within critical discourse analysis (Meyer, 2001). Such eclecticism and lack of systematicity may appear to be a weakness, but it has been argued that it is precisely to this plurality of theory and methodology that critical discourse studies owes its dynamic and productive character (Weiss & Wodak, 2003). Proponents of the DHA have developed a rather flexible interface with social theory, distinguishing between ‘grand theories’, which can serve as a foundation, and ‘middle-range theories’, which may provide conceptual tools that are better suited to analyse specific discursive events (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009). Furthermore, the intrinsically abductive character of research, i.e. the fact that empirical findings necessarily feed back into theory as the research proceeds, has been explicitly acknowledged.

3.1.3 The DHA and the study of the discursive construction of national identities

Much research grounded in the DHA has been devoted to investigating the relationship between discourse, politics and identity. In particular, the investigation of the role of discourse in the formation and reproduction of national and supranational (especially European) identities has emerged as a prominent research programme, following the seminal research conducted by Wodak *et al.* (2009) on the construction of Austrian national identity in public, semi-public and quasi-private discursive contexts. The theoretical framework and methodological approach elaborated in that study have laid the foundations for subsequent DHA-based research in the field, which encompasses an increasing variety of social, cultural and institutional contexts. The case studies collected by Kovács and Wodak (2003), for instance, analyse how public debates on neutrality vs. NATO accession in Austria and Hungary have contributed to shaping national identities, focusing in particular on argumentation strategies based on ‘historicising ways of thinking’ about the nation. More recently, Unger (2013) has investigated the discursive construction of the Scots language, both in institutional settings (through the analysis of educational policies, political debates

and official websites) and in discussions among ordinary people (through focus groups).

The discursive construction of European identity/ies, in particular, occupies a central place in DHA-based research on identity and discourse. The cornerstones of a coherent research agenda in this domain have been laid out by Wodak and Weiss (2005), who have proposed a comprehensive framework that focuses on the interplay of the ideational, organisational and geographical dimensions in discourses on Europe, identifies salient forms of legitimising the political construction of the EU and its enlargement, and also defines areas for future research from historical, communication, and participation/representation perspectives. This framework is largely based on Weiss' inquiry (2002) into legitimation and representation strategies in German and French political speeches on Europe.

Another fundamental contribution to this field of study is Krzyżanowski's study (2010) of the role of social and political discourses in the construction of Europeanness in supranational and national contexts, as well as in regard to discourses of migrants. His findings substantiate the notion that that European identities, rather than being imposed from top-down, are constantly being (re)constructed and recontextualised in response to shifting social and political backgrounds. Moreover, his analysis of media discourse on multilingualism in the EU shows how diverging conceptualisations of Europe inevitably raise issues of national vs. supranational interests, and how the media play a key role in portraying such duality. Drawing on Krzyżanowski's insights, Boukala (2013) examines whether the rhetoric employed by Greek print media contributes to the creation of a common European identity by constructing Muslims as Europe's common 'Other' (see also Wodak & Boukala, 2014, 2015).

Like the above-mentioned research work, the present study also draws extensively on Wodak *et al.*'s (2009) original approach, particularly in terms of conceptual assumptions, analytical methods and empirical findings. Firstly, it shares the following general assumptions: i) nations are primarily mental constructs, in the sense that they exist as discrete political communities in the imagination of their members; ii) national identity includes a set of dispositions, attitudes and conventions that are largely internalised through socialisation (see Pickel's notion of *national habitus* in §

3.3.2); and iii) nationhood as a form of social identity is produced, transformed and dismantled through discourse (2009: pp. 3-4). Secondly, it follows the proposed categorisation of discursive macro-strategies employed in the discursive formation of national identity, which distinguishes between constructive strategies, strategies of perpetuation (with strategies of justification as a special subgroup), strategies of transformation, and dismantling or destructive strategies (2009: pp. 31-33); in particular, it adopts the proposed typology of specific strategies pertaining to each macro-strategy (e.g. autonomisation/heteronomisation, singularisation/unification, assimilation/dissimilation, inclusion/exclusion, just to mention some), which I integrate into my own analytical approach (this is detailed in § 3.5 below). Thirdly, it builds on concrete empirical findings regarding the Austrian case to elaborate a comprehensive list of macro-topics that are relevant to the discursive representation of the nation in general (see § 3.4 below).

In conclusion, the DHA enables researchers elaborate analytical frameworks that are both grounded in social theory and, at the same time, robustly problem-oriented and context-specific. Therefore, the elaboration of a DHA-based approach to the study of the interplay of intellectual activity and nation-building practices in the post-Yugoslav context requires bringing together knowledge of the post-Yugoslav context, on the one hand, and theoretical insights into the relationship between intellectuals, public discourse, and the nation-building process. The main aspects of the post-Yugoslav context (specifically the fourth level, i.e. the socio-political and historical context) have been outlined in Chapter 2. In the following two sections (§ 3.2 and 3.3) I shall discuss the relationship between intellectual practice and discourse, and the role of intellectuals vis-à-vis nation-building processes.

3.2 Intellectuals and discourse: between estrangement and social spokespersonship

Intellectuals are an elusive social category. They escape easy definition, perhaps precisely because defining the world is what intellectual activity itself is ultimately about. Such *capacity to define* is commonly understood as the power of intellectuals to articulate, reproduce and possibly change salient aspects of the social world, primarily through the skilled use of language in public communication. This suggests that there may be something specific about how intellectuals communicate which lends validity

and credence to what they say or write. The purpose of this section is to elucidate this idea by reviewing and discussing prominent conceptions of ‘the intellectual’, in order to define what is specific about intellectual activity that distinguishes it from other kinds of social practices.

A useful entry-point to discuss the nature of intellectual activity is the paradox of self-definition hinted at above. As Bauman (1987) noted, virtually any conceivable definition of the intellectual is inescapably a self-definition. The idea is that what makes somebody an intellectual is primarily the capacity to define, or rather to impose definitions onto, certain aspects of the social world, including one’s own place in it. However, this power would be void if the intellectual did not presuppose that he or she is somehow entitled to wield it. Thus, it could be argued, drawing on Habermas (1987), that intellectual activity rests on an implicit, presupposed *claim to rightness*, i.e. the claim to have the right to perform acts of defining.

A seminal theory of the intellectual is the one proposed by Gramsci (Gramsci, Hoare & Nowell-Smith, 1971). Before Gramsci, classical Marxism had theorised the historical mission of the proletariat to overthrow the ruling class, as underpinned by the ‘iron laws’ of economics. However, as the actual working class proved unable to live up to it, Marxist intellectuals profited themselves as the vanguard and arrogated to themselves the task of awakening the proletariat’s self-consciousness. Gramsci’s theory dispels the implicit ambiguity of this stance by reclaiming the centrality of intellectuals to the class struggle. Social domination, he argues, rests on cultural hegemony, that is, the capacity of imposing a certain worldview onto an entire society in order to secure consent. Class struggle, therefore, takes place primarily in the domain of culture, where different social blocs strive to impose their worldviews. They do so through organic intellectuals, that is, intellectuals who, unlike traditional ones, are explicitly and consciously committed to directing the ideas and the aspirations of the social class from which they emerged. The final triumph of communism, therefore, is predicated on the ability of the subjugated classes to express themselves culturally and intellectually and thus achieve cultural hegemony.⁹

⁹ Gramsci’s theory lies at the basis of Cultural Political Economy, an approach to critical studies in heterodox economics and political economy elaborated by Jessop and Sum (Sum & Jessop, 2010, 2012; Jessop & Sum, 2010, 2012).

Echoing Gramsci, Mannheim's sociology of knowledge rests on the assumption that all forms of social and political knowledge originate in, and are motivated by, the will of particular social groups to make their worldview universal and thus achieve power and recognition (Mannheim, 1952). The partisan character of all knowledges, however, does not prevent the possibility of their intellectual synthesis. But this can be achieved only by a social stratum that is relatively free from the constraints of class affiliation: a free-floating intelligentsia, which is neither proletarian nor bourgeois (Mannheim, 1936). Not surprisingly, the idea that intellectuals could rise above their material interests and social determinations aroused much (intellectual) suspicion. In response to it, the critical sociology of intellectuals elaborated by Gouldner (1979) reasserted that the discourse of intellectuals is intrinsically affected by the interests and power aspirations of those who produce it. Hence, self-reflexivity becomes imperative: knowledge producers themselves must be subjected to critical scrutiny or, as Gouldner put it, the camera must be focused on the camera operator (1979: p. 9).

The interconnectedness of power, knowledge and truth is also at the core of Foucault's theory of power/knowledge (Foucault, 1972; Foucault & Gordon, 1980), which claims that people are subjected to the production of truth through power, and cannot exercise power but through the production of truth. Every society, Foucault claims, has its own regime of truth, which determines what kinds of discourses are generally taken to be true, what procedures should govern the acquisition and dissemination of truth, and what the status of the people who perform these tasks is. Therefore, intellectuals are 'produced' as specific and increasingly specialised positions within given regimes of truth, and as such are unable to fulfil the traditional role ascribed to them, i.e. that of disclosing and bearing universal truths and values. Nonetheless, Foucault (1980) maintains, it is precisely by virtue of their specificity that intellectuals can wage a (local) struggle against hegemonic forms of power/knowledge. The purpose of such struggle is not to emancipate truth from power, which is an illusion (a chimera), but to detach specific truths, and the corresponding subjugated knowledges, from present forms of hegemony. It is in this sense that intellectual activity can still aspire to take on some sort of universal significance.

The relationship between power and knowledge is also central to the economy of practice elaborated by Bourdieu (1991) in order to account for the unequal distribution

of different forms of power across society. His theory conceives the social world as a multi-dimensional space separated into relatively autonomous fields, or metaphorical markets, in which different kinds of capital – economic, cultural, symbolic, linguistic – are at stake. The amounts of different types of capital possessed by individuals objectively determine their social position, that is, their “actual or potential powers in different fields and the chances of access to the specific profits they procure” (1991: p. 231). The interaction between each person’s social position and their *habitus*, i.e. the set of embodied dispositions, values and expectations that each social group acquires through everyday life experiences, is what determines how people behave socially.

When it comes to intellectuals as a social group, it can be argued that the type of capital that chiefly determines their social position is symbolic capital. According to Bourdieu, the unequal distribution of symbolic capital (in terms of prestige, reputation and fame) underlies the emergence of what he calls *symbolic power*. This form of power consists of the ability to shape social reality by modifying the representations that social actors have of it, which is obtained through the imposition of *principles of di-vision* that actualise certain visions of the world and at the same time legitimise certain social divisions. In the case of specialists, i.e. intellectuals, the key distinction that is invoked in order to secure a monopoly of knowledge is that between sacred and profane knowledge. It is precisely by imposing this kind of division, usually by means of an elevated style of expression, that intellectuals are able to authorise themselves as legitimate repositories and producers of valid knowledge.

The idea that the tension between sacred and profane is central to intellectual activity also lies at the basis of the categorisation of intellectuals proposed by Giesen (2011), which identifies four ideal types: the cosmopolitan ascetic, the enlightened legislator, the revolutionary and the voice of traumatic memory. The cosmopolitan ascetic reflects the position of intellectuals in medieval feudal Europe, whose command of written Latin allowed them to participate in a translocal high culture from which common people were totally excluded; the enlightened legislator corresponds to the figure of the Enlightenment intellectual, who, unlike medieval ascetics, pursued the active transformation of the world in the name of reason and human progress; the revolutionary is the type of intellectual that originated in the late eighteenth century, with the rise of movements seeking democratic participation, civil rights and national

independence (see § 3.3.1 below); lastly, the intellectual as voice of traumatic memory reflects the central place that the remembrance of past collective trauma occupies in contemporary discourses of national identity (see § 3.4 in this regard).

Giesen's typology builds on and extends Bauman's (1987) renowned metaphorical characterisation of the intellectual in terms of the dichotomy of 'legislator *versus* interpreter'. The most conspicuous attribute of modernity, Bauman argues (drawing on Foucault), is the *power/knowledge syndrome*, i.e. the synergy, inaugurated with the Enlightenment, between the emergence of the bureaucratic state and the establishment of an autonomous intellectual discourse. Modern intellectuals serve the purposes of the modern state by acting as legislators: they enforce the social order by virtue of their superior knowledge of the world and their command of the procedures which assure the attainment of truth. In recent times, however, the coupling between intellectual discourse and the state has begun to dissolve. As a result, a world-view has emerged which admits an unlimited number of models of orders (not just one) and which rejects the idea that practices can be validated by knowledge criteria that are external to the particular tradition or community of meaning that generated those practices. In this state of affairs, usually referred to as post-modernity, the intellectual can only act as interpreter: he or she acquires the function of translating statements and propositions from one system of knowledge to another, in order to minimise the distortion of meaning in the process of communication.

The core idea of Bauman's theory is that intellectual activity, once instrumental to the establishment of the modern state, has become a resource for various communities to achieve social recognition. In epistemological terms, this corresponds to the historical shift from the positivist (and liberal) ideal of value-neutral knowledge to a variety of standpoint epistemologies, which rest on the assumption that scientific knowledge is necessarily position-bound, partial and partisan, and that objectivity can be attained only by assuming a certain social standpoint, that which guarantees a 'better vision'. What primarily differentiates standpoint theories is, obviously, the chosen standpoint. For classical Marxism (which, however, did not define itself as a standpoint theory) it was the proletariat. Feminist theories look at social reality, as it were, from the position of (subordinated) women (see for instance Haraway, 1988). Black studies and queer theory advocate forms of knowledge stemming from the perspective of black

and queer people, respectively. Whether grounded in class, ethnicity, gender or sexuality, standpoint theories are similar in that they conceive of intellectual and scientific activity as being bound to a specific standpoint, which is considered to be the privileged position from which social change and emancipation can be effectively articulated and concretely pursued.

Although the theories and approaches exposed so far emphasise different aspects of intellectual activity and are thus difficult to reconcile, it is possible to identify an element that is common to most of them. In one way or another, most accounts depict the ‘intellectual condition’ as a social (and arguably also psychological) state characterised by a constant tension between the pretension to speak from a disinterested vantage point, thus achieving *critical distance* from their object of analysis, and the inevitably socially determined character of any such endeavour. In other words, intellectuals appear to be caught in a tension between detachedness and situatedness that is inherent to their position in society.

3.2.1 Pels’ theory of intellectual spokespersonship

The theory of intellectual spokespersonship elaborated by Pels (2000) focuses precisely on this fundamental tension, arguing that it derives from the dual nature of social representation. Social representation is the process whereby social entities, such as collectivities, relationships, interests, values, norms and so forth, are ‘activated’ and ‘performed’, that is, made to matter in social life (see Hall, 1997). According to Pels, this process requires *spokespersons*, i.e. agents who are legitimised or claim the authority to ‘speak for’ specific social entities. Any act of spokespersonship, Pels argues, is intrinsically ambiguous, because it involves a distancing from whom or what is being represented, as social entities “must first be reduced to (or seduced into) silence before they can effectively be spoken for” (2000: p. 2). This means that social representation involves the constant danger that spokespersons might recontextualise the position, and thus appropriate the power, of the subjects that they represent, so that ultimately “all representative acts are crucially implicated in struggles over trustworthiness and legitimacy” (2000: p. 2).¹⁰

¹⁰ The main objective of Pels’ inquiry is to identify instances of this kind of appropriation in sociological discourse, focusing in particular on prominent approaches such as Marxism, Mannheim’s sociology of knowledge, and standpoint epistemologies in general.

Pels regards intellectuals as a particular kind of spokespersons, whose inherent tension between detachedness and situatedness arises from the specific way in which they tend to engage in social representation. As discussed above, the intellectual condition has traditionally been associated with a state of marginalization from the broader society. According to Pels, such state has often been

a source of considerable epistemic pride, in so far as intellectuals have often presumed the existence of a structural relationship between their generic distanciation and their chances of attaining a broader, less distorted, more objective or just view of the social world. (2000: pp. ix-x)

In other words, intellectuals' assumed epistemic advantage over the rest of society, i.e. their capacity to think critically and go beyond the horizons of common sense, appears to be tied to some form of conscious withdrawal from society, which is well illustrated by the clichéd metaphor of the ivory tower. However, such alienation from the social world is likely to create great resentment and anxiety. In order to overcome this condition, Pels maintains, intellectuals have often sought to reclaim a sense of belonging to society (i.e. a sense of situatedness) by publicly endorsing certain social ideals, political causes or larger interests. In doing so, they have assumed the role of spokespersons, lending their voice, as it were, to a variety of *constituencies* (as Pels calls them), e.g. History, the Working Class, the Nation, Culture, Science, Reason, Justice, but also specific political parties, movements, campaigns and so forth.

Hence, according to this theory, what defines intellectuals as a distinct social category is the implicit ambivalence with which they articulate their own standpoint in public discourse: on the one hand, they seek to stress their distance from the broader society in order to legitimise themselves as intellectuals; on the other, they tend to bracket or even obliterate that distance by coming forward as spokespersons for certain social constituencies. This key insight provides a useful theoretical basis for the analysis of the discursive practices of intellectuals. The elaboration of a comprehensive discourse-analytical framework for the present study, however, requires a detailed investigation of the intellectual spokespersonship for a specific constituency, i.e. the Nation. The next section is thus devoted to examining the relationship between intellectuals and the nation-building process from a historical and sociological perspective.

3.3 Spokespersonship for the nation: intellectuals as *nation-makers*

In this section, I elaborate on the role that intellectuals play in relation to nation-building processes, both in a historical perspective and in the frame of contemporary global tendencies. These insights will inform the second component of the analytical framework, which addresses the discursive manifestations of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation.

3.3.1 *The modern intellectual as a 'nation-maker'*

Among various approaches to nationalism and nation-building, the so-called modernist perspective or paradigm (Smith, 1998) posits that nationalism, defined as a political ideology based on individual and collective identification with the nation as a sovereign entity, is a relatively recent phenomenon that requires the structural conditions of modern industrial societies in order to exist. More specifically, proponents of this paradigm argue that the historical development of the nation-state as the primary form of political, social and cultural organisation of modern human societies is strictly connected with the emergence of a national intelligentsia, i.e. a class of professionals and intellectuals working in the service of industrial development, bureaucratic administration and mass education. We have already encountered this concept in Bauman's (1987) portrayal of the modern intellectual as a *legislator*, that is, as an authority tasked with administering a new form of state power capable of planning and implementing established models of social relations (see § 3.2). In a similar characterisation, Smith describes the modern intelligentsia as "the new priesthood of the nation" (1986: p. 157), arguing that the emerging national elites, made up of administrators, educators and other professional specialists, have gradually replaced the pre-modern clergy as the holders of the monopoly of truth.

The central argument underlying these evocative representations is that modern societies require the creation and dissemination of national cultures in order to sustain industrial and economic development, maintain an effective bureaucracy, and ensure the circulation of knowledge and information. According to Gellner (1983), the imposition of homogeneous and standardised 'high cultures' is a precondition for the functioning of modern nation-states. Such literate cultures need to be specially cultivated, that is, nurtured and disseminated through a unified educational system and

supervised by the academic community. These tasks, he argues, can be performed only by an educated class of intellectuals and professionals, who therefore emerge as the guardians, or rather the 'gardeners' (Bauman, 1987), of modern national cultures.

Indeed, many scholars have pointed out the key role of intellectuals in establishing the nation as a homogeneous cultural system, i.e. the process that is commonly referred to as nation-building. According to Anderson (1983), every modern nation is an *imagined political community*, because it rests on the capacity of its members to feel a strong sense of communion, although even in the smallest nations they are mostly strangers to one another. The very possibility of imagining the nation, or rather oneself as part of a specific nation, arose historically with the spread of print-capitalism, that is, when publishers started printing books and other media in the vernacular languages (instead of exclusive languages such as Latin in Europe) in order to maximise circulation. This created unified communication environments in which educated readers began to think of themselves as members of distinct cultural communities, each based on a specific print-language, i.e. a standardised or codified language; moreover, these print-languages also became instruments of administrative centralisation, i.e. 'languages of power', which laid the basis for the emergence of nations as sovereign political entities. As an imagined community, the nation needs constantly to be narrated and talked about in ways that are resonant and familiar to all of its members. Historically as well as today, this has been the prerogative of the intellectual elites who, by nurturing a shared national imagination through various media, have contributed, and still contribute, to the formation of national consciousness.

The importance of intellectuals in processes of nation-formation has been stressed also by Smith (1998), who maintains, drawing on Breuilly (1993), that there is

a specific sense in which intellectuals as well as professionals, notably educators, are crucial to nationalisms: so often, they propose the category of the nation in the first place and endow it with symbolic significance. It is their imagination and understanding that gives the nation its contours and much of its emotional content. Through their images and symbols, they portray and re-present to others the significance and distinctiveness of the nation (1998: pp. 91-92).

This description of intellectuals as having the ability to ‘activate’ the category of the nation, that is, to make it matter to people by shaping its symbolic content, is a concrete illustration of Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic power, but is especially reminiscent of Pels’ theory of social representation and intellectual spokespersonship (both have been discussed in § 3.2 above). Indeed, the notion of spokespersonship as the legitimisation of one’s authority through the act of representing certain social constituencies captures very well the unique link that seems to exist between intellectuals and the modern nation as such.

Among the various dimensions of the symbolic construction of the nation, Hobsbawm (1983) has discussed the strategic use of history as a resource to legitimise social action and cement social cohesion. In his view, one of the key features of modern societies is the *invention of tradition*, that is, the fabrication of a factitious sense of continuity with a historical past through symbolic and ritual practices that seek to inculcate values and norms by repetition. Modern nations, he maintains, are largely based on such invented traditions. Although they generally claim to be ‘natural’ and rooted in the remotest antiquity, they tend to be subjectively experienced and interpreted on the basis of recent symbols, such as flags, public ceremonies and monuments, as well as suitably tailored public discourses, such as official ‘national histories’. In other words, “[t]he history which became part of the fund of knowledge or the ideology of the nation [...] is not what has actually been preserved in popular memory, but what has been selected, written, pictured, popularised and institutionalised by those whose function is to do so” (1983: p. 13). The ‘fabricators’ of national traditions alluded to by Anderson are primarily thinkers and educators – again, intellectuals – who are in a position to disseminate the national culture through the educational system and the media.

A similar point has been made by Gellner (1983), who openly criticises the ideology of nationalism for being based on a fundamental (self-)deception, whereby the modern character of the nation is concealed, as it were, behind the veil of antiquity and folk culture. As mentioned above, Gellner regards nationalism as a modern phenomenon, arguing that the nation as a new form of social organisation has emerged in response to the requirements of bureaucratic and technological communication imposed by industrial societies. However, Gellner contends, “this is the very opposite of what

nationalism affirms and what nationalists fervently believe”, which is that nations are deeply rooted in the “healthy, pristine, vigorous life of the peasants, of the *Volk*, the *narod*” (1983: p. 57), of which they represent some sort of ‘awakening’. Although Gellner is less explicit than Anderson in identifying the agents responsible for this ‘deception’, a strong case can again be made for intellectuals, whom Gellner defines as the “driving force of [...] nationalism” (1983: p. 118).

What emerges from the theories exposed above is the absolute primacy of intellectuals in the articulation of national cultures and the symbolic construction of the nation as a homogeneous political community rooted in a historic past. This point has been made with much force by Suny and Kennedy (1999), who conceive of nations as social formations that may grow out of various kinds of communities (e.g. ethnic or civic/territorial), but that come together and understand themselves as nations only through the efforts of intellectual and political elites to articulate powerful national discourses able to mobilise the masses. Indeed, the two authors attribute to intellectuals the greatest agency in the process of nation formation. This emerges quite strongly in this vivid description of how intellectuals have established themselves as ‘nation-makers’:

[Intellectuals were] the “revivers” of cultures that had been forgotten, or, in many cases, not yet constituted. They were the discoverers of the folk, the people, whom they defined and delimited. In an increasingly democratic age they were the political philosophers who shaped the new universal discourse of the nation, linking people, power, and territory to notions of representation, self-determination and popular sovereignty. Intellectuals transformed inchoate peoples into mobilizable nationalities and modern nations in ways similar to the homogenization of populations carried out by bureaucratic states. They spread the national message, wrote the articles and published the newspapers, edited the grammars and the dictionaries, taught the classes and wrote the laws that bounded the people and determined the citizenry. And in many cases they came to power, took control of the instruments of the state and used that awesome power to promote their nation’s welfare and security as they saw it, its advancement and expansion, in a dangerous world of national competition (1999: p. 423).

Furthermore, in order to account for the specific ways in which intellectuals engage in processes of nation-building, Suny and Kennedy have outlined a theory of *national*

intellectual practice. According to it, the national discourses produced by intellectuals underpin the formation of the nation, but simultaneously constitute the structure that enables and constrains intellectual activity as such (which is consistent with the co-constitutive nature of the relationship between discourse and social reality postulated in critical discourse studies, see § 3.1.1). As a result of this mutual articulation, intellectuals are faced with a double risk: “[o]n the one hand, as patriots they lose their credentials as critical or independent. On the other hand, as critical intellectuals questioning the very ‘authenticity’ of the nation, they are either ignored, marginalized, or cast out altogether” (Kennedy & Suny, 1999: p. 5). This insight illustrates quite well the tension between situatedness and detachedness that Pels considers to be inherent to the intellectual condition as such (see § 3.2).

3.3.2 Intellectuals and nation-building in the contemporary world

There is wide agreement among modernist (and Marxist) scholars that modern nationalism originated in Europe in the period following the French revolution, as a result of the historical emergence of industrial society and the establishment of the nation-state as the primary principle of social organisation. As discussed above, they regard nationalism and nationhood as projects of modernity, inextricably connected with the centralising tendency towards the homogenisation of populations that defines modern statehood. In the contemporary post-industrial world, however, global trends of cultural fragmentation (connected to growing economic interdependence, consumerism, mass migration, and the diffusion of communication networks) increasingly override national boundaries. This has led some scholars to envisage the end of the ‘age of nationalism’, suggesting that humanity is about to enter a post-national era in which nations and nationhood will gradually but inevitably lose their significance for large segments of the world’s population. This attitude is encapsulated in this much-quoted prediction by Hobsbawm:

It is not impossible that nationalism will decline with the decline of the nation-state [...]. It would be absurd to claim that this day is already near. However, I hope it can at least be envisaged. After all, the very fact that historians are at least beginning to make some progress in the study and analysis of nations and nationalism suggests that, as so often, the phenomenon is past its peak. The owl of Minerva which brings wisdom, said Hegel, flies out at dusk. It is a good sign that it is now circling round nations and nationalism (1990: p. 192).

The assumption that nationalism and nation-states are abating as a result of increasing cultural fragmentation is one of the central tenets of postmodernism. Bauman's theory of the intellectual, which has been briefly discussed above (§ 3.2), rests precisely on this assumption: the shift from the role of the legislator to that of the interpreter, in fact, is taken to be a consequence of the decoupling of the intellectual from the modern state, whose function as ordering principle and source of identification has been superseded in a globalised world by the proliferation of different cultural communities and multiple forms of affiliation. In a similar vein, Appadurai (1996) maintains that transnational trends, especially connected with global financial capitalism, have 'de-territorialised' the nation-state, making it necessary for people to rethink themselves and their identities outside and beyond the national frame. From the perspective of political science, the supposed crisis of the modern nation-state in the era of globalisation has been conceptualised mainly as a loss of sovereignty, that is, as diminished control by the state over activities and processes that transcend territorial boundaries and a growing inability to face the pressures coming from transnational governance arrangements and the global market (Beck, 1999). Heller (2011), for instance, argues that the political and economic conditions of globalisation destabilise hegemonic discourses of national identity and the nation-state, thus ushering in an age of post-nationalism.

Whereas the loss of political sovereignty of nation-states in the face of global processes is relatively little disputed, the postmodernist argument that national identities are becoming increasingly hybridised and therefore less salient as a consequence of mass migration and the influx of culturally diverse economic migrants into more affluent western societies (e.g. Bhabha, 1990) has been met with strong objections. The opponents of the post-national paradigm not only argue that the nation persists as a fundamental source of identity, community and collective memory, but also point out that processes linked to globalization have in fact led in recent times to the resurgence of nationalism in various parts of the world (Zuelow, Young & Sturm, 2007; see also Smith, 1998: pp. 202-205). In the European context, for instance, re-nationalising tendencies have been clearly observed especially in regard to attitudes and policies towards immigrants and refugees (Koopmans, Statham, Giugni & Passy, 2005; Wodak, 2015), signalling a general retreat from multiculturalism as a political project.

According to the critics of the post-national paradigm, in the global era the nation still represents a hegemonic form of cultural affiliation and social organisation, as well as a tremendously important source of political legitimacy – the most prominent *constituency*, as Pels would put it. The pervasiveness and endurance of nationalism and national identities in contemporary societies has been addressed from manifold theoretical and analytical perspectives. Pickel (2004), for instance, has elaborated the concept of *national habitus* (drawing on Bourdieu, see § 3.2) to capture the idea that nationhood is largely internalised and so deeply embedded in the ways people think about themselves as to appear as something natural and universal. The modern individual, he argues, is primarily a *homo nationis*, because he or she is typically born and raised in a particular national culture, and socialised as a citizen of a particular nation-state. Consequently, his or her specific dispositions, i.e. forms of thinking, feeling, acting and interacting, tend to reflect general patterns determined by nationhood, thus forming what Pickel calls a “nationalised personality structure” (2004: p. 327). Such *national habitus*, he concludes, constitutes a pervasive and embodied psycho-social infrastructure, and is therefore constitutive of the modern nation-state order (see also Wodak *et al.*, 2009).

A groundbreaking approach to the discursive reproduction of nationhood is Billig’s study (1995) of what has since become known as *banal nationalism*. His central claim is that, in established nation-states, nationhood has become so ‘enhabited’ and naturalised that it no longer requires acts of national imagination (as Anderson suggests, see above) to reproduce itself. Instead, it operates as an implicit background for a variety of social practices, political discourses and cultural products, which only needs to be hinted at, that is, ‘flagged’, in order to be effectively activated. As Billig puts it, it is small, prosaic words such as ‘we’ and ‘our’, rather than grand memorable narratives, that “offer constant, but barely conscious, reminders of the homeland, making ‘our’ national identity unforgettable” (1995: p. 93). The banal character of nationalism, Billig contends, has two problematic implications. The first is that the people living in established nation-states (such as western democracies) tend to view nationalism as a dangerous and irrational condition affecting the global peripheries, thus forgetting, or at least conveniently overlooking, the fact that nationalist ideologies are a constitutive aspect of their individual and collective self. The second implication is that nationalism has become so deeply ingrained in contemporary ways of thinking

that it is not easily studied or theorised, because analysts may be unaware of the extent to which related unquestioned assumptions and common-sense habits actually shape their research work. Therefore, Billig concludes, the investigation of nationalism and its discursive manifestations should necessarily be a critical study involving a high degree of self-reflexivity.

The general point illustrated by the above theories and approaches is that even in the contemporary world nations are always in the making. Nation-building is not a historical phase that has now concluded, nor can nations be established once and for all. On the contrary, they need to be continuously reproduced, narrated, and 'enhabited' in order to subsist, especially in an increasingly globalised world. As Balibar claims, the fundamental challenge is "to make the people *produce itself* continually as a national community. Or again, it is to produce the effect of unity by which the people will appear, in anyone's eyes, 'as a people', that is, as the basis and origin of political power" (Balibar, 1991: pp. 93-94). In other words, the nation-state can only legitimise itself by literally producing the nation that serves as the basis for its legitimisation (Butler & Spivak, 2007).

Although nations are everywhere and always in the making, there are specific situations in which nation-building processes gain more impetus and become more explicit than in others. This is particularly the case with modern post-colonial nations, whose elites have mobilised people and resources in the pursuit of full statehood, and also with newly emerging states, which strive to 'nationalise' themselves through the promotion of official national cultures. The post-Yugoslav transitional context, which has been discussed in detail in the previous chapter, is an obvious illustration of the latter case, along with the analogous situation that emerged from the dissolution of the Soviet Union. According to Kennedy and Suny (1999), intellectuals are particularly significant in the articulation of the nation precisely in such situations of crisis and transition, as they find familiar work in the codification of new official languages, the production of histories and the promotion of unique national values and visions. This insight finds confirmation in Hobsbawm's remark that the invention of tradition is particularly heightened when societies undergo dramatic and radical changes:

There is probably no time and place with which historians are concerned which has not seen the 'invention' of tradition in this sense. However, we should expect it to

occur more frequently when a rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns for which 'old' traditions had been designed, producing new ones to which they were not applicable, or when such old traditions and their institutional carriers and promulgators no longer prove sufficiently adaptable and flexible, or are otherwise eliminated [...]. (1983: pp. 4-5)

In sum, nation-building ideologies and practices continue to be hegemonic in the contemporary world, especially in so-called transitional societies (such as the post-Yugoslav ones) in which old social, political and economic structures are being replaced by new ones. Due to the pervasiveness of processes of nation-formation in contemporary societies, it is reasonable to assume that the historical nexus between intellectuals and nation-building described above has not dissolved. On the contrary, the power to articulate and disseminate national cultures, especially in newly established states, has largely remained the prerogative of intellectuals, who therefore maintain their role of privileged spokespersons for the nation even today.

3.4 The representation of the nation in public discourse

After having discussed the key role that modern and contemporary intellectuals play in the articulation of national cultures, I now turn my attention to the very contents of these processes of social representation, by considering the relevant aspects of the nation that are available to be constructed in public discourse. Broadly speaking, the discursive nature of national cultures has been pointed out, among others, by Hall, who maintains that

[a] national culture is a discourse – a way of constructing meanings which influences and organises both our actions and our conception of ourselves [...]. National cultures construct identities by producing meanings about 'the nation' with which we can identify; these are contained in the stories which are told about it, memories which connect its present with its past, and imagines which are constructed of it. (1996: p. 613)

In the following, I shall attempt to identify the main aspects of the nation that are available to be activated, emphasised or made banal (in Billig's terms) when intellectuals *speak for* the nation in public discourse. Drawing on prominent theories of nationalism and nation-building (see § 3.3), I propose a categorisation including five main thematic areas or macro-topics. This categorisation is not intended as an

exhaustive treatment of all the elements of a national culture that can be expressed in discourse, but rather as a heuristic tool to orient the analysis of the discursive representation of the nation in specific contexts and situations.

3.4.1 The discursive representation of the nation: macro-topics

At the most fundamental level, speaking for the nation involves representing it as a distinct social entity, that is, as something that can be identified as such and, at the same time, distinguished from its counterparts, i.e. other nations. As noted by Breuilly (see § 3.3.1 above), intellectuals are crucial to nation formation precisely insofar as they affirm and sustain the *distinctiveness* of the nation. Similarly, according to Smith, the idea that the nation has its own *peculiar character* is one of the core propositions of every nationalist doctrine (1998: p. 187). Since nations are human communities, positing the peculiar and distinctive character of a nation implies establishing criteria of belonging based on some specific attributes shared by its members. These attributes might be the most diverse, which is reflected in the existence of competing conceptions of the nation, both in scholarly and in popular discourse. A distinction that is rather entrenched in the specialised literature in sociology and political science is that between the *Kulturnation*, whereby membership is defined by criteria that are perceived as objective and essential, such as ethnic belonging, language, tradition, territory and ancestry, and *Staatsnation*, which is based instead on civic-political criteria, such as the will of the citizens to be part of a legally instituted political community (Wodak *et al.*, 2009). This distinction is codified in citizenship legislation as the separation between the principles of *jus sanguinis* (right of blood) and *jus soli* (right of the soil), which determine how citizenship is inherited (by birthplace or through parents, respectively). The dichotomy of ‘*Kulturnation vs. Staatsnation*’, Smith cautions, does not apply to particular nationalisms, as all of them include elements of both dimensions; however, he maintains, it can be a useful analytical tool to explore the various ways in which national distinctiveness is constructed (1998: p. 126).

Whatever grounds are invoked to assert national distinctiveness, this is always an act of self-definition, which is “the social process of naming and defining by self and others of a community constituting ‘us’ in contrast to ‘them’, outsiders who are dissimilar and unfamiliar” (Smith, 2007: p. 19). It has been widely argued that any

kind of identity is necessarily constructed through its relation to the Other, to what it lacks, that is, to the constitutive negative of its positive meaning; in short, that “identities are constructed through, not outside, difference” (Hall, 1995: p. 4). National identities, of course, are no exception. This has been pointed out, among others, by Triandafyllidou (1998), who claims that national identity becomes meaningful only in contrast to other nations, because national consciousness involves both self-awareness of the group and awareness of significant others from which the nation wishes to differentiate itself. More specifically, national self-definition usually implies stressing internal sameness against the backdrop of external otherness. Thus, “discursive constructs of nations and national identities [...] primarily emphasise national uniqueness and intra-national uniformity but largely ignore intra-national differences” (Wodak *et al.*, 2009: p. 4).

In the light of these considerations, a fundamental dimension (or macro-topic) of the discursive representation of the nation is the construction of (1) *national distinctiveness and homogeneity*, which can be further differentiated in intra-national and inter-national similarities and differences.

As stated above (§ 3.3), nationalism is generally defined as a political ideology based on individual and collective identification with the nation as a sovereign entity. Thus, another crucial dimension of nation-building discourses is the belief that the national community should be able to determine itself as an autonomous social and political entity, typically in the form of the modern (nation-)state. The linkage between national self-determination and state sovereignty is indeed enshrined in another of the core propositions of nationalist doctrines identified by Smith, namely that “nations can only be liberated and fulfilled in their own sovereign states” (1998: p. 187). Once this linkage becomes accepted as necessary and indispensable, Smith argues, the nation begins to operate as the fundamental source of political power, because “loyalty to it overrides all other loyalties” (1998: p. 187). Obviously, this has enormous implications for political thought and practice. On the one hand, the nation becomes the basis for any claim to political legitimacy, allowing political elites to establish themselves as representatives of the interests of the nation; on the other, it also serves as a resource for political struggle and contestation, because elites may be criticised and delegitimised by their opponents precisely for harming national interests. In sum,

the nation can be invoked as a normative principle to legitimise or delegitimise certain political arrangements, or even an entire political order.

In a similar way, the nation can also function as a principle of social organisation. Different social actors may appeal to the nation in order to promote or challenge certain social arrangements and institutions. They may discursively articulate the nation in such a way as to justify or reject specific social roles, customs, hierarchies or patterns of interaction, declaring them desirable or undesirable for a given community. In this regard, the normative reach of the category of the nation is virtually unlimited, ranging from particular aspects of the human body to broader social structures and relationships. Such pervasiveness is probably most apparent in the relationship between nation, gender and sexuality. Iveković and Mostov (2002), for instance, stress how nation-building practices tend to rest on rigid social constructions of masculinity and femininity, in which women are expected to reproduce the nation (physically and symbolically) while men are supposed to protect and avenge it. Moreover, the nation can also be invoked to justify and entrench gender inequalities. As Mostov (1995) argues, the ethnonational concept of nation defines it as a patriarchal family, thus assigning to men the power to act as 'guardians of the nation' by supervising motherhood and reproduction. Furthermore, scholars like Mosse (1985) have explored the link between nationalism and sexuality, particularly in regard to the dominance of the male image in *völkish* (i.e. ethnonational) thought. Lastly, Musolff (2010) has illuminated the relationship between nationalism and body politics, focusing on the political use of *body-nation* metaphors, particularly those related to illness and parasites, in Nazi propaganda.

What emerges from the above is that various conceptions of the nation can be used as warrants for asserting certain social or political ordering principles, encouraging conformity to norms and stigmatising deviation from them. Therefore, the second macro-topic of the discursive representation of the nation is (2) *the nation as an ordered socio-political community*.

In the above discussion about the primacy of intellectuals in the symbolic articulation of national cultures (§ 3.3), history appeared to occupy a central place. In Hobsbawm's view, history is a powerful resource for legitimising social action: modern nations, he argues, are largely based on invented traditions, that is, rituals and

practices aimed precisely at cultivating a sense of historical continuity. In a more critical vein, Gellner contends that nationalist ideologies manipulate history in order to disguise the modern character of nations and make them appear as being rooted in antiquity and folk culture. Indeed, there is wide agreement among nationalism scholars that history and historical memory play a cardinal role in the creation and articulation of national cultures (in this regard, see Wodak & De Cillia, 2007).

Broadly speaking, nations as systems of cultural representation are based on (grand) historical narratives, which usually emphasise aspects such as origins, continuity, tradition and timelessness (Hall, 1996: pp. 613-615). These narratives may include a variety of elements, which various scholars have classified in different ways. Here I propose a working list based on categorisations formulated by Kolakowski (1995), Smith (2007: p. 19), and Hall (1996). The first element relates to myths of origins and ancestry, which may include tales of descent from heroic ancestors and are often associated with a 'nameable beginning', that is, a foundational event. The second element is the teleological dimension, i.e. the belief that the national community has an intrinsic purpose or mission (a *telos*) entrusted to it by the deity, so that any development is interpreted as a fact of national progress and as fulfilment of the nation's destiny. The third element is the fictitious idea of a pure, original people and of pristine, ancestral homelands, which are the object of collective attachment and intimate devotion. The fourth and last element includes 'myth-memories' of golden ages and glorious heroes and heroines, who are to be celebrated, commemorated, and possibly emulated as ideals of sacrifice, dignity and greatness.

In conclusion, history is often mobilised in order to create national mythologies and *ad hoc* official narratives, which in turn serve to legitimise and reproduce national cultures and identities. Hence, the third key macro-topic of national discourses concerns (3) *the sacred historical foundations of the nation*.

Besides representing it as rooted in a historic and glorious past, speaking for the nation may also involve projecting it into the future, particularly as a collective endeavour towards freedom and prosperity. This aspect resonates with another of the core propositions of nationalist doctrines identified by Smith, namely, that people must identify and belong to a nation if they wish to be free and to realise themselves (1998: p. 187). From this point of view, the capacity of a community to achieve

freedom and self-fulfilment depends on the extent to which its members identify with, and express loyalty to, the national project or cause. In a less narrow perspective, the nation might be taken to incarnate a common vision of future prosperity, and at the same time a model (or blueprint) for pursuing and realising that vision. In the recent scholarship on nationalism, however, the idea of the nation as a conception and a vision of the good has seldom been addressed in detail. This is probably a reflection of what Sayer (2011) identifies as a general and deep-seated tendency within the social sciences, namely, the reluctance to address and problematise conceptions of the good, of well-being and of human flourishing. In this respect, the choice to shed light on this aspect of the discursive construction of the nation is consistent with Sayer's (2006) exhortation to focus precisely on how existing discourses construe and interpret notions of human flourishing and the good life.

The nation can be thought of, and talked about, as a collective endeavour towards future prosperity either as a teleology (a 'design') or as a social project with no predetermined outcome. In the former case, the future of the nation is conceived as the necessary fulfilment of its preordained destiny (see above), in a way that binds its members into a *community of destiny* (in this regard, see for instance Šarić, Gammelgaard and Rå Hauge, 2012 on the discursive construction of identity related to important national holidays); in the latter, national progress is understood as the contingent result of human action, which may or may not be conducive to the self-actualisation of the national community as a whole. Either way, from a discourse perspective, casting the nation into the future involves building future scenarios. These range from utopian scenarios, in which the nation overcomes all the hardships and ultimately triumphs, to dystopian scenarios, in which the nation succumbs to external or internal hostile forces and fatally perishes. Depending on how such scenarios are discursively constructed, they can be drawn upon to argue in favour or against certain forms of social action and behaviour, through portraying them as beneficial or detrimental to the good of the nation.

In the light of the above, the fourth macro-topic of the discursive representation of the nation is (4) *the nation as a vision or project of future prosperity*.

Finally, speaking for the nation may involve determining and evaluating the influence that relevant social actors (individuals, groups or institutions) have, or could have,

upon the life and wealth of the national community. In the above discussion about the role of the nation-state in the era of globalisation (§ 3.3), particular emphasis was placed on the challenges that global processes such as economic restructuring, transnational governance, mass migration etc. pose to national sovereignty and national identity. So, discourses on the nation might construct specific actors, e.g. transnational companies, supranational political institutions or immigrant communities, as constituting a threat to the nation in various ways. Conversely, however, the same global phenomena could be interpreted as an opportunity for the nation to reassert its capacity to govern economic and social processes, to play a distinct political role in the international community, as well as to promote and enrich its culture. Thus, the relationship of the nation with some of the above-mentioned actors may instead be discursively represented as virtuous and beneficial.

Another type of relationship that is likely to figure prominently in national discourses is, of course, that with other nations. According to Smith, a fundamental assumption of nationalist ideologies is that the world is naturally divided into nations, and that the liberation and security of all nations are preconditions for achieving global freedom and peace (1998: p. 187). From this perspective, it appears that each nation has a vested interest in allowing other nations to develop autonomously and unobstructedly, which prefigures some kind of alliance, or at least an agreement of mutual non-interference, among the world's nations. This view seems to find confirmation in the growing integration of nation-states into a global system of governance and cooperation (embodied in the United Nations and other international agencies); however, the ongoing proliferation of ethnic and national animosities, territorial disputes and armed conflicts all over the world rather suggests that many modern nations (still) perceive and often treat each other as potential or actual threats to their own integrity and prosperity. This gives credit to Schmitt's (1996) emphasis on the existential distinction between *friend* and *enemy* as constitutive of the modern political order (although in his theory enmity is not necessarily based on nationality). Of course, this polarisation does not only apply to external entities such as other nations and international bodies, In fact, it may also be directed at actors that are internal to the nation, such as ethnic or national minorities, immigrant communities, as well as specific individuals or movements, which may be represented as 'friends' or 'enemies' of the nation.

In conclusion, the fifth and last macro-topic that pertains to the discursive representation of the nation is (5) *the nation and the Other (i.e. global actors, other nations, intra-national actors)*.

3.5 A methodological framework for the analysis of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation in discourse

In the previous three sections, I have discussed theoretical aspects of the intellectual condition, examined the specific relationship between modern intellectuals and nation-building in the contemporary world, and identified the main elements (macro-topics) of the representation of the nation in public discourse. The purpose of this section is to draw upon these three areas to elaborate a comprehensive framework for analysing the discursive manifestations of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation. In order to do so, I will follow the general heuristic scheme developed within the DHA. This scheme is intended as a guide to develop analytical frameworks that are tailored to the problem under examination, and it includes three dimensions: i) the identification of salient contents, i.e. themes and topics; ii) the investigation of the discursive strategies (including macro- and sub-strategies) that specific actors employ in regard to each unit of content; and iii) the analysis of how these strategies manifest themselves at the level of language, i.e. their concrete linguistic realisations. The notion of discursive strategy, which derives from the assumption that discourse, just as any other social practice, involves strategic thinking and behaviour, is indeed central to the DHA.¹¹ This approach proposes five types of discursive strategies to be looked at, namely, the way in which actors and processes are referred to (nomination strategies), what qualities are attributed to them (predication strategies), what argumentative and persuasive devices are employed (argumentative strategies), from what position these nominations, attributions and arguments are expressed (perspectivisation or framing strategies), and whether utterances are intensified or mitigated (intensification and mitigation strategies). The framework elaborated below integrates and builds upon this useful schematisation.

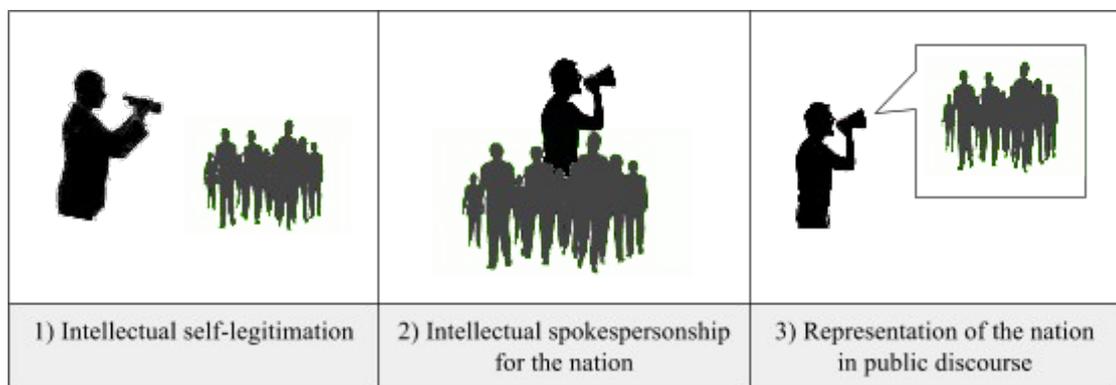
Among the various approaches to critical discourse studies, the DHA has developed a particularly strong and organised focus on argumentation (i.e. the third of the five types of discursive strategies mentioned above). A detailed DHA framework has been

¹¹ For a comprehensive explanation see Wodak *et al.*, 2009: pp. 31-35.

elaborated by Reisigl (2014), who distinguishes between formal and content-related analysis of argumentation. The formal approach analyses the structure of argumentation as syllogism, that is, on the basis of three components: the *argument*, which gives the reason for or against a controversial claim; the *conclusion rule*, which guarantees the connection of the argument to the *claim*; and the *claim* itself, which represents the disputed statement that has to be justified or refuted. In formal argumentation schemes, abstract conclusion rules are also called *topoi*, and are generally formalised as ‘if/because *X* then *Y*’ statements. The content-related approach, on the other hand, conceives of argumentation as always topic-related and field-dependent. From this perspective, *topoi* are instead defined as “recurring content-related conclusion rules that are typical for specific fields of social action” (Reisigl, 2014: p. 77). The framework elaborated in this thesis adopts the latter approach, because a focus on content-related *topoi* reveals more about the specific character and social embeddedness of discourses than a purely formal analysis.

The proposed framework for the analysis of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation consists of three components, which are summarised in the Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. *The three components of the analytical framework.*



The first component is 1) *intellectual self-legitimation*, which relates to the ability of intellectuals to claim authority in public discourse on the basis of some kind of estrangement from the broader society, i.e. the so-called intellectual ‘vantage point’, which constitutes the defining feature of the intellectual condition (as discussed in § 3.2). The second component is 2) *intellectual spokespersonship for the nation*, which concerns the power of intellectuals to assume the role of public spokespersons for their national community, using their public position to articulate and promote

national cultures (as discussed in § 3.3). The third component is 3) *the representation of the nation in public discourse*, which refers to the actual contents of those acts of representations, that is, the specific aspects of the nation (within the five macro-topics identified in § 3.4.1) that given intellectuals choose to emphasise in discourse. In the following, I suggest ways to approach each components from a critical discourse-analytical perspective, drawing on the DHA but also integrating other relevant analytical categories taken from cognate areas of research in linguistics.

3.5.1 First component: intellectual self-legitimation

The intellectual condition is one of inherent detachment and marginalisation from the mainstream of society. As discussed above, intellectuals tend to regard (and often exhibit) their own estranged position as affording them a better, clearer and more objective view of society, or at least of certain aspects thereof. This distanciation, in other words, is perceived and construed as a *critical distance* that enables a more correct and rigorous understanding of the complexities of the social world. In this sense, through assuming this particular standpoint, intellectuals implicitly claim some kind of epistemic privilege over the broader society, thus legitimising themselves as authoritative voices in public discourse. Taking a critical discourse-analytical approach to intellectual practice, therefore, requires examining the ways in which actors strategically use language to achieve self-legitimation by constructing their standpoint as an intellectual vantage point. For the sake of brevity, I call these *macro-strategies of intellectual self-legitimation*.

Among the five types of discursive strategies identified within the DHA, the most relevant to this kind of inquiry are the fourth and the fifth types, namely, strategies of perspectivisation (or framing) and strategies of intensification or mitigation. The former type includes strategies that speakers or writers employ to position their point of view and express involvement or distance, which may involve deictic expressions, discourse markers, speech representation, figures of speech, animating prosody and so on (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009). The latter type refers to strategies used to modify the illocutionary force of utterances, i.e. their specific status as assertions, questions, promises, threats, etc., which is usually obtained through strengthening or mitigating their epistemic or deontic status (see below) through linguistic devices such as diminutives and augmentatives, modal particles, hedges, vague expressions,

hyperbole, litotes, the choice of particular verbs of saying, feeling, thinking, and so forth (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009). Both types of strategies are salient in regard to intellectual self-legitimation, since the discursive construction of the intellectual standpoint involves both an act of positioning and a more or less tacit claim to epistemic primacy. Of course, this can also be achieved via other types of discursive strategies, e.g. nomination, predication and argumentative strategies.

In the light of the above, a concept that is particularly useful to capture the dynamics of intellectual self-legitimation is that of *epistemic stance*. Broadly speaking, the notion of stance refers to the fact that all speakers and writers take up some position, which may be overt or covert, in relation to the propositions they make. In discourse analysis, it has been studied under various names, e.g. point of view (Simpson, 1993), evaluation (Bednarek, 2006) or appraisal (Martin & White, 2005). Epistemic stance, in particular, concerns the legitimation of propositions, that is, the process whereby speakers and writers, “in order to overcome the epistemic safeguards of their audience, offer ‘guarantees’ for the truth of their assertions in various forms of evidence” (Hart, 2011: p. 6). In this light, the intellectual vantage point can be conceived as a strong form of epistemic stance, in which the guarantees offered by the speaker/writer reflect his or her claim to epistemic primacy. Thus, a fruitful way to explore discursive strategies of intellectual self-legitimation is to examine how epistemic stance is expressed in discourse. According to Marín-Arrese (2011), speakers/writers can achieve epistemic positioning in two main ways: first, by pointing to sources of knowledge that confer validity on the information being communicated (evidentiality); second, by conveying their own estimation of the veracity or likelihood of the designated fact or event (epistemicity). Hence, analysing the discursive manifestations of epistemic stance, and specifically of intellectual self-legitimation, requires looking both at evidential expressions (which point to relevant evidence, e.g. “I claim this on the basis of X”) and at epistemic modal markers (which express the author’s epistemic commitment towards his or her own assertions, e.g. “I am deeply convinced of X but am not quite sure about Y”).

In addition to the notion of epistemic stance, another approach that can help to shed further light on intellectual authority in discourse is van Leeuwen’s framework for analysing the discursive construction of legitimation (2007, 2008; see also van

Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999). The framework focuses on the linguistic strategies that can be used to justify (but also delegitimise) certain social practices. It groups them in four main categories: i) authorisation, i.e. legitimation by reference to tradition, custom and law; ii) moral evaluation, i.e. legitimation by reference to value systems; iii) rationalisation, i.e. legitimation by reference to goals and uses of institutionalised social practice; and iv) mythopoesis, i.e. legitimation conveyed through exemplary narratives. These four groups of strategies can occur separately or in combination, and each includes a set of specific sub-strategies. Although this model was originally developed to study the legitimation of social practice, some of its components appear well-suited to inquire into self-legitimation, particularly of the intellectual kind. For instance, sub-strategies of authorisation such as *personal authority* and *expert authority* (whereby legitimation is provided by social status or expertise, respectively), as well as *theoretical rationalisation* (a sub-strategy of rationalisation that grounds legitimation in some kind of truth about ‘the way things are’), are useful categories for analysing intellectual self-legitimation too.

3.5.2 Second component: intellectual spokespersonship for the nation

As discussed above (§ 3.3), intellectuals play a pivotal role vis-à-vis nation-building processes. Evocative scholarly definitions of intellectuals as legislators of the nation-state, the new priesthood, gardeners of national high cultures, nation-makers etc. substantiate the idea of their primacy in the articulation, promotion and dissemination of national cultures, and more generally in the symbolic construction of the nation. This relationship, which originated from the historical emergence of the modern nation-state, has not lost its significance in a globalised world, due to the persistence of the nation as a hegemonic form of cultural, social and political organisation in the global era, and especially the re-nationalising tendencies that characterise many contemporary societies. Hence, the second component of the analytical framework relates to the discursive strategies that intellectuals employ to take up and perform the role of nation-makers. I shall refer to these as *macro-strategies of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation*.

In broad terms, speaking for the nation is an act of social representation, as it involves using language to shape certain aspects of social reality. One of the main assumptions in critical discourse studies is precisely that discourse is socially constitutive (see §

3.1.1), in the sense that through discourses social actors *constitute* situations, social roles and identities, interpersonal relations, objects of knowledge and so on. This process, according to the DHA, is mediated by four main macro-functions:

Firstly, [discursive acts] are largely responsible for the genesis, production and construction of particular social conditions. Secondly, they can contribute to the restoration, legitimation or relativisation of a social status quo (ante). Thirdly, discursive acts are employed to maintain and reproduce the status quo. Fourthly, discursive practice may be effective in transforming, dismantling or even destroying the status quo. (Wodak *et al.*, 2009: p. 8)

The relationship between intellectuals and the nation can easily be described in terms of these four macro-functions: firstly, intellectuals may use discourse to construct the national community, e.g. by emphasising commonalities and downplaying differences; secondly, they may attempt to defend, support or justify a certain interpretation of the nation in the face of adversity and disagreement; thirdly, they may contribute to perpetuating an established idea of the nation, notably when it is being challenged or called into question in public discourse; fourthly, they may seek to transform or even destroy certain elements of the nation in the name of a different national vision.

In the scope of these four social macro-functions, the concrete discursive strategies that intellectuals might resort to when performing the role of spokespersons for the nation are manifold and depend very much on the specific social, cultural and political context under examination. Consequently, it is not possible to provide an *a priori* classification. However, the five-strategy approach developed within the DHA (see above) provides a very useful heuristic tool in this regard. In particular, exploring the referential strategies (i.e. strategies of nomination and predication) that intellectuals use in regard to the nation can shed light on how they perceive and construct their relationship to it; investigating argumentation strategies can help us identify salient argumentative schemes, or *topoi* (see above), and the social roles that they underpin; the analysis of perspectivisation strategies can clarify the self-positioning of intellectuals in relation to their national community; lastly, looking at intensification/mitigation strategies can help us determine their level of commitment and involvement with issues concerning the nation. Therefore, the analysis of macro-

strategies of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation will integrate all of the above types of discursive strategies.

3.5.3 *The third component: the representation of the nation in public discourse*

The third component of the proposed framework investigates the ways in which intellectuals as spokespersons construct, justify, perpetuate or transform certain aspects of the nation, in the scope of the five macro-topics identified above (§ 3.4.1): (1) *national distinctiveness and homogeneity*; (2) *the nation as an ordered socio-political community*; (3) *the sacred historical foundations of the nation*; (4) *the nation as a vision or project of future prosperity*; (5) *the nation and the Other (i.e. global actors, other nations, intra-national actors)*. In Table 1 below, I indicate a range of discursive strategies that intellectuals may employ when addressing each of these macro-topics. This categorisation is an adaptation from the comprehensive framework elaborated by Wodak *et al.* (2009: pp. 36-42) to analyse the discursive construction of Austrian national identity, but it also includes some additional strategies.

Table 1. *Discursive representation of the nation: macro-topics and relevant discursive strategies.*

Macro-topic	Relevant discursive strategies
<p>(1) National distinctiveness and homogeneity</p> <p>Main aspects: distinctiveness and peculiar character of the nation; criteria of self-definition and belonging based on shared attributes; intra-national homogeneity.</p>	<p>Assimilation/Inclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presupposition of/emphasis on intra-national sameness/similarity/commonality <p>Dissimilation/Exclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presupposition of/emphasis on inter-national differences <p>Singularisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presupposition of/emphasis on national (positive or negative) uniqueness - unificatory warning against the loss of uniqueness <p>Avoidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - suppression/backgrounding of intra-national differences
<p>(2) The nation as an ordered socio-political community</p> <p>Main aspects: autonomy, self-determination and sovereignty; nation as source of political loyalty; nation as basis for political</p>	<p>Autonomisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presupposition of/emphasis on national autonomy, sovereignty and independence - emphasis on autonomy and independence to alleviate fears of increasing heteronomy <p>Cohesivation/Polarisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emphasis on the will to unify/co-operate/feel and show solidarity, or rather on intra-societal divisions and conflicts <p>Legitimation/Delegitimation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - legitimation or delegitimation of national elites

<p>(de)legitimation of elites; nation as principle of social organisation (from individual body to entire society).</p>	<p>Inclusion/Exclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - polarisation between ‘us’ and ‘them’ - negative other-presentation - emphasis on intra-national sameness and inter-national difference <p>Vitalisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emphasis on the nation as an organic whole, anthropomorphisation, personification
<p>(3) <i>The sacred historical foundations of the nation</i></p> <p>Main aspects: myths of origins and ancestry; mission/purpose of the nation; fictitious idea of original people and homelands; ‘myth-memories’ of golden ages and glorious heroes and heroines.</p>	<p>Continuation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presupposition of/emphasis on positive or negative continuity - negation of discontinuity <p>Avoidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - suppression/backgrounding of discontinuities/disruptions (e.g. denial, repression) <p>Discontinuation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emphasis on a difference between then and now
<p>(4) <i>The nation as a vision or project of future prosperity</i></p> <p>Main aspects: project/vision of collective prosperity, freedom and self-fulfilment; utopian or dystopian future scenarios; notion of the good of the nation.</p>	<p>Unification/Cohesivation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emphasis on the will to unify/co-operate/feel and show solidarity <p>Vitalisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emphasis on the nation as an organic whole <p>Continuation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presupposition of/emphasis on positive continuity - utopian future scenarios - negation of discontinuity <p>Discontinuation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emphasis on difference between now and the future - emphasis on discontinuity/disruptions - dystopian future scenarios
<p>(5) <i>The nation and the Other (i.e. global actors, other nations, intra-national actors)</i></p> <p>Main aspects: other actors as threat to nation; other actors as providing opportunities for the nation; relationship with other nations as harmonious development vs</p>	<p>Unification/Cohesivation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emphasis on national model character of subnational units - constructing the nation as part of a supranational context/entity <p>Vitalisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emphasis on the nation as an organic whole <p>Autonomisation/Heteronomisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emphasis on autonomy and extra-national independence - emphasis on heteronomy and extra-national dependence <p>Dissimilation/Exclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - negative other-presentation - emphasis on intra-national differences

<p>friend/enemy dialectic; relationship with intra-national actors (immigrants, minorities, etc.)</p>	<p>Avoidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - suppression/backgrounding of inter-national or supranational sameness/similarity/commonality - ignoring/downplaying of extra-national heteronomy <p>Shift of Blame and Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - polarisation between ‘us’ and ‘them’ (as strategy of isolation/singularisation) - blaming/scapegoating/victim-perpetrator inversion
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As a concluding remark, it should be noted that this is an *a priori* and by no means exhaustive categorisation, which is solely intended to guide the empirical analysis.

4. Design of the research: data selection, case studies and creation of the sample

In this chapter, I describe the design and methodology of the study. I begin by considering what forms of communication, and hence what kinds of linguistic data, are best suited to explore the discursive manifestations of intellectual spokespersonship, arguing in favour of a specific genre of media texts, namely opinion pieces published in the national press (§ 4.1). Then, I develop a case study approach focused on three key events that sparked public debate about nationhood and national identity in three post-Yugoslav countries: Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (§ 4.2). Subsequently, I describe the procedure I followed for selecting and collecting the data, as well as for narrowing down the initial sample in order to obtain three limited samples (of 12 items each) suitable for qualitative analysis, one for each case study (§ 4.3). Finally, I provide a thematic overview of the opinion pieces included in the three final samples (§ 4.4).

4.1 Conveying intellectual viewpoints: opinion pieces as a relevant genre

The purpose of the present research is to investigate the ways in which intellectuals engage in nation-building practices in and through public discourse. Therefore, the first step in developing a viable methodology for the study is to determine what are the communicative contexts or sites in which this activity occurs most prominently. As discussed in § 3.2.1, intellectual spokespersonship consists of a wide range of discursive practices whereby various social entities (or constituencies) are ‘brought into existence’ and made relevant within the public discourse of a given community or society. Hence, the focus should be on the mass media, as they are a key arena of public debate and (still) constitute the chief infrastructure of what is usually referred to as the public sphere.¹² The category of media texts, however, is extremely broad, as it includes texts coming from sources as diverse as newspapers, magazines, books, television, film, radio and the internet (and arguably many more) and targeting a wide

¹² For a broader discussion of the latest theoretical developments about the notion of public sphere, see Lunt & Livingstone, 2013. A theory of media power as the power of framing our experiences of the social has been elaborated by Couldry, 2000.

variety of different audiences. So the question arises as to what types of media texts are most relevant for the purpose of exploring the participation and involvement of public intellectuals in the public sphere.

The question can be conveniently addressed using the notion of *genre*. Genres are ideal categorisations of texts according to their inherent properties, such as formal and stylistic traits, textual structure and organisation, and communicative purposes. As Bax (2010) claims, a genre is characterised primarily by the function it performs, in the sense that the specific functions of a genre determine, or at least significantly shape, the linguistic features that are peculiar to that genre. As far as intellectual spokespersonship is concerned, the relevant communicative function is that of enabling the author to publicly express his or her viewpoints and thus establish himself or herself as a legitimate and authoritative ‘speaker’ for a certain social entity or group. The genre that best fulfils this function is, in my view, that of the *opinion piece*. Opinion pieces, which include editorials, commentaries, columns, op-eds, interviews¹³ and letters published in the press (especially newspapers and magazines) are in fact intended to convey the author’s (or the interviewee’s) authoritative and/or expert opinion about matters of great interest and significance for the public, and tend to be perceived as such by the readership. A distinctive feature of this genre is the predominance of the argumentative mode (Bax, 2010) and the evaluative key (Martin & White, 2005), which are important aspects of the construction of authority in discourse. The ideological function of opinion pieces, and editorials in particular, has also been acknowledged in critical discourse studies (van Dijk, 1991).

The choice of focusing on print media such as newspapers and magazines instead of other media types, such as television, radio or online media, rests on a set of methodological considerations advanced by Mautner (2008). She argues that there are both practical and substantive reasons why critical discourse analysts would want to investigate print media such as newspapers and magazines. The practical advantage is that they are much easier to collect than audio-visual data, and also more permanent than online contents. The substantive reasons, on the other hand, are threefold: firstly, print media are typically very pervasive, which makes them able to attract public attention and thus exert political influence; secondly, they tend to reflect a social

¹³ For a discussion of the history and features of media interviews as a genre, see Bell & van Leeuwen, 1994.

stream (or *the* hegemonic social mainstream in non-pluralistic societies), which makes them valuable sites to study dominant discourses; thirdly, like all mass media they are disseminated to large audiences, which amplifies their power to promote shared constructions of reality. The last point, in particular, resonates quite strongly with the concept of intellectual spokespersonship adopted in the present study (see § 3.2.1).

So far, two key criteria for data selection have been defined: the analysis should focus on opinion pieces (as a relevant genre) published in printed newspapers and magazines (as a relevant type of media). This raises a further methodological issue: what criteria should guide the selection of specific print media outlets among the many that usually circulate in any given society? I argue that the chief criterion should be representativeness, meaning that the selection of newspapers and magazines should be such as to best reflect the variety and complexity of the relevant mediascape.¹⁴ This requires exploring the contexts in which individual print media are situated in terms of economic and political background, institutional environment, authorship, production process and characteristics of the readership (Mautner, 2008). Moreover, particular attention should be given to the ideological and organisational structure of the media, as this may significantly affect not only the way in which publics and audiences are addressed, but also the way in which they are conceptualised (Richardson, 2007).¹⁵ In the light of these indications, I propose the following approach to data selection: the sample for analysis shall include opinion pieces published in a limited number of newspapers and magazines of national (not local) circulation, to be selected so as to be representative of the spectrum of cultural-political orientations existing in the given society, as well as of the varying quality and reputation of the media outlets themselves. In other words, newspapers and magazines will be selected which reflect different cultural and political attitudes, ranging from conservative and traditionalist positions to progressive and openly anti-mainstream ones, and which span the full range from up- through middle- to down-market publications, the popular or ‘tabloid’ press. The concrete application of this approach to the present study is detailed in § 4.3 below.

¹⁴ On the concept of mediascape see Appadurai, 1990.

¹⁵ For an inquiry into the difference between audience and public and the possible intersection of the two notions, see Livingstone, 2005.

4.2 The case studies: Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina

After having established a set of criteria for choosing relevant texts on the basis of genre and media type, the next step in developing a suitable procedure for data selection is to identify specific events or situations, within the broader post-Yugoslav context, which are likely to have prompted local intellectuals to produce discourses on the nation. The idea is that the analysis of opinion pieces published in the national press in the aftermath of these events can offer valuable insights into how intellectuals engage in discursive practices of nation-building. At the same time, such an approach allows the researcher to overcome the possible bias of selecting only texts that deal specifically with the nation and national identity, which would amount to cherry-picking. As discussed in Chapter 2, the post-Yugoslav context is characterised as much by its common historical background as by the heterogeneous social, political and cultural trajectories followed by each of the post-Yugoslav societies, especially in the last decade. This complexity requires an approach to data selection based on purposive sampling (Silverman & Marvasti, 2008), that is, the investigation of a limited number of carefully selected cases aimed to illustrate the broader context that is the main focus of research. The most appropriate research method for the present study, therefore, is the *case study* method (see Stake, 2000).

In order to try to capture the variety of manifestations of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation in the contemporary post-Yugoslav transitional context, I have chosen to address three case studies. These focus on three recent events that had great resonance, both locally and internationally, and which were accompanied by sustained public debate around issues concerning various aspects of the concept of a nation, such as national identity, national history and culture, and its future development. These are: i) Kosovo's declaration of independence from Serbia in 2008; ii) Croatia's entry into the European Union in 2013; and iii) the wave of anti-government protests that took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2014. These three cases have been selected because they illustrate the main aspects of the post-Yugoslav context laid out in § 2.3, namely, post-conflict reconciliation, democratisation and European integration, and the challenges of post-socialist transition. A brief introduction to each of the three cases is provided below.

4.2.1 Serbia: the aftermath of the declaration of independence of Kosovo in 2008

As discussed in § 2.3, Serbia's post-socialist and democratic transformation started as late as 2000, after an entire decade of rule by the Socialist Party of Serbia led by Slobodan Milošević, which attempted to forcibly unite all Serbs living in the various Yugoslav republics in a single state and secure for them the dominant position among the other ethnic groups. In Kosovo, this exacerbated long-term ethnic tensions existing between the Albanian majority and the small Serb minority. Inter-ethnic violence culminated in the late 1990s, when Milošević launched a military offensive to crush Kosovo's growing resistance movement (Ramet, 2002). The conflict was ended in 1999 by NATO's intervention, resulting in Kosovo being placed under transitional United Nations administration. In 2006, international negotiations to determine the final status of Kosovo were initiated, but were largely unsuccessful. This led to Kosovo unilaterally declaring independence from Serbia on 17 February 2008, which again provoked strong reactions in Serbia. As the Serbian government disputed the legality of the act, more than half a million protesters took to the streets in Belgrade under the slogan "Kosovo is Serbia". On the whole, Kosovo's achieving of *de facto* independence had a profound impact on the articulation of the nation in Serbian public discourse. In fact, widespread concern soon emerged over the implications this 'loss of territorial integrity' could have for Serbian nationhood. The main reason for this concern is that Kosovo is widely regarded as the 'cradle' of Serbian culture and the place where defining moments in the country's history occurred (Malcolm, 1998).

4.2.2 Croatia's accession into the European Union in 2013

Similarly to Serbia, Croatia's democratic transition also began only in 2000, with the end of Tuđman's autocratic regime. The new government implemented important democratic reforms, steering the country towards full integration into the European Union sphere. Ten years after submitting its application for membership, on 1 July 2013 Croatia joined the EU as its 28th member state, thus becoming the second former Yugoslav republic to become part of the EU, after Slovenia. EU accession was hailed as a historic achievement both by the Croatian government in office, led by President Ivo Josipović and Prime Minister Zoran Ivanović (both from the Social Democratic Party), and by the majority of the Croatian people, who had already expressed their strong support for joining the Union in a referendum held the year before (with 66% of participants voting in favour). As discussed in § 2.3.3, over the

past two decades European identity has become a widely shared social value among the Croatian people, and this has further consolidated the country's European perspective. The achievement of EU membership was thus woven into official narratives as the culmination of Croatia's transition from the burdensome legacy of the Yugoslav communist past into the family of Western European democracies. The process of negotiating EU accession, however, was not without obstacles, mainly due to the high and rigid requirements of EU conditionality. Full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, for instance, represented a major challenge: Croatia's efforts to capture the war crimes suspect General Ante Gotovina were deemed insufficient, which led to the commencement of negotiations being postponed. Apart from an unresolved border issue with Slovenia, other significant challenges included the reform of the judicial system, a crackdown on corruption and organised crime, a dispute with the Italian government over land ownership, and the issue of shipyard privatisation. These drawbacks resulted in occasional spikes of euroscepticism, which partly stifled the otherwise very positive attitude of the Croatian people towards European integration.

4.2.3 Bosnia and Herzegovina: the 2014 anti-government protests

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a severely divided society, which is still deeply affected by the trauma of the recent war that lasted from 1992 until 1995. The territorial divisions and complex power-sharing arrangements introduced by the Dayton Peace Agreement (1995) to keep the country together have been widely criticised as entrenching existing divisions among the country's 'constituent peoples' (i.e. Bosniaks, Serbs, Croats). Furthermore, the social situation in the country has been steadily deteriorating over the past decade, mainly due to widespread political corruption and inefficiencies in the privatisation process. In the early months of 2014, a series of demonstrations and riots took place in several cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The unrest first erupted on 4 February in the industrial town of Tuzla, where thousands of people rallied to express their anger about unemployment and the collapse of local industries, but quickly spread to other cities including, among others, the capital Sarajevo, Mostar, Zenica, and Jajce. The protests, fuelled by discontent over rampant political corruption, monotonous ethno-nationalist rhetoric and the country's deteriorating economic conditions, led to the emergence of a mass movement seeking social justice and the overthrow of lower-level governments, which were held responsible for the

stagnation. The unprecedented levels of participation and the remarkably non-ethnic character of the upheaval led international media to refer to it, somewhat prematurely, as the “Bosnian Spring” in the wake of the 2011 Arab Spring (and the 1968 Prague Spring before that). Deep dissatisfaction with the political status quo prompted the movement to entrust self-governed citizen assemblies (called plenums) with the task of articulating clear political demands, thus enacting a participatory model of direct democracy never experienced before in Bosnian-Herzegovinian society. Apart from small differences, all the plenums demanded the revision of the privatisation process, the end of excessive benefits for politicians, and new governments filled with people with no record of corruption. As a result, most canton governments¹⁶ resigned and canton assemblies mostly accepted, at least nominally, the main demands by the plenums. Although the long-term political impact of the protests remains an open question (especially since the following political elections in October 2014 saw yet further the consolidation of the main nationalist parties from the Serb, Croat and Bosniak communities), the movement reinvigorated critical debate about the exclusionary political-institutional arrangements of post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina and the dominance of the ethno-political paradigm in the country’s social and political life.

4.3 Creation of the data sample

In this section, I elaborate a method for creating three distinct samples of opinion pieces published in the national press, one for each case study, which will then be submitted to in-depth qualitative analysis (in Chapters 5, 6 and 7). The overall aim of this method is to *select those opinion pieces in which the nation is discursively most salient, while at the same time ensuring that the final samples are sufficiently representative of each country’s specific context.*

The method consists of the following steps:

1. Selection of a representative set of print media (newspapers and magazines) for each of the three countries under examination;

¹⁶ The cantons of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina are the political districts of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, one of the two political entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina (the other being Republika Srpska). Each of the ten cantons has its own government headed by a Prime Minister.

2. Gathering of all the opinion pieces addressing the events detailed in the case studies which were published in the selected media outlets within 30 days of the date of the event;
3. Downsizing of the initial sample through quantitative techniques (if and where needed) in order to obtain three intermediate samples, each including a maximum of 40 opinion pieces.
4. Downsizing of the intermediate samples via thematic analysis in order to obtain three final samples, each including 12 opinion pieces.

Before describing each step in more detail, a few remarks about certain issues of language and translation that may arise in the analysis are in order. My knowledge of the languages spoken in Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina¹⁷ allows me to collect and analyse texts written in the original language instead of relying on translations. For the reader's convenience, all the original texts, along with the English translation of all the excerpts included in the analysis, are available in the CD enclosed with this thesis. All translation issues as well as all discrepancies between the original text and the English translation that might affect the analysis will be duly addressed and explained, either in text or in footnotes.

4.3.1 Step 1: selection of newspapers and magazines

The first step in the creation of the data sample is to identify the set of newspapers and magazines in national circulation that is sufficiently representative of each country's mediascape. As stated in § 4.1, the selection should reflect both the variety of cultural-political orientations existing in the given society and the varying quality and reputation of the print media outlets themselves (as both dimensions affect patterns of production and reception). Following these two criteria, I have selected a limited number of outlets (newspapers and magazines) for each case study, as illustrated below.¹⁸

With regard to the case of Serbia, I have selected four daily newspapers (*Politika*, *Danas*, *Blic*, *Press*) and two weekly magazines (*Nedeljne Informativne Novine*,

¹⁷ What was once known as Serbo-Croatian is now known as Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, Montenegrin etc. depending on the speaker's political and ethnic affiliation; see Greenberg, 2004 for a detailed study of the disintegration of the Serbo-Croatian language.

¹⁸ Information about Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian-Herzegovinian print media outlets has been taken mainly from the website of the European Journalism Centre (EJC): www.ejc.net.

Vreme). *Politika* and *Danas*, the two most important Serbian up-market papers, enjoy a high reputation for journalistic quality and reliability. Launched in 1904 as Serbia's first modern and civic-oriented daily newspaper, *Politika* has earned its reputation by nourishing an impartial analytical approach to politics and public life, by providing fact-based reporting, and by featuring editorials written by people from all spheres of life; its circulation was 75,000 copies in 2009. *Danas*, on the other hand, was established in 1997 by a group of journalists opposed to the Milošević regime, and in the late 1990s often found itself targeted by the Serbian authorities because of its independent editorial policy; today it is a left-oriented paper promoting European integration, human rights and the protection of minorities. *Blic* is a middle-market tabloid founded in 1996 by a group of Austria-based investors and owned by a Swiss communications group since 2004; with a circulation surpassing 150,000 copies, it is the most widely read newspaper in the country. *Press* was a popular down-market tabloid published in Belgrade between 2005 and 2012; following its centre-right populist orientation, it was prone to unbridled criticism and sensationalism. *Nedeljne Informativne Novine* (known by its acronym *NIN*) and *Vreme* are weekly magazines addressing political and current events. Originally started in 1935, *NIN* is one of Serbia's oldest and most renowned weeklies, with a long tradition of opening its pages to esteemed Serbian writers, artists and public figures (the magazine also awards its own literary prize every year). Although commercial competition following the collapse of socialism has forced *NIN* to adapt its content to wider audiences, it still remains a highly regarded magazine; it has an average circulation of 15,000 copies. *Vreme*, on the other hand, was founded in 1990 by intellectuals dissatisfied with the Milošević regime, and has since established itself as an independent, high-quality weekly magazine, and also as one of the most reliable news sources in the whole post-Yugoslav space.

In the scope of the case study on Croatia, I have selected five daily newspapers (*Večernji list*, *Jutarnji list*, *Slobodna Dalmacija*, *Novi list* and *24sata*) and one weekly magazine (*Gloria*). Founded in Zagreb in 1959, *Večernji list* was the leading state-owned daily in socialist Croatia, and since 2000 has been under the ownership of the Austrian media group Styria Medien AG; its political orientation is conservative, and its circulation is approximately 60,000 copies. *Jutarnji list* was launched in 1998 by the local Europapress Holding media group and quickly replaced *Večernji list* as the

most widely read paper in the country, establishing itself as an authoritative left-leaning and liberal news source. *Slobodna Dalmacija* started in the 1940s as a Dalmatian regional newspaper, but quickly became one of the most widely read papers across the former Yugoslavia. Fiercely opposed by the Tuđman government in the early 1990s as one of Croatia's few truly independent media, *Slobodna Dalmacija* was subsequently privatised and its editorial policy steered towards hard-line nationalism, which resulted in many veteran journalists and editorial staff being fired or leaving voluntarily. Acquired by Europapress Holding (see above) in 2005, it is nowadays the fourth best-selling national newspaper. *Novi list* is a respected regional daily newspaper published in Rijeka; highly critical of the Tuđman regime in the 1990s, today it is considered a centre-left newspaper. The fifth print media outlet, *24 sata*, is the youngest daily newspaper in the country. It was launched by Styria Medien AG (see above) in 2005 as a tabloid targeting the younger generation and, due to its attractive layout and affordable price, quickly managed to reach a circulation of more than 100,000 copies, thus becoming the third daily newspaper in Croatia in terms of circulation, after *Jutarnji list* and *Večernji list*. Since Croatia's magazine market is led by women's magazines, I have decided to include *Gloria* in the sample as the best-selling weekly in the country; first published in 1994, it has a circulation of approximately 100,000 copies.

As in the case of Croatia, the selection for Bosnia and Herzegovina also includes five daily newspapers (*Oslobođenje*, *Dnevni Avaz*, *Dnevni list*, *Nezavisne Novine* and *Glas Srpske*) and one weekly magazine (*BH Dani*). Since reading patterns are significantly influenced by ethnicity, in the sense that print media based in one region of the country where a certain ethnic group is predominant tend not to be read in other parts of the country or by people belonging to other ethnic groups, I have decided to include print media based in different cities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Oslobođenje*, founded in 1943, is a popular and highly respected newspaper published in Sarajevo, which gained distinction during the Bosnian War as its staff, consisting of Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats, managed to publish the paper continuously throughout the siege of the city (1992-1995); nowadays it expresses views that are close to those of the Social-Democratic Party. *Dnevni Avaz*, also published in Sarajevo, is the country's largest newspaper; launched in 1995 by Fahrudin Radončić, a media magnate who later founded the centre-right political party *Union for a Better Future of BiH*, it has a

distinct pro-Bosniak stance. *Dnevni list*, the second most widely read newspaper in the country (according to a 2007 survey), is based in Mostar and addresses a mainly Croatian audience. *Nezavisne novine* and *Glas srpske* are both based in Banja Luka and are read primarily by the Serb population. *Nezavisne novine* was launched in 1995 as a weekly independent magazine, and later became a daily reaching an average circulation of 18,000. *Glas Srpske*, on the other hand, was originally established during World War II by national liberation parties, and during the Yugoslav era it had a regional character until it became, in the late 1980s, a Serbian paper in its content and target audience; it was privatised in 2008 and today it is known as a daily with strongly nationalist rhetoric. The only magazine included in the sample is *BH Dani*, a magazine focused on current political and cultural affairs launched in 1992 and which features notable journalists and columnists; its average circulation is 25,000 copies per week.

4.3.2 Step 2: data gathering (creation of the initial samples)

The second step in the creation of the sample is to search the selected daily newspapers and weekly magazines for opinion pieces that address, to a greater or lesser extent, the key event defining each case study (see above), and which were published in the 30 days following the event.¹⁹ Relevant opinion pieces are identified on the basis of the title or, in case the title did not reveal enough about the content of the piece, through skimming the text. The results of this selection process are illustrated below:

- **Serbia: 108 items** (*Politika*: 43; *Danas*: 31; *Blic*: 5; *Press*: 17; *NIN*: 8; *Vreme*: 4).
- **Croatia: 40 items** (*Večernji list*: 17; *Jutarnji list*: 11; *Slobodna Dalmacija*: 4; *Novi list*: 8; *24sata*: 0; *Gloria*: 0).
- **Bosnia and Herzegovina: 36 items** (*Oslobođenje*: 11; *Dnevni Avaz*: 10; *Dnevni list*: 3; *Nezavisne Novine*: 6; *Glas Srpske*: 0; *BH Dani*: 6).

As stated above, the purpose of the sampling procedure is to obtain three final samples of 12 opinion pieces each. While in the cases of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina this can be done through qualitative thematic analysis (see Step 4 below), the

¹⁹ For Serbia: from 17 February until 18 March 2008; for Croatia: from 1 until 31 July 2013; for Bosnia and Herzegovina: from 4 February until 3 March 2014.

considerable size of the Serbia sample requires elaborating and applying a downsizing method based on quantitative techniques. This is done in Step 3 below.

4.3.3 Step 3: downsizing of the Serbia sample through quantitative techniques

The third step consists of downsizing the initial Serbia data sample in order to obtain an intermediate sample of 40 items suitable to be further downsized via thematic analysis. For this purpose I have developed a method that employs quantitative corpus linguistics (CL) techniques to determine the extent to which the nation is thematised in each of the sample texts (on the basis of specific keywords, as explained below).

Generally speaking, the potential advantages of combining quantitative corpus-driven analysis and critical discourse analysis have been acknowledged in the literature from both fields (see for instance Baker, Gabrielatos, KhosraviNik, Krzyżanowski, McEnery & Wodak, 2008; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). In particular, according to Mautner (2009) CL techniques may help critical discourse analysts to process larger amounts of data, broaden the empirical grounds of research, and gain different kinds of insight into textual data; moreover, they can help reduce cherry-picking (see Koller & Mautner, 2004: p. 218). In the scope of the present study, however, CL techniques are employed in their more ‘traditional’ role of a method for supporting qualitative discourse analysis, that is, for the purpose of downsizing a large sample of media texts (see Baker, Gabrielatos & McEnery, 2013: p. 276, in note 7).

The proposed method consists of: i) defining a set of keywords that relate to the nation, both generally and within the concrete context of the Serbian case study; ii) using CL software tools (Wordsmith) to determine the cumulative normalised frequency of all the keywords in each text included in the initial sample; iii) ranking the texts according to their frequency values; iv) selecting the 40 texts with the highest keyword frequencies, in such a way as to approximate the original distribution across print media outlets (in order to preserve the representativeness of the initial sample).

The definition of keyword adopted here is a qualitative one (unlike in corpus linguistics, where the term stands for a word that is statistically characteristic of one or more texts; see Culpeper & Demmen, 2015): a keyword is a word that is culturally ‘key’, in the sense that it captures the essence of discourses embedded in particular social, political and cultural contexts (Williams, 1983) and therefore activates specific

cognitive frames (see Bigi & Greco Morasso, 2012). This resonates with Mautner's (2009) remark that CL processes constitute a valuable approach to text and discourse analysis only if the relevant discursive phenomenon crystallises around discrete lexical items or patterns. Specifically, the proposed method looks at two types of keywords: i) lexical items referring to general aspects of the nation; and ii) lexical items referring to the specific national and ethnic communities involved in the case under examination, such as ethnonyms, demonyms, politonyms, toponyms, as well as relevant deictic expressions.

The first category includes terms such as *nacija* and *nacion* (nation), *nacionalista* (nationalist), *narod* (people), *patrija*, *domovina*, *otadžbina* (homeland, fatherland), *zajednica* (community), *zemlja* (land, country), *stanovništvo* (population), *ljudi* (people), *društvo* (society), *država* (state), and *građanstvo* (citizenry) in all their inflected variants,²⁰ as well as all nouns, adjectives and adverbs derived from them. The second category includes terms such as *Srbija* (Serbia), *Srbin*, *Srbijanac* (Serb), *srpski*, *srbijanski* (Serbian), *srpstvo* (Serbianness), *Albanac* (Albanian), *Albanija* (Albania), *albanski* (Albanian), *Šiptar* (Albanian) *Kosovo* (Kosovo), *Kosovo i Metohija* (Kosovo and Metohija), *Kosmet*, *KiM* (short forms for Kosovo and Metohija), again in all their inflected variants; moreover, it includes relevant deictic expressions such as *mi* (we), *nas* (us), *nam/a* (us), *naš* (our, ours), *oni* (they), *njih* (them), *njima* (them), *njihov* (their, theirs), *ovde/ovdje* (here), *ovdašnji* (local), *tu/tamo* (there), *tamošnji/ondašnji* (belonging there). Since not all of terms listed above necessarily relate to the nation (or a specific national group), every single concordance (i.e. the immediate co-text of a word) has been manually checked to ensure that only relevant occurrences are counted in.

The application of the downsizing procedure described above has allowed the researcher to obtain an intermediate sample of 40 opinion pieces with the following distribution across print media outlets: *Politika*: 15; *Danas*: 12; *Blic*: 2; *Press*: 6; *Nezavisne informativne novine*: 4; *Vreme*: 1.

4.3.4 Step 4: creation of the final samples through downsizing based on thematic analysis

²⁰ The Serbian-Croatian-Bosnian language is characterised by declension, that is, the inflection of nouns, pronouns and adjectives to indicate number, case and gender.

The fourth and last step involves downsizing the intermediate samples in order to obtain three final samples of 12 items each. This is done through thematic analysis, which allows the determination of the thematic/topical structure of each text and thus weeds out those in which the nation is less thematically salient.

Broadly speaking, thematic/topical analysis accounts for the way in which themes/topics are hierarchically organised within a specific text. Within critical discourse studies, this approach is largely based on van Dijk's seminal work on macro-structural analysis (1977, 1980, 1988) and topical analysis (1991). Macro-structural analysis is a highly formalised procedure for deriving or inferring topics from any strand of discourse through a systematic reduction of semantic information. Specifically, it consists of a set of three semantic operations (i.e. deletion, generalisation and construction; see van Dijk, 1980) whose recursive application allows the reduction of the information contained in a (coherent) text to a limited set of macro-propositions (i.e. topics), which constitute the macro-structure of that particular text. Within critical discourse studies, macro-structural analysis tends to be employed as a strategy for downsizing large samples rather than as a proper analytical tool. Approaches grounded in the DHA, in particular, tend to integrate thematic/topical analysis as a 'first level' analytical tool for detecting the main theme(s) of given strands of discourse and for mapping the way in which they are hierarchically organised.²¹

In the scope of the present study, thematic analysis is employed precisely as a 'first level' analytical tool for downsizing purposes. I have started by identifying the main topic and the immediate sub-topics of each opinion piece, which has allowed me to immediately filter out those texts whose main topics were not about the nation (or aspects of it). Subsequently, I have assigned to each of the remaining texts a 'saliency value' calculated by dividing the number of sub-topics addressing the nation (or aspects of it) by the total number of sub-topics included the given text. Finally, for each case study I have gathered the opinion pieces with the highest saliency value from each print media outlet (in order to ensure representativeness) and added 6 to 8 of the remaining top-ranking opinion pieces (regardless of the print media), in order to

²¹ A nice illustration of this more 'exploratory' use of thematic/topical analysis is found in Krzyżanowski (2008).

obtain a final sample of 12 items. An overview of the opinion pieces included in the three final samples is provided in the next section.

4.4 Overview of the final samples for the three case studies

In this section I provide an overview of the three final samples obtained through the downsizing procedure explained in § 4.3 above. The original texts of the opinion pieces included in the final samples, along with the translations into English of the excerpts selected for analysis, are provided in the CD enclosed with the present thesis.

4.4.1 The Serbia sample

The final sample for the Serbia case study includes 12 opinion pieces. An overview of the content of each text is provided in Table 2 below. For the sake of clarity, each text from all three samples has been assigned a unique code (indicated in the left column) which will be used as reference in the analysis.

Table 2. *Content overview of the texts included in the Serbia sample.*

S01	Ivana Anojčić, <i>Naši interesi</i> [Our interests], published in <i>Politika</i> on 17 February 2008 In her commentary, published on the very day of Kosovo’s declaration of independence, Anojčić discusses the highlights of a conference on Serbia’s national and state interests held in Belgrade. The main points raised by the speakers are that there is no clear consensus about such interests, that Serbia’s progress is hindered by unresolved border disputes, and that Serbia should embrace democracy and European integration.
S02	Milan Grujić, <i>Lazarev zavet</i> [Lazar’s oath], published in <i>Press</i> on 17 February 2008 Also published on the day of Kosovo’s independence, Grujić’s opinion piece firmly defends the idea that Serbian society ought to honour its past struggles, epitomised in the myth of Prince Lazar, ²² by claiming sovereignty over Kosovo.
S03	Miloš Garić, <i>Prokletije</i> [The Accursed Mountains],²³ published in <i>Press</i> on 18 February 2008 In his passionate commentary, Garić argues that Serbia must and will fight for Kosovo in the future. After expressing disgust for the Serbs who do not deplore Kosovo’s secession

²² Prince Lazar is a medieval Serbian ruler who gave his life fighting against the Ottomans in the Battle of Kosovo in 1389. He is a key figure of the Kosovo myth (see § 5.3.4 for details).

²³ *Prokletije* is a mountain range on the western Balkan peninsula, extending from northern Albania to Kosovo, to eastern Montenegro. Its name means “the accursed (mountains)”, possibly because they are perceived as wild and insurmountable. Here it is used metonymically to refer to Kosovo.

	<p>from Serbia, he declares that future generations of Serbs will take up the struggle for Kosovo in the name of the nation's great ancestors.</p>
S04	<p>Nikola Samardžić, <i>Kosovo u Srbiji</i> [Kosovo in Serbia], published in <i>Danas</i> on 19 February 2008</p> <p>Samardžić, historian and professor at the University of Belgrade, advances the claim that the Serbian political and economic elites are the most responsible for the country's critical situation. Not only have they precipitated the Kosovo crisis, he argues, but they also foster the Kosovo myth as ideological cover for pursuing their own private interests.</p>
S05	<p>Goran Despotović, <i>Vreme za odgovornost, otrežnjenje i razum</i> [Time for responsibility, sobriety and reason], published in <i>Danas</i> on 20 February 2008</p> <p>Despotović blames the Serbian political elite for being self-interested and for using the Kosovo issue to shift public attention away from the real problems affecting society. He then urges the political leadership to improve Serbia's foreign relations and to embrace European integration as a pathway to prosperity.</p>
S06	<p>Jelena Cerovina, <i>Bol i nada</i> [Pain and hope], published in <i>Politika</i> on 22 February 2008</p> <p>In her opinion piece, <i>Politika</i> reporter Jelena Cerovina advances the view that, contrary to popular belief, most Serbs are not willing to accept the loss of Kosovo, as shown by the recent massive street protests.</p>
S07	<p>Đoko Kesić, <i>Mudrost</i> [Wisdom], published in <i>Press</i> on 26 February 2008</p> <p>Kesić's opinion piece provides advice to Serbia's political and intellectual elites on how to wisely address the Kosovo issue. Kesić argues that Serbia needs to avoid armed conflicts and clearly define its own goals, and concludes by stating that the best way for Serbia to strengthen itself is to continue its engagement in the European integration process.</p>
S08	<p>Batić Bačević, <i>Tri lidera</i> [Three leaders], published in <i>NIN</i> on 28 February 2008</p> <p>Bačević regards the inability of Serbia's three main political leaders (President Tadić, Prime Minister Koštunica and the opposition leader Nikolić) to adopt a unified response to the Kosovo crisis as evidence of the high level of polarisation of Serbian society. Such dividedness, he contends, damages Serbia's international reputation and undermines its chances to achieve prosperity.</p>
S09	<p>Teofil Pančić, <i>Anamneza jedne parole</i> [Anamnesis of a slogan], published in <i>Vreme</i> on 28 February 2008</p> <p>In this ironic and caustic commentary, <i>Vreme's</i> prominent columnist and political analyst Teofil Pančić takes a cue from a statement by Prime Minister Koštunica to expose what he</p>

	regards as the core of Serbia's dominant political ideology, namely the idea that Kosovo has acquired a much greater significance than Serbia itself. He concludes by pointing out how the political establishment is increasingly divided over the Kosovo issue.
S10	Vuk Drašković, <i>Kosovo i mi</i> [Kosovo and us], published in <i>Blic</i> on 5 March 2008 A renowned political figure, opinion leader and novelist, Vuk Drašković accuses both the political elites who ruled Serbia in the 1990s and those who spearheaded its post-Milošević democratic transition of being responsible for the loss of Kosovo, which he views as a traumatic national defeat. He also states that recognition of Kosovo's independence is not a precondition for Serbia's EU integration, and concludes with an appeal to the Serbian people to uphold the spirit of the <i>Zajedno</i> coalition (i.e. the main anti-Milošević movement during the 1990s, of which Drašković himself was a prominent leader).
S11	Vladimir Arsenijević, <i>Kosovo ni(je) Srbija</i> [Kosovo is (not) Serbia], published in <i>Politika</i> on 13 March 2008 Novelist and columnist Arsenijević advances the viewpoint that Serbian society needs to 'grow up' by coming to terms with the fact that Kosovo is no longer part of Serbia. The inability of many to accept this truth, he claims, depends on a widespread 'disorder of perception' that has characterised Serbian society since the demise of Milošević. The responsibility to help Serbia overcome this predicament, he concludes, lies with the political leaders.
S12	Milan Škulić, <i>Kosovo je Srbija</i> [Kosovo is Serbia], published in <i>Politika</i> on 18 March 2008 In his commentary written in response to Vladimir Arsenijević's editorial (see above), law professor Milan Škulić maintains that Kosovo belongs to Serbia from both a legal and cultural perspective, and that those who claim the opposite should be considered as traitors to the Serbian nation.

4.4.2 The Croatia sample

The final sample for the Croatia case study includes 11 commentaries and 1 interview.

Table 3 below provides a brief overview of their content.

Table 3. *Content overview of the texts included in the Croatia sample.*

C01	Božo Skoko, <i>Hrvatska je zaslužila dostojanstveniji finale ulaska u EU</i> [Croatia deserved a grander finale in the EU accession game], published in <i>Večernji list</i> on 1 July 2013 Skoko acknowledges the fact that EU accession will likely boost Croatia's international
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	<p>reputation, but also regrets that the country could have made better use of this opportunity by promoting its own success stories.</p>
C02	<p>Gordan Zubčić, <i>Povratak u ekipu kojoj pripadamo</i> [Back into the team where we belong], published in <i>Slobodna Dalmacija</i> on 1 July 2013</p> <p>In this short commentary, Zubčić celebrates Croatia's accession into the EU as a return to where the country truly belongs.</p>
C03	<p>Ivo Josipović, <i>Početak budućnosti za našu Hrvatsku</i> [The beginning of the future for our Croatia], published in <i>Jutarnji list</i> on 1 July 2013</p> <p>Writing in his official capacity of President of Croatia, Ivo Josipović expresses his satisfaction for Croatia's newly achieved EU membership. European integration, he claims, brings freedom, security and solidarity to Croatian society, and therefore constitutes an excellent opportunity to achieve social consensus.</p>
C04	<p>Josip Leko, <i>EU je šansa koju moramo iskoristiti</i> [The EU is an opportunity we have to take advantage of], published in <i>Jutarnji list</i> on 1 July 2013</p> <p>Josip Leko, Speaker of the Croatian Parliament at the time, embraces EU membership as an opportunity for Croatia to progress. He acknowledges that Croatia has made significant efforts to promote the European project, and that this has shaped Croatian society in profound ways. Moreover, he calls attention to Croatia's role in stabilising the region of South-Eastern Europe, and points out its need to take a proactive role within the European context.</p>
C05	<p>Jurica Pavičić, <i>Između katedrala i balkanskih gudura</i> [Between cathedrals and Balkan crevices], published in <i>Jutarnji list</i> on 1 July 2013</p> <p>Pavičić advances the view that Croatian national identity is based upon a unique combination of two paradoxes: first, Croatia is a majority Catholic country in the Balkans; second, Croats are Mediterranean Slavs. According to Pavičić, the lack of an organic national identity is also the reason why Croats are particularly fond of symbolic representations of togetherness.</p>
C06	<p>Milan Jajčinović, <i>Od danas počinje novo hrvatsko povijesno vrijeme</i> [Today begins Croatia's new historical era], published in <i>Večernji list</i> on 1 July 2013</p> <p>Jajčinović's opinion piece presents EU accession as a great opportunity for Croatia to achieve progress and prosperity, but also emphasises what Croatia brings to Europe. By becoming a EU member state, he argues, Croatia has broken away from the Balkans and its mentality, and finally returned to the European cultural and civilisational environment.</p>
C07	<p>Miljenko Jergović, <i>Zemlja bez privrede i bez rudnih blaga, s mnogo vode i vjetra</i> [A</p>

	<p>country without an economy or mineral treasures, with plenty of water and wind], published in <i>Jutarnji list</i> on 1 July 2013</p> <p>In this commentary, Jergović, a well-known writer and columnist of Bosnian descent, spells out Croatia's unique cultural and natural features. After providing a brief history of Croatian statehood, he stresses how Croatian culture is the product of a mixture of different cultural influences coming from the East and the West. He also contends that Croatia is a very rich country in spite of its current economic crisis.</p>
C08	<p>Nino Raspudić, <i>Probudili smo se kao građani EU! Što će nam biti novi cilj?</i> [We have awakened as EU citizens! What will be our next goal?], published in <i>Večernji list</i> on 1 July 2013</p> <p>Political analyst Nino Raspudić advances the claim that EU accession, instead of being the object of rational deliberation, has been constructed as an irrefutable dogma in Croatian public discourse. Although he believes that EU membership has not brought substantial changes to Croatian society, he expects it to produce a normalisation of the Croatian political spectrum.</p>
C09	<p>Marina Šerić, <i>Postali smo dio europske bauštele. Zasućimo rukave i počnimo raditi</i> [We have joined the European construction site. Let's roll up our sleeves and get to work], published in <i>Večernji list</i> on 2 July 2013</p> <p>Šerić's commentary draws an analogy between the European project and a construction site, arguing that Croatia should take the opportunity to take part in the project in a creative and mature way.</p>
C10	<p>Nino Raspudić, <i>Tko o čemu, oni o regiji, ali tko ih je ovlastio da Opatiju i Banju Koviljaču opet guraju u istu državu?</i> [Let them rattle on about the region, but who authorised them to push Opatija and Banja Koviljača into the same country again?], published in <i>Večernji list</i> on 5 July 2013</p> <p>In his second opinion piece included in the Croatia sample (see the first above), Raspudić criticises the idea that EU membership implies that Croatia should seek new forms of regional association with the other post-Yugoslav countries. This idea, he claims, has no popular support or democratic legitimation, and its realisation would be against Croatia's interests.</p>
C11	<p>Josip Jović, <i>Hoće li Europa umjeti da pjeva...</i> [Will Europe be able to sing...], published in <i>Slobodna Dalmacija</i> on 7 July 2013</p> <p>EU-phoric attitudes are largely unjustified, Jović claims in his commentary, because those who will mostly benefit from EU accession are the politicians. Not only have ordinary</p>

	people remained rather indifferent, but EU integration also involves a loss of sovereignty, so that Croatia will now be more exposed to external forces and interests.
C12	<p>Katarina Luketić (interviewed by L. Tomičić), <i>Hrvatska je u zabludi ako misli da može pobjeći od Balkana</i> [Croatia is mistaken if she thinks she can escape from the Balkans], published in <i>Novi list</i> on 13 July 2013</p> <p>In this interview about her new book, <i>Balkan: od geografije do fantazije</i> [The Balkans: from geography to imagination], literary critic and essayist Katarina Luketić articulates a critique of stereotypical representations of the Balkans, both in Croatia and in Europe. Particularly, she argues that both the negative perception of the Balkans and the dominance of the return-to-Europe narrative in Croatian public discourse are a result of the nationalist ideology nourished by the Tuđman regime.</p>

4.4.3 The Bosnia and Herzegovina sample

Lastly, the final sample for the Bosnia and Herzegovina case study includes 7 commentaries and 5 interviews. Table 4 below provides an overview of their content.

Table 4. Content overview of the texts included in the Bosnia and Herzegovina sample.

B01	<p>Almasa Hadžić, <i>Neka ih je stid!</i> [Shame on them!], published in <i>Dnevni Avaz</i> on 7 February 2014</p> <p>In this quite aggressive opinion piece, written a few days after the first wave of protests, Tuzla-based reporter Almasa Hadžić openly sides with the protesters, blaming the government for failing to protect the people's interests and to address their demands.</p>
B02	<p>Dino Mustafić, <i>Ujedinjeni u gnjevu</i> [United in anger], published in <i>Oslobođenje</i> on 10 February 2014</p> <p>Film and theatre director Dino Mustafić regards social rage as a legitimate reaction against political corruption, as a way to pursue social justice. He blames both politicians and prominent observers for defaming protesters, framing the protests as ethnically motivated, and denying the possibility of social change. He then wishes for progressive forces to reshape the country's political system.</p>
B03	<p>Slavo Kukić, <i>Zemaljski bogovi i socijalna bijeda. Socijalni bunt za još jedan mandat etnonacionalista</i> [Earthly gods and social misery. A social uprising which will earn the ethno-nationalists another term], published in <i>Dnevni list</i> on 10 February 2014</p> <p>Sociologist and politician Slavo Kukić advances the view that protests are likely to favour ethno-nationalists by giving them an opportunity to manipulate the masses and further</p>

	entrench their power. He contends that protests stem from widespread discontent but are far from having a revolutionary character, as they are probably led by powerful actors behind the scenes.
B04	<p>Almasa Hadžić, Čir je pukao [The bubble has burst], published in <i>Dnevni Avaz</i> on 11 February 2014</p> <p>In this other commentary, Almasa Hadžić reaffirms her support for the protests, stating that they are a legitimate response to the social discontent caused by the political elites, which she also blames for manipulating the masses in order to gain consensus.</p>
B05	<p>Nino Raspudić, Njihova lasta ne čini naše proljeće [Their swallow does not make our spring], published in <i>Nezavisne novine</i> on 11 February 2014</p> <p>Political commentator Nino Raspudić²⁴ offers various interpretations of the demonstrations, suggesting that they could be part of broader power struggles at the national or international level. He concludes by arguing that Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina do not have a stake in the current protest movement, because they lack proper political representation in the country and therefore have nobody to protest against.</p>
B06	<p>Ibrahim Prohić (interviewed by Đ. Krajišnik), Vlast se plaši jedinstva građana [The government is afraid of the unity of the citizens], published in <i>Dani</i> on 14 February 2014</p> <p>Political analyst and psychologist Ibrahim Prohić endorses the protests as a way to vent popular frustration with the political leaders as well as express widespread concern over the deteriorating social situation in the country. He claims that the authorities fear the masses and hence react by fostering ethnic animosities and condemning violence instead of facing their own responsibilities.</p>
B07	<p>Enes Trumić, Neko se probudio, neko se tek budi [Someone woke up, some are just waking up], published in <i>Oslobođenje</i> on 17 February 2014</p> <p>Commentator Enes Trumić contends that protests have forced political elites to confront their failings, heralding progress and prosperity for the whole country. He blames the authorities for promoting entertainment (especially football) as a way to defuse social discontent, and justifies violent acts by the protesters as a struggle for survival. Finally, he calls upon Gandhi-like political leaders to work for the common good of Bosnian-Herzegovinian society.</p>
B08	<p>Asim Mujkić (interviewed by V. Bačanović), Gradimo otoke slobode [Let us build islands of freedom], published in <i>Dani</i> on 21 February 2014</p>

²⁴ Note that two texts by Nino Raspudić are also included in the Croatia sample.

	<p>Political science professor Asim Mujkić advances the view that the citizen plenums challenge the dominant ethno-nationalist ideology in significant ways. After discussing the ideological structure of Bosnian-Herzegovinian society and the role of academia in it, he endorses direct democracy as a way for the marginalised to re-enter the political debate and achieve emancipation. Protests and plenums, he maintains, provide an innovative alternative to ethno-politics.</p>
B09	<p>Ibrahim Prohić (interviewed by S. Degirmendžić), <i>Vlast se uplašila opljačkanih građana</i> [The authorities are afraid of defrauded citizens], published in <i>Dnevni Avaz</i> on 21 February 2014</p> <p>In this other interview, political analyst and psychologist Ibrahim Prohić explains that politicians' reactions to the protests consist of four phases: silence, media spinning, staged commitment to change, repression. He argues that political elites will not change unless the people force them to do so.</p>
B10	<p>Svetlana Cenić, <i>Svako svoje pljačka i svako svoje bira</i> [Everyone robs their own, everyone elects their own], published in <i>Dani</i> on 21 February 2014</p> <p>Economist and former politician Svetlana Cenić argues that politics in Bosnia and Herzegovina resembles a corrupted market system monopolised by political parties. Protests, she claims, are a reaction against the illusion of political marketing, signalling that people have begun to question the established order based on the ethnic norm.</p>
B11	<p>Zdravko Grebo (interviewed by S. Degirmendžić), <i>Nemojte odustati, budite na ulicama do izbora!</i> [Do not give up, stay in the streets until the elections!], published in <i>Dnevni Avaz</i> on 22 February 2014</p> <p>In this interview, Law professor and renowned political activist Zdravko Grebo claims that revolting against political corruption is fully justified and that every citizen affected by the problem should take to the streets. Although they failed to break the dominant ethno-nationalist paradigm, protests have a historical significance, says Grebo, asking the people to keep demonstrating and to not let the government manipulate them.</p>
B12	<p>Vehid Šehić (interviewed by S. Karić), <i>Kad kupujete socijalni mir, desi se ulica</i> [Who buys social peace gets street clashes], published in <i>Oslobođenje</i> on 26 February 2014</p> <p>Political analyst and Tuzla-based activist Vehid Šehić views the protests as a workers' revolt fuelled by the yawning gap between the people and the elite, political corruption and human rights violations. He encourages protesters to focus on redressing social inequalities and avoid political appropriation. Then, he explains the lack of protests in Republika Srpska as a result of ethnic propaganda, advancing the notion of ethnic privatisation.</p>

The results of in-depth qualitative analysis of all the texts included in the final three samples will be presented in Chapter 5, 6 and 7, respectively.

5. Serbia: the aftermath of the declaration of independence of Kosovo in 2008

This chapter addresses the first of the three case studies, i.e. the reactions of Serbia's intellectuals to Kosovo's declaration of independence in 2008. The analysis of the 12 opinion pieces included in the final sample is conducted on the basis of the methodological framework elaborated in § 3.5, which focuses on strategies of intellectual self-legitimation (which are examined in § 5.1), strategies of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation (§ 5.2), and the discursive representation of the nation (§ 5.3). The empirical findings of all three case studies are further discussed in Chapter 8, which also examines their broader significance as well as possible conceptual and methodological implications.

5.1 Strategies of intellectual self-legitimation

The purpose of this section is to examine the strategies that the authors of the selected opinion pieces employ to legitimise themselves as intellectuals by constructing their own standpoint as a vantage point, that is, as a position estranged from the broader society and thus affording them a 'better view' of the social world. As the analysis will show, the strategies used by the authors under consideration are manifold and highly diversified. On the basis of the findings, I propose to categorise them in three broad groups:

1. Strategies based on *engagement and attitude*
2. Strategies based on *knowledge and expertise*
3. Strategies based on *status and membership*

In the following, I illustrate the linguistic realisation of these strategies by analysing relevant excerpts from the sample.

5.1.1 Intellectual self-legitimation based on engagement and attitude

This category includes discursive strategies that construct the privileged position of the intellectual as marked by specific forms of engagement or disengagement with

human affairs, or as characterised by certain attitudes or dispositions towards the broader society. In this respect, a strategy that is common to a few authors is that of representing their own pursuit of reason and truth as carrying great responsibility, or even as an act of courage and prowess, in the face of society's inability to gain self-awareness or engage in meaningful self-reflection. The best illustrations of this strategy are found in Vuk Drašković's and Vladimir Arsenijević's opinion pieces. Let us consider the opening sentences of *Kosovo and us* by Vuk Drašković [S10]:

(1) The popular indignation over the violation of Serbia's territorial integrity is translating into destructive anger. (2) In the streets and squares, in television studios, in newspapers and churchyards, the word is that [...] we need to return to the path of our civic, national and mental breakdown. (3) It is risky to think normally. (4) Reason is stigmatised as betrayal of Kosovo, and thus the clever Serbia has transformed into a frightened shadow.

The author describes a society permeated by rage, defeatism, self-contempt and distrust in reason. The use of nominalisations (e.g. "popular indignation", "destructive anger", "civic, national and mental breakdown") conveys a sense of doom and inescapability, as if people were no longer in control of themselves and their destiny. In such a critical situation, the very exercise of reason appears to lose its force, overridden by fervent loyalty to Serbia's territorial integrity. This is epitomised in the metaphorical representation of the "clever Serbia", a metonymy for the restricted group of people who have managed to retain their intellectual faculties, as a "frightened shadow". By positioning himself amid such a scenario, Drašković implicitly emerges not only as a member of the "clever Serbia" jeopardised by collective anger, but also as someone who has the courage to "think normally" in times when doing so appears to be ill-advised.

Vladimir Arsenijević, in *Kosovo is (not) Serbia* [S11], constructs his intellectual standpoint in a very similar manner:

(2) Since when, on 17 February 2008, Kosovo declared independence, Serbia has entered the final stage of its proverbially problematic relationship with reality. (3) For this reason, today it seems to me more important than ever to use a language that does not lose sight of factual reality, and to feed into the local memosphere, so polluted with nonsense and myths, one notorious truth that no-one of the local *opinion makers*

dares to speak, and which is more than necessary to us for our collective mental health. (4) Here is that sentence: *Kosovo is not Serbia*.

Like Drašković, Arsenijević paints a rather bleak and discomfoting portrait of mainstream society, in which reason, truth and “factual reality” have succumbed to delusion and aberration. Through referential strategies drawing on a health-related lexicon (e.g. “final stage”, “polluted”, “collective mental health”), which conveys an underlying conceptual metaphor of illness (see Musolff, 2010; Wodak, 2015), this predicament is constructed primarily as a serious health condition affecting the entire Serbian society (in this regard, see the first theme in the discursive representation of the nation, discussed in § 5.3.1). This specific representation enables the author to present his own involvement as urgent and decisive. The argument rests on a *topos of threat and danger*, which can be deconstructed as follows: *if* nobody takes on the (intellectual) responsibility to get a hold on reality and speak the truth, *then* society is likely to plunge into some form of mental insanity. Arsenijević’s intellectual heroism is further underscored by the alleged reticence of his fellow commentators. Hence, the discursive construction of intellectual estrangement is twofold: on the one hand, the author presents himself as able to help society recover from a widespread illness to which he is apparently immune; on the other, he stands out among his peers as someone who dares to speak inconvenient truths. On both levels, intellectual self-legitimation is predicated on engagement, responsibility and bravery.

Another common strategy of intellectual self-legitimation based on engagement and attitude consists of constructing the intellectual vantage point as a position that is impervious to manipulation and from which the workings of ideology can be exposed and confronted. For example, in his opinion piece entitled *Kosovo in Serbia* [S04] Nikola Samardžić presents himself as someone who is committed to demystifying political manipulation:

(7) It was not difficult to predict the components of the clerical-Marxist orgy which has once again pushed Serbia back into a state of officially managed barbarianism. (8) And it is obvious that the languishing pathos of the President and the Prime Minister about Kosovo’s departure is a smokescreen for realignment in a new phase of the transitional robbery which benefits from the endless protraction of Serbia’s agony as an unfinished state. (9) The official raving about world politics, a political pathology

in itself, is the continuation of a complex process of monopolisation of the political and economic sphere. (10) The Kosovo myth is again imposed as the framework of an ideology of unfreedom.

A salient linguistic feature in this passage is the systematic recourse to agent-deletion: actions and processes are largely nominalised (e.g. “officially managed barbarism”, “realignment”, “transitional robbery”, “endless protraction”, “official raving”, “continuation of a complex process of monopolisation”) and verbs tend to be in the impersonal (and passive) form. As a result, the concrete actors responsible for the aforementioned actions and processes are almost fully omitted, which conveys a sense of vagueness and uncertainty. Moreover, most nominalisations belong to the same semantic field, that of machination and intrigue. The combined effect of these linguistic choices is the creation of a scenario that appears to be dominated by forces that escape ‘our’ control; however, they do not escape the author’s own awareness, as signalled by the use of epistemic markers such as “it was not difficult to predict” and “it is obvious”. This representation, sustained through a particularly assertive, overly ornamental and declarative style, enables Samardžić to establish himself as an outspoken critic who does not refrain from engaging (at least on paper) with covert and fraudulent large-scale practices and structures.

In conclusion, the analysis has shown that a salient way to discursively construct intellectual estrangement is to foreground specific aspects of one’s own engagement in (or disengagement from) human affairs, as well as one’s attitude towards society in general. In the texts under scrutiny, this macro-strategy is reflected in two different discursive strategies, which vary in terms of how intellectual engagement and attitude are characterised: i) Representing intellectual engagement as a responsible and courageous act motivated by society’s irrational state of disorientation (mental or cognitive); ii) Constructing the intellectual vantage point as a position affording the power to uncover and debunk ideological manipulation.

5.1.2 Intellectual self-legitimation based on knowledge and expertise

A second group of strategies of intellectual self-legitimation includes those aimed to construct the intellectual, implicitly or explicitly, as someone who possesses greater knowledge and expertise than the ordinary person. This corresponds to van Leeuwen’s (2008) category of *expert authority* (which is comprised under *authorisation based on*

recommendation). Strategies of this kind presuppose a distinction between expert or specialist knowledge, on the one hand, and folk or common knowledge, on the other. In some cases, this distinction may imply an evaluation of expert knowledge as somehow ‘superior’ to common knowledge; however, such a disparity is quite unlikely to be explicitly acknowledged or sanctioned by the intellectual-author, as this would easily be perceived by the readers as a pretentious move. The analysis of the opinion pieces from the Serbia sample seems to confirm this expectation. To be sure, many authors support their claims by drawing evidence from various areas of expert knowledge (primarily history, literature and law); however, in most cases this is not so conspicuous as to constitute a fully-fledged strategy of intellectual self-legitimation. Indeed, virtually no author treats her or his expertise as having an intrinsically higher value than the lay knowledge possessed by the (projected/intended) readership.

There are, however, some cases in which specialist knowledge and expertise indeed serve as grounds for intellectual self-legitimation, namely, when the author attempts to de-legitimise those who oppose her or his viewpoint by representing them as biased or as lacking the necessary knowledge to make meaningful contributions to the debate. This strategy is obviously fallacious, as it is intended to discredit the other party instead of tackling their argumentation. More specifically, calling into question the knowledgeableability of the other party is explicitly recognised in the pragma-dialectical approach as the *abusive* variant of the *argumentum ad hominem* fallacy (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004: p. 177).

A notable illustration of this strategy of intellectual self-legitimation is found in Milan Škulić’s commentary, *Kosovo is Serbia* [S12]. A salient feature of this text is the discursive construction of the debate about Kosovo as heavily polarised along two axes: expertise *versus* ignorance and truthfulness *versus* mendacity. The author stands on the positive side of each dichotomy, while the opponents are relegated to the negative side. Thus, Škulić constructs himself as an expert authority (specifically in the fields of law and history), while the other party to the debate is negatively represented not only as uninformed about, or even deliberately oblivious of, legal norms and historical facts, but also as mendacious. Take as an example the following passage:

(2) Sometimes, when they want to be ostensibly objective, Serbs accept the logic of those who are Serbia's enemies, or at least not its friends. (3) Some Serbian citizens raise their voice publicly and quite extravagantly – at least insofar as their opinion concerns legal matters, but in any other respect unfoundedly – in favour of the recognition of Kosovo's independence by Serbia. (4) A lie will not become a truth no matter how many times it is repeated, though this may create some propaganda effects, but certain truths are to be repeated many times.

Through implicitly targeting Vladimir Arsenijević,²⁵ the author sets out to defame all those who share the latter's viewpoint on Kosovo. The opponents are referred to in a quite vague manner ("Some Serbian citizens") and are portrayed in utterly negative terms, i.e. as unloyal to Serbia, too biased or incompetent to make valid claims about the Kosovo issue (and yet obstinate in speaking out), as well as mendacious. This passage appears largely fallacious (as it rests on an *argumentum ad hominem* deployed to discredit the opponents instead of addressing their claims), but only if it is taken in isolation. In fact, much of the subsequent text is devoted precisely to deconstructing the opponents' standpoint. However, more relevant to our discussion of intellectual self-legitimation is to ask ourselves what Škulić achieves by means of this discursive strategy. The answer is that he indirectly emerges as an authority on the subject matter, i.e. a 'repository of truth' with regard to the debate about Kosovo.

There is an additional aspect that makes Škulić's text particularly interesting in terms of the discursive construction of the intellectual standpoint, that is, the specific way in which specialist knowledge is combined with common knowledge and popular wisdom. Let us consider the following excerpt:

(6) It is known to Serbs that "He whose law is written by his cudgel leaves behind the stench of inhumanity". (7) The "cudgel" can take the form of cruise missiles and "intelligent" bombs, but also of historical forgery and a sort of "rape" of international law. (8) But a "cudgel" will always be a "cudgel" and will never become law. (9) Hence Serbia will never recognise Kosovo as an independent state. (10) Perhaps some "other Serbia" could do that in different circumstances [...] but that would not be a legal or legitimate act, just like, for example, the so-called NDH²⁶ never became a fully-fledged state although at the time it was recognised by some countries, Nazi

²⁵ The piece was written as a response to Arsenijević's commentary (S11). Furthermore, sentence (4) is an implicit reference to Arsenijević's claim that he "would like to repeat once more, twice, even a hundred times should it be necessary: Kosovo is not Serbia" (27).

Germany in the first place. (11) There applies also the traditional legal norm: “What is born crooked not even time can straighten”.

Škulić makes a case against the recognition of Kosovo’s independence by Serbia by weaving together a literary quote,²⁷ a historical-legal reference to the Independent State of Croatia, and a common proverb, conveniently passed off as a “traditional legal norm”. This strategy could be explained as an attempt to make the argument persuasive and appealing to a broader readership. Apart from its rhetorical force, however, this discursive construct is relevant also in terms of intellectual self-legitimation. Through employing popular knowledge to illustrate a (specialist) legal argument, the author seemingly ‘blurs the line’ between the two domains of knowledge. The distinction, however, is not obliterated but only dissimulated. Throughout the article, in fact, proverbs and popular expressions are used solely to exemplify or elucidate technical legal arguments; nowhere does folk knowledge surmount or replace professional expertise, which therefore retains its primacy over the former. The discursive construction of the intellectual standpoint is greatly shaped by this specific interplay. Although this strategy is most apparent in Škulić’s text, other authors employ it as well, albeit to a much lesser extent.

Finally, the analysis has revealed a very specific form of intellectual self-legitimation, which involves intentionally downplaying one’s knowledge or ability to comprehend reality (i.e. one’s epistemic stance) in order to conveniently make one’s authority less ‘visible’, so to speak. Instances of this strategy are found in Arsenijević’s and Samardžić’s opinion pieces. As they comment upon Serbia’s predicament, both authors understate their own capacity for ‘vision’ and analysis, and they do so in a similar manner. Arsenijević [S11] speaks of the unlikelihood that the country’s situation will improve by the tenth anniversary of Milošević’s demise:

(18) Things will hardly get fixed in a significant way by then – one does not need to be a prophet to guess that things may easily get worse than they are today.

²⁶ The acronym NDH stands for Independent State of Croatia, which was a puppet state of Germany and Italy during World War II.

²⁷ Sentence (6) contains a quote from *The Mountain Wreath*, a mid-nineteenth century poem written by Montenegrin prince-bishop and poet Petar II Petrović-Njegoš (and translated into English by V. Mihailović). The poem is widely regarded as a masterpiece of Serbian literature, and the quoted line is well-known among the Serbian public.

Samardžić [S04], on his part, criticises the deterioration of the country's social and political situation:

(7) It was not difficult to predict the components of the clerical-Marxist orgy which has once again pushed Serbia back into a state of officially managed barbarianism..

The two phrases “one does not need to be a prophet to guess that [...]” and “It was not difficult to predict [...]” indicate the writers' attitude towards the quality and validity of the communicated information, and as such constitute markers of evidentiality. Specifically, they minimise or even abolish the authors' vantage point by approximating their epistemic stance to that of ordinary observers. However, the two expressions can be regarded as understatements, insofar as they serve to reinforce the authors' intellectual authority by making it less apparent and explicit, and therefore less exposed to objections and criticisms by the readership. In this respect, downplaying one's intellectual authority seems to constitute a salient discursive strategy of intellectual self-legitimation.

In conclusion, the analysis illustrates that strategies of intellectual self-legitimation drawing on knowledge and expertise, and particularly on the (hierarchical) distinction between specialist and lay knowledge, are not commonly employed in the texts under consideration. In fact, although many authors mobilise their expertise in order to support their claims, almost none of them appears to establish her or his intellectual vantage point primarily on these grounds. As suggested above, the reason for this is that such a strategy would likely come across as self-aggrandisement, with predictable repercussions on the credibility of the author. However, self-legitimation through expertise can be achieved in other ways, for instance by representing one's opponents as less knowledgeable than oneself (as Škulić does) or, conversely, by conveniently downplaying one's authority (as seen in the last two examples).

5.1.3 Intellectual self-legitimation based on status and membership

A third group of strategies of intellectual self-legitimation includes those which represent intellectual detachment from mainstream society as deriving from social status or from membership of a restricted (intellectual) elite. In van Leeuwen's (2008) framework, this macro-strategy corresponds to *personal authority legitimation*, although it is of course directed at legitimising the self instead of an external social practice.

Let us begin with *Anamnesis of a slogan* by Teofil Pančić [S09]:

(2) I am sure that my colleagues will address everything that happened last Thursday from a variety of disciplinary approaches, therefore it is unnecessary for me to, you know, stand out; there is, however, a place that is worth focusing on, as it reveals the *core of a pathology* that has costed us an impressively great deal, and surely will cost us even more.

Here, Pančić speaks as a member of a community of “colleagues” that arguably includes analysts, commentators, experts, journalists and opinion-makers, i.e. fellow intellectuals. He therefore constructs his intellectual standpoint as based on membership of a restricted group of professional observers/interpreters of social reality. However, this is just the initial step in a broader and more sophisticated strategy of self-legitimation, which revolves around the opposition marked by the adversative conjunction “however”. Initially, the author positions himself among a community of peers and explicitly rejects the chance of ‘standing out’ from it. Subsequently, *however*, he contradicts his pledge by implicitly claiming to be able to focus on something that none of his colleagues seem to have noticed. What is more, this something is referred to as a matter of the greatest importance, as suggested by the metaphor “core²⁸ of a pathology” as well as by the use both of intensifiers (such as “impressively great” and “even more”) and of markers of epistemic modality conveying certainty (such as “reveals” and “surely”). Thus, Pančić eventually does ‘stand out’ from the intellectual community in which he had initially positioned himself, a discursive move that grants him an even higher intellectual status.

This specific strategy of intellectual legitimation based on a shift from equal membership in an intellectual community to prominence is unique to Teofil Pančić’s opinion piece. Most other authors, in fact, tend not to accentuate their own ‘intellectual profile’, and the few who do are much less bold than Pančić about their belonging to a restricted intellectual elite. In most cases, they limit themselves to occasional references to situations and people that are vaguely related to intellectual, academic or artistic circles. A good example of this discursive feature is found in *Wisdom*, by Đoko Kesić [S07]:

²⁸ In Serbian *srž*, literally “marrow”.

(1) In principle I agree with writer Milovan Danajlić who recently said about the Kosovo events that Europe and the developed world understand only the language of force, and that no other option is left to us, today militarily and economically powerless, other than wait.

Kesić opens his commentary by illustrating his stance with regard to a writer's opinion on the geopolitical situation of Serbia. Regardless of the specific content of the quote, this choice could be seen as a salient perspectivisation device, insofar as it situates the author on a par with the writer, and by implication associates him to a community of intellectual peers. This initial form of self-legitimation provides grounds for Kesić's subsequent self-presentation as insightful observer and as advocate of political prudence.

An altogether different form of intellectual self-legitimation based on status is the one employed by Vuk Drašković in *Kosovo and us* [S10]. Let us consider the concluding paragraph of the piece:

(23) Today we learn from those who, on that 9th of March, at the Vidovdan gathering as well as at the glorious street carnivals of the *Zajedno* coalition, awakened Serbia, gave it back its sight and showed it the way. (24) We learn from those people who were betrayed by the merchants of democracy because freedom did not ring in the way hundreds of thousands of Dositejs from the European Serbia had wished.

In order to grasp the importance of this passage for the author's self-legitimation, one needs to explicate the numerous references to shared knowledge it contains. The 9th of March (1991) is the date of the first of a series of mass demonstrations organised by the Serbian Renewal Movement, an opposition party led by Vuk Drašković himself, to protest against Slobodan Milošević's rule. The next reference is to the 1992 Vidovdan gathering, another opposition event coordinated by Vuk Drašković's political movement. Further, the *Zajedno* (Together) coalition is an alliance formed by Drašković's Serbian Renewal Movement with other democratic forces in 1996, again in opposition to Milošević. Finally, Dositej is the mononym of Dimitrije 'Dositej' Obradović, one of the protagonists of Serbia's national and cultural renaissance between the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century. Together with Vuk Karadžić, he is regarded as the father of modern Serbian literature.

In this light, this passage is a clear attempt to praise and aggrandise the people who took part in the aforementioned political activities. This is achieved through a combination of discursive strategies. In terms of perspectivisation, the syntagm “we learn from...”, repeated in both sentences, constructs that group of politically active citizens as exemplary people worthy of imitation. This is reinforced through positive nominations (“Dositejs”) and predications (“glorious”), but mostly by representing their engagement as a noble gesture for the entire people of Serbia (through metaphors of awakening, vision and path), as well as a sacrifice in the name of democracy and a “European Serbia”. The self-legitimising force of this discursive construction stems from the knowledge, which the average Serbian reader possesses, that Vuk Drašković was himself the leader of the movement he so passionately celebrates. Thus, by praising his followers he indirectly elevates himself as a prominent figure in Serbia’s recent history, particularly as an anti-Milošević dissident and as a champion of the European ideal. This constitutes an instance of intellectual self-legitimation based on personal status and charisma, analogous to van Leeuwen’s notion of authority legitimation based on *role model* (2008).

Broadly speaking, discursive strategies aimed at constructing intellectual marginality on the basis of social status or membership appear to be quite rare across the sample. Nonetheless, the analysis has highlighted some interesting features concerning this specific group of strategies. The main finding is that most authors tend not to amplify or call attention to their own ‘intellectual profile’, probably for the same reasons that they largely refrain from grounding their standpoint in expertise and specialist knowledge (i.e. in order to avoid self-aggrandisement, as explained above). There are, however, two notable exceptions. One is Teofil Pančić, who discursively enacts his intellectual estrangement by playing ironically with his own status of public intellectual. The other is Vuk Drašković, who legitimises himself charismatically through implicit references to his past role of movement leader and political dissident.

5.2 Strategies of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation

In the previous section I have discussed the ways in which the considered authors discursively construct their own intellectual marginality, that is, their vantage point with respect to the broader society. The purpose of this section is to examine the strategies they employ in order to bracket or overcome this original estrangement,

coming forward as spokespersons for the nation. The authors under consideration appear to assume a variety of roles vis-à-vis the nation, which I propose to gather in three broad groups:

1. *The intellectual as political guide for the nation*
2. *The intellectual as promoter/defender of the nation's values and distinctive character*
3. *The intellectual as emancipator/educator of the nation*

5.2.1 *The intellectual as political guide for the nation*

The most common way in which Serbian authors take on the role of spokespersons for the nation is by granting themselves the authority to make evaluations, recommendations and normative/prescriptive judgments concerning Serbia as a political community. By offering guidance on the country's political affairs, they present themselves as *political guides for the nation*.

The analysis shows that several authors do so by criticising Serbia's political elites, specifically by blaming them for the country's hardships. A clear illustration of this specific strategy of spokespersonship for the nation is found in *Three leaders* by Bačević [S08]. Throughout the piece, the author speaks not only as someone who is poised to criticise the conduct of the country's major political leaders, but also as an advocate of general political consensus and national unity in times of crisis. The last paragraph most clearly attests to this form of discursive self-positioning:

(24) For the three Serbian leaders who last week displayed an enviable dose of political immaturity, there exists a proposal which is totally unrealistic, but it is logical. (25) Forget about the media, the public opinion polls, foreign friends who friendly took a piece a land away from you, as well as domestic partners who dream of isolation so that they can further strengthen their business empires through smuggling or the usual robbery. (26) You failed to agree on a single meeting, but perhaps you will agree on important matters. (27) This seems impossible today, but over time it will become clear that some balance between past and future, Kosovo and Europe, must be achieved among the leading parties in Serbia.

The three leaders (President Tadić, Prime Minister Koštunica and the opposition leader Nikolić), who arguably stand metonymically for Serbia's entire ruling class, are

depicted as incompetent, self-interested and embroiled in illegitimate affairs. This negative presentation is intensified by means of irony (e.g. “enviable dose of political immaturity”, “friendly”) and cynicism (e.g. “totally unrealistic”, “usual robbery”, “impossible”). In sentences 25 and 26, the author openly engages the above-mentioned politicians through direct address, advising them to enfranchise themselves from public opinion and untrustworthy associates. This exhortation, however, is labeled as “unrealistic”, therefore it should not be read as a genuine piece of advice, but rather as a rhetorical move intended to further discredit the addressees. In the final sentence, then, Bačević puts aside his criticism of Serbian ruling elites and outlines a political vision for the future of the country that is infused with a sense of historical necessity (indicated by the future “will” and the modal “must”).

In the example above, the articulation of a political vision for the nation occupies only a marginal place in comparison to the criticism of political elites. In several texts from the sample, however, the former strategy emerges as a paramount form of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation (under the rubric of *political guide*). A salient illustration is found in the following excerpt from Kesić’s commentary [S07]:

(8) [...] the political and intellectual elite of Serbia today have two major tasks before them: first, to cleverly and necessarily avoid any armed conflicts over Kosovo, especially the potential conflict in which the great powers would flex their muscles over our neck. (9) Secondly, to precisely consider the circumstances in which the country finds itself, define the state and national goals, and, as politicians would say, subordinate everything to their achievement. (10) Whether Serbia will actually prove to be able to defend and reclaim Kosovo through a long-lived diplomatic struggle depends on how these issues will be addressed.

Here, Kesić spells out what he regards as Serbia’s key political objectives. A number of linguistic aspects are worth noting: first, the author’s instructions are directed at the country’s elites broadly understood, not only to its political leaders, and should therefore be viewed as forming a comprehensive social and political vision rather than as simply a blueprint for political action. Secondly, the argument largely rests on an implicit *topos of threat and danger*, which emerges from the adverbs “cleverly” and “necessarily”, and can be deconstructed as follows: *if* a political action or decision bears specific dangerous, threatening consequences (such as an armed conflict), *then*

one should not perform it. This *topos* is further substantiated in Kesić's warning about the risk of Serbia being drawn into an international conflict (in this regard, see the third theme of the discursive representation of Serbia as a nation discussed in § 5.3.3), and finally reinforced by the exhortation to Serbia to pursue its goals through a "long-lived diplomatic struggle". Lastly, the choice to put forth a normative/prescriptive argument without using modal verbs (such as "should" or "must") lends objectivity to the prescribed actions and goals, and can therefore be regarded as a persuasive device. As a result of these discursive strategies, Kesić assumes and performs the role of political guide of the nation by urging the elites to act with prudence and in the best interest of the national community.

In some cases, the two strategies of spokespersonship for the nation discussed above (i.e. criticism of the political elites and articulation of a political vision for the nation) appear in combination. This occurs, for instance, in Despotović's opinion piece, *Time for responsibility, sobriety and reason* [S05]. The author levels a series of accusations against Serbian political elites, reproaching them for their inability to properly articulate and pursue the good of the Serbian people:

(12) Instead of focusing on²⁹ concrete people, their lives and their rights, our current politics asserts the priority of abstract principles such as territorial integrity, international law and inviolability of borders. [...] (14) This is a dangerous tendency, because once the well-being of concrete citizens is neglected in favour of inapplicable principles we are only one step away from the political syndrome of the 1990s, that is, from an aggressive and hostile attitude towards the outside world, and from the limitation or the violation of rights and liberties as far as internal relations are concerned.

Despotović accuses Serbian political elites of favouring compliance with abstract norms over the prosperity of concrete individuals, which is implicitly elevated as a higher goal. Two linguistic features seem particularly important in this regard. The first is the predominance of nominalisations (such as "politics", "tendency", "political syndrome", "attitude", "limitation", "violation" etc.) and impersonal verbs, whereby concrete agents are backgrounded while processes acquire realness and permanency. The second is the construction of a catastrophic scenario raising the spectre of a

²⁹ Literally "having before its eyes".

relapse into the unrest and discontent that marked the 1990s. The relapse is said to be “one step away”, which creates a sense of risk and danger. From an argumentative perspective, this constitutes a *topos of threat and danger*, as the main claim (i.e. that the political elites should look after the well-being of the citizens) is supported with reference to the devastating consequences of acting otherwise. Moreover, this could also be regarded as a fallacy of the *slippery slope* type, as the author fails to demonstrate the inevitability of the predicted sequence of events.

In the second half of the article, Despotović constructs a polarisation between Serbia, which is portrayed as being in a pathological state of regression, and Europe (i.e. Western Europe), which instead appears as a symbol of progress and prosperity. The closing paragraph contains a wholehearted appeal for Serbia’s political leadership to finally embrace European integration as a way out of the country’s long-standing deadlock:

(38) The elimination of this social pathology and European integration actually represent for us one and the same process. (39) For this reason it is high time for all responsible political agents to stop manipulating, deceiving and intimidating the public opinion and to finally, responsibly and explicitly set themselves on the path which we should have embarked on already in 1989 – the path of civilisational progress, the path of European integration. (40) After all the lost years, after decades of lies, evil, misery and shame, it is high time for sobering up, for a principled, responsible and reasonable politics. (41) For Europe.

The central prescriptive argument, i.e. that Serbia’s political elites should uphold the country’s process of integrating into Europe, rests on three main discursive devices. First, the representation of integration into Europe as a metaphorical path (the word “path” itself is repeated three times) leading out of backwardness and towards progress and prosperity. Second, the creation of a compelling sense of urgency (see the repetition of “it is high time”) and missed opportunities (“already in 1989”, “all the lost years”, etc.) underlies a *topos of urgency*, which has the following general structure: decisions or actions need to be made very quickly because of an external, important and unchangeable event or higher cause. Third, the emphasis on the related notions of (political) responsibility, maturity and reasonableness, which are aptly encapsulated by the very title of the opinion piece.

While in the first excerpt Despotović harshly criticises Serbia’s incumbent political leaders by warning the reader of the perils arising from their alleged incompetence, in the second example he makes an enthusiastic plea for Serbia’s European prospects. As a result, Despotović emerges not only as an intransigent analyst of Serbian politics, but also as someone who can provide guidance to the nation by indicating the pathway to recovery and prosperity, which in this case corresponds to European integration.

Another important way in which the intellectual can act as political guide for the nation is by representing her or himself as a vocal proponent (if not a leader) of an epoch-making process of national regeneration. A salient illustration of this form of spokespersonship for the nation is found in *Kosovo and us* by Vuk Drašković [S10]. This is hardly surprising, given that Drašković’s own political ideology revolves precisely around the idea, and the ideal, of a national regeneration for Serbia. After depicting the situation of the Serbian nation as bleak and desolate (a “breakdown” and a “defeat”), the author details his blueprint for national recovery and victory:

(6) Kosovo and the Kosovo epic, as the Serbian Iliad and Odyssey, have always turned defeat into national victory, and not into a self-destructive cancer. (7) Reason requires that the same be done now. (8) Victory can be achieved only by a strong Serbia [...] (9) Our most pressing duty is to recover from the causes of defeat, from the politics which, at the end of the 20th century, turned our national victories in the two Balkan wars, as well as in the First World War, into a breakdown.

Through the glorification of Serbia’s mythical (6) and historical past (9), the emphasis on the momentousness of the present (7) and the foreshadowing of a future victory (8), this passage frames a powerful teleological narrative of national catharsis and regeneration. In argumentative terms, this narrative serves as warrant for the prescriptive claim made in sentence 9, in which the author calls upon his fellow-citizens to repudiate Milošević’s ruinous politics and its legacy, and thus pave the way to the final goal of national recovery. The style is made declaratory and grave through lexical choices that convey a sense of duty, necessity and resoluteness, such as the predominance of the indicative mood, the recurrence of words such as “always”, “now”, “only”, and the explicit reference to a “most pressing duty”. Another relevant linguistic device is the shift of perspective that occurs in the last sentence of the excerpt, where the possessive *our* in “Our most pressing duty” and “our national

victories” constructs the author as a member of the Serbian nation. At the same time, this is also a strategy of involvement whereby readers too are made to feel part of the nation. All these discursive elements concur to represent the author as a spokesperson for the nation, specifically as an advocate (and a guide) of the nation’s envisaged renewal. Broadly speaking, in Drašković’s opinion piece *reason* and *national victory* are aligned axiomatically, in the sense that the full exercise of the former is equated to the attainment of the latter. This can be regarded as a salient way of combining intellectual estrangement predicated on the ‘courage to be reasonable’ (see § 5.1.1) and intellectual spokespersonship for the nation based on the role of *political guide*.

In conclusion, the analysis provides evidence that several authors act as spokespersons for the nation by framing their role as political guides, and that they do so in three main ways. First, by coming forward as critics of the nation’s political elites, and particularly by blaming them for the nation’s ills. Secondly, by articulating so-called national interests, that is, by setting goals and priorities in order to achieve prosperity. Thirdly, by acting as proponents and interpreters of a process of national regeneration culminating in the nation’s ultimate actualisation/realisation. As seen in the last example, these strategies may also occur in combination.

5.2.2 *The intellectual as educator/emancipator of the nation*

Another macro-strategy that intellectuals may employ to come forward as spokespersons for the nation is that of assuming a pedagogical role towards it, that is, acting as educators of the nation in some relevant respects. This macro-strategy clearly mirrors one of the strategies of intellectual estrangement based on engagement and attitude discussed in § 5.1.1 above, namely *ii) Constructing the intellectual vantage point as a position affording the power to uncover and debunk ideological manipulation*. However, there is a fundamental difference between the two. While strategies of the latter type foreground the intellectual’s inherent marginality from the broader society, strategies of the former type substantiate a specific relationship between the intellectual and the nation, in which the intellectual performs the role of somebody who can help the nation to develop its potential and thus gain ‘awareness’ or ‘maturity’.

This macro-strategy of spokespersonship for the nation occurs less frequently than the previous one (*political guide*) across the sample texts. Here, I will discuss two cases in

which the intellectual's role of educator and emancipator of the nation emerges with particular force. The first example is taken from Vladimir Arsenijević's piece *Kosovo is (not) Serbia* [S11]:

(26) [Serbia's international isolation] is always and only the others' fault, while we are left to make a fuss immaturely and repeat our little and ever less important "truths" in this unjust world which, with or without us, keeps moving forward. [...]

(38) Perhaps we ought to [...] make an effort [...] to finally begin the inevitable process of smartening up and facing reality in a responsible manner?

(39) Perhaps we ought to accept the fact that the clock has clearly struck the hour when Serbia must learn to live without its own "cradle"?

(40) That the time has come for Serbia... to *grow up*.

I have singled out these sentences, although they are not strictly consecutive, because taken together they form a unitary argumentative scheme. The scheme begins in sentence 26, where Arsenijević ironically adopts Serbia's point of view in order to depict the country as immature, self-absorbed, and disgruntled at lacking recognition on the global stage. In the next two sentences, the point of view remains the same (the nation-inclusive *we*), but there is a clear shift from irony to earnestness, as the author now urges Serbian society to finally overcome its childlike condition. This is done through two rhetorical questions which construct an opposition between childhood/immaturity and adulthood/maturity, as exemplified by the expressions "smartening up", "facing reality" and "responsibly", but above all by the metaphor of the cradle, which is a common way of representing Kosovo in Serbian public discourse (see § 4.2.1). Moreover, the author's appeal is further reinforced through a *topos of urgency* epitomised by the metaphor of the clock, which underpins the injunction to "grow up" contained in the last sentence. By taking upon himself the task of stimulating Serbian society to accept the reality of the situation instead of denying it, Arsenijević assumes a pedagogical role towards the national community, therefore his strategy of spokespersonship fully fits under the macro-strategy of *educator of the nation*.

The next example is taken from Milan Grujić's commentary *Lazar's oath* [S02]. In the passage below, the author instructs Serbian society on how to react to Kosovo's declaration of independence:

(11) We are not entitled to forget Lazar's sacrifice, to regard his oath with contempt, to ridicule his promise... (12) We are not entitled to disrespect those who before us fought for us. [...] (14) We are not entitled not to understand that the declaration of independence of Kosovo and Metohija is not a consequence of Milošević's criminal rule. (15) To be fooled by the western lie that we have lost Lazar's holy land because of Račak. [...] (17) And we are not entitled to keep silent.

The paragraph is organised as a set of paratactic clauses, each containing an appeal/admonition to the Serbian people introduced by the syntagm "We are not entitled to" (apart from sentence 15, in which it is left implicit). The use of parataxis and repetition is both an intensification strategy and a persuasive device, lending weight and authority to Grujić's claims. It also serves to establish a connection between apparently unrelated topics such as Prince Lazar's mythical sacrifice (see the fourth theme in § 5.3.4 for details) and the alleged misrepresentation of Milošević's responsibilities vis-à-vis Kosovo,³⁰ which are thus framed as part of the same narrative/scenario; this culminates in sentence 15, in which contemporary Kosovo is referred to as "Lazar's holy land". Additionally, Grujić addresses Serbian society using the first person plural (i.e. the nation-inclusive *we*, like in the previous example) and in a quite informal register, thereby enhancing readers' involvement. Broadly speaking, Grujić positions himself not only as a defender of Serbia's glorious past (which is relevant to the third macro-strategy of spokespersonship for the nation discussed below), but also as someone who is committed to dispelling the false accusations made against the Serbian nation by 'hostile' western forces. In this sense, insofar as he encourages his fellow citizens to express their national pride by refusing to believe, so to speak, the 'lies of the enemy', he acts as *emancipator of the nation*.

5.2.3 The intellectual as promoter/defender of the nation's values and distinctive character

³⁰ The Račak massacre was the mass killing of 45 Kosovo Albanians perpetrated by Serbian security forces in the village of Račak (Albanian: *Reçak*) in central Kosovo in January 1999. Although the order for the massacre may have come from Milošević's office, the Serb government maintained that the casualties were all members of the rebel Kosovo Liberation Army killed in combat.

The third and last macro-strategy of spokespersonship for the nation relates to cases in which the intellectual performs the role of defender or promoter of the national identity. Generally speaking, this macro-strategy does not occur very often in the opinion pieces and interviews included in the sample. As a matter of fact, apart from the minor instance from Grujić's text that I have just pointed out, the only other relevant case appears in the concluding paragraph of *Kosovo is Serbia* [S12], in which Škulić challenges Arsenijević's appeal to the Serbian people to abandon their 'cradle', that is, Kosovo (which has been analysed above):

(33) Kosovo is Serbia and Kosovo is the "cradle" of Serbian nationhood. (34) Not even reasonable "adults" renounce their "cradles". (35) Those who claim that Serbs do not need their "cradle" because they have finally "come of age", could argue by the same logic that a grown-up person should renounce his or her parents, since they are no longer needed. (36) But do elderly parents not need their children? (37) Who renounce their own past, history and roots just like that? (38) Only those who have a reason to be ashamed of them, but with Serbs and Serbia this is not the case. (39) Without a bond with what we were, we cannot be anything. (40) If we renounced our "cradle", we would renounce our future, too. (41) For this reason Kosovo was, is and will remain Serbia.

The argument advanced by Škulić is entirely built around the cradle metaphor. The main claim (which is not explicitly stated in the text but can easily be inferred) is that Serbs should not abandon their cradle, i.e. Kosovo. The argument is structured as an extensive rebuttal to Arsenijević's assertion that Serbs should renounce Kosovo. The counterclaim is included in the text (in sentence 35) but not specifically attributed to Arsenijević, which can be regarded as a rhetorical strategy aimed at depreciating the opponent. Škulić's rebuttal rests on an attempt to invalidate Arsenijević's point by showing that the underlying warrant (referred to as "logic" in the text) is flawed as it leads to unacceptable conclusions. In its place, Škulić proposes a set of alternative warrants, couching them as rhetorical questions (sentences 36 and 37) and categorical statements (sentences 38 to 40). These warrants are: i) family ties are valuable; ii) people who are proud of their origins do not repudiate them; iii) having strong ties with the past is a precondition for future progress and development. By representing the Serbian people as adhering to these principles, and hence as unwilling to

relinquish sovereignty over Kosovo, Škulić assumes the role of promoter of Serbian national identity, heritage and pride.

5.3 The discursive representation of Serbia as a nation

The previous section has provided evidence of the manifold ways in which Serbian public commentators perform the role of spokespersons for the nation. Now, we shall turn our attention to what they *say* about the nation, that is, how they discursively represent Serbia as a national community in their opinion pieces and interviews. By deploying the heuristic framework for exploring the discursive construction of the nation elaborated in § 3.5, the analysis indicates that the authors represent Serbia as a nation on the basis of four main themes:

1. *Serbian society as being in a chronic state of crisis*
2. *Serbia as a deeply divided society*
3. *Serbia as a weak and isolated player on the international stage*
4. *Serbia as a nation driven by its historical and mythical past*

In the following, I will illustrate and discuss each theme through relevant examples taken from the sample.

5.3.1 *Serbian society as being in a chronic state of crisis*

The first theme, by far the most common among the authors considered, is that Serbia is entangled in some sort of continual state of crisis that manifests itself in various aspects of social and political life. This theme was already implicitly presupposed in one of the strategies of intellectual self-legitimation discussed above (§ 5.1.1), that whereby intellectuals justify their own engagement as motivated by society's supposed proclivity to irrational and destructive attitudes. This strategy was explained through examples taken from Vuk Drašković's and Vladimir Arsenijević's opinion pieces. For the sake of analysis, I will report here the parts in which Serbia's chronic state of crisis is explicitly thematised. Drašković describes Serbian society as fraught with "destructive anger" and vulnerable to slipping down a "path of [...] civic, national and mental breakdown"; he also bemoans the decline of collective reason, which has transformed the "clever Serbia" into a metaphorical "frightened shadow". Arsenijević, on his part, speaks of Serbia's "proverbially problematic relationship with reality",

portrays local public discourse as being “polluted by nonsense and myths”, and suggests that “collective mental health” is seriously at risk.

In the examples above, Serbia’s predicament is represented via two salient figures of speech: a path metaphor, indicating Serbian society’s tendency to backslide into a state of collective delusion (strategy of *discontinuation* based on outlining a dystopian future scenario, see § 3.5.3), and a metaphor of illness, whereby the reluctance of large sectors of the society to accept Kosovo’s independence is pathologised as a symptom of mental disease (strategy of *vitalisation* through personification of the national body, see § 3.5.3). The analysis shows that across the sample texts both metaphors are often employed, albeit in different forms, to foreground the harsh conditions of contemporary Serbia (that is, as a strategy of *singularisation* through placing emphasis on national negative uniqueness, see § 3.5.3). For instance, in *Anamnesis of a slogan* Teofil Pančić speaks of the dominant ideology, by which the importance of the Kosovo issue transcends any other problem or challenge facing Serbian society, as a “pathology” that has resulted in “overwhelming irrationality, [...] meaningless violence, [...] embarrassing chaos”. The most salient illustration of the pathologisation of the national body, however, is found at the beginning of Jelena Cerovina’s commentary *Pain and hope* [S06]:

- (1) These days Serbia looks a bit like a patient who has woken up from anæsthesia.
- (2) For the third year in a row, we have been told by the world that it is all over [...].
- (3) We listened to them and realised what they were up to. (4) But the moment the operation was completed, when they cut off part of our territory, the Kosovo wound hurt us the most.

The initial analogy between Serbia and a patient sets the stage for a metaphorical scenario in which the process that led to Kosovo declaring independence from Serbia is equated to an amputation carried out on Serbia’s body by an unspecified surgeon (arguably the international community, metonymically represented as “the world”). What this representation achieves in rhetorical terms is to stress the power imbalance existing between Serbia, which passively undergoes the surgery, and the foreign powers, who actively perform it. The active verbs employed in sentence 3 partially countervail this symbolic passivity, connoting Serbia as a vigilant being who is able to understand the nature of the operation to which it is being subjected. On the whole,

however, the emphasis is on the nation's predicament rather than on its resilience. This is reflected both in the anaesthesia metaphor (1), which denotes inertia and lack of self-consciousness, and the wound metaphor (4), which stresses the pain that Serbian society is going through.

There is one case in which the path metaphor and the pathologisation of the national body appear in combination. In *Kosovo in Serbia* [S12], Samardžić attacks Boris Tadić, then President of the Republic, by preemptively criticizing what he is supposedly going to say at the 'Kosovo is Serbia' rally organized by the Serbian government for two days later:

(21) It is not an unusual event to which he agreed, and at which he is going to repeat, together with the owners of this ruined country and its mental meanderings, that Serbia will not give up all its nonsense, and that, on the basis of the ruling theology and politics, self-destruction is the only way out [...].

Samardžić's goal in this passage is to discredit President Tadić by portraying him as vocally opposed to Serbia's national interests. Tadić's projected speech is ironically twisted into as a series of unacceptable and self-defeating statements, which in argumentative terms constitutes a *straw man* fallacy. But these statements, although fallaciously attributed to the opponent, actually reveal what the author himself thinks about Serbia's current situation and future prospects. The catastrophic scenario he outlines hinges, among other things, on the expression "mental meanderings", which evocatively combines a path metaphor with an element of pathologisation of the national body, suggesting that the Serbian nation is entrapped in a state of debility which renders it incapable of articulating clear goals and pursuing them effectively (strategy of *discontinuation* placing emphasis on disruptions, see § 3.5.3).

5.3.2 Serbia as a deeply divided society

Strictly connected to the previous theme is the representation of Serbia as a nation marked by sharp political and ideological cleavages, which emerges as a prominent theme in several texts from the sample (strategy of *polarisation* emphasising intra-societal divisions and conflicts, see § 3.5.3). For many authors, in fact, Kosovo's independence is directly linked to the deep fissures affecting Serbia's social and political life, in manifold ways. Some regard the 'loss' of Kosovo as the culmination

of Serbia's protracted inability to reach a common agreement over this and other fundamental issues (e.g. Arsenijević, Samardžić), or rather as the result of a misguided attempt to pacify deep-seated political conflicts by imposing a fictitious national unity (e.g. Drašković). Some others view the Kosovo issue as the ultimate proof that Serbian society is deeply divided (e.g. Bačević, Pančić). Finally, some commentators speculate that the dispute over Kosovo will only raise new dilemmas and possibly nourish future conflicts (e.g. Despotović, Škulić).

The following excerpt, taken from *Three leaders* [S08], provides an excellent summary of the theme of Serbia's dividedness. In it, Bačević reflects on the significance of President Tadić's decision to desert the 'Kosovo is Serbia' mass rally:

(7) Thus has ended, temporarily or for a bit longer, the old, boring Serbian story about unity and consensus, but it is unclear whether that evening began another story, or maybe the last episode of the great Balkan series on the confrontation of the two Serbias. (8) One that moves forward, into the future, and the other that, lo and behold, moves backwards, further into the past. (9) The only trouble is that both are in the same place and there is no indication that one of the two Serbias is going to move out and let the other live in peace.

The author argues that Tadić's withdrawal has finally dispelled (though not permanently) ill-founded aspirations to national unity, which he dismisses as an "old, boring Serbian story". At the same time, he also speaks contemptuously of the opposite narrative, that of the conventional polarisation between the so-called 'two Serbias', i.e. the old marxist-nationalist elites and the new pro-Western civic elites,³¹ representing it as some sort of fictional show. Yet, he does not seem to reject the latter narrative entirely. In fact, he builds upon it to outline a complex metaphorical scenario representing contemporary Serbian society. The complexity of the scenario stems from the fact that the 'two Serbias', although moving in opposite directions along the axis of progress, appear to be competing for the same ground. What this 'impossible'

³¹ The representation of Serbian society as divided between 'two Serbias' originated from a book called *Druga Srbija* (English: *The Other Serbia*), published by Ivan Čolović, an anthropologist, in 1992. The book contained eighty public speeches delivered by opponents of the Milošević regime, and therefore provoked much controversy. Since then, the expression 'the other Serbia' has become a synonym for all those who opposed (and still oppose) the nationalist, populist and militaristic streams in Serbian politics.

configuration seems to suggest is that Serbia is entangled in radical contradictions which severely undermine its ability to achieve prosperity.

Although the narrative of the polarisation between the ‘two Serbias’ is nowhere as explicitly articulated as in Bačević’s commentary, it emerges from several other opinion pieces, most often as subtext. One such example is found in Škulić’s commentary [S12]:

(9) [...] Serbia will never recognise Kosovo as an independent state. (10) Perhaps some “other Serbia” could do that in different circumstances, like a new occupation, which some maybe even wish for, but that would not be a legal or legitimate act [...].³²

That Škulić is drawing on the narrative of the ‘two Serbias’ is evident from the quotation marks around the expression “other Serbia” signalling its conventional use. They also serve as scare quotes, implying the author’s skepticism and disdain towards the role played by the Serbian elites identified by that denomination, whom he sees as anti-patriotic due to their support for Kosovo’s independence. This aversion becomes explicit further on, as Škulić insinuates that some members of the ‘other Serbia’ would even welcome a foreign occupation of the country, thus constructing them as potential traitors to the nation (see the next theme in this regard).

Another example of how the polarisation between the ‘two Serbias’ operates as subtext is found in Arsenijević’s opinion piece [S11], in the passage where he provides an explanation of why many Serbs still refuse to accept that Kosovo is no longer part of Serbia:

(15) All of this inevitably occurs whenever and wherever it comes to such a huge disorder of perception and reasoning, and this chasm, here at our place, has unstoppably opened up and grown bigger since Milošević’s times.

The key word, in this case, is “chasm”. The resonance of this metaphor with the discourse of ‘first *versus* other Serbia’ is substantiated by a co-textual element, that is, the reference to “Milošević’s times”, which is the epoch when the clash between the ‘two Serbias’ originated. By depicting the cleavage as constantly widening,

³² This quote has been discussed in § 5.1.2 above in relation to strategies of intellectual self-legitimation based on knowledge and expertise.

Arsenijević provides a quite pessimistic outlook on the capacity of Serbian society to manage its internal divisions in a constructive manner.

5.3.3 Serbia as a weak and isolated player on the international stage

The third theme of the discursive representation of the nation concerns Serbia's position in the international community. The case of Kosovo's independence, in fact, has prompted several authors among those considered to problematise Serbia's relations with key international actors, particularly those directly involved in the process. The analysis shows that, apart from relatively small discrepancies, the overall picture is that of a country suffering from international isolation and lacking the power to pursue its national interests at the global level (strategy of *heteronomisation* placing emphasis on extra-national dependence, see § 3.5.3). I will illustrate this specific thematisation of the nation by discussing a few salient examples.

The first is taken from *Kosovo is (not) Serbia* [S11]. In the following passage, Arsenijević criticises Serbia's international isolation through an analogy with interpersonal relationships:

(22) It is sad, it is unbearable to be on such miserable terms with the entire near and far surroundings. (23) It is not alright to be so lonely. (24) If, for instance, you are in a quarrel with all your housemates or neighbours, would it not be logical to ask yourself what is wrong with yourself and why your relationship with the others does not get off the ground? (25) However, Serbs mostly do not view things this way.

The country's international isolation is stressed via two strong predications: Serbia is said to be on "miserable terms" with many other world countries and "lonely" on the international stage. The author condemns this situation by evoking shared emotions ("sad", "unbearable") and by advancing a normative claim ("It is not alright") presupposing the desirability of good external relations. In the subsequent analogy, the focus shifts onto what Serbia ought to do in order to improve its situation. By employing a rhetorical question and the generic *you* as persuasive devices, Arsenijević urges Serbia to question its own attitude, justifying his exhortation through an appeal to reason ("would it not be logical"). Yet, in the final sentence he expresses distrust in the willingness of his fellow citizens to follow his advice, conveying an image of Serbia as stubbornly reluctant to address the problem of its international isolation.

In *Time for responsibility, sobriety and reason* [S05], Despotović takes a quite different approach, arguing that Serbia should keep a ‘low profile’ on the international stage in order to avoid getting entangled in global power struggles:

(29) Some [...] advocate friendship with Russia as the priority of priorities [...]. (30) Others, instead, find arguments to absolutely bring this into question. (31) One loses sight that Serbia should not place itself into the fray of competing centers of power. (32) It should not contribute in any way to the deepening of such competition, and even less should it base its politics primarily on the intensification of such a contradiction.

The argument is developed in two stages. First, the author constructs the debate about Serbia’s relations with Russia as dominated by bold stances, using intensification devices such as repetition (“priority of priorities”) and the adverb “absolutely”. Second, he rejects those stances by advancing the normative claim that Serbia should not get involved in, or aggravate, existing rivalries between world powers. The argument is an enthymeme, since the reason or premise supporting the claim is not explicitly stated. It can, however, easily be inferred from the metaphorical expression “place itself into the fray” (or “the millstone”, in a more literal translation), which implies Serbia’s liability to be crushed by external forces. The whole argument, therefore, rests on the presupposition that Serbia is too weak to successfully engage in global power struggles.

In the two examples above, Serbia emerges as a weak player on the international stage. Yet, in discursive terms its agency is never fully suppressed. Both Arsenijević and Despotović, in fact, represent the Serbian nation as a relatively autonomous subject, whose disengagement is contingent upon temporary circumstances or prudence rather than an intrinsic inability to act. In Despotović, in particular, this is substantiated by the abundance of active verbs with Serbia as their subject (the fact that these describe actions from which Serbia should abstain does not invalidate the point). In contrast with this, a few commentators tend to bracket or even obliterate Serbia’s agency, portraying it as a passive entity acted upon by external, often hostile, forces. In some cases, these referential strategies underpin or activate broader narratives of victimisation, usually by mobilising elements of contextual knowledge shared by the readers. Among the very few instances of victimisation found in the

sample texts, the most striking one appears at the beginning of Škulić's opinion piece, *Kosovo is Serbia* [S12]:

(5) Today, just as a weak person who is a tyrant's victim, Serbia can endure serious injuries, but does not wish to inflict pain on itself. (6) It is known to Serbs that "He whose law is written by his cudgel leaves behind the stench of inhumanity". (7) The "cudgel" can take the form of cruise missiles and "intelligent" bombs, but also of historical forgery and a sort of "rape" of international law.³³

In the first sentence, Serbia's position on the international stage is represented, through a simile, as that of an individual who is subject to the abusive power of a tyrant. This personification carries a strong moral connotation, as it constructs the relationship between Serbia and specific foreign countries (notably those supporting Kosovo's independence) on the basis of the victim-perpetrator framework. This representation is further developed in the next two sentences, in which Škulić draws on a famous verse from a popular poem (see footnote 27 in § 5.1.2) to portray Serbia as a victim of aggression and injustice. This is obtained through a set of subtle references to the 1999 war with NATO ("cruise missiles and 'intelligent' bombs") and to the recent separation of Kosovo ("historical forgery" and "sort of 'rape' of international law"), two *topoi of history* that rely on the readers' contextual knowledge to be understood. The choice to draw a parallel between these two events is part of the same strategy of victimisation described above, as it endows the discourse of the Serbian nation as a victim of injustice perpetrated by external forces with a sense of historical continuity (strategy of *continuation* presupposing negative continuity, see § 3.5.3).

Further on in his commentary, Škulić turns his attention to a different category of actors perceived to antagonise the Serbian nation, that of 'internal enemies'. Although this specific sub-theme falls outside the main theme of Serbia as a weak and isolated player on the international stage, three reasons make it worth investigating: first, it forms part and parcel of the above-mentioned narrative of victimisation; second, this is the only case among the texts from the sample in which this aspect emerges so

³³ Parts of this excerpt have been analysed in § 5.1.2 above, in regard to strategies of intellectual self-legitimation based on knowledge and expertise.

bluntly; thirdly, the very category of ‘traitors to the nation’ is made the object of an interesting meta-discursive reflection. The relevant excerpt is the following:

(25) Serbia never lacked national “masochists”, but this time the matter is too serious to gloss over an overt national betrayal. (26) Everyone has had enough of words such as “betrayal” and “traitors”, because, like many other, they have become quite “worn-out” in the nineties. (27) But what other word would be adequate to describe not just the simple acceptance of a territorial loss, but the overt commitment for Serbia to accept it enthusiastically and thus recognise a monstrously forged state on its own territory?

The obvious purpose of this passage is to defame and demonise supporters of Kosovo’s independence, by depicting them, through pejorative nominations and predications, as enemies of the Serbian nation. By speaking of an “overt national betrayal”, the author extends the foregoing narrative of Serbia’s victimisation to also include internal enemies apart from external ones. Furthermore, the initial claim that “Serbia never lacked national ‘masochists’” confers on this narrative a sense of historical continuity, much like the historical parallel drawn in the first example. However, the accusation of national betrayal is so serious that Škulić finds it necessary to justify, and to a certain extent mitigate, his choice of words. First he acknowledges the strongly negative connotation that such words have acquired in Serbian public discourse as a legacy of the rampant nationalism fomented by the Milošević regime in the 1990s; then, he rebuts with a rhetorical question intended to reclaim their use in the face of the perceived gravity of the situation. As shown in these two examples, Škulić conceives the Serbian nation as a perpetual victim of acts of aggression and subversion perpetrated both by foreign powers and by unloyal Serbian citizens (thus combining a strategy of *dissimilation/exclusion* through negative other-presentation with a strategy of *blaming/scapegoating* targeting ‘national traitors’, see § 3.5.3).

5.3.4 Serbia as a nation driven by its historical and mythical past

The fourth main theme that emerges from the analysis relates to how Serbian national history and mythology are taken to shape, or even determine, the nation’s present as well as its future (strategy of *continuation* presupposing positive continuity between past, present and future of the nation, but also strategy of *avoidance* through suppression of discontinuities, see § 3.5.3). There is a clear correspondence between

this theme and the fact that some authors perform the role of spokespersons for the nation precisely by appealing to national history and remembrance, either as an attempt to educate/emancipate the national community or as a way to promote/defend its unique identity (see § 5.2.2 and 5.2.3). As a matter of fact, the most salient instances of this theme are found in the texts written by those same authors. In this section, I will illustrate this theme by discussing two such instances in which the element of the national past is particularly prominent. The first is taken from *Lazar's oath* by Milan Grujić [S02], the second from *The Accursed Mountains* by Miloš Garić [S03].

In the first example, Grujić attempts to reclaim the significance of a key element in Serbian national mythology, i.e. the martyrdom of Prince Lazar, for the present situation of Serbia:

(1) Perhaps today we are not obliged to understand Lazar's oath. (2) Perhaps it appears distant and unjustified to us who live in the 21st century. [...] (10) There exist, however, some things we are not entitled to. (11) We are not entitled to forget Lazar's sacrifice, to regard his oath with contempt, to ridicule his promise... (12) We are not entitled to disrespect those who before us fought for us. (13) Those who made it possible for us to live freely, to speak our own language, those who inscribed our name onto the world map.

Lazar's sacrifice is one of the central themes of the Kosovo myth, which is the traditional belief of the Serbian people asserting that the Battle of Kosovo Polje in 1389 symbolises the struggle of the Serbs in defence of their honour, and of Christendom, against the Ottomans (Bakić-Hayden, 2004). The meaning of Lazar's martyrdom is encapsulated in his legendary oath, whereby he renounced the worldly glory of the 'earthly kingdom' for the eternal glory of the 'heavenly kingdom'. In this excerpt, Grujić restates the significance of this myth, appealing to the Serbian nation to remember, respect and uphold it as a founding element of national identity. In the last sentence, he ascribes Serbia's achievement of freedom, cultural identity and statehood – the latter aspect being metonymically represented as Serbia's appearance on the world map – to the deeds of those great heroes, thus fabricating a sense of historical continuity between Serbia's mythical past and its present condition. This becomes even more apparent in the continuation of the text, where Grujić draws on

the Kosovo myth to challenge what he sees as common misconceptions about the ongoing dispute over Kosovo's independence, thus accomplishing a conflation between myth and reality.

In the second example, Garić also draws on the Kosovo myth in order to establish a connection between Serbia's national (and mythical) past and its present reality:

(8) The turbulent history of this country has written its saddest page. (9) But not so long ago, some six centuries back, historians noted that the bells of Notre Dame in Paris rang out all day celebrating the glorious victory of the Serbs against the invading Ottoman Turks. (10) Unfortunately, the great Serbian suffering in Kosovo in 1389 has the same influence on current geostrategic decisions by the world powers like humidity in Tokyo has on the price of tomatoes at Kalenić market. (11) It is hard, but Serbs must not cry now. (12) Even less come to terms with defeat. [...] (14) Lazar, Karađorđe, Putnik and other Serbian knights are watching us. (15) Want it or not, this and all future generations of Serbs will have to dream of returning to Prizren, Peć and Pristina.

In this passage, the conflation between mythical past and present reality is obtained through a complex argumentative sequence alternating claims, concessions and rebuttals. Initially, the author employs the metaphor of history as book to construct the 'loss' of Kosovo as the worst defeat in Serbia's history. Then, as a way to counterbalance this downfall, he aggrandises Serbia's historical role in the defence of Christendom³⁴ through a *topos of history* (see Forchtner, 2014) implying that if Serbia was a great country in the past it should continue to be so even today, as well as by resorting to intensification devices such as positively connoted attributes ("glorious") and temporal approximation ("not so long ago"). Immediately after, however, he deplores the current irrelevance of Serbia's heroic past, by means of a sarcastic analogy related to everyday life. This is followed by another rebuttal, again introduced by the adversative "but", in which Garić exhorts Serbs to be strong in the face of the current hardship. The supporting reason, provided in sentence 14, combines a *topos of history* and a *topos of authority*: in fact, the metaphorical gaze that Serbia's national heroes direct at "us", the Serbs of today, not only evokes the nation's historical

³⁴ It should be noted that Garić omits to say that the bells of Notre Dame rang out prematurely, because the Serbs, in whom the hopes of Christian medieval Europe were vested, eventually lost the battle against the Ottomans.

greatness, but also establishes the said heroes as a deontic authority conveying expectations of bravery and glory on the part of the Serbian people (the *topos of authority* can be deconstructed as follows: *if* Serbian heroes would want us Serbs to behave in a certain way, *then* we should behave in that way). It is with this construct, which appeals to ancestry in order to create a sense of duty in the present, that the above-mentioned conflation between past and present reaches its culmination. Finally, in the concluding sentence the author projects this sense of duty into the future, thus creating a powerful image of historical continuity.

6. Croatia's accession into the European Union in 2013

This chapter examines the second of the three case studies, i.e. the reactions of Croatia's intellectuals to the country's accession into the EU in 2013. As in the case study on Serbia, the analysis focuses on strategies of intellectual self-legitimation (§ 6.1), strategies of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation (§ 6.2), and the discursive representation of the nation (§ 6.3).

6.1 Strategies of intellectual self-legitimation

Do the authors of the selected opinion pieces and interviews claim, or at least presuppose, to be looking at the social world from a 'detached' observation point? Do they characterise this position as affording them a better, more penetrating or 'objective' view into certain aspects of social life? If so, what concrete linguistic elements indicate this? The purpose of this section is to provide a comprehensive and systematic account of the strategies employed by the authors to legitimise their intellectual vantage point by emphasising their own marginal position in regard to the broader society. On the basis of the findings, I propose the following categorisation:

1. Strategies based on *engagement and attitude*
2. Strategies based on *knowledge and expertise*

It should be noted that, unlike in the case of Serbia, the Croatia sample does not include prominent instances of strategies of intellectual self-legitimation based on *status and membership*. In the following, I illustrate the two groups of strategies indicated above through examples taken from the sample.

6.1.1 Intellectual self-legitimation based on engagement and attitude

For Croatian society, the process of European integration constitutes a major development, which has deeply affected, and will most likely continue to affect, the political, cultural, social and economic life of the country for a long time. Some of the authors under consideration lament that some aspects of this process, in spite of its paramount significance, have received insufficient critical scrutiny and limited public

debate, whereas a few others criticise the opponents of European integration for failing to reasonably appreciate its benefits for the Croatian community. In both cases, the criticism rests on the premise that issues that are of great significance for a community should be subject to critical evaluation and democratic deliberation. By reclaiming this principle, the authors implicitly position themselves as guardians and defenders of the public use of reason, particularly in contexts in which it is absent or very weak. In doing so, they construct their own standpoint not only as being disjoined from the broader society, but also as one from which the ideal of public reason and its requirements can be upheld and promoted across society itself. Characterised as such, this standpoint manifestly qualifies as a vantage point in the sense discussed above, and thus corresponds to a specific strategy of intellectual self-legitimation.

Instances of this particular way of granting oneself intellectual authority appear in several texts from the sample. However, the most conspicuous illustrations of this discursive strategy are found in the two opinion pieces written by Nino Raspudić and published in *Večernji list*. In the piece entitled *Let them rattle on about the region, but who authorised them to push Opatija and Banja Koviljača into the same country again?* [C10], Raspudić takes issue with the revival of a regional perspective in Croatian political discourse, following the country's process of European integration. Indeed, he rejects the notion that Croatia needs to (re-)establish strong ties with the other former Yugoslav countries not only as historically untenable, but also as lacking rational justification and democratic legitimation:

(4) [...] the story about the region has emerged as something self-explanatory. (5) The problem is not that someone from their particularistic, interested or emotional viewpoints considers the former Yugoslav framework as the optimal economic, cultural and political horizon for Croatia. (6) Although I believe that this standpoint is totally misplaced, because two historical realisations of Yugoslavia confuted it, I accept that it is a legitimate political stance and that its supporters have a democratic right to offer it to the public. (7) The catch, however, is that the story about the “region” has crept in in a totally illegitimate way.

In sentence 4, the aforementioned regional perspective is contemptuously referred to as “the story about the region”, and its emergence is represented as a process that has

unfolded independently of human agency and which has not involved any debate. Subsequently, the regional perspective is further discredited as subjective and biased, and then openly rejected as “totally misplaced” through a *topos of history* about the failure of the Yugoslav project (which has the following structure: *because* Yugoslavia failed as an economic, cultural and political project, its legacy should be rejected altogether). In sentence 6, however, the author grants it the status of a legitimate political viewpoint, thereby demonstrating his own democratic credentials. Finally, he reiterates the initial claim by portraying the abhorred perspective as unmanaged, potentially dangerous (note the verb “crept in”) and devoid of democratic legitimacy. The argument is structured in such a way that Raspudić emerges as somebody who greatly values rational deliberation and democratic principles, and who is ready to uphold them when they are disregarded.

In his other text, *We have awakened as EU citizens! What will be our new goal?* [C08], Raspudić makes a similar point about EU accession, refuting the dogmatic and myth-like aura in which it has been wrapped in Croatian political discourse:

(8) Since the beginning, accession to the EU has been introduced as a myth, a holy story one ought to believe in and for which no arguments are necessary. (9) That dogma has not been questioned [...]. (10) There has not been public debate about accession or non-accession, instead of rational arguments [...] emphasis has been placed on [...] trivialities. (11) What has been mostly missing is a concrete interest assessment [...]. (12) That the EU has no alternative has been imposed as self-explanatory, and this fundamental political myth has cast its shadow onto the entire political scene.

Most of the analytical remarks made above apply here, too. Through the extended use of impersonal passive verbs and nominalisations, the author represents the emergence and consolidation of Croatia’s EU perspective as an agentless, almost self-sustaining process that has regrettably escaped critical scrutiny and collective deliberation. The argument is based on an axiological polarisation between the realm of rational thinking, which is positively valued, and that of dogmatism and triviality, which is negatively valued. The writer places himself firmly on the side of rational thinking, bolstering his standpoint through a bold and assertive style, marked by the absence of hedges and the reiteration of the main claim several times throughout the passage.

Therefore, the framing strategy outlined above also constitutes a powerful strategy of intellectual self-legitimation, in that it enables the author to present himself as a guardian of public reason against attempts to misconstrue or trivialise matters of great social significance.

As stated above, several authors among those considered resort, in more or less explicit ways, to this form of intellectual self-legitimation. There is one author, however, who stands out from this group, as she associates her intellectual estrangement with unconventional, creative thinking rather than procedural and deliberative rationality. In her article *We have joined the European construction site. Let's roll up our sleeves and get to work* [C09], Marina Šerić, speaking about the uncertainties of the European integration process, makes the following exhortation:

(11) In the moments when chaos takes the lead, and when people can no longer predict or control anything, one should not resist uncertainty, but rather find in that general confusion some new opportunities on which something new can indeed be built. (12) In short, chaos is not purely negative because it warns us that what is old and worn must crumble and disappear, while at the same time it directs us toward elements of something new and vital. (13) But in order to notice that, we must be creative [...].

The author challenges the notion that chaos, understood as a situation in which the activities of the rational mind (such as prediction and control) become impracticable, is necessarily unproductive. On the contrary, she contends that chaos brings opportunities and, in sentence 12, she even personifies it as a positive agent that helps people to unfetter themselves from the past as well as to embrace the future. This allows the author to dictate what people “should” do and how they “must” be like in order to seize these opportunities, as is reflected in the use of prescriptive deontic modality and the predominance of categorical statements worded in a declarative style. By granting herself the authority to urge people to think and act in unconventional ways, Šerić assumes a discursive position that corresponds to the intellectual vantage point.

6.1.2 Intellectual self-legitimation based on knowledge and expertise

While some authors seek to establish their intellectual authority by engaging directly with existing social practices, either by denouncing the failure to uphold certain

principles or by encouraging people to challenge conventional outlooks and behaviours, others do so by emphasising their own knowledge and understanding of how society operates. Those employing this strategy of intellectual self-legitimation tend to present themselves as insightful observers and interpreters of certain aspects of the social world, typically by mobilising their specialist knowledge and expertise. Generally speaking, this can be done in a variety of ways. Authors may speak as experts in a particular discipline or on a particular topic, for instance by referring to existing research in the field or by using specialist terminology. Alternatively, they may claim, or at least presuppose, a broad critical perspective on society as a whole, sustained by the special ability to grasp its fundamental structure and dynamics. Or they may situate themselves somewhere in between these two cardinal positions.

Instances of this specific strategy of intellectual self-legitimation are not very frequent in the texts from the sample. However, there are two cases which may serve well to illustrate the different ways in which it can be realised in discourse. The first case is Jurica Pavičić's analysis of Croatian national identity and its relationship with statehood, in the opinion piece entitled *Between cathedrals and Balkan crevices* [C05]. The second is the interview with Katarina Luketić entitled *Croatia is mistaken if she thinks she can escape from the Balkans* [C12]; Luketić is addressed as an expert (on the 'symbolic geography' of the Balkans), and this is reflected in the way she discursively constructs her own standpoint.

Let us first consider the following excerpt from Pavičić's opinion piece:

(36) [...] Croats eagerly await symbolic manifestations of togetherness still today [...].
(37) All those public displays of euphoric togetherness serve to a great extent to conceal the fact that the citizens of this country do not know each other well and can hardly understand each other. (38) One would commonsensically conclude that [...] Croats venerate their young state and its institutions. (39) The truth is – indeed – the complete opposite. (40) In their history, Croats have been a colonised nation who experienced statehood only through someone else's state: Vienna, Constantinople, Hungary, Venice, Belgrade. (41) Hence, in Croatia nationalism goes hand in hand with total contempt for the idea of the state [...].

This passage advances two claims about Croatian national identity: first, that it is largely 'imagined' (i.e. symbolically constructed), since Croats are a composite and

heterogeneous nation; second, that it expresses itself in opposition to the state due to historical reasons. What is relevant in terms of the construction of the intellectual vantage point is the perspective from which these two claims are articulated. In sentence 37, Pavičić implicitly claims the ability to grasp something that is impalpable to most Croatian people, i.e. the imagined character of their own national identity. Thus he elevates himself, as it were, ‘above’ his fellow citizens. In the next two sentences, he takes the viewpoint of the ordinary person, but only to discard it shortly afterwards. By rejecting an argument based on common sense in favour of a counterintuitive “truth”, the author constructs his standpoint as affording him a certain epistemic advantage over mainstream society. The *topos of history* in sentence 40 further substantiates this advantage by foregrounding Pavičić’s knowledge of history. In conclusion, the author ‘performs’ from a privileged position, one which affords him a clearer and more informed view than the rest of society – i.e. an intellectual vantage point.

The other salient illustration of this strategy of intellectual self-legitimation comes from the interview given by Katarina Luketić to *Novi list* [C12]. Luketić is asked to elaborate on the perception of the Balkans in the Croatian society, one of the main topics of her latest book. The interview is therefore framed as a dialogue with an expert, and the interviewee duly takes up this role by constructing her standpoint as that of a specialist throughout the entire interview. This strategy of perspectivisation is well exemplified in the following excerpt:

(24) *When did the Balkans become a synonym for all things negative?*

(25) – The Balkans have been the object of intense imagination in European literature approximately from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. (26) Of course there are earlier texts, such as Fortis’ famous travelogue through Dalmatia, as well as many other accounts by English and German travellers. (27) The image of the Balkans has not always been negative and is not always demonic. (28) In a number of texts, especially in the beginning of the above-mentioned period, the entire region and all local peoples are romanticised. (29) This is the case with Lord Byron, who writes about Greece and the Greek freedom fighters, and with Alphonse de Lamartine, who describes Serbia, Serbian fighters and the like. (30) This romanticisation of the Balkans continues through the twentieth century, for instance with the renowned travelogue *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* written by Rebecca West [...].

This passage contains several linguistic elements that all contribute to the discursive construction of expertise. To begin with, the author uses a rather impersonal and factual style, which is typical of scientific discourse: all verbs are in the indicative mood, the passive voice is predominant, and some processes are nominalised using specialist terminology (e.g. “romanticisation”). This lends an aura of objectivity to the conveyed information. Furthermore, Luketić supports her claims with many learned examples, thereby emphasising her extensive knowledge of the field. In this regard, expressions such as “Of course” in sentence 26 and “renowned” in sentence 30 serve to underscore the author’s expert authority by stressing her familiarity with certain literary works (although they may conversely be seen as mitigating devices aimed to downplay the exclusivity of such acquaintance). Through these stylistic, lexical and rhetorical choices, the author constructs herself as an expert and researcher in the relevant subject. By employing this strategy of intellectual self-legitimation, she also fulfils the role that is demanded of her by the specific communicative situation (i.e. public interview).

The examples discussed above illustrate how authors can legitimise themselves as intellectuals by exhibiting their advanced knowledge or by boasting their ability to comprehend certain aspects of society better than ordinary people. An alternative but equivalent way to stress one’s own epistemic advantage is to criticise other people’s supposedly authoritative viewpoints as wrong or ill-grounded. In other words, instead of resorting to positive self-presentation, the author aspiring to attain the intellectual vantage point may opt for negative other-presentation and seek to discredit the opponents, i.e. other ‘authorities’ in the relevant field of knowledge or practice. Notably, this often rests on, or presupposes, an axiomatic distinction between ‘local’ observers and ‘external’ ones (typically Western European).

In her interview about the symbolic geography of the Balkans, Luketić also makes use of this specific strategy. This is most evident in the passage below, where she attacks the authors who write about the Balkans in a disdainful, uninformed and rather exotic manner:

(71) The works I am talking about are typically written by authors who discovered the Balkans in the nineties. (72) Few among them know the history and the specificities of the Balkans, speak the local languages and have dealt with the culture of the

Balkans. (73) The result is some sort of cursory insight into the local environment. (74) Foreign authors come here and at best stay a few months, after which they return to their countries and become experts, specialists in the Balkans. (75) Many of them feel entitled to write as if they fully understand this area. (76) This is a typical imperialist attitude, when you come to another country, another culture, which you consider somehow less valuable, or not as complex as your native culture.

The passage is filled with negative predications. The targeted authors are described as latecomers (and, subtly, as opportunists), who lack sufficient knowledge and understanding of the Balkan context and yet do not refrain from designating themselves as experts. Their pretensions, Luketić argues, are not only unwarranted, but also inconsiderate of the complexity of the culture of the Balkans, and therefore constitute a form of cultural imperialism. Luketić's criticism of these authors can be regarded as an attempt to undermine precisely the foundations of their intellectual vantage point, by challenging the quality of their expertise as well as the depth of their insights. This discursive strategy has clear implications in terms of self-legitimation: through diminishing her opponents' intellectual status, the author implicitly asserts her own authority as an expert in Balkan affairs. What is more, she emphasises being situated *in the Balkans* (note the deictic expressions "here" and "this area" in sentences 74 and 75) as a position that is epistemically more advantageous (and also morally more justifiable) than that of her foreign peers.

A similar strategy of intellectual self-legitimation occurs in Miljenko Jergović's commentary *A country without an economy or mineral treasures, with plenty of water and wind*, published in *Jutarnji List* [C07]. In the following excerpt, Jergović takes issue first with stereotypical representations of the Balkans (i.e. the so-called 'ancient hatred' argument), and then with western interpretations of the Yugoslav wars:

(28) Although it is commonly believed that hatred and conflicts in the Balkans have lasted for centuries, and that this is about wicked traditions inscribed in national identity, before 1918 and the establishment of the joint Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, there were no conflicts among these peoples [...] (31) Although European observers and historians typically characterize them as civil wars [...] the Balkan wars [of the 1990s] were generally fought because of culture. (32) That is to say, because of identity, language and belonging.

The argumentative scheme of the passage is the following: first the author introduces a claim he disagrees with, which he then seeks to disprove by pointing to disconfirming evidence; then, he introduces a second claim, to which he also objects by advancing a counterclaim. Interestingly, the author characterises both claims as widely accepted: the former is said to be “commonly believed” (28), while the latter is said to be largely shared by “European observers and historians” (31). By employing these predications, Jergović sets his own standpoint in opposition to ‘mainstream’ ways of thinking. This, as we know, corresponds to the paradigmatic structure of intellectual marginality (§ 3.2). Furthermore, it should be noted how, not dissimilarly to the case of Luketić discussed above, Jergović seeks to legitimise himself by questioning specifically the authority of European (and generally western) analysts and experts interested in the Balkans. In other words, the strategy employed by both Luketić and Jergović to establish their intellectual vantage point, i.e. their claim to a better-informed view on (Balkan) society, is based not only on criticising viewpoints that are generally held to be authoritative, but also on the presumption that their ‘belonging’ to the Balkan context gives them a better chance to understand its specificities. In other words, both authors assume that their being materially and culturally situated within the Balkan context provides them with a greater ability than ‘external’ observers to understand its specificities.

In conclusion, the analysis provides evidence that the authors use different strategies to legitimise themselves intellectually, that is, to frame their social estrangement as an epistemically advantageous condition. As seen above, several authors establish their intellectual vantage point by assuming the role of guardians and defenders of the public use of reason. This strategy of intellectual self-legitimation is best illustrated with reference to Raspudić’s two opinion pieces, in which the author vigorously condemns the surreptitious manner in which two paramount political ideals such as Croatia’s ‘regional perspective’ and its accession to the EU have become accepted as dogmatic and incontrovertible, and thereby emerges as a staunch advocate of rational public debate as a fundamental component of democratic deliberation. An alternative way of constructing one’s intellectual standpoint is to endorse forms of thinking that are typically regarded as original and unconventional. The only salient example of this strategy is found in Šerić’s text, where the author exhorts people to discover and exploit the creative potential of chaos and uncertainty by ‘thinking out of the box’.

Although these two strategies of intellectual self-legitimation appear quite different from one another, they both construct the intellectual standpoint as a position involving significant engagement with the broader society: the former emphasises the intellectual's responsibility to publicly uphold fundamental social norms, while the latter stresses the role of the intellectual in encouraging society to depart from ordinary ways of looking at the world. Therefore, both modes of intellectual self-legitimation can be subsumed under the category of intellectual self-legitimation on the basis of engagement and attitude.

Another possible way of establishing one's perspective as a privileged vantage point is to treat one's ability to comprehend key aspects of the social world as superior to that of the ordinary person. In principle, this is the most literal embodiment of the intellectual standpoint, which is based precisely on a superior ability to understand the social world. At the same time, such an attitude may prove counterproductive, as it is likely to be judged as arrogant or self-aggrandising by the intellectual's audience. In the two examples discussed above, however, this risk is averted. In the case of Luketić's interview about the symbolism of the Balkans, the author is explicitly addressed as an expert in the subject matter, which creates an expectation that she will draw on her expert knowledge to answer the questions posed by the interviewer. In the case of Pavičić's commentary, the author purports to understand the Croatian people better than they understand themselves; however, he downplays this bold pretension by couching it in a temperate and mitigated language. Other authors claim a privileged viewpoint on similar grounds, but do so in a more indirect and less heavy-handed manner, resorting to negative other-presentation instead of positive self-presentation. Namely, they implicitly assert their expert authority by openly challenging notions and interpretations that are widely accepted or commonly held in high regard. The most salient instances of this strategy are found in Luketić's interview and Jergović's opinion piece. As shown above, both authors take issue with dominant or stereotypical representations of the Balkans and overtly reject them as ill-founded. By doing so, they implicitly grant themselves the status of experts.

6.2 Strategies of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation

The purpose of the previous section was to identify and categorise the manifold discursive strategies employed by the authors to convey their intellectual estrangement

from society at large. This section investigates the circumstances in which they withdraw from their privileged observation point, in order to speak for their national community. As revealed by detailed analysis of the 12 texts included in the sample, all of the authors act to a greater or lesser extent as spokespersons for the nation, and they do so through a range of different discursive strategies. As with the case of Serbia, I propose to group them in three broad groups:

1. *The intellectual as political guide for the nation*
2. *The intellectual as promoter/defender of the nation's values and distinctive character*
3. *The intellectual as emancipator/educator of the nation*

In the following, I will illustrate each of these broad strategies of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation, pointing out their most relevant linguistic and discursive aspects.

6.2.1 The intellectual as political guide for the nation

Croatia's accession to the EU has been publicly acknowledged in the media as a historic event of paramount importance for Croatian society. Framed as the long-awaited fulfilment of a common goal, it has been promoted first and foremost as an unprecedented political achievement, fraught with important and far-reaching consequences for Croatia as a political community. Hence, it is not surprising that most of the authors among those considered focus precisely on the political significance of Croatia's EU membership, rather than on its economic or cultural aspects. Indeed, several authors are explicitly concerned to explore the relationship between Croatia as a polity and the EU, as well as the impact that EU membership has had, or might have, on the Croatian political scene. By assuming this attitude, these authors undertake the role of political guides for their national community.

This strategy of spokespersonship for the nation can take various forms, depending on the specific discursive strategies employed by the authors. A typical form involves articulating a political project or promoting a common agenda/framework for political action. Generally speaking, this can be done in many different ways, ranging from developing a broad and comprehensive political vision to spelling out single objectives to be accomplished. Also, the degree of specificity may vary: some authors

outline their proposed political project in detail, while others just give general recommendations or sketch out guidelines. In this regard, the strategy that recurs most frequently in the texts from the Croatia sample is the one whereby the author emphasises certain opportunities (typically stemming from EU accession) and then urges the Croatian people to seize them. I will illustrate this specific strategy through some examples.

In the conclusion of his opinion piece, entitled *Croatia deserved a grander finale in the EU accession game* [C01], Skoko addresses the following exhortation to his fellow citizens:

(18) After a difficult and arduous negotiation process, Croatia deserves some celebration. (19) All the more since we belong to Europe and our membership will open up new opportunities. (20) But now we have to get to work. (21) To start with, we could define a vision of the Croatian future and reach a national consensus over our place in the EU and how we will make use of this high-priced membership.

Membership in the EU is represented as the completion of a long and difficult journey, but at the same time as the threshold of an era of great promise for Croatia. Skoko's argument, therefore, is that Croatian society should not only legitimately celebrate EU accession as an accomplishment, but also make the necessary arrangements to be able to reap the benefits that come with it. These arrangements, as suggested by the author, are of a political nature, as they involve envisaging Croatia's political future, and especially developing a shared strategic view of its relationship with the EU. Although the author stresses the urgency of having a political vision, he does not spell out its contents. Nevertheless, his position can still be regarded as that of a political mouthpiece for the nation, insofar as he takes the responsibility of exhorting his national community to reflect upon its future prospects.

A similar attitude is found in Marina Šerić's commentary *We have joined the European construction site. Let's roll up our sleeves and get to work* [C9]. This is the concluding paragraph:

(19) In this whole story Croatia cannot stay on the sidelines, but must demonstrate that it has will and creativity, and the desire to put effort into a common goal. (20) If we were to wait for someone to feed us like young birds in a nest because we are

miserable and small, we would become a burden on the shoulders of the EU. (21)
This is a historic opportunity that we should not fritter away.

Similarly to the previous example, the author portrays EU accession as a “historic opportunity” (21) that Croatia cannot afford to let pass by. The exhortation Šerić addresses to the nation is to take a proactive stance vis-à-vis the European integration process. In this case, the emphasis is not so much on the necessity of a clearly defined political vision, but rather on the need to show commitment and inventiveness (which is in tune with her predominant strategy of intellectual self-legitimation based on promoting ‘thinking out of the box’, as discussed in § 6.1.2). In any case, by formulating an overarching vision and direction for Croatian society, the author assumes the perspective of political mouthpiece for the nation. Moreover, she does so in a quite confident and assertive manner, as indicated by the use of prescriptive deontic modality (“cannot”, “must” and “should not”), and also by the counterfactual analogy between the Croatian people and small birds waiting to be fed, which is probably intended to provoke a sense of (national) pride in the readership.

In the two examples discussed above, the authors suggest a more or less specific framework for political action, and by doing so seek to establish their authority as political spokespersons for the nation. Occasionally, however, authors might already be officially vested with that kind of authority (in various degrees), notably if they are renowned political leaders. In this case, the position of spokespersons for the nation is not one they might attempt to achieve, but one they already occupy, and which they might want to perform and reassert before their constituencies. It is against this background that I will now examine the cases of Ivo Josipović and Josip Leko, respectively the President of Croatia and the Speaker of the Croatian Parliament (at the time). Let us first consider the following excerpts from Josipović’s commentary, entitled *The beginning of the future for our Croatia* [C03]:

(43) Our country’s accession to the European Union gives us great hopes. (44) I am personally proud that we have succeeded. [...]

(51) Perhaps now is an opportunity to think about how to best take advantage of this new energy and new confidence. [...]

(59) Perhaps today is an opportunity for us to foster this new social consensus, this unity towards a new goal – the development of our country. [...] (64) When I look ahead, ten, twenty or fifty years from now, I see today as the birthday of a happier, more successful and more prosperous Croatia [...] (65) Today is the beginning of our future – a future that will be better to us than was our past.

Josipović describes Croatia's accession to the EU as a turning point for Croatian society. It represents not only a great accomplishment, but also, and especially, the inauguration of a 'space of opportunities' available to Croatia for sustaining progress and achieving prosperity. This crucial occurrence, metaphorically equated to the "birthday" (64) of a new and better Croatia, is hailed with the catchphrase "the beginning of our future" (65), which also appears in the title of the article. But Josipović does more than herald the onset of a 'new era'. Firstly, he outlines the emerging opportunities, and encourages his fellow citizens to seize them. Secondly, he sets "development" (59) as the new, overarching goal of Croatia. Finally, he lays out a promising scenario for Croatia stretching far into the future, which presupposes an extraordinary capacity for vision. Admittedly, none of these projected elements are spelled out in much detail; nevertheless, through promoting a political vision, however vague, the author implicitly ratifies his position of political guide of the nation. In this respect, he appears to fulfil the expectations of his official role of President of Croatia, in which capacity he is speaking.

Like Josipović, Josip Leko, the Speaker of the Croatian Parliament, also takes upon himself the duty of motivating the Croatian people to pursue the opportunities provided by EU accession. His opinion piece is appropriately entitled *The EU is an opportunity we have to take advantage of* [C04], and this attitude is most apparent in the following paragraph:

(21) Although we have met the membership requirements and many see us as the most prepared country for EU membership, there is still much to be done. (22) First of all, we need to strengthen our economy and raise the standard of living. (23) In the worldwide economic crisis Croatia suffered major damage, and five years after the onset of the crisis we have failed to stimulate economic growth. (24) The European Union provides an opportunity for such a turnaround too, but it is up to us to take advantage of it.

The passage begins with the author calling on his fellow citizens not to underestimate the challenges still facing Croatia in spite of its recent accomplishment. Leko admonishes that “there is still much to be done” (22), a warning that echoes Božo Skoko’s “But now we have to get to work” (see above), and indicates economic recovery as the main priority in this regard. The claim is backed up with reference to Croatia’s long-standing inability to tackle the economic crisis, which can be regarded as a combination of a *topos of history* and a *topos of threat and danger*. Then, Leko urges Croats to capitalise on EU membership as a way out of the current predicament.

As illustrated by the examples above, many authors discursively construct their standpoint as political guides for the Croatian nation in a very similar fashion. Namely, they all construct the EU as a ‘space of opportunities’ in which Croatia can flourish and develop, and subsequently seek to motivate the people to embrace and act upon those opportunities. The analysis has shown that this applies to both ‘prospective’ and ‘official’ political mouthpieces, that is, to regular columnists as well as to professional politicians.

Another possible way in which authors can act as political spokespersons for the national community is to criticise the country’s political elites, blaming them for failing to adequately represent the people and to advance their interests. This strategy is also quite frequent in the texts from the Croatia sample. For instance, in his piece *Will Europe be able to sing...* [C11], Josip Jović ridicules the enthusiastic attitude of the political leadership towards Croatia’s accession to the EU, exposing their disconnection with the people:

- (4) Members of the elite were genuinely happy and content, it is their success, lucrative positions and awards await them, after all they do not have to share the fate of this nation, and especially of this state that many of them did not gladly welcome.
- (5) But which served them well anyway.

The overall tone of the passage is bitter and sarcastic. Initially, the author debases the fervour of Croatian politicians for EU accession as a mere expression of self-interest. Then, he attributes their complacent attitude to their being radically alienated from their national community. Finally, he subtly points out their ambivalent and hypocritical relationship with the Croatian state, accusing them of reaping benefits

from a polity that they were not ready to support when it gained independence in the early 1990s. In this polarised representation, which is further developed through the article, political leaders are depicted as selfish individuals who do not feel any obligation towards their constituencies, nor any loyalty to the polity they are meant to serve. By pointing out the disconnection of political elites from the people, Jović takes on the role of political mouthpiece for the Croatian national community.

A somewhat similar kind of criticism of national political elites comes from Nino Raspudić. In his opinion piece entitled *We have awakened as EU citizens! What will be our next goal?* [C08], he accuses them of having shown more allegiance to the EU than to the Croatian people:

(31) During all these years of negotiations, the Croatian political elite did not play an authentic political game for the local public, but a post-colonial one for Brussels' judgmental look, to whose expectations it obediently conformed.

In this sentence, the author outlines a metaphorical scenario in which Croatian politicians appear submissively prostrated before the powerful European Union, which is personified as casting a "judgmental look" upon them. The adjective "post-colonial" works as a framing device: by conjuring up notions of colonialism and post-colonialism, it stigmatises the relationship between Croatia and the EU as one marked by significant structural inequalities. By taking such a bold and critical stance towards Croatia's leadership, Raspudić assumes and performs the role of political guide for the Croatian nation.

6.2.2 *The intellectual as promoter/defender of the nation's values and distinctive character*

In institutional and media discourses, EU accession has largely been represented as the historical fulfilment of a common objective of the Croatian people. At the same time, much emphasis has been placed upon the challenges involved in joining an international organisation of such magnitude and status, particularly in terms of its possible impact on Croatia's culture, identity and values. In this respect, several authors among those considered have focused their attention on two broad issues. One is the concern to reassert Croatia's national and cultural identity in the new international context created by EU accession. The other is the wish to complement the debate on the benefits of EU membership for Croatia with some considerations

about what Croatia itself can contribute to the EU and its future development, and thus defend its international reputation. By explicitly addressing these issues, the aforementioned authors take on the role of promoters and/or defenders of Croatia's values and unique national character, which is a specific strategy of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation.

The first two examples, which I discuss below, are taken from two texts published by *Jutarnji List* in the thematic section *Kakva je moja Hrvatska* (What my Croatia is like). The section, launched on the occasion of Croatia's entry into the EU, featured renowned columnists, writers and public figures expressing their personal views on the country, its people and culture. In all likelihood, the authors were explicitly invited to submit their contributions to the section; therefore, one may object that they did not take on the role of promoters of Croatian national identity (provided they did) deliberately, but were rather put into that position (one may say *interpellated*) by the newspaper itself. In my view, this is hardly sufficient grounds to dismiss the notion of spokespersonship for the nation as irrelevant to this case. On the one hand, one should not deny the agency of the authors, who consciously occupied the 'speaking position' that was offered to them. On the other hand, the decision made by *Jutarnji List* to launch such a thematic section could itself be regarded as symptomatic of a societal need to reassert Croatia's distinctive character in the face of European integration, as suggested above.

The first example is from Miljenko Jergović, a well-known and influential Bosnian writer who has lived in Zagreb (Croatia) since 1993. In his opinion piece, entitled *A country without an economy or mineral treasures, with plenty of water and wind* [C07], he elaborates on the peculiar character of Croatian identity, culture and society:

(24) Croatian traditional culture and popular folklore are determined by [...] versatility, and partly by blending. [...]

(40) [...] Croatia is a rich and very diverse country. (41) Just as its cultural and national identity is variegated and pours into the mould from many different sources, and as Croats themselves are very much mixed with neighbouring Slavic nations, but also Italians, Austrians and Hungarians, so the beauty of their country is miraculously very diverse and contradictory.

The second example is taken from *Between cathedrals and Balkan crevices* [C05], by writer and film critic Jurica Pavičić. In this piece, he gives his personal interpretation of the specificity of Croatian culture, which is summarised in the opening paragraph:

(2) Geographically, culturally, linguistically, politically and gastronomically, Croatia is a country that is based on two fundamental contradictions, which defy cultural stereotypes as well as conventional geographic and macro-regional conceptions. (3) The first of these contradictions is that Croats are Balkan Catholics. (4) The second contradiction is that Croats are Mediterranean Slavs.

The two authors explain Croatian identity in terms of what they regard as its defining characteristics. Jergović stresses its composite and heterogeneous character, while Pavičić understands it as the product of two peculiar paradoxes. By advancing their views in an informative and declarative style, with all verbs in the indicative mood and no hedges or mitigating devices, both present themselves as experts in the subject. But there are discursive elements which suggest that they might speak not only as experts, but also as *promoters* of Croatian identity. Jergović, on the one hand, represents Croatian identity in very positive terms, emphasising its richness, diversity and unusual beauty; this positive representation culminates in the value-laden adverb “miraculously”³⁵ (41), which conveys an aura of mystery and otherworldliness. Pavičić, on the other hand, argues that the two contradictions underlying Croatian identity are such that they challenge common knowledge, which compels the reader to appreciate its extraordinary character. In this light, both writers act as spokespersons for the Croatian nation by elevating and reasserting Croatia’s distinctive identity and culture (in the context of increasing European integration).

As stated above, a further motive driving some authors to speak out in support of Croatian national identity is the desire to claim recognition for Croatia’s capacity to contribute to the EU in significant ways. This desire seems to arise in response to a perceived general undervaluation of Croatia’s ability to improve the Union culturally, economically or otherwise. A clear illustration of this attitude, which underlies a specific strategy of spokespersonship for the nation, is found in Milan Jajčinović’s opinion piece, entitled *Today begins Croatia’s new historical era* [C06]:

³⁵ A more literal translation would be “by some sort of miracle”.

(8) The contribution³⁶ Croatia brings to the EU might seem modest, but it is not insignificant. (9) It brings not only its natural beauty, especially the Adriatic, but also its millennial culture, its people's diligence and hard work, intellectual capabilities and athletic talent.

The author's standpoint is enshrined in the first sentence: although he partially acknowledges (the epistemic modality marker "might seem" functions as a hedge) Croatia's supposedly limited ability to contribute to the EU, he retorts that the country's endowment is indeed significant. The expression "it is not insignificant" is an understatement (litotes) whereby the author makes an affirmative point by denying its opposite. In the next sentence, Jajčinović substantiates his claim by boasting about what he sees as the country's main qualities and assets. The construction "not only [...] but also" serves as an intensification device, as it places the accent on the virtues and capabilities of the Croatian people, which are portrayed in utterly positive terms. The attempt by the author to vindicate Croatian national identity in the context of European integration makes him a spokesperson for the nation, specifically a defender and promoter of the nation's values.

In a similar vein, Skoko [C01] expresses his disapproval of Croatia's failure to publicise its merits to the wider European public:

(11) [...] In Croatia everyday life [is] really difficult, but it is a shame that we have not made enough efforts to tell those positive facts that made us deserve membership and by which we will enrich the Union. (12) And there are many indeed! (13) Of course, this requires knowledge, creativity, coordination and commitment.

As in the previous example, the author makes an initial concession, which is then followed by a rebuttal aggrandising Croatia's accomplishments. Unlike Jajčinović, however, Skoko does not specify the nature of these feats. Instead, he limits himself to claiming with confidence that "there are many indeed", which is a rather clichéd way of eulogising one's nation as it plainly mobilises commonplace beliefs held by the general public. On the other hand, Skoko explicitly puts the blame for the misrepresentation of the nation's value on the Croatian people themselves. The accusation is expressed in quite vague terms, but it is precisely its generic character that makes it central to Skoko's self-positioning as a spokesperson for the nation. In

³⁶ *Popudbina* in the Croatian language, literally "viaticum".

fact, by dispersing the responsibility among his fellow-nationals (including himself), he turns the accusation into a general appeal for every Croat to be a better ambassador of her or his nation. The exhortative character of this discursive move is confirmed by the final sentence, in which the author indicates the skills that such an ‘office’ requires. This attitude is a clear instance of spokespersonship for the nation, as the author puts himself forward as a promoter of Croatian national identity on the European and international stage.

6.2.3 The intellectual as educator/emancipator of the nation

Besides the two modes of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation examined above, some authors appear to resort to a third mode, which involves assuming the role of educator or emancipator of the Croatian nation. Broadly speaking, the role of educator/emancipator of the nation can in principle be assumed and performed in manifold ways. In the texts under examination, only a few authors assume this standpoint, and they do so in two main ways: as educators of the nation, by setting out to explain what they see as the key facets of Croatian nationhood and national consciousness; as emancipators of the nation, by questioning shared perceptions and common practices as harmful to the nation. These approaches will be illustrated through three examples.

The first example is an excerpt from Josip Leko’s opinion piece [C04], in which he describes European integration as a much-earned-for achievement of Croatian society:

(9) From the beginning we knew that we would have to work hard, but also that the prize awaiting us was immensely valuable. (10) We have regarded European integration not only as a duty to be accomplished once and for all, but as the project of several generations. (11) [...] we have witnessed the slow but steady change of Croatian society. (12) We have always known that we want a society built on the same founding values as the European Union, a society that respects human rights, freedom of the market, the rule of law and the rights of minorities.

The repeated use of *we* is a rhetorical and persuasive device aimed at obliterating the distance between the author and his readers by presenting a particular viewpoint (arguably the official position of the government, given Leko’s political role) as being shared by the entire Croatian people. As indicated by the predominance of epistemic

verbs (*know, regard, witness*) associated with *we*, this staged viewpoint attributes to the Croats a shared knowledge and understanding of the reality and the future of their national community. This specific framing strategy allows Leko to construct a shared sense of national identity, or national consciousness, by projecting it onto his imagined audience, the Croats. I designate this attitude as that of an *educator of the nation*, in the sense that, by presupposing a common vision of the nation, the author intends to *impart* that vision to his fellow-citizens.

A more straightforward illustration of this strategy of spokespersonship for the nation is found in Katarina Luketić's interview [C12]. When asked a question about Croatia's ambivalent geographical position in between Europe and the Balkans, she replies:

(19) I see Croatia equally as a European, a Mediterranean and a Balkan country. (20) I do not see any problem in that, and it seems to me that the position that wants to determine whether you belong to the Balkans or to Europe is something that only leads to neurosis. (21) Things must be approached differently. (22) Of course we are both things, Europe and the Balkans.

Luketić's attitude towards the nation in this passage is both educative and emancipatory. It is educative/didactic insofar as she intends to teach the Croatian public about fundamental aspects of Croatian nationhood. Specifically, she is keen on promoting a view of Croatia that magnifies its multiple geographic determinations. The style, made explicative and assertive by the use of the indicative mood and the paucity of hedges, is well suited to this purpose.³⁷ But Luketić's attitude with regard to the Croatian nation can also be seen as emancipatory, because she is concerned to dispel a widespread conception of Croatian identity as adversely affecting the nation's capacity for self-understanding. The use of the medical trope "neurosis" (20) contributes to framing the author's statement as a *diagnosis* of a supposedly unhealthy condition affecting the Croatian national body (or mind, in this case). This further reinforces her role as emancipator of the nation, which is largely based on promoting (the value of having) multiple identities.

The third and final example presents a case in which the author acts as emancipator of the nation in a quite caustic manner. In his piece *We have awakened as EU citizens!*

³⁷ As already noted above, Luketić's assertiveness in exposing her views on the symbolic geography of Croatia and the Balkans is a key aspect of her intellectual self-legitimation as a knowledgeable expert.

What will be our next goal? [C08], Nino Raspudić takes issue with EU-phoric and EU-phobic stances, condemning both as deceptive and harmful political propaganda:

(12) The idea that joining the EU has no alternative has been imposed as self-evident, and this founding political myth has cast its shadow on the whole political scene. (13) What is really different this morning as compared to yesterday? (14) Nothing, we are in the same predicament, with the same people, in the same boat. [...]

(22) [...] the europhobic story that today we have lost our sovereignty is also a fairy tale. (23) We cannot lose something we have not had for long. (24) We have not been financially, economically, and geostrategically sovereign for years now.

In sentence 12, Raspudić uses specific strategies of nomination and predication to express his distrust towards dogmatic pro-EU attitudes. These are described as a “myth”, fabricated by unspecified powerful actors (notice agent deletion: “has been imposed”), which has corrupted Croatia’s political life casting a metaphorical “shadow” on it. Subsequently, by means of a rhetorical question, he engages his fellow-citizens in a critical examination of the unwarranted optimism underlying these attitudes, which are finally rejected. The second paragraph does the same with radically anti-EU positions. First, the author discredits them by calling them “a fairy tale”. Then, he substantiates his judgment by invoking what he regards as an ‘uncomfortable truth’ about the situation of Croatia. In both cases, Raspudić appears committed to liberating the Croatian nation from false beliefs and perceptions about its own condition. His role of emancipator of the nation is best encapsulated in a question he addresses to the nation at the beginning of the article: (5) “[...] [A]re we as a community capable at all of living and doing politics without such myths?”.

In conclusion, only a few authors among those considered construct their role as educators or emancipators of the nation. The strategies they employ range from imparting a sense of national consciousness to the readership (Leko), to helping the national community to avoid an ‘identity crisis’ (Luketić), to dispelling false beliefs and self-perceptions (Raspudić).

6.3 The discursive representation of Croatia as a nation

In the previous section I have investigated the discursive strategies employed by Croatian intellectuals to claim the role of spokespersons for the nation. The purpose of

this section is to explore the manifold representations of the nation that they put forth in this capacity, in order to determine recurring themes and discuss their significance in relation to the context of the case under consideration. I have approached the data using the framework elaborated in § 3.5. Detailed analysis of the sample texts has allowed me to identify four main themes:

1. *The uniqueness and specificity of Croatian identity*
2. *European integration as a chance for Croatia to achieve social and political consensus?*
3. *The controversial narrative of Croatia's 'return to Europe': a break away from the Yugoslav legacy and the Balkans, or rather a new role in the region?*
4. *Croatia and the EU: from dependency to equal partnership*

In the following, I will introduce and discuss each theme by providing relevant examples from the sample texts.

6.3.1 *The uniqueness and specificity of Croatian identity*

As shown above (§ 6.2.2), assuming the role of *promoters/defenders of the nation's values and distinctive character* is one of the key modes of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation adopted by Croatian intellectuals. The obvious consequence of this tendency is that the distinctiveness of Croatian national identity is likely to be foregrounded across the sample texts (strategy of *singularisation* placing emphasis on national positive uniqueness, see § 3.5.3). Although focused on intellectuals and how they construct their standpoint, the previous analysis has already shed some light on aspects of Croatian national identity that are explicitly thematised. The most prominent one appears to be Croatia's distinctively composite cultural makeup/heritage. Miljenko Jergović [C07] celebrates it as the outcome of cultural blending with other nations and as the source of Croatia's beauty, whereas Pavičić [C05] sees it as stemming from two fundamental tensions underlying Croatian identity, condensed in the 'paradoxical' designation of the Croats as Balkan Catholics as well as Mediterranean Slavs. A similar emphasis on Croatia's heterogeneous culture is also found in Katarina Luketić's interview [C12], as shown in the analysis of her self-positioning as educator and emancipator of the nation (see above). A less prominent aspect relates to praising the virtues and skills of the Croatian people, which Milan Jajčinović highlights as Croatia's most valuable contribution to Europe.

These two aspects, however, do not exhaust all the discursive manifestations of the main theme. An additional way in which the uniqueness and specificity of Croatian national identity are accentuated in the articles of the sample is by framing the European context as a platform for Croatia to exhibit and boost its national and cultural identity. Many authors among those considered seem to imply this, but it is in Josipović's opinion piece [C03] that the argument is made most explicit:

(36) Now that we have become a full member, we have an additional opportunity to present ourselves to the other European peoples in the best light, to show them the strength and beauty of our culture and identity. (37) There is no ground to fear that our identity will be "lost" in the "sea" of the European Union. (38) Not a single people in the EU lost its identity, nor became unrecognisable, so it will not happen to us either. (39) Just the opposite – it is an opportunity to integrate our culture into European culture even more effectively, and thus become more visible and more attractive.

The passage is replete with lexical items from the semantic field of appearance and recognition ("present ourselves", "in the best light", "beauty", "unrecognisable", "visible", "attractive"). They all refer, more or less explicitly, to Croatian nationhood, which conveys the idea that national identity requires being performed and acknowledged by others in order to endure and thrive. Indeed, this general principle serves as warrant for Josipović's claim that joining the EU is an "opportunity" (the word occurs twice in the paragraph) for Croatia to preserve and sustain its national and cultural makeup. The aquatic metaphor in sentence 37 introduces the counter-argument that integration might in fact lead to assimilation and thus jeopardise Croatia's specificities. The author dismisses this fear as unfounded, and further rebuts it by adducing the continuing distinctiveness of other European peoples as evidence through a *topos of comparison* (38), which has the following structure: *if* no other people has lost its identity upon integrating into Europe, *then* the Croatian people will not either). On the whole, this argumentative scheme suggests a conception of Europe as a stage on which different national identities strive to achieve visibility and recognition. In Josipović's view, Croatia should engage in this endeavour in order to further promote the distinctive "strength" and "beauty" of its national identity.

As shown by the examples above, the unique character of Croatian national identity tends to be associated with positive attributes and qualities: its enriching cultural

heterogeneity, its vitality and attractiveness, the admirable skills of the Croatian people. There is, however, one dissonant view. In *Between cathedrals and Balkan crevices* [C05], Jurica Pavičić argues that what makes Croatian identity exceptional is its inability to accommodate so much cultural diversity into a coherent whole. In the following passage, he explains what this implies:

(34) It is because it is incapable of producing an organic identity – a tangible combination of sights, tastes and idioms that can be seen, heard and enjoyed with one’s palate – that Croatia is prone to construct abstract national narratives. (35) If you cannot “be a nation” on the basis of the Puszta, goulash soup, paprika and “Magyar nyelv” (the Hungarian language), Croatia “becomes a nation” through para-ideological stories, narratives about Zvonimir’s curses, the bulwark of Christianity, “we-have-always-been-in-the-West”, the millenary dream, geese in the fog, up to the myths about Genex’s foreign currency and Dinamo’s stolen titles.

The gist of the argument is that Croats are ready to embrace all sorts of national myths because they lack a consistent (“organic”) national identity. This is the only case in the sample where Croatian national identity is not assumed to exist as a coherent, positive whole. Instead, it is presented as an unfinished project, a failed attempt to create a synthesis of the country’s extraordinary geographic, gastronomic and linguistic diversity. As the author puts it, the impossibility of *being a nation* is what impels Croatia to *become a nation* by resorting to mythology, collective representations and common symbols, ranging from ancient history to relatively recent events such as corruption scandals. Incidentally, this argument partly reflects the well-established view of nations as imagined communities (Anderson, 1983), as well as the concept that national official history is largely fabricated (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983), both of which have been discussed in § 3.3.1. Yet, Pavičić does not frame the case of Croatia as a typical instance of how national identities are constructed, but rather as a singularity based on a very peculiar configuration of culture, identity and narratives. This suggests that what may initially appear as a criticism of the defective character of Croatian national identity might in fact be understood as an attempt, albeit convoluted, to glorify the country’s extraordinary cultural uniqueness.

6.3.2 European integration as a chance for Croatia to achieve social and political consensus?

The second theme identified in the analysis pertains to the nation conceived as a *political community*, which is the second of the five dimensions of the discursive construction of the nation included in the analytical framework (§ 3.5.3). The theme concerns the significance of the European integration process for Croatia's political life, particularly the question of whether joining the EU has helped, or can help, the country to reaffirm its common values and to build a durable political consensus. As discussed in § 2.3, post-socialist transition, the post-conflict situation and Europeanisation have deeply shaped the post-Yugoslav societies, often bringing about widespread uncertainty, social distress and political cleavages. Thus, looking at how Croatian public intellectuals interpret and assess the impact of EU accession on Croatian politics can shed some light on the progress made by Croatian society in dealing with these challenges and consolidating as a political community.

As signalled by the question mark at the end of the theme title, there appears to be no clear agreement on the issue. In fact, although only three authors out of fifteen explicitly touch upon it, the positions they express are quite divergent. While one author is very optimistic about the benefits that Croatia may reap from European integration in terms of social and political cohesion (strategy of *cohesivation* emphasising the will to unify, see § 3.5.3), another insinuates that EU accession has only made more apparent the deep-seated cleavage between the Croatian people and its political leadership (strategy of *polarisation* emphasising intra-societal divisions, combined with a strategy of *delegitimation* of the political elites, see § 3.5.3). The third author takes a sort of compromise position between these two extremes, suggesting that EU integration provides a chance to reconsider, and possibly reduce, the existing disconnection between the Croatian electorate and the political elites.

The more optimistic view is that advanced by Josip Josipović [C03]. Considering his institutional role as President of the Republic, as well as the strong pro-European orientation of the incumbent Croatian government, this is hardly surprising. Nevertheless, it is worth focusing on how Croatia is discursively constructed as a community in Josipović's text, as this reveals some underlying ideological assumptions. Most relevant in this regard is the following excerpt:

(59) Perhaps today is an opportunity for us to foster this new social consensus, this unity towards a new goal – the development of our country. (60) It is my desire that Croatia maintains and improves even more the sense of solidarity and mutual understanding between workers and employers, between the rich and the poor, between the haves and the have-nots.

The first sentence contains an enthymeme (a truncated argument), which can be expanded as follows: European integration (metonymically represented as “today”, the day of EU accession) is widely supported by the Croatian people, *therefore* it constitutes an opportunity for Croatia to consolidate and flourish as a national community. The implicit warrant is that a society needs to be united around a common goal in order to achieve prosperity. In the second sentence, Josipović clarifies that in the case of Croatia the common goal should be to reduce existing cleavages by fostering inter-class solidarity. From a critical perspective, this can be seen as a way of tactically promoting social appeasement, that is, the neutralisation of conflicting interests in order to preserve the status quo. It should also be noted that the use of the words “maintains” and “even more” generates the (conventional) implicature that even before EU accession Croatia *already* enjoyed such a kind of social solidarity to a certain degree, which contrasts with the emphasis on the element of novelty (see repetition of “new”) in the first sentence. This could be interpreted as a compromise made by the author in order to represent the Croatian national community in utterly positive terms, by avoiding suggesting that before becoming a EU member state Croatia was a divided society.

A very different representation of Croatia as a political community is offered by Josip Jović in his piece *Will Europe be able to sing...* [C11], particularly in the following extracts, which describe the way in which Croatian politicians welcomed EU accession:

(4) Members of the elite were genuinely happy and content, it is their success, lucrative positions and awards await them, after all they do not have to share the fate of this nation [...].

(12) As in all these past years, local politicians have competed to show how committed Croatia is to the European idea and what it brings to Europe, without asking themselves what Europe brings to Croatia. [...]

(15) Ordinary people remained quite indifferent.

By stressing the disparity between the attitude of Croatian politicians and the ordinary people towards EU accession, the text conveys a representation of Croatian society as marked by a sharp elite-people divide. This polarisation also bears a critical evaluative stance, as political leaders are described as opportunistic, self-interested and insufficiently accountable to their constituents. Moreover, the phrase “they do not have to share the fate of this nation” connotes their disengagement with society as structural rather than contingent; at the same time, the use of the word “fate” gives a sense of disquiet and uncertainty, suggesting that the absence of a responsible leadership undermines the capacity of the Croatian nation to cope with the challenges and the perils of the contemporary world. What emerges from Jović’s anti-elitist argument is a portrayal of Croatia as a divided and dysfunctional (at least from a democratic standpoint) political community, which stands in stark contrast to Josipović’s hopeful and optimistic view.

A much more moderate account of Croatia’s political situation is found in Nino Raspudić’s editorial [C08]. In his view, EU accession is an opportunity for Croatia to become a more viable political entity:

(35) What is certainly a positive consequence of the accession is the beginning of a “normal” profiling of the political scene [...], within which the viewpoints of different segments of the electorate will be articulated in a better and more reliable way, as opposed to the present state of affairs in which the majority of voters do not feel adequately represented.

Like Jović, Raspudić acknowledges that Croatian politics is hampered by a problem of representation, but unlike his fellow commentator he does not frame this problem as a chronic anomaly affecting the Croatian body politic, but rather as a transitory phase that EU integration will help overcome. The argument and its premises are spelled out in a clear and non-emphatic style, which reflects the more balanced way (as compared to both Jović and Raspudić) in which the author addresses the issue. The image of Croatia that emerges from this passage is that of a fairly stable and dynamic political community striving to improve its democratic performance. The only linguistic element that appears to be at odds with this representation is the word “normal”, which might be taken to imply that the Croatian political scene has so far been

“abnormal”, thus substantiating Jović’s pessimistic view. However, throughout the article quotation marks are used consistently as scare quotes, therefore it is safe to assume that Raspudić does not subscribe to the apparent meaning of the term.

In conclusion, there appears to be little consensus among the authors considered about whether European integration provides an opportunity for Croatia to achieve social and political consensus. The significance of this discrepancy will be further elaborated upon in Chapter 8.

6.3.3 The controversial narrative of Croatia’s ‘return to Europe’: a break away from the Yugoslav legacy and the Balkans, or rather a new role in the region?

The third theme that emerges from the analysis of the discursive representation of Croatia as a nation is the ambivalent and controversial framing of EU accession as a ‘return to Europe’. As pointed out, among others, by Galasińska and Galasiński (2010), the narrative of the ‘return to Europe’ was the predominant way in which the end of communism was perceived and constructed, both in political and private discourses, in Central and Eastern European societies during the 1980s and the 1990s (see § 2.2.1). This kind of narrative had also a great grip in the Yugoslav context, where movements seeking national self-determination, particularly in Slovenia and Croatia, discursively framed their political action as an attempt to ‘leave’ the Balkans in order to finally ‘rejoin’ Europe as independent nations (Todorova, 1997). After the fall of the East-West divide and the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the ‘return to Europe’ gradually came to coincide with the process of European integration, and specifically with membership of the EU. Thus, what had emerged as a narrative of liberation from oppression evoking a scenario of melting borders has now transformed into a largely institutional and bureaucratic discourse, founded on new, and perhaps more rigid, boundaries (Leontidou, 2004). Expressions such as ‘Fortress Europe’ and ‘Visa Curtain’ (after the ‘Iron Curtain’), which have circulated in popular and institutional discourses since the 1990s, aptly expose the onset of a less idealised and more problematic perception of the ‘return to Europe’, based on increasing awareness of the challenges inherent in the processes of EU enlargement and European integration in general (see § 2.3).

This ambivalence between the aspiration to join the ‘European family’ and the great efforts required in order to meet the political, economic and legislative targets set by

EU conditionality (see § 2.3.3) is clearly reflected in the different attitudes that the authors considered assume with regard to the significance of Croatia's own 'return to Europe'. These range from passionate optimism to outright skepticism, as illustrated in the following examples. The most enthusiastic stance is that expressed by Jajčinović in *Today begins Croatia's new historical era* [C06]:

(2) Croatia has finally returned to the cultural and civilisational environment that it had left almost a century ago due to the will of its elites.

(3) The 1st of July 2013 marks the beginning of a new historical era for Croatia. [...]

(7) Croatia joins the European community of peoples and states with the hope that its own return to it will also be a European, political, economic, cultural and mental new beginning.

Jajčinović interprets EU membership as signifying Croatia's long-awaited reintegration into the European cultural space (strategy of *unification/cohesivation* constructing the nation as part of a supranational context/entity, combined with a strategy of *discontinuation* emphasising a disruptions, see § 3.5.3). In the first sentence, he constructs a spatial dichotomy in which Yugoslavia is placed in a different "cultural and civilisational environment" from Europe, which can be regarded as a replication of the 'Europe versus Balkans' *leitmotif* identified by Todorova (see above). Moreover, by highlighting the responsibility of Croatian elites in determining the country's departure from the European space, the author seems to insinuate that they acted against the will of the people, who would otherwise have preferred to remain 'in Europe'. In the next sentence, Jajčinović stresses the significance of Croatia's accession into the EU by framing it as a crucial turning point in the history of the country. Finally, he further elevates Croatia's 'return' by suggesting that it might represent a chance for Europe to rejuvenate itself. The overarching narrative has both a teleological and a palingenetic character, in the sense that Croatia's return to Europe is framed not only as the fulfilment of its destiny, but also as an act of rebirth/regeneration, both for Croatia and (possibly) for Europe as a whole.

A teleological understanding of Croatia's accession into the EU transpires also in the next example, which is taken from *Back into the team where we belong* by Gordan Zubčić [C02]:

(2) [In 1990] Croatia already had in its hands an exit ticket from Yugoslavia, and in many ways it was miles ahead of the societies that in the meantime have more or less become proud holders of the title of membership in the European Union. (3) But [...] many in our surroundings did not want to accept the above-mentioned exit ticket, so we had to take a detour, along with countless spanners thrown into our own works, to reach the society towards which we so fervently strived at the beginning of the 90s. [...]

(7) Now, however, it has come full circle. (8) We have found ourselves together, insieme, with the team that was summoning us, also for the sake of their own interests, more than two decades ago.

Here, Zubčić recounts Croatia's process of integration into Europe as a metaphorical journey, or race, that lasted more than twenty years (strategy of *continuation* placing emphasis on positive continuity, see § 3.5.3). This metaphorical scenario extends across the entire passage. In the first sentence, the "exit ticket" stands for the opportunity that Croatia (supposedly) had in the early 1990s to make a clean break from the disintegrating Yugoslav Federation, while the expression "miles ahead" evokes an imaginary race towards Europe in which Croatia holds the first place while all other former Yugoslav republics lag behind. Further on, the war with the rump Yugoslavia (i.e. Serbia and Montenegro) is euphemistically equated to a "detour" in Croatia's otherwise steady advancement towards Europe, while internal political setbacks are depicted as the proverbial 'spanners in the works' or, in a more literal translation from the Croatian, as 'sticks in the wheels' (strategy of *discontinuation* placing emphasis on disruptions, see § 3.5.3). The teleological concept underlying this metaphorical scenario emerges at the end of the second sentence, when Zubčić clarifies that Croats had clearly determined the endpoint of their 'journey' already in the 1990s, and is further reinforced in sentence 7 by the idiomatic expression 'coming full circle', which indicates accomplishment and closure. The significance of the entire narrative is condensed in the final sentence, in which the author celebrates Croatia's success in becoming an equal member of the European "team".

While Zubčić views Croatia’s membership in the EU as a victory in a race against its competitors, i.e. the other Yugoslav successor states, Raspudić perceives it rather as imposing on Croatia the burden of helping its competitors to achieve the same goal (strategy of *heteronomisation* stressing extra-national dependence, see § 3.5.3). This is most apparent in the following excerpt, taken from his second commentary [C10]:

(23) It looked like it was not an independent state that joined [the EU], but rather a piece of the ‘region’ which has promptly accepted to serve as a bridge to get the others aboard. (24) This approach does not conceive of Croatia as a fully-fledged homeland, but rather as a shard of Yugoslavia or as an amputated limb of the ‘region’.

In both sentences, the author represents the expectation that Croatia should enter into a partnership with the other countries of the post-Yugoslav region as incompatible with its status as an independent nation-state. He conveys his criticism of the so-called regional approach by putting scare quotes around the word “region” (indicating his skepticism towards the very notion of a post-Yugoslav region), but especially by means of a series of metaphors emphasising the degrading character of the role ascribed to Croatia, i.e. “bridge”, “shard” and “amputated limb”. The last metaphor constitutes an interesting variation of the *nation-body* metaphor (see Musolff, 2010), as in this case the (Croatian) nation is depicted as a part of a larger, *regional* body, yet a body to which, in the author’s view, the nation does not and should not belong.

The question whether EU membership requires Croatia to assume a new role vis-à-vis the other post-Yugoslav societies is indeed the object of much controversy. In his commentary titled *The EU is an opportunity we have to take advantage of* [C04], Leko voices what can be regarded as the official position of the Croatian government on the matter:

(18) We see [our success] also as a chance for South-Eastern European countries wishing to join the European Union.

(19) Croatia’s accession to the EU is more than a clear beacon worth following and a message that all the hard work pays off in the end. (20) We certainly can and want to help them, because without a stable South-Eastern Europe there is not stable Europe.

The attitude expressed by Leko is opposed to that assumed by Raspudić in the previous example. Unlike Raspudić, Leko regards the possibility of Croatia helping

the neighbouring countries as something positive instead of a burden (strategy of *unification/cohesivation* constructing the nation as part of a supranational context/entity, see § 3.5.3). Apart from defining Croatia's accession to the EU as a "chance" for the countries of the region, he presents Croatia as an example to be followed (through the beacon metaphor, which conjures up an image of Croatia as a lighthouse) and also as an inspiring successful story. The underlying argumentative scheme is made explicit in sentence 20, where Leko clarifies that Croatia's commitment to help is justified by the need to maintain and guarantee stability. This could be regarded as a *topos of threat and danger* implying that the failure of Croatia to assume a leading role in the region might have dramatic consequences.

In conclusion, the analysis of this theme has shown that Croatia's intellectuals have diverging attitudes in regard to the 'return to Europe' narrative, and that such disagreement is largely connected with discussion about the role that Croatia should (or is expected to) play vis-à-vis the post-Yugoslav region.

6.3.4 Croatia and the EU: from dependency to equal partnership

The fourth theme concerns Croatia's place within the broader frame of the European project. As in the previous theme, the attitudes that Croatia's intellectuals assume towards this issue are also quite divergent. The analysis of the sample texts shows that the relationship between Croatia and the EU is often represented by means of figurative expressions related to childhood and adulthood (strategy of *vitalisation* through anthropomorphisation/ personification of the nation, see § 3.5.3). I shall illustrate this point by discussing three relevant examples. The first is a brief excerpt from Jajčinović's opinion piece [C06]:

(19) The long-standing negotiations with Brussels' Eurocracy have not been easy. (20) During the negotiations, Croatia often behaved as a diligent pupil who simply does their homework.

The simile in the second sentence frames the relationship between the EU and Croatia as a teacher-pupil type of relationship, that is, as one marked by an inherent imbalance of power. Croatia's subaltern position is further emphasised by the attribute "diligent" and the adverb "simply", which indicate the country's readiness to comply with the obligations established by the EU. The nomination strategy whereby the EU is

designated as “Brussels’ Eurocracy” is also relevant in this respect, as it highlights the great amount of power that is embedded in the EU’s polity (rather than, for instance, its political, economic or cultural dimensions).

In his commentary [C08], Raspudić employs an analogous framing strategy:

(29) This morning [...] has marked the end of the phase of self-imposed national childhood. (30) Croatia’s childish position in the negotiations was clearly evident from the discourse of our negotiators, who talked about “doing our homework” or “demonstrating maturity”.

Here too, Croatia’s weaker position in the negotiations is expressed linguistically through references to childhood and pupilhood. There are, however, some important differences. First, Raspudić regards Croatia’s inferiority as “self-imposed” rather than as a structural condition of the negotiation process, which implies a greater attribution of responsibility to Croatia than in Jajčinović’s view. Furthermore, Raspudić is more openly critical of Croatia’s role, which he pejoratively describes as “childish”. Finally, the quotation marks in the second sentence could be regarded as scare quotes indicating the author’s disapproval, so to speak, of the childhood/pupilhood discourse itself.

An interesting variation on the theme of childhood *versus* adulthood is found in Šerić’s commentary [C09], particularly in the following passage, in which she exhorts Croatia to take a proactive role vis-à-vis the EU:

(6) [...] yesterday Croatia joined Europe’s building site, so it must immediately [...] roll up its sleeves and get to work. [...]

(19) In this whole story Croatia cannot stay on the sidelines, but must demonstrate that it has will and creativity, and the desire to put effort into a common goal. (20) If we were to wait for someone to feed us like young birds in a nest because we are miserable and small, we would become a burden on the shoulders of the EU.³⁸

In the initial metaphorical scenario, Croatia is likened to a construction worker who has just joined the EU “building site”. In sentence 29, Šerić spells out what Croatia’s new role entails in terms of duties and responsibilities towards the common European

³⁸ Part of this excerpt has been discussed in § 6.2.1 in regard to strategies of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation.

project. Finally, in sentence 20 she justifies her prescriptive claim by means of a counterfactual analogy³⁹ containing two salient figures of speech, i.e. a simile comparing Croats to young birds and a double metaphor in which the EU is represented as a person and Croatia instead as an object.⁴⁰ The juxtaposition of these two referential strategies (specifically of the *construction worker* and the *small birds* metaphors) suggests that existence of an underlying dichotomy of ‘maturity *versus* immaturity’, which resonates with the way in which Croatia is thematised in the examples discussed above. Specifically, while Jajčinović and Raspudić highlight the subaltern, ‘immature’ role assumed by Croatia in the negotiation process with the EU, Šerić focuses on the country’s attainment of a ‘mature’ and responsible role on a par with the other EU member states.

The overarching narrative that emerges from all three examples is one of ‘maturation’: Croatia is depicted as moving from an initial position of inferiority (child, pupil, small birds) to one of equality with the other nations and peoples involved in the construction of the future Europe. The broader significance of this kind of discursive representation will be elaborated upon in Chapter 8.

³⁹ Already briefly discussed in § 6.2.1.

⁴⁰ A more literal translation of the original text would be “cuffs on EU’s legs”.

7. Bosnia and Herzegovina: the 2014 anti-government protests

This chapter is devoted to examining the third case study, which relates to the wave of anti-government protests that took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina in early 2014. In the following, I illustrate the results of the analysis of the sample, focusing on strategies of intellectual self-legitimation (§ 7.1), strategies of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation (§ 7.2), and the discursive representation of the nation (§ 7.3).

7.1 Strategies of intellectual self-legitimation

This section is devoted to exploring the discursive strategies employed by the authors under examination to construct and legitimise themselves as intellectuals. As elaborated in § 3.2, intellectual self-legitimation involves constructing one's standpoint as affording some kind of epistemic advantage over ordinary people, typically by emphasising one's estrangement from the broader society. Generally speaking, the analysis of the Bosnia and Herzegovina case suggests that authors resort to the following macro-strategies of intellectual self-legitimation:

1. Strategies based on *engagement and attitude*
2. Strategies based on *knowledge and expertise*
3. Strategies based on *status and membership*

In the following I shall illustrate this variety by discussing some relevant examples.

7.1.1 Intellectual self-legitimation based on engagement and attitude

As illustrated in the overview of the opinion pieces included in the sample (§ 4.4.3), most of the authors openly support the anti-government protests. Positioning oneself as a politically engaged individual who supports a social cause can be a more or less effective way of establishing one's authority in public discourse, and could therefore be regarded as a strategy of intellectual self-legitimation. However, since the protests were driven by issues that supposedly affect the entire Bosnian-Herzegovinian society, such as social inequalities, political corruption and economic mismanagement, cases

of individual authors endorsing (or dismissing) the protest movement will be treated as instances of spokespersonship for the nation, and will therefore be discussed in § 7.2. Here, the focus will be on cases in which claims to a vantage point are based on attitudes or dispositions towards society that do not explicitly involve assuming the role of a public spokesperson.

Only two clear instances of this particular strategy of intellectual self-legitimation were found in the texts from the sample. Interestingly, both authors employ very similar discursive strategies. In fact, they both present themselves as nonconforming thinkers, implying some kind of estrangement from the mainstream intellectual community. The first instance appears at the beginning of *Let us build islands of freedom* [B08], when Asim Mujkić is asked to comment on the attitude of the local academic community towards the demonstrations:

(1) DANI: Professor Mujkić, the academic community has largely been silent about the 7th of February and all that ensued, or has otherwise expressed limited support or severe condemnation. (2) You are one of the few who gave support to the plenums. (3) What do you think is happening with the academic community?

(4) MUJKIĆ: Unfortunately, I wrote a lot about this, too. (5) Our academic community has never seriously confronted the issue of academic freedom. [...] (10) Particularly when it comes to social science and humanities, the University has traditionally been a place that brings together people who in one way or another legitimise and serve the dominant political worldviews.

The opening question constructs Mujkić as standing out in the academic community for his openly supportive attitude towards the protests and the citizens' plenums. It is precisely in this capacity that he is asked to account for the reluctance of many of his colleagues to take antagonistic political stances. In his response, Mujkić appears to embrace this projected identity, by presenting himself as an unremitting (and prolific) critic of academia as an institution that caters to dominant ideologies and is therefore unable to promote social change. By depicting the professional community of which he is a member as generally lacking the capacity to foster alternatives to the status quo (e.g. by supporting the plenums), he implicitly places himself in the estranged yet privileged position of the 'socially engaged' academic. Moreover, he constructs his own critical attitude as a matter of duty rather than inclination, as signalled by the

adverb “Unfortunately” in sentence 4. This specific perspectivisation strategy allows the author to claim intellectual authority as an outspoken, principled and nonconformist academic.

Further on in the interview, Mujkić resumes his discussion of the social engagement of academics, this time putting an important restriction on it:

(63) [...] I am glad that nobody, including me, has usurped the public space. (64) That none of us has come forward trying to do something there, take action, or simply dominate that space.

After having criticised the structural idleness of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian academic community, the author warns against the opposite risk of academics becoming too socially engaged, to the point of appropriating the movement and thus undermining its prerogatives. By explicitly including himself among those who could have ‘usurped’ the arena of deliberation yet did not do so, Mujkić not only demonstrates a capacity for self-reflection, but also constructs his own political involvement as a genuine attempt to help the movement without abusing his power. The image he conveys of himself is that of a concerned, self-aware and committed member of the academic community, which constitutes a conspicuous case of intellectual self-legitimation based on *attitude*.

The other salient example of the discursive construction of the intellectual vantage point based on engagement and attitude appears in the following passage from Dino Mustafić’s editorial [B02]:

(13) The chorus of voices [of politicians] has been joined by conformist intellectuals, a variety of political analysts who have brainwashed our minds for years talking about fatalism, apathy and the impossibility of change, suggesting that politics is a meaningless activity. (14) Such misconduct is embodied in public figures who use media appearances to establish the dogma that it is impossible to improve or change the system.

The passage contains various negative predications targeting Bosnian-Herzegovinian mainstream intellectuals and analysts. After portraying them as united in a metaphorical chorus with the political leaders, whom he had previously described as irresponsible and self-interested, Mustafić blames them for eroding trust in politics

and stifling the ability of citizens to engage in political action, in particular through the media. Unlike Mujkić, Mustafić does not present himself as a representative of the intellectual community. However, being a public figure himself, Mustafić's harsh criticism of people abusing their public position to maintain the status quo can be read as an implicit defence of all discordant, out-of-the-chorus intellectual voices, among which he supposedly counts himself. In this sense, by criticising the conservative and repressive attitude of his peers, the author legitimises himself as a progressive intellectual and a promoter of social change.

7.1.2 Intellectual self-legitimation based on knowledge and expertise

In the sample texts, knowledge and expertise appear to be invoked as grounds for claiming one's intellectual authority much more frequently than engagement and attitude. Various authors emphasise their specialist knowledge or their ability to understand aspects of the social world, and they do so in manifold ways. While some propose innovative ways of looking at certain social phenomena, others mobilise their professional expertise to adopt a 'didactic' attitude towards their readership.

A clear example of the latter strategy is found in Ibrahim Prohić's interview for *Dani*, entitled *The government is afraid of the unity of the citizens* [B06]. As in Mujkić's case, the interviewer initially addresses Prohić as an expert (he is a psychologist), who then constructs his own position accordingly:

(2) DANI: Mr Prohić, Bosnia and Herzegovina has witnessed its first serious social unrest, how do you comment on this fact from the standpoint of psychology?

(3) PROHIĆ: Protests are the canonical consequence of a long-term social crisis. (4) To put it simply, what happened had to happen, logically it had to happen considering that for years we have been faced with inefficient, irresponsible and even arrogant authorities. (5) From a theoretical, psychological standpoint there is a limit to tolerating frustration, that is, a point up to which it is possible to endure deprivation. (6) Certain universal standards suggest that this social reaction, [i.e.] the citizens' protests, was long overdue.

Prohić's response contains several markers of evidentiality, that is, linguistic items indicating the sources of knowledge that the writer invokes to confer validity to his

assertions. These are “canonical”,⁴¹ “logically”, “theoretical, psychological standpoint” and “universal standards”. All of them point to psychology as a research field with established theoretical principles and norms (apart from “logically” which appeals to logical rationality in general). What these expressions achieve in terms of intellectual legitimation is that they allow the author to present himself as an authoritative representative of the relevant discipline. Moreover, the style is explanatory and reflects the author’s manifest intention to make complex notions clear to his readers (e.g. “To put it simply”). This pedagogical approach fits well, and further reinforces, Prohić’s standpoint as an expert.

Other authors mobilise their knowledge or expertise in different ways. One way to do so is to articulate certain social facts as complex, heterogeneous phenomena that require intense critical scrutiny in order to be properly understood. An illustration of this strategy appears in Nino Raspudić’s opinion piece titled *Their swallow does not make our spring* [B05]:

(25) [...] the first, quite plausible interpretation is that a protest by outraged citizens has subsequently been used for political calculation within the Bosniak camp. (26) The second is that it is a sort of shock therapy aimed at disrupting existing tendencies identified in the declaration by the European Parliament [...]. (29) The third interpretation is that protests were encouraged in order to dissolve the Bosniak community [...] (31) Attempts at interpreting such a complex event, which cannot be reduced to a single dimension, are reminiscent of the story of the blind people touching an elephant and disagreeing about what they think they have touched, as it seemed like a tree to some and like a snake to others.

The author advances three alternative explanations of the anti-government protests, all involving a certain degree of machination by some external agency (left unspecified via agent deletion) seeking to exploit the situation for political purposes. In epistemic terms, the standpoint from which these propositions are put forth presupposes a capacity to disentangle the complex and often invisible web of power relations and political interests underlying every social manifestation. This is precisely the intellectual vantage point that Raspudić discursively assumes in this passage. It should be noted, however, that nowhere in the article does he venture to assess the veracity or

⁴¹ *Zakonomjerna* in the original language, which means “according to law”.

likelihood of the proffered explanations (apart from qualifying the first one as “quite plausible”). The adoption of this particular epistemic stance, which partially offsets the previously established vantage point, finds its justification in the concluding sentence, by means of a vivid analogy with a parable (from Indian culture) about the relative nature of subjective experiences and the impossibility of attaining a totality of truth.

Other authors build up their image of knowledgeable and expert intellectuals in a much bolder way than Raspudić does, for instance by claiming not only the power to ‘see through’ social reality, but also the ability to make exact predictions about it. This specific strategy is quite salient in Slavo Kukić’s editorial entitled *Earthly gods and social misery. A social uprising which will earn the ethno-nationalists another term* [B03], particularly in the following bits:

(15) Among the public [...] the thesis prevails that the social uprising is the result of a spontaneous reaction of the humiliated – who are allegedly backed by informal groups organised through social networks. (16) I am afraid, however, that this is not the whole truth. (17) There are many details, I mean, that call this theory into question. [...]

(38) In the following months and years – time will tell – the socially humiliated, who, I repeat, make up nine tenths [of the entire population], will turn again to their own troubles [...]. (39) And such a state of mind favours the very ones who created the socially humiliated – and who have manipulated them in the past quarter of a century. (40) Social turmoil, I mean, will bring the socially miserable back again to where they have been all these years, that is, to the position of being subject to ethno-nationalist philosophy, the position in which the masses are easy to manipulate.

In the first excerpt, the author expresses his skepticism about the common interpretation of the protests as a spontaneous uprising by stressing its speculative, conjectural character. Apart from explicitly contesting its factual validity (in sentences 16 and 17), this is obtained also by means of referential expressions indicating epistemic status (such as “thesis”, “theory”, and “not the whole truth”) as well as evidential markers (“allegedly”). This discursive move underpins a strategy of perspectivisation, as it enables the author to construct his own standpoint as affording a better-founded and more critical understanding of social phenomena as compared to

the broader society, which is the hallmark of intellectual authority. The possibilities arising from this position are exemplified in the second excerpt, where Kukić makes predictions concerning the way in which the current social discontent will develop in the future (and also insinuates the existence of some sort of conspiracy against the people, through a calculated use of vagueness). The use of the future tense (“will turn again”, “will bring”) and the absence of hedges convey certainty and confidence in the uttered predictions, while the phrase “time will tell” creates a general sense of necessity and inevitability. Moreover, the very content of these predictions presupposes the author’s ability to comprehend the structural/systemic dimensions of social domination in Bosnian-Herzegovinian society, which is also a relevant feature of intellectual self-legitimation.

This latter aspect is central to another salient instance of intellectual self-legitimation based on knowledge and expertise, which appears (again) in Mujkić’s interview for *Dani* [B08], particularly in the passage below:

(25) [...] a successful ideology is one that convinces its subjects to accept their position voluntarily by free will, or says that there is no alternative [...]. (26) And this is instituted through media narratives, education, the church, and trade unions. (27) Trade unions are also an important lever in the system of what Althusser called ideological apparatuses. (28) And I think that after 20 years this whole matrix has become quite consolidated... When we think of Bosnia and Herzegovina, although we say that there is no state and that it does not work, I would even say that this ideological matrix, within which people recognised, understood and positioned themselves, functioned unobstructedly until the 7th of February.

In sentences 25 to 27, Mujkić gives an explanation of how ideology works. Considering that this is (most probably) the written record of an oral interview, the style is remarkably scholarly and erudite, almost reminiscent of standard academic writing, due to the predominance of nominalised abstract notions (see Billig, 2014), the clarity of the argumentation, and the citation-like reference to Althusser, a well-known scholar of ideology. Although such self-construction as a knowledgeable expert is in itself a way of establishing one’s authority, it is in relation to the following text that its relevance to intellectual self-legitimation can be fully appreciated. As a matter of fact, in sentence 28 the author applies the previously exposed knowledge to

the concrete case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, thus demonstrating not only his ability to relate theory to practice, but also his capacity to understand the fundamental mechanisms that govern (his own) society. In this respect, Mujkić's choice to represent his claim as counterintuitive through the concessive clause "although we say ..." and the intensifier "even" further contributes to establishing his standpoint as an epistemically privileged vantage point from which commonly shared perceptions can be called into question.

7.1.3 Intellectual self-legitimation based on status and membership

Several Bosnian-Herzegovinian authors claim intellectual authority on the basis of their particular status in the community and/or their membership in an established intellectual elite. The analysis has shown that this is achieved in a variety of ways, and through manifold discursive strategies. I have regrouped them in three main strategies, which relate to self-positioning as a member of the intellectual or academic elite, as an authoritative and prominent commentator of social reality, and as a witness or participant in key historical events, respectively. In the following, I will illustrate each strategy with two examples, in order to account for the different ways in which the same strategy can be realised in actual discourse.

The two most conspicuous instances of self-positioning as a member of the intellectual or academic elite appear in Asim Mujkić's and Zdravko Grebo's interviews. Both are well-known university professors, so it is hardly surprising that they discursively construct their intellectual authority accordingly. There are, however, some discrepancies in how they achieve this. Let us first reconsider a passage from the interview [B08] in which Mujkić, asked to comment on the distrustful and unsupportive attitude of most academics towards the protest movement, assumes the position of a nonconformist, critical voice in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian academic world:

(3) What do you think is happening with the academic community?

(4) MUJKIĆ: Unfortunately, I wrote a lot about this, too. (5) Our academic community has never seriously confronted the issue of academic freedom. [...] (10) [...] the University has traditionally been a place that brings together people who in one way or another legitimate and serve the dominant political worldviews.

On the one hand, this standpoint involves a strong disposition to challenge the hegemonic role of academia, for which reason it has been examined above as an instance of intellectual self-legitimation based on engagement and attitude (§ 7.1). On the other hand, it can be argued that Mujkić's critique would not be so cogent if he did not present himself as an academic, which suggests that part of his intellectual authority derives precisely from his membership in the academic elite. By granting himself the authority to criticise the very institution to which he belongs (in order to improve it, arguably), he establishes his vantage point at the intersection, so to speak, of membership and engagement.

In his interview for *Dnevni Avaz* [B11], Grebo is also asked to comment on the relationship between the intellectual community and the anti-government protests:

(19) For years the intellectuals, including you, have expressed amazement that in Bosnia and Herzegovina there is no rebellion of the people. (20) What sort of revolt did you expect?

(21) I expected a genuine, perhaps not fully articulate uprising, but a social one. (22) I personally do not belong to the class of the insulted, the humiliated, the miserable...

(23) I am a university professor about to retire. (24) I am not hungry or thirsty, and someone could ask me: "Why are you doing this, since you are not affected?", which is true. (25) But my expectations were [...].

Grebo starts off by giving a short and concise answer to the question. Before elaborating it further, he makes a digression (from sentence 22 to 24) in which he explicitly represents his own social position as privileged, particularly in comparison to the people involved in the protests. This is obtained through self-predications related to class belonging, profession and existential conditions. The digression culminates with a staged dialogue, in which a generic other appears to successfully call into question the legitimacy of Grebo's own involvement with the movement. Yet, this does not seem to affect his entitlement to articulate expectations about what the movement can achieve, which he does from sentence 25 onwards. This rather complex strategy of self-presentation has important implications in terms of intellectual self-legitimation. On the one hand, it conveys a strong sense of self-awareness and 'intellectual honesty' on the part of the author. On the other hand, it operates as a powerful disclaimer: by acknowledging his position as inherently detached from that

of the protesters, Grebo anticipates and deflects potential criticism targeting his right to speak of (and for) the movement. This suggests that there are (at least) two ways in which status/membership can serve as grounds on which to build one's intellectual authority: authors may construct their vantage point by invoking or presupposing a special status; alternatively, they may represent their special status as an *impediment* to acquiring a fully legitimate intellectual standpoint, as Grebo does, and thereby avoid being blamed as hypocritical or manipulative (see Hansson, 2015, about blame avoidance strategies).

The second category of strategies of intellectual self-legitimation based on status or membership refers to authors who present themselves as authoritative and publicly recognised commentators of social and political matters. As an illustration, let us first consider the opening paragraph of Slavo Kukić's opinion piece [B03]:

(3) Over the past days I was asked time and again what I think about all this. (4) And every time I repeated that I understand this social explosion of hungry people. (5) After all, for several years I have been repeatedly saying that this is the inevitable consequence of the way the country has been ruled in the past quarter of a century. (6) I am referring, let there be no doubt, to a form of governance that has at its subtext a robbery which BiH [...] has never experienced in its history.

The passage is characterised by the predominance of verbs of speech in the first person and expressions conveying a sense of repetition (“time and again”, “every time”, “repeated”, “repeatedly”). These underpin a discursive strategy whereby the author represent himself as somebody whose opinion (at least about the protests) carries weight in the public eye, and also as someone who has long been vocal about important matters concerning Bosnian-Herzegovinian society. More specifically, Kukić constructs his role as a critically committed commentator by emphasising his continuous efforts to speak out against misgovernment and corruption, particularly in sentence 5. He also manifests a quite strong expectation that his opinion should be well understood by the audience, as signalled by the aside “let there be no doubt” in the concluding sentence, which further reinforces his image as an authoritative commentator of social facts.

Establishing oneself as an authority in public discourse can also be done in a less straightforward and bold way. This is the case with Enes Trumić, who in his editorial [B07] writes the following:

(64) Many have criticized the SDP for dealing with the urban decoration of Tuzla while the civic spirit is one of misery and destitution. (65) The mayor ignored the critics who, in fact, were his best friends, and still are. (66) If he had listened to us, this would have never happened.

A closer look at the referential strategies used to represent a specific social actor, i.e. the critics, reveals a salient change of perspective, or reframing. While they are initially referred to in the third person, in sentence 66 there is a shift to the first person plural, i.e. the author-inclusive “us”. This entails that the predications about the critics made in the previous text also apply to the author himself, because he is one of them. This (re)framing strategy allows Trumić to present himself retrospectively as someone who is concerned for the well-being of his community, and a constructive (friendly) critic of the local government. Through the counterfactual in the final sentence, then, he promotes himself as member of a group whose advice, if taken by the authorities, could have avoided the escalation of the situation. In formal terms, this strategy of intellectual self-legitimation is less direct and assertive than Kukić’s, particularly since Trumić does not employ the first person singular. The substance, however, is quite similar, as both authors construct themselves, so to speak, as victims of the same curse as Cassandra,⁴² lamenting that their valid predictions and warnings were dismissed or disbelieved by those who should have followed them.

A third way in which some of the authors legitimise themselves as intellectuals on the basis of status is by assuming the privileged standpoint of witnesses to and/or participants in historical events that bear some significance for the present situation (which constitutes a specific *topos of history*). Two authors, Mujkić and Grebo, do so quite explicitly and in a similar way: both establish their authority by drawing a parallel between the current anti-government protests and events from the Yugoslav past in which they were personally involved. In his interview [B8] Mujkić, for instance, explains the failure of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s ethno-national political

⁴² The ‘Cassandra’ strategy is one of the strategies of demontage and destruction identified by Wodak *et al.* (2009) in their study on the discursive construction of Austrian national identity.

system to accommodate the growing demand for social change by comparing it to the crisis of communist ideology in Yugoslavia:

(30) MUJKIĆ: I am not over-optimistic, but I think that a crack has opened up. (31) Perhaps we can discuss the aspects of what happened in the late '80s when the vocabulary of the communist apparatchiks simply could no longer mobilise anyone. (32) It happened almost overnight. (33) So, I witnessed that, I was a student back then. (34) You could no longer mobilise anyone through the fundamental words of the ideological-mobilising narratives of the Communist Party. [...] (36) This simply created space for a different discourse.

Initially, the author describes the impact of protests and plenums upon Bosnian-Herzegovinian society as a metaphorical “crack”, that is, as something that can potentially disrupt the existing order. Then, he illustrates the point via a *topos of history*, evoking the rapid loss of momentum undergone by the official Yugoslav ideology in the 1980s. In sentence 33, Mujkić constructs himself as a witness to that significant historical event. By placing himself, as it were, amid those circumstances, he gives credibility to his argument, and hence confers authority on his own standpoint. Indeed, the combination of autobiographical elements and general analytical propositions expressed in scientific language appears to be a very effective strategy of intellectual self-legitimation, enabling the author to give his statements and judgments about society the force of testimony.

Unlike Mujkić, who willingly vindicates his status of witness/participant to a key historical event, Grebo is installed in that position by the interviewer [B11]:

(54) As a participant in the 1968 demonstrations in Sarajevo, can you draw a parallel between the reaction of that government as compared to the present one?

(55) – The reaction of the then political and military leadership was almost caricaturally similar to that of today. (56) Even the undisputed leader Josip Broz Tito during the first ten days said: “We support the legitimate demands of the students, but we condemn the method”. (57) Somehow this sounds similar to me. (58) But some ten days later, and I am afraid that we are witnessing this today, [...] Tito gave a speech [saying]: “No one will ever tear down this country again, we will by all means...”

Through inviting Grebo to draw on his own experience in the 1968 protests in Yugoslavia, the interviewer implicitly constructs that experience as a valuable perspective from which to discern the ongoing social clash. In his answer, Grebo readily occupies that vantage point by reporting salient episodes from that historical context and pointing out their similarity to the present situation, quite like Mujkić in the example above. In fact, both authors ground their authority as interpreters of social reality in their having been witnesses to significant historical events. Unlike Mujkić, however, Grebo does not explain the comparison in a conceptually sophisticated manner; instead, he uses a much more anecdotal and suggestive style. For instance, the conclusion (i.e. that the incumbent government is ready to crush the protest movement) is only alluded to and left to the reader to decipher. In this respect, his strategy of intellectual self-legitimation differs from that of his academic colleague, as it does not involve using specialist terminology.

7.2 Strategies of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation

This section focuses on the ways in which the authors under examination take on and perform the role of spokespersons for the nation. In the specific context of Bosnia and Herzegovina, whose society is characterised by ethnic divisions that are deeply entrenched in the country's institutional and political structure (see § 2.3 and 4.2.3), the concept of nation may be taken as synonymous with ethnic group. From this viewpoint, the three 'constituent peoples' of Bosnia and Herzegovina, i.e. Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats, would constitute three distinct nations, or national groups, within a single country, and the notion of spokespersonship for the nation would therefore be coterminous with spokespersonship for a particular ethnic group. In the specific case under consideration, however, this framework has little or no relevance. As explained in § 4.2.3, the 2014 anti-government protests did not have ethnic connotations, nor did they address specific ethnic issues; on the contrary, they rejected the hegemony of the ethno-political paradigm, criticising its dysfunctional and inherently oppressive character. In this sense, the relevant concept of nation is much closer to the idea of a civic *Staatsnation* than to that of an ethnically defined *Kulturnation* (see § 3.4.1). Hence, insofar as Bosnian-Herzegovinian intellectuals supported the protest movement (and most of them did), they took on spokespersonship for the entire Bosnian-Herzegovinian society, irrespective or, rather, in spite of ethnic differences.

This point is further confirmed by the fact that, unlike the cases of Serbia and Croatia, in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina there are no instances of intellectuals acting as *promoters/defenders of the nation's values and distinctive character*. The analysis, in fact, has shown that the strategies they employ fall under these two categories:

1. *The intellectual as political guide for the nation*
2. *The intellectual as emancipator/educator of the nation*

Below I discuss each of them through salient examples taken from the sample.

7.2.1 *The intellectual as political guide for the nation*

The most common macro-strategy found in the sample texts is the one whereby authors assume the position of *political guide* of the nation. This is hardly surprising, due to the highly political character of the key event chosen as the case study for Bosnia and Herzegovina. In fact, almost all commentators (with a few salient exceptions, see below) take the side of the protest movement, endorsing its outcry against political corruption and its demands for political change. Hence, practically all of the authors perform, to a greater or lesser extent, the role of political guide for the nation. They do so by suggesting, arguing or dictating how Bosnia and Herzegovina should operate as a political community. As stated above, they assume this position in manifold ways. A very common strategy is that of criticising the country's political elites on various grounds in order to de-legitimise them in the eyes of public opinion. The most blatant illustration of this strategy is found in Almasa Hadžić's two short pieces published in *Dnevni Avaz*, in which she wages a fierce attack on Tuzla's local government. In *Shame on them!* [B01], for instance, she blames local political leaders for avoiding confrontation with the protesters:

(7) [Tuzla's government is] unjust, corrupt, and discredited [...]. (8) Were it otherwise, at least someone from the Tuzla Canton government (of course there is no difference between them and their predecessors) would have deigned to meet with the representatives of the citizens who demonstrated and talk to them about the reasons for such dissatisfaction. (9) Nobody did! (10) The ministers [...] pulled out slyly and bitchily, indeed fled, from their cabinets [...]. (11) [...] [They did so] instead of discussing and negotiating with the people. (12) They did not even issue a meaningful statement! (13) Shame on them!

Hadžić expresses outrage and indignation over the politicians' behaviour by portraying them in utterly negative terms. To begin with, the tone of the whole passage is contemptuous and often derogatory, due to the abundance of negative attributions, the absence of hedges, and the use of intensification devices such as negatively connoted words and exclamation marks. Furthermore, the argumentative scheme is largely based on counterfactuals and implicatures indicating what the government officials would have done if they were good instead of bad politicians. More specifically, sentence 8 contains an explicit counterfactual argument introduced by "Were it otherwise", while in sentence 11 a similar effect is obtained via an adversative construct introduced by "instead". Lastly, the adverb "even" in sentence 12 generates the analogous implicature that politicians were expected to act differently from what they did. Generally speaking, the author seeks to de-legitimise Tuzla's political leaders by stressing the discrepancy between their actual behaviour and the expected, normatively defined behaviour of 'good' politicians, whereby she assumes the role of political guide for the nation.

In her other opinion piece, *The bubble has burst* [B04], Hadžić launches an even more vehement tirade against corrupt politicians, whom she describes as:

(6) [...] party scoundrels and dummies [...] who dressed up to gain the seats of directors and ministers, the parliamentary benches, national and international commissions, and from their dens, without fear, ripped off the state, employed relatives and diverted budget money to private companies and their criminal bosses...

In this case, her self-construction as political (and moral) guide is based on simply defaming the politicians rather than assessing their actions against the ideal of political accountability towards the people, as in the previous example. The quoted sentence, in fact, is a sequence of negative nominations and predications that represent the politicians as opportunistic, unscrupulous and immoral individuals who exploit their position of power for personal gain.

While Hadžić's strategy of spokespersonship rests on a rather sweeping and indiscriminate attack on the political elites, other authors establish their position of political mouthpieces by tackling specific practices that they see as detrimental to the political process. In this regard, the main criticism levelled at Bosnia and

Herzegovina's political leaders is that they use ethnic politics to manipulate and mobilise public opinion to their own advantage. Two strong proponents of this idea are Dino Mustafić and Ibrahim Prohić, who denounce the attempt by politicians to curb the subversive potential of the protests by forcing an ethnic frame upon them. In *United in anger* [B02], Mustafić argues the following:

(12) The political establishment is struggling to find arguments that these riots are a kind of conspiracy [...], that they should not be allowed to “flow” or “be transferred” across entity borders; they are trying to ethnicise them so they call them “Bosniak spring”, urge “their people” not to join them and to be wise and prudent, relying on the fact that through the politics of fear and ethnic separation they will still be able to continue to rule for decades.

In his interview for *Dani* [B06], Prohić makes a very similar claim:

(64) PROHIĆ: There are explicit attempts to use the citizen revolt for fueling conflict among ethnic communities. (65) The war in the early nineties was prepared and carried out on these grounds. (67) They want to keep the conflict on that level, and they are afraid of the relocation of the conflict to its natural dimension, that is, between citizens and government, which is the natural environment of social conflict in non-democratic and non-productive societies.

In the first example, Mustafić strongly condemns political leaders for trying to falsify the real nature of the social protests in order to preserve their power. He seeks to delegitimise them by portraying them as unable to sustain their opinions with reasons and evidence (they are depicted as “struggling to find arguments”), by using scare quotes to distance himself from their words, and also by condemning their manipulative attitude as part of a broader ideological strategy for monopolising political power, which he refers to as the “politics of fear and ethnic separation”. In a similar vein, in the second example Prohić exposes what he sees as a machination aiming to shift the conflict to a level that better suits the interests of the ruling classes, that of ethnic struggle. He expresses his criticism in a more veiled and indirect way as compared to Mustafić. First, the process itself is represented mainly via nominalisations and passive verbs, and therefore largely depersonalised. Secondly, the historical parallel with the Yugoslav wars drawn in sentence 63 is not carried to its conclusions, leaving it unclear whether it should be understood as an implicit attack

on the agents of the machination or rather as a *topos of threat and danger* raising the spectre of a new conflict. Thirdly, the emphasis on political confrontation as the “natural” site of struggle (an attribute repeated twice) implies a condemnation of ethnicisation as ideological mystification, although Prohić does not develop this criticism further. In conclusion, the two cases analysed here provide an illustration of the how intellectuals may act as spokespersons for the nation by opposing ethno-political manipulation.

A stylistically noteworthy example of spokespersonship for the nation predicated on criticising the political elites is found in Enes Trumić’s commentary *Someone woke up, some are just waking up* [B07]. As the title forewarns, the article represents the situation in Tuzla by outlining a metaphorical scenario of awakening. The scenario extends across two paragraphs, but it is most prominent in this excerpt:

(46) The people have finally forced Bosnian-Herzegovinian authorities to wake up. (47) Those who forgot about us in their orgiastic spending spree with public money are finally stretching and reluctantly opening their eyes. (48) [Local political leaders] have not yet fully woken up to the events in Tuzla. (49) Which is totally understandable, because if they wake up completely they will realise they have the biggest responsibility.

What is peculiar about this example is not only the extended use of figurative language, but also the fact that the metaphorical scenario of awakening, which is a rather clichéd way of describing processes of mobilisation and emancipation involving the masses, is instead used in relation to the target of the protests, that is, the politicians. The agent of awakening, however, remain the people, specifically the demonstrators. It is them, in fact, who force politicians out of the slumber that symbolises their indifference towards “us”, the people, as well as their reluctance to be held accountable for their deeds. Hence, the author performs the role of political mouthpiece for the nation by constructing a polarisation between the political elites, who are depicted in utterly negative terms (note also the loaded expression “orgiastic spending spree”), and the people, who are implicitly elevated as the agents of change.

Among the authors considered, criticising the political elites is by far the most common manifestation of the macro-strategy of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation labelled *political guide*. A less common but equally relevant manifestation of

the same macro-strategy is that of engaging with the protest movement itself, for instance by questioning its practices or redefining its goals. Two excerpts from the sample texts illustrate this well. One is from Vehid Šehić's interview [B12]:

(40) This social uprising should remain in the domain of solving [the issue of] social policy in BiH, in order to give hope for a better tomorrow to every citizen, to restore the dignity they have lost because it has been reduced to numbers and percentages, instead of names and surnames. (41) I think that one should insist upon these requests, one should not engage in high-level politics aiming at abolishing cantons and entities, because we would be wading into political waters and forgetting what has compelled the citizens to take to the streets.

Šehić urges the movement to remain true to its grassroots, instead of nurturing aspirations to reshape Bosnia and Herzegovina's government and institutional structure. He substantiates this claim first by enunciating, in sentence 40, what he regards as the overarching goals of the movement, then by pointing out, in sentence 41, their incompatibility with such higher political aspirations. The latter point is captured in the metaphor of "political waters", which implies the risk of becoming 'engulfed' in an unfavourable situation. By advancing a prescriptive argument, hinging on markers of deontic modality such as "should" and "should not", Šehić seems to assume a rather authoritative (even patronising) attitude towards the protest movement. But this is mitigated by the shift, in the last sentence, from an impersonal to a more personal style involving the use of *we*, which minimises the distance between the author and the protesters conveying a sense of closeness and benevolent support.

The other relevant excerpt is taken from Slavo Kukić's opinion piece published in *Dnevni List* [B03]:

(10) Although I can understand the social explosion of the humiliated, I would be dishonest if I also justified the form in which it has manifested itself. (11) Buildings were set on fire, material values created by generations were destroyed. (12) And all this, let us be honest, is not the cause of all the suffering that every person, Bosnian and Herzegovinian, is forced to go through. (13) The causes of suffering are, in fact, the political philosophies – and the politicians who personify them – which have kept plunging poor people into the abyss over the past quarter of a century. (14) If it be so,

and it is, the outpouring of discontent, and hence the destructive energy, should have been directed at them – by insisting on their resignation, the request for snap elections, and the election of new, uncompromised and moral [politicians] [...].

Throughout the paragraph, Kukić takes a rather condescending attitude towards the movement. On the one hand, he deliberately ignores the obvious symbolic value of targeting government buildings, dismissing the gesture as an ignominious attack on heritage. On the other, he tells the protesters what they already know, i.e. that the politicians are the ones to blame, but he frames this rhetorically as an act of intellectual honesty (“let us be honest”) on his part, thus invoking moral values. In the last sentence, Kukić reproaches the movement for failing to channel its outrage into meaningful demands. By using the past tense (“should have been”), he conveys his distrust in the capacity of the movement to change its course of action. This is reflected in the choice to discursively represent the movement as a highly depersonalised and uncontrolled process, by means of agent deletion (through the use of the passive voice) and nominalisations relating to the semantic field of natural catastrophes (“explosion”, “outpouring”, “destructive energy”). Unlike Šehić, who exerts political guidance by encouraging the movement to act in certain ways, Kukić takes on the role of political spokesperson by harshly condemning its practices.

7.2.2 The intellectual as emancipator/educator of the nation

As in the case of Serbia (§ 5.2.2) and Croatia (§ 6.2.2), also in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina a number of authors assume the discursive perspective of emancipators of the nation, typically by appealing to (and thereby shaping) the shared consciousness of their fellow-citizens, by supporting their emancipatory practices, or by exposing political or other kinds of ideological manipulation. In this section I will discuss two examples of this specific form of spokespersonship. The first example is from Asim Mujkić [B08], who discusses the value of plenums as a way of empowering people to become active democratic citizens:

(59) I am delighted that [participants] are given the chance to experience themselves as agents of change in a system that turns us into objects. (60) This is an opportunity of liberation and emancipation, which in my opinion carries with it an enormous potential. (61) Perhaps all this may not end as we think it should, but I think it is very important, as a first step, to change our perceptions, for ourselves and for the

communities in which we live. (62) People can finally say to themselves "Look, I am being asked; look, I can speak out; look, my proposal has been adopted."

In this passage, Mujkić openly declares his support for the experience of the plenums, arguing that they constitute a real chance for people to emancipate themselves. Initially, he constructs his perspective as the typical intellectual vantage point, by positioning himself as somebody who observes the situation with great analytical interest and emotional zeal, but without being directly enmeshed with it. Then, in sentence 61 there is a shift of perspective (from *I-they* to *we*) and register (from formal to informal), whereby the author appears to situate himself *among* the subjects of the emancipation process. At the same time, however, his attitude becomes more prescriptive, as he implicitly defines certain priorities and ends for the process itself. In the last sentence, the initial distance between the author and the people is restored, although now the latter are depicted (via fictional direct speech) in a slightly condescending way as individuals who are somewhat naively excited about being able to exercise political agency. In terms of spokespersonship, this salient oscillation of point of view can be interpreted as reflecting the author's concern to preside over the process of emancipation without seeming to be usurping it.

In the second example, Dino Mustafić [B02] acts as emancipator of the nation by endorsing the idea of a radical political transformation guided by reason:

(15) [...] it is now time to move forward resolutely. [...] (18) Above all, this is a rebellion against politicians and politics, which must change [...] (19) Such a reversal will occur when all intellectual and progressive forces gather and use reason to conduct a responsible policy conceived as a mission to solve the social crisis and to create the conditions for economic and social development. (20) It is necessary to restore public interest in politics and in the universal value of leading a free and responsible life.

On the one hand, the author constructs the invoked change as a decisive break from the current state of affairs, by employing spatial metaphors such as "move forward" and "reversal" along with the loaded terms "rebellion" and "mission". On the other, he presents himself as a firm proponent of such change by using several constructions expressing deontic modality, such as "it is now time to...", "must change" and "it is necessary". Moreover, he dictates the conditions for the transformation to eventually

occur (in sentence 19), and elevates reason, responsibility, progressive attitude and intellectual status as the key attributes of the putative agents of change. As a result, Mustafić emerges as promoter of an alternative vision of politics, understood as a process driven by an (enlightened) intellectual elite and aimed at achieving social progress and emancipation for the people.

7.3 The discursive representation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a nation

After having explored the strategies employed by Bosnian-Herzegovinian intellectuals to legitimise their authority (§ 7.1) and assume the role of spokespersonship for the nation (§ 7.2), this section examines the ways in which they construct and represent Bosnia and Herzegovina in public discourse. As already specified at the beginning of § 7.2, in this specific context the concept of the nation should be understood in civic rather than ethnic terms. On the basis of the analytical findings, I have identified four main ways in which Bosnia and Herzegovina is thematised as a nation. These are:

1. *Bosnia and Herzegovina as a dysfunctional society facing an uncertain future*
2. *Bosnia and Herzegovina as a political community dominated by corrupt elites*
3. *Bosnia and Herzegovina as a nation marked by a deep divide between the people and the elites*
4. *The increasingly contested hegemony of the ethno-political paradigm*

In the following, each theme will be discussed with examples taken from the sample.

7.3.1 *Bosnia and Herzegovina as a dysfunctional society facing an uncertain future*

As noted above, apart from a few exceptions the views expressed by most authors are substantially aligned with the dominant standpoint of the protesters. Thus, it is not surprising that, generally speaking, the most common representation of Bosnia and Herzegovina found in the sample texts is that of a society stricken by poverty, inequalities and social discontent, whose future prospects are dramatically compromised (strategy of *singularisation* through emphasis on national negative uniqueness, combined with a strategy of *discontinuation* outlining dystopian future scenarios, see § 3.5.3). Various authors articulate this theme in different ways, placing emphasis on specific aspects or resorting to certain discursive strategies rather than others.

Among the many instances available, I have chosen three examples in which this theme is particularly salient. In the first example, taken from *The government is afraid of the unity of the citizens* [B06], Ibrahim Prohić explores the reasons for the protests:

(38) Let us try now to specify what bothers the citizens. (39) Poverty, drastic social differences, unemployment, uncertainty, hopelessness, a collapsed economy, an irresponsible, arrogant and inefficient government, corruption and crime in conjunction with the authorities, the criteria on the basis of which one achieves social status or a professional career. (40) If this is not enough reason for citizens' dissatisfaction then there must be something deeply wrong with some people in this society.

Prohić makes a comprehensive list of the main problems affecting Bosnia and Herzegovina, portraying it as a dysfunctional and unjust society dominated by political corruption and economic hardship. Most items (processes, entities, and conditions) included in the list are largely nominalised; as a result, human agency is played down, and hence the very possibility of social change is made to appear rather unlikely. In the last sentence, Prohić constructs dissatisfaction as the only reasonable reaction to the present state of affairs, thus adding to the dramatic and discouraging tone that characterises the whole passage.

The second example is from *United in anger* by Dino Mustafić [B02], who also explains the outburst of the anti-government protests as driven by citizens' dissatisfaction with the deteriorating social conditions:

(11) [...] generations of angry people were born and raised who have no more trust, nor patience, towards ways of doing politics that lead us into the blind alley of growing debt, as well as towards unemployment, shortage of hope, and an increasing number of people being sentenced to social death, that is, a life without future, and hence without meaning.

The two excerpts present similarities and differences. Broadly speaking, both convey an image of Bosnia and Herzegovina as suffering from bad administration, social distress and lack of future prospects. In both cases, the people/citizens are discursively construed as passive actors who are subjected to external disruptive forces, rather than as agents of change. This is evident from the predications associated with them: in Prohić's excerpt they are bothered and express "dissatisfaction", while in Mustafić's

text they are “angry”, distrustful, impatient and “being sentenced to social death”. There is a discrepancy, however, in how responsibility is attributed: while Prohić tends to represent social problems as objective (and depersonalised) facts, Mustafić is slightly more forthright in blaming “ways of doing politics” (which is still a nominalisation, though) for the current social crisis (strategy of *delegitimation* of national political elites, see § 3.5.3). The style also differs, as Mustafić employs a more figurative language (notice the metaphors of “the blind alley”, “shortage of hope” and “social death”), thus creating a rather vivid and dramatic tone.

An analogous representation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a society facing an uncertain future appears in Nino Raspudić’s opinion piece [B05], when he discusses the factors lying behind the initial outbreak of protests in Tuzla:

(5) The initial impetus of the protests was the tremendous social and existential dissatisfaction, accumulated over years and decades, that stems from unemployment and poverty, but also from the impossibility of envisaging any better future within the existing paradigm. (6) For these reasons on Wednesday a mass of desperate people boiled over in Tuzla.

Like Prohić and Mustafić, Raspudić also portrays Bosnia and Herzegovina as a society that has failed to bring prosperity and well-being to most of its citizens, forcing them into frustration and exasperation. His critique is even more radical than that of his peers, because he regards the very structure (“the existing paradigm”) of Bosnian-Herzegovinian society as inherently flawed and ill-suited to cater to the needs and aspirations of its members. This is encapsulated in the expression “impossibility to envisage any better future”, which resonates with the “hopelessness” lamented by Prohić as well as the “life without future” deplored by Mustafić.

Generally speaking, the authors tend to discursively construct Bosnia and Herzegovina not only as a society facing serious economic and social hardships, but also, and prominently, as a context marked by uncertainty and where many people have been and continue to be exposed to insecurity, psychological stress and existential threats. Moreover, the responsibility of politicians in this regard is evoked by means of discursive strategies of delegitimation.

7.3.2 *Bosnia and Herzegovina as a political community dominated by corrupt elites*

Strictly connected with the previous point is the representation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a political community tainted by dishonesty and corruption, which emerges as a salient theme in several texts from the sample (strategy of *delegitimation* of national political elites, see § 3.5.3). This largely reflects the tendency of many authors to assume the position of spokespersons by acting as political guides for the nation. In fact, as discussed above (§ 7.2.1), a typical way of performing this role is by criticising the political elites for their failure to comply with democratic requirements of transparency and accountability. In most cases, this critique is inscribed in the referential strategies employed in relation to individual politicians or the political leadership altogether. A clear example of this is found in the extract from Ibrahim Prohić's interview for *Dani* reported in the previous section, in which the government is qualified as "irresponsible, arrogant and inefficient" and said to be involved in "corruption and crime". However, there are also cases in which political corruption is thematised by means of more complex and sophisticated discursive strategies, involving specific argumentative, rhetorical and stylistic devices. Here I will discuss three such examples.

The first appears in Almasa Hadžić's opinion piece *Shame on them!* [B01]:

(5) [The dissatisfied] think that the only one responsible for [their miserable lives] is the government. (6) What government? (7) The unjust, corrupt, and discredited one; the one that smuggled their factories and jobs; the one that unlawfully employed family members in the administration, in steering and supervisory boards, in *Telecom*, in the Power plant, in *Elektroprivreda*, as well as in other public enterprises; the government that for years has only served its own ends and protected itself, its power, its wages and its party interests.

By asking rhetorically, in sentence 6, what kind of government is the object of the protesters' scorn, Hadžić gives herself the space to express her own personal views of Bosnia and Herzegovina's political leadership. This occurs in the next sentence, in which the government is presented in extremely negative terms. The criticism derives much of its rhetorical force from the very structure of the sentence, which is organised as a sequence of paratactic clauses in which the same subject, i.e. the government, is coupled with different negative predicates, ranging from general predications to

concrete examples. Various forms of unethical behaviour are touched upon, such as malpractice and profiteering from the privatisation process, clientelism, nepotism, and abuse of power. The broader picture is that of a country in which deep-seated political corruption has long affected and continues to affect both the social and economic spheres.

The second example comes from Svetlana Cenić's commentary for *Dani* [B10]. She constructs a rather elaborate metaphorical scenario in which Bosnia and Herzegovina's political arena is represented as a market:

(18) [...] our political parties, organized as private companies, make up an oligopoly, a market where a small number of manufacturers compete with each other with the same or similar products. (19) The prices for the citizens are formed through secret agreements, while they publicly proclaim that competition exists. (20) For the product is essentially the same, only the packaging is different. [...] (22) Marketing boils down to the herd of voters exercising surveillance over themselves, the so-called "divide and rule".

In Cenić's view, the (metaphorical) political market of Bosnia and Herzegovina is severely affected by unfair competition, lack of transparency and consumer manipulation. On the one hand, political parties secure their hegemony by formally adhering to democratic principles while in fact restricting pluralism and public participation in the deliberation process. On the other, the citizens, derogatorily represented as a "herd", succumb to manipulation and accept as legitimate the (ethnic) divisions that the political elites impose upon them. The broad picture that emerges from this metaphorical scenario is that of a country in which hypocritical and corrupt political elites retain power and preserve the status quo by reversing democratic practices and misleading the people.

The third and last illustration of the thematisation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a corrupt political community is taken from Ibrahim Prohić's interview for *Dnevni Avaz* [B09]:

(9) [Prohić] points out that the current government is not able to give up the bad habits it has had so far, nor is it ready for something constructive and creative, because it has for years been oriented to consumption and clientelism. (10) – Political changes are tied to interests, and people hardly waive their interests and acquired

positions, but instead defend them by all means. (11) Hypothetically, even if they wanted to change, the question is whether they would be able to do so. (12) The authorities will change only if obliged to, with constant pressure and control from below, from the people – Prohić maintains.

Whereas Cenić condemns the conservative and impervious attitude of the political elites as a deliberate strategy of power, Prohić interprets it as a symptom of their incapacity to relinquish deep-seated corrupt practices. In order to support this claim, he develops an argument that combines elementary political analysis with insights into the psychological aspects of power. This is reflected in the general principle (or warrant, in argumentative terms) that Prohić invokes in sentence 10, which associates political conservatism with people's innate tendency to defend their own interests and privileges. The gist of his criticism is that the country's political leadership is too entrenched in the status quo to be able to embrace change and articulate progressive political projects, unless it is forced to do so by the people. Albeit formulated from a different perspective and in a more neutral tone, Prohić's criticism resonates well with both Hadžić's and Cenić's accounts.

As shown in these three examples, Bosnia and Herzegovina tends to be represented as a community in which corrupt political elites work against the people instead of addressing their demands, a portrayal that emerges quite strongly also from most of the remaining texts from the sample.

7.3.3 Bosnia and Herzegovina as a nation marked by a deep divide between the people and the elites

The third theme is a corollary of the first and the second. In addition to being represented as a dysfunctional society whose members are denied security and prosperity, and as country dominated by a corrupt political leadership, Bosnia and Herzegovina is also discursively constructed as a national community characterised by a dramatic cleavage between the people and the elites (strategy of *polarisation* stressing intra-societal divisions and conflicts, see § 3.5.3). In fact, several texts describe the masses as destitute, disempowered and languishing in misery, whereas the elites are portrayed as a clique, or rather a caste, of privileged and wealthy individuals who feel little or no solidarity towards the rest of the society.

Slavo Kukić's opinion piece [B03] contains a striking illustration of this theme, particularly in the excerpt reported below, in which the author blames the government for the rising economic and social disparities that permeate Bosnian-Herzegovinian society:

(7) [I am referring to a form of governance that] results in such social stratification as can be encountered only in Latin American regimes. (8) Namely, on one side there is a very thin, percentually insignificant layer of earthly gods who acquired wealth through robbery, and on the other side there is social misery, to which belong more than nine-tenths of the entire population – while the middle class, which everywhere in the world has the function of connective tissue, has literally been swept away.

Kukić represents Bosnian-Herzegovinian society as drastically polarised. The argument derives its rhetorical force from a comparison with Latin American countries, which are taken as representative of extreme social inequalities, but also from the strategies of nomination used in regard to the various social strata, which largely employ figurative language. Namely, the elites are portrayed as “earthly gods”, a metaphor intended to stress their practically unrestrained power, whereas the lowest social classes are metonymically represented as “social misery”, which by contrast emphasises their powerlessness and lack of agency.⁴³ The polarisation is further accentuated by the semantic opposition between “misery”, on the one hand, and “wealth” and “robbery”, on the other. Finally, the middle class is assimilated to a “connective tissue”, a clichéd expression related to conceptions of the nation as an organic body; by pointing out its absence, the author constructs Bosnian-Herzegovinian society as a defective social organism, devoid of one of its essential components.

Another illustration of the thematisation of the people-elite divide is found in Vehid Šehić's interview for *Oslobođenje* [B12], when he explains the protests as a consequence of the loss of solidarity between the political elites and the citizens:

(4) Unfortunately, something like this had to happen, because the authorities have alienated themselves from the citizens and lived in a world of their own, oblivious of how citizens live. (5) Politics has been turned into the most lucrative profession and

⁴³ The two nominations also appear in the title of the opinion piece: *Earthly gods and social misery. A social uprising which will earn the ethno-nationalists another term.*

has become what everyone strives for in order to solve their problems. [...] (8) Politicians have alienated themselves from everyday life, solidarity has been destroyed as a concept, particularly the solidarity from the current government.

Like Kukić, Šehić too offers a representation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a highly polarised society, in which the elites, similarly to Kukić's "earthly gods", appear to inhabit a metaphorical "world of their own" situated at an insurmountable distance from the harsh reality of people's lives. While his fellow commentator gives a rather static picture of the situation, Šehić treats it as a process involving specific agents and actions. In particular, he highlights the responsibility of the political elites, who are repeatedly said to have proactively "alienated themselves" from the broader society. As a result of their agency being foregrounded, the elites appear to be responsible also for the two seemingly agentless processes described in sentences 5 and 8, i.e. the transformation of politics into a profitable business and the repudiation of social solidarity. Thus, apart from condemning the elites' withdrawal from public life, the author also stresses the detrimental impact that this disengagement, and the ensuing social polarisation, has had on social cohesion and political ethics.

The most suggestive way of representing the people-elite divide affecting Bosnia and Herzegovina is that chosen by Enes Trumić [B07], who develops a metaphorical scenario in which the ongoing confrontation between the citizens and the government is recast as a football match. The scenario extends across several paragraphs, eventually leading into another metaphorical scenario, that of a collective awakening, which has been already discussed in § 7.2.2). Some of the key bits underpinning the football match scenario are reported below:

(10) And so began the match, but not as a game at the stadium, but as a reality on the streets of Tuzla. (11) The Government on one side and the people on the other. (12) The Government could claim victory over the people, because the people have been hypnotized into expressing their dissatisfaction by peaceful and non-violent means [...].

(42) We all know well that in Tuzla took place the first three-day match between the people and the Government. (43) What is not clear to most is what is the result of the match. [...] (45) The result is the first victory of the people over the bourgeoisie in the last twenty years.

Using metaphorical expressions that draw on sports as the source domain is a common and rather clichéd way of representing political (or any other kind of) confrontation (see King, 2006, about the use of sports metaphors in nationalist discourse). What is peculiar about the example above, however, is that it contains a sort of double metaphor: at one level, the football match as source domain is mapped onto the three-day anti-government protests in Tuzla; at another level, the ‘Tuzla match’ becomes itself a metaphor for the long-standing opposition between the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the country’s political elites. Albeit less explicit, this second-level metaphor can be inferred from the general statements included in sentences 12 and 45, which transcend the local context to embrace a wider, national perspective. In this respect, the football match metaphor operates as a conceptual metaphor, which underpins the discursive construction of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian national community as being traversed by a deep-rooted conflictual polarisation between the people and the elites.

7.3.4 The increasingly contested hegemony of the ethno-political paradigm

The fourth and last theme of the discursive construction of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a nation concerns the so-called ethno-political paradigm, that is, the primacy of ethnic identity as a principle of political organisation. As explained above (§ 4.2.3), this paradigm is embodied in the political and institutional structure of the country, through a system of government based on power-sharing among the representatives of the three main ethnic groups (Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats). This arrangement has often been criticised by its opponents as being detrimental to democracy and social justice, insofar as it enables ethnic elites to entrench their power, pursue their economic interests, and manipulate public opinion in order to secure consensus. The 2014 protest movement greatly invigorated this criticism, transforming it into a struggle against the worst aspects of the regime, i.e. political hypocrisy, endemic corruption and growing social inequalities.

In his commentary *United in anger* [B02], Dino Mustafić provides a vivid description of the protests as a reaction to the dominant ethno-political paradigm:

- (5) Citizens are no longer willing to suffer robbery, theft, or the parties that in the name of their nations have ravaged this country, making it poor and hopeless. (6) This is an authentic reaction of the citizens against the ethno-political model of Dayton’s

Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has allowed the plutocrats from the “constituent peoples” to accumulate wealth and live in luxury and comfort for years, demonstrating their arrogance and greed as corrupt elites.

While Mustafić decries the way in which the ethno-political system has allowed for rampant corruption and accumulation of wealth by the political leaders, Svetlana Cenić, in her opinion piece entitled *Everyone robs their own, everyone elects their own* [B10], explains in an equally vivid way how the ethno-political principle operates as an instrument of social coercion:

(7) The norm in Bosnian-Herzegovinian society is, of course, national belonging, so if you express skepticism there is no need for the authorities to do anything to get you back into the fold and to the national prison, since the masses around you react immediately condemning your attempt to escape. [...] (11) The awakening of the brain is hardly condoned, on the basis of the old principle: if you are not with us, you are against us.

Most of the authors among those considered raise the question whether the protest movement has the power to subvert the dominant ethnic norm and thus help the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina to escape from the metaphorical “national prison” described by Cenić. Although all of the authors, to different extents, acknowledge the concerns of the movement and express general support for its cause, their positions on this question vary considerably. Some believe that the protests signal the beginning of the inexorable decline of the ethno-political matrix (strategy of *discontinuation* emphasising disruption, combined with a strategy of *cohesivation* stressing the will to overcome societal cleavages, see § 3.5.3), while others are more skeptical about the real impact that the movement might have on the status quo (strategy of *continuation* placing emphasis on negative continuity, see § 3.5.3). The most critical stance in this regard is that of Slavo Kukić [B03], who argues that the turmoil caused by the anti-government movement will eventually prove counterproductive, rendering the masses even more susceptible to ethnic propaganda:

(39) [...] [S]uch a state of mind favours the very ones who created the socially humiliated – and who have manipulated them in the past quarter of a century. (40) Social turmoil, I mean, will bring the socially miserable back again to where they

have been all these years, that is, to the position of being subject to ethno-nationalist philosophy, the position in which the masses are easy to manipulate.⁴⁴

In terms of the discursive representation of the nation, it is worth noticing that both Cenić (above) and Kukić describe the workings of ethno-politics by means of spatial metaphors that relate oppression/emancipation to movement. In Cenić, the conservative and reactionary attitude of most part of Bosnian-Herzegovinian society is represented as a force that pushes dissenters *back into place*. Similarly, in Kukić the predicted failure of the movement to produce emancipation is portrayed as a *backward movement* of the people to their original position of subjugation. In both cases, the chosen spatial metaphors carry an evaluative connotation, as they convey a sense of collective impotence in the face of the overwhelming force of the ethno-political ideology.

In opposition to Cenić's and Kukić's pessimistic stances, Asim Mujkić [B08] regards the protest movement as a sign that the hegemony of the ethno-political paradigm in Bosnia and Herzegovina is actually waning:

(38) It seems to me that, at least in the places where protests took place, nobody took the bait of the old matrix. (39) The media are somewhat trying to get people back into the morass, but it does not seem to me that the ethno-political narrative has been predominant. (40) This can be seen in the discourse, in the statements of the people, and this is really important to me. (41) So, ethno-politics has begun to lose its importance.

The recurrence of hedges, particularly expressions of epistemic modality ("It seems to me", "it does not seem to me"), indicate that the author is rather cautious about proclaiming the decline of the ethno-political ideology. Yet, he looks very favourably upon this eventuality, as signalled by the metaphors chosen to represent the situation, which bear a clear evaluative connotation. Namely, the idiomatic expression 'take the bait' implies that the "old matrix" is being offered to the public so as to deceive and mislead it, while the stark reality of society dominated by the ethnic norm is portrayed as a "morass", which is quite reminiscent of Cenić's "national prison" (see above). As in the previous two examples, the regressive/oppressive character of ethno-politics is

⁴⁴ This excerpt has already been discussed in § 7.1.2 in regard to strategies of intellectual self-legitimation.

encapsulated in a spatial metaphor of forced backward movement: the media, in fact, are “trying to get people back” to a position of conformity and compliance with the ethnic norm, thus curbing the emancipatory potential of the movement.

Kukić’s and Mujkić’s standpoints represent, respectively, the most pessimistic and optimistic stances about the capacity of the anti-government movement to subvert the hegemony of ethno-politics in Bosnian-Herzegovinian society. The other commentators tend to express more balanced viewpoints, stressing the significance of the protests without overestimating their revolutionary potential. An example of this attitude is Zdravko Grebo’s interview for *Dnevni Avaz* [B11]:

(28) My other quiet hope – which is dashed for now, but I will not give up on it – is that the process that started as social would take off the agenda, or at least postpone, these stories “from above” that strangle and suffocate us. (29) Which are about us being Serbs, Croats, Bosnians, others. [...] (32) I thought this was a spark that could ignite something called the class identification of the people, because people live in equally difficult conditions, and they equally face intimidation from their tycoons and political elites. (33) So far this just has not happened.

As in the previous examples, ethno-political ideology is discursively constructed as an extraneous force oppressing the people (strategy of *heteronomisation*, see § 3.5.3). This is obtained once again via a spatial metaphor, this time related to the vertical rather than horizontal dimension (“from above”), and also via personification, since ideology is referred to as an agent inflicting physical damage to the people. The emancipatory potential of the movement is also represented via a metaphor, i.e. a “spark” that could “ignite” social change, thus outlining a scenario in which the negative burden of ethno-political ideology stands in contrast to the positive lightness of the flame of mass emancipation. It should be noted in passing that Grebo is one of the few authors who venture to say explicitly what they think should replace ethno-politics as the dominant paradigm (for Grebo this is class identification). Although the hoped-for social transition has not occurred, Grebo’s attitude is not fully pessimistic. On the contrary, he states that he will not give up on his hopes, and the repetition of time adverbs such as “for now” and “so far” creates the implicature that he still leaves room for the possibility of a radical social change.

In conclusion, the hegemony of the ethno-political paradigm in Bosnia and Herzegovina is seen by most of the authors considered both as a source of widespread political corruption and as an instrument to control and manipulate the masses. Therefore, they tend to justify the protest movement as a legitimate attempt to challenge the dominant paradigm in order to reinvigorate the democratic process and combat social inequalities. However, they largely disagree about the capacity of the movement to actually discard the existing power structures and build a viable alternative to them. The significance of this specific discrepancy will be further discussed in Chapter 8 below.

8. Patterns of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation in contemporary Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina

In this chapter, I draw together the findings from the analysis of the three case studies (Chapters 5, 6 and 7) in order to identify the prominent patterns of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation that are specific to each case. A pattern is defined here as a meaningful intersection between the macro-strategies pertaining to the three different dimensions of analysis, i.e. intellectual self-legitimation, spokespersonship for the nation, and the representation of the nation in public discourse (see § 3.5). After illustrating each of the patterns through examples taken from the previous analysis, I explore both their contextual significance in relation to the post-Yugoslav context (see Chapter 2) and their conceptual and methodological implications for the critical study of the relationship between intellectual activity and nation-building processes (see Chapter 3).

8.1 Serbia's intellectuals: still 'saviours' of a nation in crisis

Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence, proclaimed on 17th February 2008, prompted many commentators in Serbia to engage in intense and often heated discussion about their country's situation and overall direction. The 12 opinion pieces included in the final sample represent only a small portion of the larger debate, yet their detailed analysis has provided valuable insights into the discursive strategies employed by intellectuals to legitimise themselves as authoritative voices (§ 5.1), frame their role as spokespersons for the nation (§ 5.2), and promote specific representations of the nation in public discourse (§ 5.3). Drawing on these empirical findings, in this section I shall identify distinct articulations of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation and point out their contextual and theoretical relevance.

A first salient pattern of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation revealed by the analysis involves *intellectuals ascribing to themselves the formidable task of helping the Serbian nation recover from its supposedly 'pathological' state*. This concept is reflected and embedded in each of the three dimensions of analysis. In terms of intellectual self-legitimation, it corresponds to the strategy adopted, for instance, by Drašković and Arsenijević, who frame their public engagement with the Kosovo dispute as an act of courage and responsibility motivated precisely by the mental and cognitive disorientation affecting Serbian society (§ 5.1.1). In terms of spokespersonship for the nation, the concept resonates quite clearly with the macro-strategy of *educator/emancipator of the nation*, especially insofar as the intellectual emerges as someone who can help the nation develop its potential and thus reach some kind of maturity; this attitude is well exemplified in Arsenijević's commentary, which contains a heart-felt exhortation to the Serbian people to finally 'grow up', i.e. gain self-awareness, sustained through an implicit *topos of threat and danger* embodied in the suggestive metaphor of a ticking clock (§ 5.2.2). Finally, there is a clear correspondence between this concept and the first of the four themes identified in the analysis of the discursive representation of the nation, namely *Serbian society as being in a chronic state of crisis* (§ 5.3.1). This theme emerges with great force in several opinion pieces, primarily as a result of strategies of *vitalisation* whereby the nation is constructed as an organic whole. More specifically, there is a recurrent pathologisation of the national body, which is often obtained through conceptual metaphors of illness (see Musolff, 2010; Wodak, 2015). This is most evident in Cerovina's metaphorical representation of Serbia as a wounded patient who has just awakened from anaesthesia, but also transpires from Arsenijević's reference to Serbia's "proverbially problematic relationship with reality", from Pančić's presupposition that Serbian society is affected by a harmful "pathology", as well as from the fatalistic image of Serbia's "mental meanderings" conjured up by Samardžić.

From all the above, it appears that there is a strong tendency among Serbia's intellectuals to portray their nation metaphorically as affected by some kind of chronic illness undermining its capacity to cope with reality, and to invest themselves with the power, so to speak, to 'heal' the nation from that illness. This finding resonates well with specific features of the post-Yugoslav transitional context highlighted in § 2.3. To begin with, it incarnates the difficulty, shared by most post-Yugoslav societies, in

coming to terms with the consequences of the wars of the 1990s. In the case of Serbia, in fact, the ongoing dispute over Kosovo's political and legal status is probably the greatest challenge facing Serbian society in terms of post-conflict governance and reconciliation, so it is not surprising that analysts and commentators perceive it as a major obstacle to a 'healthy' social development. Secondly, the emphasis on collective delusion and bewilderment corroborates the dominant notion of post-socialist transition as a condition marked by widespread social uncertainty (Burawoy & Verdery, 1999), whereas the idea that the nation should be helped to achieve maturity still resonates with more traditional (and widely criticised, for instance by Buden, 2010, 2012) views of post-socialist transition as a progressive advancement towards some kind of western-like 'normality'.

The finding also has some conceptual and methodological implications. The strategy of representing one's epistemic advantage not as being afforded by a symbolic act of 'rising above' society, but rather as resulting from some sort of cognitive impairment affecting the whole of society, suggests that the notion of intellectual estrangement (discussed in § 3.2.1) should be broadened to include what could provisionally be called *negative intellectual estrangement*. Moreover, the pathologisation of the national body emerges as a prominent aspect of national and nation-building discourses, lending support to the methodological choice of focusing on the nation as a vision or project of future prosperity, which has been included in the analytical framework as the fourth macro-topic of the discursive representation of the nation (see § 3.4.1).

Another salient pattern identified in the analysis refers to *intellectuals showing concern for Serbia's deep social cleavages (which have been further exacerbated by Kosovo's declaration of independence) and hence urging the political leadership to formulate a viable vision/project for the nation*. Unlike the previous case, this pattern has no direct parallel with any specific strategy of intellectual self-legitimation. In terms of spokespersonship for the nation, however, it clearly reflects the most common strategy observed in the sample, i.e. that of *political guide*. Indeed, many authors assume this specific role vis-à-vis the nation, either by acting as detractors of the political elites (for instance by blaming them for the nation's woes) or by outlining a roadmap to achieve national prosperity. This has been illustrated in § 5.2.1 with

three examples: Bačević, who insists that politicians should overcome their incompetence (which he points out with irony and cynicism) and finally reach an agreement; Kesić, who advocates political prudence and exhorts the elites to define and pursue a firm national agenda; and Despotović, who reinforces his appeal to Serbian politicians to embrace European integration through creating a sense of urgency and momentousness. With respect to the discursive representation of the nation, the relevant theme is the second one, i.e. *Serbian society as a deeply divided society*. As discussed in § 5.3.2, the Kosovo debate is regarded as an epitome of the fundamental contradictions afflicting Serbian society (e.g. by Arsenijević, Samardžić, Bačević and Pančić), or as a harbinger of future social and political conflicts (e.g. by Despotović and Škulić). These representations largely hinge on strategies of *polarisation* placing emphasis on intra-societal divisions; in particular, most of them draw on, and therefore reproduce, the popular narrative of the ‘two Serbias’, which portrays Serbian society as polarised between the old marxist-nationalist elites and the new civic, pro-western and pro-European elites.

The intellectuals’ bold disapproval of the lack of societal consensus and of a clear political commitment to address the country’s most pressing problems substantiates the view that Serbia, like other post-Yugoslav states, is a fragile (or *constrained*) democracy struggling to foster a viable democratic political culture (see § 2.3.3). Furthermore, the observed persistence of the divide between pro-European and anti-European stances, epitomised by the paradigm of the ‘two Serbias’, provides further evidence that, unlike other post-Yugoslav societies such as Croatia and Slovenia, European identity is not a widely shared social value within Serbian society. From a theoretical viewpoint, the propensity of Serbia’s intellectuals to take an active role in the national political process suggests that, at least in specific situations, contemporary intellectuals continue to perform the role of *legislators* rather than that of *interpreters* (in the sense proposed by Bauman and Giesen, see § 3.2), insofar as they exercise their authority to enforce the social order and determine the political development of the nation-state.

The analysis has provided evidence for a third important, although less predominant, pattern of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation, which refers to *intellectuals expressing deep concern for Serbia’s strained relations with other post-Yugoslav*

countries and the major western powers. The relevant theme in the discursive representation of the nation is the third one, i.e. *Serbia as a weak and isolated player on the international stage*, which rests mainly on strategies of *heteronomisation, exclusion* through negative other-presentation, and *blaming/scapegoating*. Examples of this theme include Arsenijević's criticism of Serbia's bad relations with the neighbouring countries, Despotović's warning about the risk of Serbia being 'ground' in the 'millstone' of global struggles, and Škulić's portrayal of the Serbian nation as historically victimised by external forces (notably western powers such as NATO and the USA, which led the 1999 military intervention against Serbia, see § 2.1) as well as by internal 'traitors to the nation'. The element of victimisation, in particular, seems to underlie a specific attitude assumed by some intellectuals, that of speaking out against forms of oppression, manipulation and subversion that are perceived to threaten the sovereignty of the Serbian nation. This is best exemplified by the strategy of intellectual self-legitimation employed by Samardžić, who presents himself as someone who is able to discern, and willing to expose, the obscure and powerful forces dominating society (§ 5.1.1), but also by Grujić's strategy of spokespersonship for the nation, which consists of acting as an *emancipator of the nation* by exhorting his compatriots to raise their voices against foreign powers' attempts to corrupt the domestic political debate with deception and lies (§ 5.2.2).

Kosovo's declaration of independence seems to have brought into focus Serbia's fragile relations with its former enemies in the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s. The passionate engagement of several authors with this issue demonstrates the persistence of post-conflict challenges in Serbian society (highlighted in § 2.3.2 in regard to the broader post-Yugoslav context). It should be noted, however, that the authors considered have different opinions on the matter: while some (like Arsenijević) wish for a collective reckoning with the past, others (like Škulić) do not refrain from stirring up animosity and resentment towards the old enemies. This suggests that there is little or no consensus in Serbian society about how to confront competing responsibilities and overcome the traumatic past. Finally, the aspect of victimisation that emerges in a few texts in the sample (especially in Škulić's commentary) resonates with the claim, advanced by Kanin (2011), that Serbs are somehow 'nurtured by defeat'. Kanin claims that Serbian national identity has developed as a result of sustained efforts by politicians, intellectuals and artists to fold Serbia's

military failures, particularly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, into the memory of the historic Battle of Kosovo Polje; this has led to the emergence of a powerful national mythology pervaded by a sense of collective defeat and victimisation, which is still dominant nowadays.

Kanin's point about the role played by intellectual elites in the codification of Serbian national history and identity finds an echo in the fourth and last pattern of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation identified by the analysis, which involves *intellectuals acting as custodians of Serbia's mythical past and as interpreters of its significance for the present and future of the nation*. Not many authors among those considered frame their role of spokespersons for the nation in this specific way; yet, those who do are worth focusing on, as certain aspects of their discourse have important conceptual implications (see below). The most salient illustration is provided by Drašković, who presents himself as a vocal proponent of an epoch-making process of national regeneration. As pointed out in § 5.2.1, his strategy of spokespersonship as *political guide of the nation* consists in proposing a teleological narrative of national catharsis, in which the glorification of Serbia's historical-mythical past is instrumental to mobilising the nation to pursue future glory and prestige.⁴⁵ The very idea that the development of the Serbian nation is shaped by its glorious historical achievements finds expression in the fourth theme of the discursive representation of the nation, i.e. *Serbia as a nation driven by its historical and mythical past* (§ 5.3.4). This theme has emerged with particular force in Grujić's and Garić's opinion pieces: the former contains a fervent appeal to the nation to remember, respect and uphold Prince Lazar's oath (see § 5.3.4 for details), in which myth and present reality are conflated into a coherent whole; the latter evokes the 'gaze' of Serbia's glorious ancestors in order to create a sense of national duty among the readership. Generally speaking, this theme rests on *topoi of history and authority*, and particularly on discursive strategies that presuppose positive continuity, and suppress elements of discontinuity, between the past, present and future of the nation.

⁴⁵ Interestingly, one of the premises underlying Drašković's invocation coincides with Kanin's argument about Serbian national identity: "Kosovo and the Kosovo epic, as the Serbian Iliad and Odyssey, have always turned defeat into national victory", writes Drašković in his commentary *Kosovo and us*.

This finding suggests that national history (especially in its mythologised version) has a strong appeal within contemporary Serbian society. In particular, the Kosovo myth appears not only to remain at the foundation of Serbian national identity as a source of remembrance, nostalgia and pride, but also to hold a great mobilising potential that can be activated in situations of political and social distress, such as the one examined in this case study. As noted by Bakić-Hayden, “in Serbian self-definition of cultural, religious and national identity, Kosovo [...] is a narrative that continues to interact with reality in a unique way” (2004: p. 40). Indeed, the Kosovo myth serves as an archetype of national *trauma*, which is constantly drawn upon, often in ambivalent and original ways, to cope with new problems and challenges (Spasić, 2010). In this regard, Ramet views Serbian nationalism as a typical example of *traumatic nationalism*, in that it draws most of its energy “from a reinterpretation of Serbia’s history in terms of suffering, exploitation, pain, and injustice” (1995b: p. 103). When intellectuals engage in such work of cultural (re)interpretation, they act as *voices of traumatic memory*, which corresponds to one of the four ideal types of modern intellectuals identified by Giesen (2011) (see § 3.2 above).

What can be concluded from the above exploration is that, in the context of the sustained nation-building discourses and debates about national identity triggered by Kosovo’s declaration of independence, Serbia’s intellectuals have tended to adopt an attitude of deep concern for the well-being and progress of the Serbian nation, casting themselves in the role of proponents and carriers of an impelling process of national recovery. By expressing disquiet about the country’s sharp social cleavages and deteriorating foreign relations (second and third pattern), by reclaiming the significance of the nation’s mythical past (fourth pattern), and by denouncing the ‘pathological’ conditions of contemporary Serbian society (first pattern), they have acted as *saviours of the nation*. As seen in § 2.2, a similar attitude had been taken by prominent Serbian intellectuals in the 1980s, when growing centrifugal forces had begun to seriously threaten the stability of the Yugoslav Federation (Dragović-Soso, 2002). Although the two contexts differ in fundamental ways and therefore cannot be easily compared, one can discern some continuity in the way Serbia’s intellectuals have responded to situations of ‘national crisis’ and widespread uncertainty about the future.

8.2 Croatia's intellectuals: redefining the nation's role in an integrating Europe

As pointed out in § 4.2.2, Croatia's accession into the EU has been perceived by large sectors of the Croatian public as a pivotal moment in the history of the country. The event was in fact preceded and followed by sustained discussion about the political, social and cultural significance of this achievement for the Croatian people. The liveliness of the debate is clearly reflected in the 12 opinion pieces included in the Croatia sample, in which analysts and commentators advance various and often opposing perspectives on important issues such as Croatia's place in the European project, the impact of EU membership on Croatian society, and the changing role of Croatia vis-à-vis the post-Yugoslav region. In Chapter 6, I investigated the strategies that the selected authors use to achieve intellectual self-legitimation (§ 6.1) and claim the role of spokespersons for the nation (§ 6.2), as well as the main themes that emerge from their discursive representation of Croatia as a nation (§ 6.3).

The first overarching pattern of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation identified in the analysis refers to *intellectuals fostering the uniqueness of Croatian identity and culture, particularly within the broader European context*. There is obviously a close correspondence between this pattern and the macro-strategy of spokespersonship for the nation that I have labelled *promoter/defender of the nation's values and distinctive character*, which many authors among those included in the sample resort to. As discussed in § 6.2.2, this macro-strategy manifests itself in two main ways: the first consists of elevating the peculiar character of Croatian culture, as exemplified by Jergović's emphasis on its beauty and composite character, as well as by Pavičić's concept of Croatian identity as the extraordinary synthesis of antithetical elements; the second consists of claiming recognition for the cultural and intellectual richness that Croatia brings to the EU, as illustrated both by Jajčinović's appreciation of the virtues and skills of the Croatian people and by Skoko's exhortation that Croatia's achievements should be better publicised to the wider European public. In addition to this, the above-mentioned pattern can also be recognised in specific manifestations of another macro-strategy, that of *educator of the nation*; in particular, it is reflected in the attitude adopted by authors such as Leko and Luketić who, although in altogether different ways, spell out distinctive aspects of Croatian nationhood to their readers.

These examples clearly point to a specific thematisation of the nation in discourse, which I have labelled *The uniqueness and specificity of Croatian identity* (see § 6.3.1). A remarkable aspect of this theme is that national uniqueness is not predicated on (presupposed) intra-national sameness, but rather on intra-national heterogeneity. In other words, the authors tend to represent Croatian identity as the product of a peculiar process of cultural hybridisation rather than as a culturally monolithic construct. The most striking example is provided by Pavičić, who in his opinion piece goes as far as to argue that the hallmark of Croatian identity is the impossibility of integrating the existing cultural diversity into a consistent, organic framework.

The fact that Croatia's accession into the EU prompted so many commentators to delve into specific aspects of Croatian culture (and a newspaper, *Jutarnji List*, to launch an *ad hoc* section featuring the opinions of popular Croatian writers and public figures about their country and its peculiarities) seems to indicate that there is widespread concern that the European integration process could dilute Croatian national identity, which therefore needs to be publicly reasserted. Evidence of this concern is found in President Josipović's own commentary, notably in his need to reassure the Croatian people that "[t]here is no ground to fear that our identity will be 'lost' in the 'sea' of the European Union". Although it reflects the general climate of uncertainty associated with efforts at democratisation and EU integration in the post-Yugoslav region (see § 2.3.3), this preoccupation with preserving national identity seems characteristic of Croatia, as it does not emerge conspicuously either in the case of Serbia or Bosnia and Herzegovina. This may depend on the fact that for both Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina the prospect of EU membership is still too far off to be perceived as a significant challenge to national or ethnic identity. In any case, the case of Croatia examined here sheds some light on the complex interplay between national identity and European identity, and particularly on the cultural tensions inherent in the process of European integration.

Another distinctive pattern identified in the analysis relates to *intellectuals interpreting the significance of European integration for Croatia as a political community*. This pattern emerges from specific forms of spokespersonship for the nation subsumed under the broader macro-strategy of *political guide* and *emancipator of the nation*. The analysis has shown that a significant number of authors perform the

role of *political guide* by discussing or theorising the importance of EU membership for Croatia's political life. Specifically, most of them discursively construct the EU as a 'space of opportunities', which Croatia should pursue in order to achieve social and political progress (see § 6.2.1). Skoko, Šerić and Leko, for instance, exhort the Croatian people to be prepared for the future challenges of EU membership and to take a proactive stance in the new political environment, while President Josipović enthusiastically depicts EU accession as 'the beginning of Croatia's future' and sets development as the country's overarching goal. Other commentators, like Jović and Raspudić, are instead quite skeptical about the benefits that European integration will bring, since they regard Croatia's political leadership as self-concerned and incapable of advancing the people's interests. Raspudić, in particular, also acts as *emancipator of the nation* by encouraging Croats to reject both EU-phobic and EU-phoric stances as ill-founded and dogmatic. This attitude dovetails with his strategy of intellectual self-legitimation: by stressing the necessity to make important matters (such as EU accession) the object of public deliberation, he emerges as a defender of the public use of reason. In terms of the discursive representation of the nation, the above-mentioned pattern is based on the second theme identified in the analysis, which I have termed *European integration as a chance for Croatia to achieve social and political consensus?*. The question whether EU accession can help Croatian society to consolidate through strengthening its shared values is raised, more or less explicitly, by several authors. As seen in § 6.3.2, their views in this respect differ quite substantially, the two extremes being exemplified on the one hand by Josipović's emphatic embrace of European integration as a source of national unity, and on the other by Jović's criticism of politicians' opportunistic support for EU integration as opposed to the indifference and disinterestedness of ordinary people.

The investigation of how Croatia's intellectuals interpret the significance of EU integration for Croatian politics shows that pro-European perspectives are predominant, but by no means unchallenged. In fact, although membership in the EU is widely regarded as constituting a 'space of opportunities' for Croatia's future development and prosperity, there are some controversies regarding the credibility of Croatia's political leadership and the apparent lack of a serious public debate about Croatia's process of integration into Europe. Furthermore, the explicit thematisation of the possible impact of EU integration on the country's chances of strengthening social

and political consensus carries the implication that this consensus is perceived to be weak and volatile. In other words, behind optimistic and hopeful views of Croatia's bright European future lies a concern for the divisions affecting Croatian society, and in particular for the gap between the people and the ruling elites, which the European integration process seems to exacerbate instead of alleviate.

The third pattern marks a shift from Croatia's internal political affairs to its broader geopolitical position, as it refers to *intellectuals repositioning Croatia in between the European and the post-Yugoslav context*. As pointed out in § 6.3.2, the authors examined tend to frame Croatia's progressive integration into the European institutional space in ways that often depart from the traditional post-socialist narrative of the 'return to Europe' (see § 2.2 in this regard), and which instead attribute to Croatia a rather ambivalent, liminal position between Europe and the Balkans (and what the latter are taken to represent). The analysis of the third theme of the discursive representation of Croatia as a nation, i.e. *The controversial narrative of Croatia's 'return to Europe': a break away from the Yugoslav legacy and the Balkans, or rather a new role in the region?*, suggests that this ambivalence stems from the discrepancy between Croatia's aspiration for a fresh start in the new European environment and the reality of its firm entrenchment in the political, social and cultural dynamics of the post-Yugoslav region. The collective wish for a clean break from the Yugoslav tradition and the Balkans as a cultural and geopolitical space finds tangible expression in Zubčić's and Jajčinović's choice to frame Croatia's EU accession as a teleological narrative, respectively of historical closure and national 'rebirth'. Raspudić, on the other hand, points out the difficulties of making such a break; by employing discursive strategies of *heteronomisation*, such as representing Croatia as an amputated limb of the regional 'body' and as a bridge that other Balkan countries may use to enter the EU, he foregrounds Croatia's persistent ties with the post-Yugoslav region, which he condemns as holding back the country's European ambitions. As illustrated by the commentary of Leko, who was then Speaker of the Parliament, Croatia's embeddedness in the region is explicitly acknowledged also in the official discourse of the Croatian government; however, unlike Raspudić, Leko frames it in very positive terms, namely, as a chance for Croatia to maintain stability in the region by acting as a metaphorical lighthouse for the neighbouring countries.

As shown above, the achievement of EU membership is far from being an unambiguous event with an unequivocally positive interpretation. On the contrary, the authors under examination advance different, and often contradictory, viewpoints regarding Croatia's place vis-à-vis the European and Balkan milieux. In all probability, these intellectual perspectives reflect existing positions in the public debate on the matter. Yet, by bringing into the debate their own representations of the situation, based on specific discursive strategies and linguistic devices, the intellectuals do more than just transpose existing points of view; they engage in acts of *redefinition* of the nation's role in the wider geopolitical and cultural context, in a time of great change. This pattern of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation, like the ones examined above and below, provides a concrete illustration of how intellectuals may engage in nation-building discourses, thus performing the role of *nation-makers* (see § 3.3).

The fourth and last pattern highlighted by the analysis of the Croatia case relates to *intellectuals stressing how the power relations between Croatia and the EU have changed*. As a way to blame the country's political elites for failing to serve the interests of the Croatian people (which has been examined in § 6.2.1 as an example of the macro-strategy of *political guide for the nation*), Raspudić metaphorically portrays Croatian politicians as having submissively prostrated themselves before the EU, alluding to the existence of a colonial relationship between the two entities. Although no other author among those considered frames the relationship between Croatia and the EU explicitly in these terms, the asymmetry in power between the two actors is quite frequently foregrounded. In fact, the fourth major theme in the discursive representation of Croatia as a nation is *Croatia and the EU: from dependency to equal partnership* (§ 6.3.4). Detailed analysis of this theme has shown that Croatia's position vis-à-vis the EU is often described through figurative expressions related to the semantic field of childhood/adulthood, which underlie discursive strategies of *vitalisation* through anthropomorphisation of the nation. In particular, the achievement of EU membership by Croatia is more or less explicitly constructed as a transition from childhood to adulthood, that is, from a condition of dependency (mainly due to EU conditionality, see § 2.3.3) to a status of autonomy and equal partnership with the EU. For instance, Jajčinović compares the country's subservient attitude towards the EU (before accession) to that of a pupil doing his or her homework, while Raspudić

sarcastically greets EU membership as the moment when Croatia has finally overcome the stage of ‘self-imposed childhood’.⁴⁶ A more generous account is offered by Šerić, who emphasises Croatia’s newly acquired autonomy by representing it as a construction worker who has just entered the European Union ‘building site’ and who is expected to engage in work on a par with the other team members.

Broadly speaking, the concern shown by these intellectuals for Croatia’s ‘inferior’ position in the negotiation process with the EU probably indicates that this issue has occupied a central place in the national public debate about EU accession. This suggests that, despite the substantial convergence of Croatian and European identity over the past two decades, which Subotić (2011a) regards as a key factor in the consolidation of Croatia’s European perspective, there are aspects of the European integration process that are still perceived as challenging to the Croatian society. This reflects the broader notion that processes of post-socialist transition and democratisation (of which integration into Europe constitutes a fundamental component) create conditions of uncertainty and volatility in the societies involved (see § 2.3). Furthermore, a particularly striking aspect of the pattern examined above is that Croatia’s progress towards European integration is discursively constructed as a process of ‘coming of age’, that is, of maturation from childhood to adulthood. As discussed in § 2.3.1, scholars such as Buden (2010) have criticised the dominant discourses of post-socialist transition because they foster the repressive infantilisation of transitional societies by placing them in a condition of tutelage by western authorities. From this perspective, the above representation of Croatia could be criticised as infantilising and disempowering, and the intellectuals concerned could be seen as participating in the reproduction of dominant (i.e. western) normative discourses of transition. While it could hardly be denied that the choice of representing Croatia as being in a process of coming of age reflects mainstream conceptions of democratisation and European integration, a closer look at the linguistic evidence shows that this pattern of intellectual spokespersonship involves an attempt to empower the Croatian nation, not to stifle its progress. The authors under examination, in fact, place emphasis on the country’s achieved ‘maturity’ rather than on its (previous) state of ‘puerility’, that is, inferiority and dependency.

⁴⁶ This has been observed for most Eastern European countries before EU accession in 2004 (Krzyżanowski & Oberhuber, 2007; Wodak, 2007).

In conclusion, Croatia's entry into the EU appears to have triggered sustained intellectual debate about the country's changing role in regard to the European integration project and, to a lesser extent, about its disputed association with the post-Yugoslav and Balkan contexts. The analysis of salient patterns of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation indicates that intellectuals are determined to preserve Croatian national identity from being diluted in the 'European sea' (first pattern), show concern for risk that European integration, which is generally regarded as a 'space of opportunities', might exacerbate the existing divide between the Croatian people and its ruling elites (second pattern), and are keen on supporting their country's attempt to achieve a more equal relationship with the European Union (fourth pattern). In addition to this, they express conflicting views on Croatia's supposed 'return to Europe' and on how membership in the EU has contributed to reshaping Croatia's role within the post-Yugoslav context (third pattern). Underlying all these attitudes is a common effort at defining (or redefining) the role and place of the Croatian nation in the volatile and challenging context of European integration, which thus emerges as the predominant way in which Croatia's intellectuals act as *nation-makers* in the case under consideration.

8.3 Bosnia and Herzegovina's intellectuals: seeking a pivotal role in the country's ongoing social transformation

The anti-government protests that broke out in several cities of Bosnia and Herzegovina in early 2014 gave rise to a wave of public debate about the country's deteriorating social conditions, which were largely blamed on the corruption and inefficiency of the political leadership as well as on the structural flaws of the Dayton-based institutional architecture (see § 4.2.3). The debate was particularly prominent in the national press, with many columnists and commentators expressing their views on the meaning of the protests and the legitimacy of the people's demands. Such sustained engagement is well illustrated in the 12 opinion pieces included in the final sample, which attest to the variety of perspectives, arguments and topics elicited by the events. In Chapter 7, I have conducted detailed analysis of these opinion pieces in order to detect the salient ways in which the authors legitimise themselves intellectually (§ 7.1), assume and perform the role of spokespersons for the nation (§ 7.2), and represent the nation in public discourse (§ 7.3). In this section, I shall

identify the overarching patterns of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation hingeing on the above-mentioned strategies, and point out each pattern's contextual and conceptual relevance.

In periods of intense social struggle and distress, such as the early months of 2014 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is common for the people affected to seek the expert opinion of established authorities in order to get a sense of the situation and understand its causes and consequences. Likewise, those who have, or claim to have, the authority to interpret and explain social reality (that is, the intellectuals; see § 3.2) will likely take the opportunity to publicly state their viewpoints, and thus consolidate their epistemic authority. The latter point certainly applies to the case under examination, as evidenced by the occurrence, revealed by the analysis, of two relevant patterns of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation. The first corresponds to the act of publicly interpreting the significance of the particular social situation, while the second reflects the increase in epistemic authority, and hence in social standing, that the former act entails. In the following I analyse them separately, as each requires specific consideration.

The first pattern relates to *intellectuals interpreting and legitimising the protest movement as a response to the dysfunctional arrangements, exclusionary policies and oppressive practices that characterise Bosnia and Herzegovina as a socio-political community*. The centrality of interpretive work to the exercise of intellectual authority is attested by the preponderance, among the authors considered, of strategies of intellectual self-legitimation based on *knowledge and expertise*. Indeed, many of them tend to mobilise their specialist knowledge or emphasise, more or less explicitly, their superior ability to understand how social reality functions. The analysis has shown that they do so in various ways, for instance by presenting social facts as being shaped by a complex web of power relations and political interests that can only be fully disentangled through deep critical inquiry (Raspudić), by claiming the capacity not only to comprehend social reality but also to make predictions about it (Kukić), as well as through adopting a pedagogical and explanatory attitude towards the readership (Prohić). The outcome of this interpretive work is a predominantly negative thematisation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is represented both as a *dysfunctional society facing an uncertain future* (Theme 1) and as *a nation marked by*

a deep divide between the people and the elites (Theme 3). Within the first theme, Bosnia and Herzegovina is portrayed as a society stricken by social injustice and economic hardship, and whose future prospects have been severely compromised by maladministration. This is mainly obtained via discursive strategies of *singularisation* highlighting negative uniqueness and of *discontinuation* outlining dystopian scenarios. A salient feature of this theme is that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in spite of their conspicuous engagement in the protest movement, are generally represented in a passive position. Both Prohić and Mustafić, for example, depict them in ways that undermine or even suppress their agency, stressing instead their being exposed to the pressure of disruptive forces in society. Thus, the people are constructed as impotent victims of the situation, instead of agents of change. In an even more pessimistic account, Raspudić criticises the very structure of Bosnian-Herzegovinian society as undermining the people's aspirations and their ability to flourish (in this regard, see the third pattern of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation discussed below). Such a negative portrayal of Bosnia and Herzegovina is further amplified in the second theme, which draws a dramatic contrast between the masses, who are depicted as destitute and impoverished, and the elites, who are instead portrayed as a narrow group of privileged and wealthy individuals. The proponents of this theme employ specific discursive strategies of *polarisation*. Kukić, for instance, compares Bosnia and Herzegovina to Latin American countries as a commonplace example of unequal and rigidly stratified societies; moreover, he describes it as a defective body lacking the indispensable 'connective tissue' of a proper middle class. Šehić focuses instead on the retreat of the elites from public life, which he views as a major source of social conflict and political disaffection. Lastly, Trumić represents the ongoing clash between citizens and political elites by resorting to the rather conventional metaphor of a football match.

The fact that so many authors regard the protests not as impromptu occurrences but rather as symptomatic of structural and deep-seated problems affecting Bosnia and Herzegovina is a clear illustration of the enormous challenges facing the country's democratic transition. As explained in § 2.3, the intertwined processes of post-socialist transition, democratisation and economic restructuring had, and continue to have, a dramatic impact on the lives and livelihoods of the people affected. The analysis of the

above pattern of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation suggests that this problem is particularly acute within Bosnian-Herzegovinian society.

As stated above, while the first pattern of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation reflects intellectuals' capacity to exercise their interpretive power by articulating and criticising aspects of society, the second pattern is rather connected with the pursuit of social legitimacy that is associated with the public exercise of that power. Namely, it relates to *intellectuals establishing or consolidating their public role by spearheading the protest movement*. That the majority of the authors examined take the side of the protesters, by endorsing their outcry against political corruption and legitimising their demands for political change, was already evident from the initial thematic overview of the sample (see § 4.4.3). However, detailed analysis of the discursive strategies deployed in the texts illuminates the specific ways in which, by declaring their support for the movement, Bosnia and Herzegovina's intellectuals also attempt to establish and legitimise their own social position as authoritative critics of the status quo. The most common way of doing so is by delegitimising the ruling elites in the eyes of public opinion, which belongs to the strategies of spokespersonship for the nation included in the rubric of *political guide* and corresponds to the third theme of the discursive construction of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a nation, i.e. *Bosnia and Herzegovina as a political community dominated by corrupt elites*. Instances of both are very frequent across the sample texts. Hadžić, for instance, wages a fierce attack on local political leaders for failing to confront the protesters, and presents a picture of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a country where chronic political corruption has pervaded the social and the economic spheres. Cenić, on the other hand, describes national politics as a metaphorical market that is seriously threatened by unfair competition, lack of transparency and consumer manipulation. Prohić, too, denigrates the political elites by alluding to their involvement in criminal activities and by depicting them as unable and unwilling to abandon their corrupt practices. A further way in which intellectuals establish their public authority is by engaging directly with the movement's strategies, methods, and aims. As shown by the analysis, they do so by acting either as *political guides*, like Šehić and Kukić who openly question the movement's goals, or as *emancipators*, like Mujkić and Mustafić who acknowledge its emancipatory potential.

The presence in the sample of two interviews by two prominent local academics, Asim Mujkić and Zdravko Grebo, provides a valuable opportunity to shed some light on an additional interesting aspect of the intellectuals' pursuit of social legitimacy, namely, the relationship between academic status and social engagement. The way in which Mujkić establishes his intellectual authority as an academic, for instance, rests on a seeming contradiction: on the one hand, he distances himself from the broader (Bosnian-Herzegovinian) academic community by criticising its ideological role in maintaining and legitimising the status quo; on the other, he commends his academic colleagues (and himself) for having abstained from seeking a role within the protest movement, because to do so would have undermined the movement's transformative impact. This apparent contradiction points to a fundamental question about the social position/role of academia, that is, to what extent academics should be proactive agents of social change, and to what extent they should instead maintain the role of dispassionate, albeit critical, observers of social phenomena. Since addressing this question in detail would go beyond the scope of the present study, I will limit myself to noting how the dilemma implicitly raised by Mujkić is but a specific instance of Pels' general concept of the intellectual standpoint as a position that oscillates between distancing and social engagement (see § 3.2.1). The same kind of tension surfaces also, and perhaps even more strongly, in Grebo's discursive self-positioning as a member of academia. Unlike Mujkić, he openly contrasts his own privileged position of senior university professor with that of the poverty-stricken masses participating in the protests, thus questioning his own entitlement to speak for the movement. As noted in the analysis (§ 7.1.3), Grebo's partial disavowal of his own authority serves mainly as a strategy of blame avoidance; nevertheless, his choice to frame his distance from the masses in terms of material conditions and class difference reveals another important aspect of the complex interplay between academic status and social engagement, namely, how the privileged social status enjoyed by 'professional intellectuals' such as academics may actually hinder their ability to engage in social spokespersonship and thus legitimise themselves as drivers of social change.

As stated above as well as in § 4.2.3, the 2014 protest movement was more than a mere reaction to the bad economic situation and rampant political corruption affecting Bosnia and Herzegovina. In fact, it openly challenged the country's exclusionary ethno-territorial institutional system and political arrangements (i.e. what I have

termed the *ethno-political paradigm*) as profoundly inequitable, dysfunctional and oppressive, and even sought to develop alternative ways of doing politics by organising citizen plenums in various towns across the country. The third and last pattern of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation identified through the analysis concerns precisely the movement's transformative impact, since it relates to *intellectuals assessing the potential of the protest movement to undermine the hegemony of the ethno-political paradigm over Bosnia and Herzegovina's social and political life*. Elements of this pattern were already discernible in some manifestations of the first pattern discussed above, especially Raspudić's radical criticism of Bosnia and Herzegovina's social and political structure as undermining collective progress and prosperity. However, most relevant in this regard is the fourth theme of the discursive representation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a nation, that is, *the increasingly contested hegemony of the ethno-political paradigm*. As seen in § 7.3.4, most of the authors under consideration discursively construct the ethno-political ideology as an extraneous force oppressing the people, emphasising its detrimental impact on the well-being of Bosnian-Herzegovinian society. For example, Mustafić condemns the ethno-political system for favouring corruption and the private accumulation of wealth, while both Cenić and Grebo criticise its coercive and oppressive structure, the former by comparing it to a metaphorical 'national prison' and the latter by discursively constructing it as an extraneous force that oppresses the people. Several authors explicitly question whether the protest movement has the capacity to bring about systemic changes by overthrowing the hegemony of the ethno-political paradigm. As shown in the analysis, their views are quite diverse, ranging from Mujkić's rather optimistic hope that the protest movement marks the beginning of the demise of the ethno-political paradigm to Kukić's pessimistic opinion that the turmoil will eventually prove counterproductive, making the mobilised masses more vulnerable to ethnic propaganda and manipulation.

Broadly speaking, the analysis of this pattern suggests that Bosnia and Herzegovina's intellectuals are grappling with the tension between being supportive of the protest movement and being skeptical about its potential to effect systemic and large-scale social change. Although most of the authors show great (and often even enthusiastic) support for the anti-government movement, they appear to be doubtful about its real power to disrupt the oppressive hegemony of the ethno-political paradigm, which they

regard as being deeply entrenched in Bosnia and Herzegovina's social and political life. This cautious attitude is mirrored in their general reluctance to propose alternative political visions for their country; in fact, only a few of them venture to elaborate possible alternatives to the status quo, and what they offer are only glimpses of a future virtuous society with no clear proposals as to how that goal should be achieved.

In conclusion, the picture of Bosnia and Herzegovina's intellectuals that emerges from the discussion above is a rather complex and ambivalent one. On the one hand, all of the authors under examination, albeit to different extents, lend their voice to the movement's cause by providing more or less articulate explanations of the core social and political issues driving the protests (as illustrated by the first pattern). On the other hand, it appears that the intellectuals' readiness to place their interpretive authority in the movement's service does not necessarily entail a firm belief in the latter's capacity to effect substantive social change (as shown by the third pattern). Indeed, several authors remain cautious about the possibility that the movement will succeed in undermining the hegemony of the ethno-political ideology. How can this apparent discrepancy in attitudes be reconciled? A plausible answer is offered by the second pattern identified in the analysis, which suggests that the intellectuals' involvement with the movement should not be read as a disinterested effort to help the movement advance its demands and achieve full subjectivity, but rather as an attempt to establish themselves as authoritative critics of the status quo, and thus secure a pivotal role for themselves in the ongoing debate about Bosnia and Herzegovina's process of social and political transformation.

9. Conclusion

The present study has been undertaken in an attempt to expose the discursive manifestations of the interplay between intellectual activity and nation-building practices in the contemporary post-Yugoslav context. In particular, I have sought to shed light on how public intellectuals ‘make sense’ of the complex challenges facing post-Yugoslav societies by promoting specific representations and visions of the nation in public discourse, and how this activity in turn enables them to legitimise their intellectual authority and strengthen their social position. The central notion in this respect is that of *national intellectual practice* (Suny & Kennedy, 1999). As explained in § 3.3.1, this concept emphasises the co-constitutive character of intellectual activity and nation-building, arguing that the production of national discourses by intellectuals is central to the formation of the nation, and that the frame of the nation, in turn, provides the main structure within which intellectual activity is empowered and legitimised.

In order to explore how this specific relationship is constructed and performed in and through public discourse, I have elaborated an innovative analytical framework grounded in the Discourse-Historical Approach to critical discourse studies and centred around the original concept of *intellectual spokespersonship for the nation*. I hope this thesis has demonstrated that this framework provides a viable heuristic methodology for examining how intellectual spokespersonship for the nation is discursively constructed and performed, focusing specifically on i) strategies of intellectual self-legitimation, ii) strategies of spokespersonship for the nation, and iii) the discursive representation of the nation.

The application of this framework to three samples of opinion pieces published in the aftermath of three important events, i.e. Kosovo’s declaration of independence from Serbia in 2008, Croatia’s accession into the EU in 2013, and the anti-government demonstrations that took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2014, has allowed me to identify salient recurring patterns of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation that are distinctive to each of the examined societies. I have then explored the relevance and significance of these empirical findings in regard to the main features of the post-

Yugoslav context described in Chapter 2 as well as in the light of the theoretical and methodological points made in Chapter 3. The discussion was oriented towards answering the following research questions:

- A. What do these patterns reveal about the specific national contexts they refer to? What is their significance in terms of intellectuals' involvement in nation-building practices and the underlying power relations?
- B. Are there any salient similarities or differences across the cases, and what can be concluded from this in regard to the broader post-Yugoslav context?
- C. What are the main conceptual and methodological implications for the critical study of the relationship between intellectual activity and nation-building in public discourse?

In the following, I shall present my conclusions regarding each of the above questions. I begin by providing a brief overview of the empirical findings pertaining to each case study, in order to address the first research question (A).

In the case of Serbia, detailed analysis of the opinion pieces published in the aftermath of Kosovo's independence has provided evidence that Serbia's intellectuals have tended to articulate their relationship with the national community in four main ways: i) by ascribing to themselves the formidable task of helping the Serbian nation recover from its supposedly 'pathological' state; ii) by showing concern for Serbia's deep social cleavages and therefore urging the political leadership to formulate a viable vision for the nation; iii) by expressing deep concern for Serbia's strained relations with other post-Yugoslav countries and the major western powers; and iv) by acting as custodians of Serbia's mythical past and as interpreters of its significance for the present and future of the nation, especially by positioning themselves as *voices of traumatic memory* (Giesen, 2011). Broadly speaking, intellectuals appear to have interpreted the Kosovo issue as evidence (or even as consequence) of a general 'national crisis', framing their own engagement with it as directed at ensuring the nation's survival and future development. In this sense, they have acted as *saviours of the nation*, similarly to what their predecessors did in the late 1980s and early 1990s when confronted with the steady disintegration of the Yugoslav Federation (Dragović-Soso, 2002).

The case study on Croatia, on the other hand, focused on the debate that followed the country's accession into the European Union in 2013. The analysis of relevant opinion pieces published in the aftermath of the event suggests that Croatia's intellectuals have assumed the role of spokespersons for the nation on the basis of four main patterns: i) by fostering the uniqueness of Croatian identity and culture within the broader European context; ii) by offering interpretations of the significance of European integration for Croatia's political life (mostly constructing the EU as a 'space of opportunities'); iii) by (re)articulating Croatia's place in between the European and the post-Yugoslav context; and iv) by stressing how the power relations between Croatia and the EU have gradually changed, often framing this as a process of maturation from childhood to adulthood (like in most Central-Eastern European countries before the 2004 EU accession, see Krzyżanowski & Oberhuber, 2007; Wodak, 2007). Taken together, these patterns indicate that although the EU is widely perceived as a 'space of opportunities', European integration is also a source of concern, particularly in regard to its possible detrimental impact on Croatian national identity and the role that Croatia is expected to play vis-à-vis the other post-Yugoslav countries. The intellectuals examined appear to grapple with these challenges by engaging in efforts to redefine the role and place of the Croatian nation in the changing context of the European integration process.

Finally, the case study on Bosnia and Herzegovina explored intellectual viewpoints on the wave of demonstrations against political corruption, maladministration, and the dominance of ethnic politics that swept the country in early 2014. The protests, which were accompanied by the formation of several municipal plenums at which citizens met to discuss their grievances and articulate political demands, provoked sustained debate about the factors driving the movement and its potential to overturn the status quo. The analysis of selected opinion pieces addressing the issue has disclosed a salient ambivalence in the stances assumed by Bosnian-Herzegovinian intellectuals vis-à-vis the movement. On the one hand, virtually all of the authors achieve intellectual authority i) by interpreting and legitimising the protest movement as a response to the dysfunctional arrangements, exclusionary policies and oppressive practices that characterise Bosnia and Herzegovina as a socio-political community (first pattern). On the other, however, their attitudes differ considerably when assessing the potential of the movement to undermine the hegemony of the ethno-

political paradigm over Bosnia and Herzegovina's social and political life (third pattern). Such an apparent discrepancy may be reconciled by pointing to the second pattern of intellectual spokespersonship for the nation identified in the analysis, which features intellectuals establishing or consolidating their public role by spearheading the protest movement. In other words, the findings suggest that Bosnian-Herzegovinian intellectuals' involvement with the protest movement should primarily be regarded as an attempt to secure a pivotal role for themselves as interpreters of the country's ongoing socio-political transformation, and only secondarily as being motivated by a genuine commitment to the movement's cause.

The second research question (B) focuses on similarities and differences across the case studies, asking what can be concluded from this comparison about the broader post-Yugoslav context.

A first important observation is that the cases of Serbia and Croatia demonstrate the existence of a distinct tension between the persistence of past animosities and the extraordinary pressure to move towards greater European integration. In Serbia, this tension is embodied in the divide between progressive sectors, who advocate for the 'normalisation' of Serbian society through the acknowledgment of past responsibilities and a clear commitment to EU integration, and conservative sectors, who bolster national pride by promoting narratives of historical continuity that project the nation's glorious (mythical) past onto the present situation. In Croatia, on the other hand, popular support for EU membership appears to be tempered by concerns over the loss of sovereignty and the erosion of national identity involved in the process of European integration; in particular, the dominant narrative of EU accession as a historic chance to break with the Yugoslav legacy and finally *return to Europe* seems to have lost momentum as a result of growing awareness of Croatia's new moral and political obligations towards the other post-Yugoslav countries.

A second observation is that there is a general tendency among intellectuals in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (and to a lesser extent Croatia) to blame the government for failing to safeguard and advance the interests of their society. In the case of Serbia, politicians are mainly accused of being unable to foster social consensus, improve the country's international reputation, and promote the much-needed recovery of Serbian society from its 'pathological' condition. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina,

accusations of political corruption, maladministration and poor accountability are generally linked to a broader criticism of the ethno-political principle underlying the country's institutional and political structures. Although, as shown by the analysis, adopting anti-elite stances is an effective way of legitimising one's intellectual authority and social status, the predominance of these attitudes should also be regarded as a symptom of widespread popular dissatisfaction with the inability of the post-Yugoslav ruling elites to govern the processes of post-socialist and post-conflict transition. This insight resonates with the notion, elaborated in Chapter 2, that the post-Yugoslav transition is an *unfinished transition*, as the societies involved are still faced with significant socio-political challenges and are therefore pervaded by a sense of widespread uncertainty and insecurity.

A third point suggested by the comparison of the patterns of intellectual spokespersonship identified in the analysis is that many post-Yugoslav commentators engage with society by stimulating critical attitudes towards dominant discourses, norms and paradigms, thus performing the role that is typically ascribed to the intellectual, that is, that of speaking truth to power. In the case of Serbia, this is reflected in the attitude of those authors who act as emancipators of the nation by urging Serbian society to overcome its supposed state of denial and thus achieve 'maturity', while in the case of Croatia this emerges, for instance, from repeated exhortations to challenge dogmatic views of EU integration as either totally positive or totally negative. The ambivalent attitude assumed by Bosnia and Herzegovina's commentators towards the anti-government movement, however, calls for a reconsideration of intellectuals' involvement in radical causes, suggesting that this might be predominantly driven by the desire to be publicly recognised as authoritative voices in their societies rather than by a genuine and disinterested political commitment.

These three observations raise complex and crucial questions about the role of intellectuals in the interface between national and supra-national (particularly European) cultures and identities, about the power struggles underlying intellectual activity as such, and more broadly about the place of intellectuals in contemporary society in an increasingly globalised world. This leads us to the third research question (C), which focuses on the study's main conceptual and methodological implications.

The contribution of this thesis to the above-mentioned crucial debates can be summarised in the following propositions: firstly, contrary to common perceptions the importance of intellectuals in contemporary society should not be underestimated: as exemplified by the post-Yugoslav context, they have a fundamental role in making sense of complex and often contentious issues that cut across local, national, regional and global boundaries, thus helping their communities to articulate and concretise appropriate cultural and political responses. Secondly, intellectual discourse should be understood, conceptualised and investigated as a site of constant struggles over access to power and authority; in particular, the concept of intellectual spokespersonship advanced by Pels (2000), which the discourse-analytical framework elaborated in the present study builds upon, has proven to be valuable in unpacking the multiple, layered and dynamic relationships between the exercise of intellectual authority and the power of symbolic representation. Thirdly, the historical interrelationship of intellectual activity and nation-building practices (discussed in Chapter 3) does not seem to have abated in spite of the supposed crisis of the nation-state; rather, it appears to have developed into more complex forms, in which nationhood and national identities are constantly being constituted and negotiated (also through intellectual debates) in a dialectical relation with emerging local and especially supranational identities. This interplay opens up new and vast cultural horizons, which may lead towards a more inclusive, tolerant and sustainable society, but also to the persistence and further radicalisation of exclusionary politics and practices, particularly in the face of global issues such as poverty, growing social inequalities, migration and recurrent economic crises.

Apart from these general theoretical considerations, the present research also illustrates the advantages of approaching the study of intellectuals and nation-building from the interdisciplinary and problem-oriented perspective of the Discourse-Historical Approach to critical discourse studies. The proposed framework, in fact, combines concepts and tools from critical discourse analysis with notions and insights from other relevant fields such as political science studies of nationalism, sociological theories of intellectuals, as well as philosophical reflections on the concept of social representation. By integrating knowledge from various disciplines, it allows for a certain degree of cross-fertilisation among them. On the one hand, this study enriches the growing body of DHA-based research on national identity by introducing a

specific focus on intellectuals as key agents in the articulation of nationhood and national identities, an aspect that has not yet been sufficiently addressed. On the other hand, it substantiates existing theories of the role of intellectuals in nation-building processes with empirical linguistic evidence, thus contributing to the ongoing 'discursive turn' in qualitative political science. In addition to this, it extends knowledge about the contemporary post-Yugoslav context as such, by illuminating the distinctive ways in which dynamics of nation-building and intellectual discourse are intertwined with issues of post-conflict reconciliation, post-socialist transformation, democratisation and European integration.

Finally, the study opens up several avenues for future studies in this area, as a result of both its innovative character and its methodological limitations. Firstly, new research could integrate an exploration of how 'intellectual texts' such as the ones analysed here are received and interpreted by their readerships, e.g. by focusing on their impact on audiences from different cultural and social backgrounds. I have chosen not to focus on reception analysis due to its inherently limited scope and time-consuming nature, but I believe that it provides a useful tool for determining the outreach and resonance of public intellectuals, thus enabling inferences to be drawn about the influence of intellectual discourses upon broader public opinion. Furthermore, it would be fruitful to extend the proposed approach to other texts, genres and media types (particularly online media), in order to see how intellectual spokespersonship for the nation manifests itself across different communicative situations and in relation to different publics. Lastly, the study shares the limitations inherent to the case study method: although the three case studies have been selected in such a way as to ensure that they are sufficiently representative of the broader post-Yugoslav context, their narrow scope as well as the absence of case studies concerning the other post-Yugoslav societies (i.e. Slovenia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo) puts obvious constraints on the possibilities of generalisation. Hence, it would be interesting to replicate this study in the other post-Yugoslav societies, as this would permit a more detailed comparative analysis of local nation-building discourses and their specific intertextual and interdiscursive links.

In conclusion, the original discourse-analytical approach to intellectual spokespersonship elaborated in this study has proven quite productive and versatile,

and therefore constitutes a useful tool for researchers interested to explore the role of intellectuals and the manifestations of their discursive authority in a variety of contexts and situations. This is certainly a promising and crucial direction of research, because, as I hope to have shown in this study, intellectuals have the power to shape our perceptions and attitudes in significant ways, for better or for worse, and therefore deserve our constant critical attention.

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Note: all the original texts, along with the English translation of all the excerpts included in the analysis, are available in the CD enclosed with this thesis.

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