

SOCIAL CONTROL OF EVERYDAY LIFE AND POLITICAL CONSTRUCTION OF (MONTENEGRIN) IDENTITY

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DOI: 10.2478/eras-2024-0004

Abstract

The research problem is the influence of global crisis on identity and daily life of Montenegrin people. The subject is the political construction of (Montenegrin) identity, as a result of social control on everyday life, where identities are born. For the purpose of researching this relation, the starting point is the explanatory potential of J. Habermas's contemporary socio-political theory about the colonization of the lifeworld by an expansionist logic of the political-economic constellation (system). Scientific goals are: 1) description of the colonization of the lifeworld and the construction of (Montenegrin) identity, as an indicator of social crisis (in Montenegro); 2) understanding the causal factors (causes, motives) of (Montenegrin) identity construction; 3) generic explanation of the political construction of (Montenegrin) identity, through strategies, policies, educational and media influences. Social goals refer to: 1) expansion of the fund of knowledge about contemporary (Montenegrin) society and its problematic aspects; 2) pragmatic explanations of the problem of social control of everyday life through the re-actualization of socio-political concepts; 3) indication of guidelines for possible changes for the better in the sphere of everyday life in the foreseeable future. The methodology concerns the main hypothesis that by constructing the identity of people in the post-industrial society, social control of everyday life is realized. Auxiliary hypotheses are: 1) Identity construction takes place through strategies, policies, educational and media influences as segments of social control aimed at managing social resources from the local to the global level. 2) With instruments of social control, a desirable system of values of individuals and social groups is established with the aim of preventing, delaying, compensating, and transforming their potential subversive action (undermining the system from within). The independent or causal variable is the social control of everyday life, while the dependent or consequential variable is the constructed identity. Making final findings will be facilitated by the synthesis, inductive and deductive methods of reasoning, as well as the method of comparison with a case study. The results refer to the achieved goals and the general conclusion that the system's power logic reduces the sphere of free and open communication of individuals, thus their identity becomes a place of permanent crisis due to the threat of the meaning of everyday life within which identity is formulated. This crisis is the reason that identities will remain endangered until the question of alienation of life is raised, in accordance with the capitalist imperatives of unlimited economic growth and consumption, and instrumental-rational interaction. As a reaction to the system dominance, the forces of resistance are strengthening, in the form of new alternative grassroots social movements, such as Civil Movement United Reform Action (URA), in Montenegro, which is pro-European green political party of the left center and social-liberal ideological provenance.

Keywords

lifeworld, the system, identity, alternative (green) social movements

Introduction

Guided by hypotheses that have long been scientifically proven and confirmed in the

practice of everyday life - that there are no spontaneous social processes in society, because they are all controlled (Mannheim, 2009), and that the power belongs to the one who produces discourse and perception, the theoretical research of everyday life was approached on this way.

The research starts from the theoretical position of Habermas's theory of communicative action, and from the position of social constructionism, based on the assumption that 'reality is socially constructed' (Berger & Luckmann, 1992).

In the theory of communicative action, Habermas distinguishes the lifeworld (culture and social community) from the social system (economy, politics), depending on which of the types of action (instrumental or communicative) prevails in them. Thus, the social system could be defined as - the totality of social relations, which are based on instrumental rationality, while the lifeworld would represent the totality of relations based on meaning. The lifeworld is, therefore, based on communicative action that is created by connecting the goals of individual participants in a cooperative way, through conversation. Therefore, the lifeworld implies intersubjective behavior with the aim of mutual understanding and achieving consensus (reaching an agreed upon truth). Communicative action leads actors to accept each other, emphasizing mutual demands (while giving good reasons for their beliefs) that can be accepted or contested. On the other hand, the social system rests on instrumental action that originates from the world of labor and profit and manifests itself through the function of satisfying interests and achieving goals. The essence of the crisis of modern societies stems from the fact that systems are expanding in such a way as to narrow the free space (lifeworld) of man. That is why the way out of the crisis should be sought in the affirmation of communicative rationality, the free action of people, who in equal mutual communication make reasonable decisions based on agreement (see more in Pusic, 1989, p. 81).

Another theoretical starting point of the research is social constructionism, which is often used as a label for any social influence on individual experience. The essence of social constructionism rests on discursiveness and deontologization. The research will point out the problem of discursiveness and deontologization (remaking nature). Discursive deontologization is a project of Modernity and can best be explained by the example of the political construction of identity. Therefore, this research will explain this phenomenon and the consequences it brings to the daily life of man. The political construction of identity is one of the instruments of social control (hyperproduction of information, fear of terrorism, education reform, hate speech, secularization, ideology of a healthy life) and a process supported by the combination of the influence of the media and the education system. Social control refers to all processes, institutions and methods used to coordinate or regulate the individual and collective behavior of members of society. Social control is a set of activities aimed at ensuring that the majority of members of society respect the prescribed norms. This is achieved by creating and promoting norms, and sanctions (positive - rewards and negative - punishments) for their non-compliance.

Methodological Framework of the Research

The problem of the research is the global world crisis, which also reflects on the societies in the Balkans, and especially on the daily life and identity of its inhabitants.

The subject of research is the cause-and-effect relationship between social control of everyday life and the construction of identity, which are born in the practice of everyday life. Research starts from the explanatory potential of Jürgen Habermas's contemporary socio-political theory about the colonization of lifeworld by the expansionist logic of the political-economic constellation (system).

Scientific objectives refer to: 1) description of the colonization of the lifeworld and the construction of (Montenegrin) identity, as an indicator of social crisis (in Montenegro); 2) understanding the drivers (causes, motives) of the construction of (Montenegrin) identity; 3)

generic (causal) scientific explanation of the political construction of (Montenegrin) identity, through strategies, policies, educational and media influences.

Social goals refer to: 1) expansion of the fund of knowledge about contemporary (Montenegrin) society and its problematic aspects; 2) pragmatic explanations of the problem of social control of everyday life through the reactualization of sociological and political concepts; 3) indication of guidelines for possible changes for the better in the sphere of everyday life, in the foreseeable future.

The methodological framework concerns the main and auxiliary hypotheses. The main hypothesis is that by constructing the identity of the post-industrial society, social control of everyday life is achieved. Auxiliary hypotheses of the research are: 1) Identity construction takes place through strategies, policies, educational and media influences as segments of social control aimed at managing social resources from the local to the global level; 2) With instruments of social control, a desirable system of values of individuals and social groups is established with the aim of preventing, delaying, compensating and transforming their potential subversive actions (undermining the system from within). The independent or causal variable is the social control of everyday life, while the dependent or consequential variable is the constructed identity. In addition to the theoretical analysis of basic phenomena and processes, making final findings will be facilitated by the application of synthesis, inductive and deductive methods of reasoning, as well as the method of comparison with a case study.

The results refer to the achieved goals and the general conclusion that the system's power logic reduces the sphere of free and open communication of individuals, thus their identity becomes a place of permanent crisis due to the threat of the meaning of everyday life within which identity is formulated. Therefore, the current crisis of everyday life in the society of Montenegro is an integral part of the new forms of the crisis of capitalism. The crisis of everyday life is the reason that identities will remain endangered until the question of questioning the alienation of life is raised, in accordance with the capitalist imperatives of unlimited economic growth and consumption, and instrumental-rational interrelationship. As a reaction to the establishment of dominance (through the creation of a presentational identity and an erased space), the forces of resistance are strengthening, in the form of new alternative and spontaneous (grassroots) social movements (Civil Movement United Reform Action (URA), in Montenegro) of the left center and social- liberal ideological provenance. URA is a pro-European green political party that received the status of a parliamentary party in the parliamentary elections of 2016, and on the occasion of the parliamentary elections in August 2020 it formed the coalition and platform 'Black on White'.

Determination of the Research Subject

Goal No. 1) description of the colonization of the lifeworld and the construction of (Montenegrin) identity, as an indicator of social crisis (in Montenegro)

The subject of research is the cause-and-effect relationship between social control of everyday life and the construction of identity. It is about the analysis of the process of translating identity from an ontological state, a personality, which is a metaphor for freedom, into a social-discursive construction, i.e. identity strategy and politics, and role and authority.

Everyday life, according to Habermas, can be identified with the lifeworld because it represents the target of the economic-political domination of the system and its attempts to colonize it with impersonal mediums of money and power.

The process of colonization of the lifeworld is the main cause of social anomie and disintegration of modern societies (Ivkovic, 2010, pp. 1-22). The lifeworld is increasingly shaped as a field of intersection of power relations, hierarchy, authority, and rebellion, but also

as a field of struggle (Spasic, 2012), which is activated as a reaction to attempts to colonize it. Therefore, 'everyday life is what the apparatus (both state and market) tries to overcome and subjugate, and at the same time what the people who live it want to defend, preserve, restore' (Spasic, 2012, p. 5). The colonization of the lifeworld leads to cultural impoverishment, an alienation of social relations, and the weakening of solidarity in the community, as a result of which the forces of resistance are strengthened.

The construction of identity is approached as an instrument of social control in order to explain the mechanisms by which this process is realized, manifesting itself in practice, through impressive examples from everyday life, which will be presented in the rest of the work as a kind of illustration or 'proof' of the research hypothesis. This will give a more complete picture of performative identity (Liotar, 2005, p. 12; see also Djukic, 2014, p. 130), as determinants of the postmodern state. Performative identity is constructed for the purpose of reproducing the market, that is the socio-economic system on which the colonization of the world of (everyday) life rests. Therefore, it is said that it is a type of identity based on the principle of pragmatism and efficiency, which is measurable by inputs or outputs.

Therefore, the subject of this research can be formulated with the question: How is social control of everyday life achieved (in what way/with which instruments) and what consequences does that process entail?

The Concept and Construction of Identity

Goal No. 2) understanding the drivers (causes, motives) of the construction of (Montenegrin) identity

Identity and personality

'Identity is a concept that cannot be thought through in the old way, but without which certain key questions cannot be considered at all' (Hall, 1996, p. 2). It is a plastic and, in Bourdieuan terms, an 'open concept', which is characterized by its complexity, interpretability and flexibility. As it contains a changing structure, it is often the subject of manipulation, a means of achieving and justifying certain goals. Hence the impossibility of a comprehensive approach to identity because 'identity is always a momentary and unstable effect of the relationships' (Hall, 1996, p. 109) that define it.

Identities are 'multiple constructed through different discourses, practices and positions' (Hall, 1996, p. 4). This thesis is grounded in the explanation that identity finds its justification in authority, in contrast to a person who justifies his actions with principles. Hence, the difference between identity and personality rests on the fact that an individual achieves identity when he/she/it becomes able to accept norms that are justified by authority, while personality arises at the moment when an individual with identity becomes able to perceive the difference between norms that justify authority and norms that are justified using principles (according to Golubovic in Djukic, 2014). Identity is an instrumentally-rationally based category, and personality is based on values, because it acts according to principles, i.e. in the correct way, and not according to the authoritative dictates of power holders and their interests. Hence, identity strategies and policies, as segments of social control, tend to destroy personality and replace it with identity.

Transformation of identity construction

Changes in society (the development of technical-technological means, the associated development of the division of labor and, in general, the progress of the production base) also

cause transformations in the construction of identity in the direction of constructing a changing and polyvalent identity.

While the pre-modern age (traditional society) is characterized by a stable and solid form of identity, built on the basis of religious influence and a small number of social roles, in connection with traditional values, until then we can talk about destabilization from the modern age (industrial society) due to the decline of the influence of religion in social life and political life (secularization), and the increase in social dynamics due to the increase in social groups and social roles, as well as the complication of social relations.

The contemporary system of post-industrial ('postmodern') society, from the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century, unlike pre-modern and modern systems, excludes and tends to eliminate any possibility of the constitution of different identities and personalities that differ from the identity pattern, a model that aspires to become generally accepted. In the wake of Berger's and Luckmann's findings, it is about differentiation that reduces any otherness to diversity, which should be canceled or neutralized by building a desirable form of identity. This is in line with Fukuyama's supposed 'end of history', i.e. the victory of neoliberal democracy and the economic-market system of values. Which would mean that, in case of unsuccessful export of democratic revolutions and the identity pattern based on them, i.e. in the case of their resistance, it follows the elimination of the other and the different as undesirable. The best example of the way in which the West justifies its role as the 'world policeman' is visible through the model by which it imposes its own identity pattern against the 'Balkanians', stigmatizing the identity of the population of that area with the intention of constructing it into its antipode. Thus, the construction of the West's own identity takes place in the Balkanist discourse ('Balkanism'), which is articulated starting from the differences that occur within the Western world. The Balkans are presented there as a part of the West, although as its unfinished part, half-civilized, handicapped by its underdevelopment and backwardness, and eternal conservation by the waves of transition. By construction, such a status tends to be presented as an ontological, natural state, the state of mentality of the Balkan peoples (see more in Todorova, 2006).

This endeavor was greatly facilitated considering the fact that identity, in the process of emancipation from social roles, heritage and tradition, lost its meaning background and became a discursive inscription, radically eradicated, a form freed from content and meaning, compared to its stability from the pre-modern era. This is supported by the example of the project identity that was constructed from civil society. It is about a kind of supranational identity from the period of socialism, which was constructed on the basis of the labor movement and the reshaping of collective memory and history. It is a typical example of a constructed, therefore forced from the top identity (legitimizing identity), the construction of which the Communist Party began in 1945 with proletarian internationalism, which did not recognize borders all the way to the Kremlin, because the proletarians were people of a special breed, without a nation and without a homeland. Then came the brotherhood and unity of only our peoples and nationalities within the FNRJ, so that in the '80s that framework was also reduced to a socialist self-governing community (Kecmanovic, 2007).

Identity crisis of (post)modern society

The market economy produces the performative character of identity, as a given and open existential project of each individual. Thus, the postmodern subject is characterized by multiplicity and 'hysteria' of identity. Identities become fragmented, as individuals no longer have a single and unified idea of who they are. Instead, they possess several, often contradictory identities, because with the changes that occurred in the second half of the 20th century (the development of IC technology, the reduction of the cost of transporting information and goods,

the expansion of markets, the connection of a large part of the world into a global network, the collapse of the block division of the bipolar world) there is no more swearing to one identity, while at the same time suppressing others, since with the spread of democracy, the freedom of choice took off. In simpler terms, identity in the constellation of worldwide market expansion becomes the result of personal choice, but again reduced to the range of choices offered in the identity supermarket, in which it is possible to find and choose a tailor-made identity (national, racial, gender, generational, religious, etc.), and then, if necessary, replace that initial choice with a new one.

The permanent instability of identity originates from the fact that the chosen identity can at any moment become outdated, redundant or lose its social value, all depending on extremely changing social circumstances. In this way, insecurity becomes the basic existential condition of the personality of the modern age. This leads to the implosion of individuals into masses, because a fragmented, disconnected, and discontinuous form of experience produces the same identity and the same personality, i.e. passive consumers in economic life and passive observers in political life.

Hence, the question arises as to how much it is then possible to talk about the 'identity of resistance', initiated from below, in a globalized society, according to Castells? Or, on the other hand, is it more appropriate to say that even if there is an identity of resistance, it is about extorting it depending on the needs of the political system, that is, the dominant authority!? If we were to take as an example the empirical research on the existence of the identity of resistance in the case of multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina, followed by the phenomenon of constructing an artificial Bosnian statehood, in accordance with the civil principle 'one man - one vote', judging by the factual situation of attempts to majorize the relatively most numerous ethnic group over the Croats and Serbs in B&H with the aim of building a unified, unitary and centralized B&H, the results of such research would certainly support the thesis of the existence of an identity of resistance among ethnic groups that are trying to be marginalized. The justification of their resistance stems from their division between civic loyalty to the common state and individual national loyalties to compatriots and home states in the neighborhood, which in this case prevail. Their resistance is also completely understandable since it arises as a natural reaction and defense mechanism to the political pressures of the Bosniaks and the demand for a multicultural, but actually, Bosnia and Herzegovina as a unitary state. Under such pressures, it is logical that the retreat of Serbs and Croats into their own collectivities, as a safe haven, will not fail. Thus, identification according to the native cultural code and strengthening the identity of resistance to foreign attempts to destabilize that ethnic and cultural identity exists, but it is still insufficiently defined and a rather unknown way of organizing resistance into concrete action. Judging by the current events in B&H, it will be feasible under the leadership of the ruling political elite in the Republic of Srpska. Which is to say, again under the auspices of a dominant authority.

Identity as a discourse of power

On the position held by a certain group in the (global) constellation of power, the authority of that group to define itself in relation to others depends. In support of this, Bourdieu states that 'only those who have legitimate authority, authority derived from power, can impose their own definitions on themselves and on others. The set of identity definitions functions as a classification system that establishes the respective positions of each group. Legitimate authority has a symbolic power that proves the foundation of its categories of representation of social reality and its principles of division of the social world, and therefore of the formation and dissolution of social groups' (Bourdieu, 1980, p. 54).

Therefore, general global homogenization, in planetary coordinates, carried by the wind of globalization, becomes a serious threat to collective identities (not only our Serbian, but the identities of all peoples throughout the planet Earth), since it tends to obliterate and eradicate everything that is different, through the creation of an empty identity space. Therefore, the goal is to create an erased space, as a field of social interaction emancipated from the continuity of meaning and personality, and as a space for overwriting power and the logic of domination. Since the social construction of identity always takes place in a context marked by power relations, Manuel Castells (2002) suggests distinguishing three forms and sources of identity construction: legitimizing identity, identity of resistance and project identity.

Legitimizing identity is introduced by dominant social institutions, in order to expand and rationalize their dominance in relation to social actors, and to form a civil society.

The identity of resistance is initiated from the base and represents the dominant form of identity in the contemporary globalized society, and it is created by those subjects who are in unfavorable positions, in which they are devalued and/or stigmatized by the logic of domination, which is why they create communes or communities. The identity of resistance appears as a consequence of the separation of the power holders (the state apparatus that supports the global power holders) from the citizens, who with their right to vote form the basis and foundation of the political system. However, the identity of resistance tends to exclude itself from global processes, defining people more by what they are than by what they do. Such forms of identity include communalism, religious fundamentalism, and nationalism.

Project identity arises when social actors, on the basis of any cultural materials available to them, build a new identity, which redefines their position in society and, in doing so, seeks the transformation of the entire social structure. The best example for such a form of identity is the case when feminism emerges from the trenches of the identity of resistance and women's rights, in order to challenge established social norms, the family and the entire structure of production, reproduction, sexuality and individuality, on which societies have been based throughout history. Project identity creates (political) subjects or actors.

Constructing Identity as an Instrument of Social Control of Everyday Life

Goal No. 3) causal scientific explanation of the political construction of (Montenegrin) identity, through strategies, policies, educational and media influences

Identity strategies and policies

The strategy of constructing a desirable identity, through its radical eradication from the elements that originally constituted it, was conceived with the philosophy of the Enlightenment, which has as its ultimate goal the unification of humanity, and reinforced by the dynamics of Modernity, which distances man from nature and ties with the collective. 'Nations, like individuals, are constantly rooted and uprooted. This process seems to me to be similar to the process of Christianization, always of the pagan soul of man' (Jerotic, 2017, p. 66). The logic of constructing an uprooted identity is perhaps best illustrated by the maxim of the ideologist of the free market, Adam Smith – 'A merchant has no homeland, except the country where he makes the greatest profit.'

Therefore, this theory of progress, exclusively oriented towards the future, implies that every form of belonging must be rejected, just as every organic and symbolic foundation of traditional solidarity (tradition, customs, and roots) must be destroyed, which it sees as outdated obstacles in the journey according to progress. Adorno and Horkheimer pointed to the crisis of enlightenment and boundless faith in reason, in their criticism of the instrumental objective-rational mind (of Baconian provenance) which recreates both nature and man, with (anti)dialectics, thereby abolishing its own meaning.

In the race for the gods of modernization, tradition sinks into oblivion, trying to be systematically suppressed. Space, just like time, is compressed (compression of time and space), thanks to the action of modern technologies without borders, which contribute to the disappearance of the feeling for a long history that hides the dense layers of our identity. Thus, in the name of the general progress of reason, colonialism becomes an image of violence against nature and other people, and thus against the meaning, the essence of human existence.

At one time, even Karl Marx observed that capitalism is precisely the driving force behind the dismantling of feudalism and the destruction of traditional cultures and old values, which it dissolves in the 'ice water of egoistic calculation'. In other words, capitalism in its current phase, more than ever oriented towards the supremacy of capital, needs even more trade, markets and profits, as a result of which it works to dismantle all potential obstacles (starting with the personality, which it tries to replace with identity), which stand in its way to achieving the final goal - turning the Planet into a market, if and only when it becomes atomized and when it renounces its symbolic world, incompatible with the logic of profit and the boundless accumulation of capital. Therefore, in order for the total market economy, which is aspired to, in the end to be able to function smoothly and permanently, it is necessary for the world's population to accept the dominant consumer culture, consumerism (excess consumption) and unlimited economic growth, because economic logic puts profit above all else.

Based on these needs, based on the basic principles of the market economy (needs and freedom of choice), an identity strategy was developed that intended it to play a specific role in the post-industrial society. Namely, such an identity is a construction and the result of a personal choice because it arises from the need for presentation on the market of consumer society. Roughly speaking, identity thus becomes a commodity that is subject to the laws of the market and that each individual can autonomously choose, change and 'trade' with, in accordance with the prevailing social trends and dictates of the consumer society, which implies an endless possibility of changing the identity, according to the logic of the needs of the consumer society.

Identity politics is a process of social construction and sanctioning of a socially desirable personality type. Capitalist identity politics, in order to preserve the dominant economic model, produces and imposes the acceptance of a constructed identity that functionally contributes to the reproduction of the economic system. Namely, it is a performative, market pragmatized identity that is directly in the function of the market, while in the pre-modern era it was in the function of religion, family, and tradition as the backbone of preserving collectivity.

Activists of identity politics, as Bourdieu said, develop the language of complete groupness, and their groupist rhetoric has a performative, constitutive dimension, contributing, when successful, to the construction of the group he is talking about (Bourdieu, 1980, pp. 63-72) and to the politics of difference, as explains Kwame Anthony Appiah (Appiah, 1994, pp. 149-163), which arises in the name of diversity, and hence it can also be defined by the 'politics of coercion' to interpret and value identity in an 'attributed' way.

Media and identity

The role of the media in shaping reality is also indispensable when it comes to constructing the desirable identity of individuals. The media, as one of the agents of socialization, contributes to the atomization of individuals and their social isolation. As part of the ideological function they perform, which concerns the maintenance of the dominant system of values and centers of power, the media mobilize for social action or passivity. Most often, they work to suppress the subversive potential of the base, reducing it from participants to observers, the audience.

Representing (and not presenting) reality, in accordance with the dominant values of the ruling order, the media, through its influence, strive to construct a particular perception of

individuals, in order to more easily force the required consent to existing social conditions from them.

As the basic agent of socialization, the media constructs identity through processes of socialization and internalization. By promoting the dominant (instrumental-rational) pattern of social behavior, as well as popular forms of social action and popular personalities, as basic models of identification, contemporary individuals exposed to such media influences, in accordance with the given imperatives, internalize (make part of themselves) dictated calculative values.

This is supported by examples from everyday print and electronic media, which, with the aim of retaining the attention of their main consumers - the masses, as a target group, market simplified content of high emotional and aesthetic intensity, such as pictures and gossip from the world of show business and others 'very important' personalities (VIPs) of the world and domestic jet set, thus pandering to the curiosity and taste of a wide audience and in the process shaping their consumerist mentalities and, in accordance with them, the same such identities.

Education and identity

Education, which was based on an enlightening component, aimed at increasing the knowledge of man and acquiring his ability to evaluate actions in reality. That's why it had humanist-emancipatory connotations because it was an expression of the legacy of Europe's medieval feudalism.

Contrary to this type, the modern educational concept is characterized by the predominance of the instrumental-rational component over the emancipatory component. That is why the modern educational concept is determined performatively. Thus, the basic function of education is the process of qualifying the workforce for participation in the labor market. In this way, contemporary educational concepts become permanently connoted towards the preservation of dominant social relations, especially in the work process, and consequently towards the production of an identity that reflects the structure of the social order. This only confirms the fact that, in the spirit of secularization (liberation from its immanent purpose), education is displaced from the sphere of culture and social relations, i.e. from the lifeworld (understanding and meaning), to the field of economics and politics. This is how it was reduced. Instead of being in the service of building an autonomous personality, through the transfer of knowledge and the development of critical awareness, education has been reduced to information, in order to eliminate its humanistic-emancipatory (communicative-rational) purpose.

In the spirit of Habermas' theory, the construction of identity is grounded in the discourse of power and its imperatives, not in the 'lifeworld'. Therefore, identity is built through categories of power and influence, through the internalization of the normative order of society in the consciousness of individuals, in the process of socialization and education from preschool age.

A sufficiently illustrative example, which confirms this, refers to the event of the exclusion of the Serbian bishop and the 'wisest Serbian head', Petar II Petrovic Njegos, his character and works, from school textbooks in Montenegro, in order to reform the curriculum and, in accordance with the ideological project of the creation of the Montenegrin nation and identity by the Montenegrin regime, to reshape the historical fact about the Serbian origin of the people of Montenegro, which was named after the Serbian Crnojevic dynasty and their forest wealth (the Crnojevic Mountains grew into Montenegro). Since the beginning of the 15th century, Montenegro has been a Serbian historical region called Duklja, and since the 11th century it has been called Zeta, after the river of the same name.

'There is not much room under the roof of this Montenegro, neither for the Serbian Orthodox Church, which for centuries gave birth to and created Montenegro, nor for those whose ancestors fought and died and dreamed of a high, ethical, Njegos's Montenegro'. 'Montenegro, that's how it is in her schools she silenced Njegos, the main witness of her apostasy' (Veselin Matovic, professor of the Serbian language from Niksic in Kadic, 2010).

Why exactly is Njegos controversial? Njegos is controversial because, as the former spiritual and state head of Montenegro, during the time of the Bishopric, and a great poet and enlightener in general, he reminds us of the Serbian and Orthodox roots of the statehood and Serbian identity of Montenegro, which in the first half of the 19th century was theocratically organized, since the bishops of the Cetinje Bishopric, which is the successor of the Zeta Bishopric, organized on Serbian territory by St. Sava in 1219. The Serbian Orthodox Church acquired autocephaly in 1219 (Slijepcevic, 2018, p. 70) by decision of the Ecumenical, i.e. The Constantinople Patriarchate in Nicaea in the west of today's Turkey has been the foundation of statehood and Serbian identity in Montenegro for 8 centuries (804 years to be exact). 'By creating and organizing the Serbian National Church of St. Sava is in fact the founder of the Serbian nation' (Slijepcevic, 2018, p. 71).

'Since its origin in the 9th and 10th centuries, when it began to take shape more seriously as a medieval Serbian state, the Serbian nation gradually and relatively successfully took root, thanks primarily to its Orthodox Church and the abilities of the Nemanjic rulers' (Jerotic, 2017, p. 67). Nevertheless, 'the history of the Serbian people appears, already at first glance, as a tragic story of interruptions and discontinuities' (Kovic in Slijepcevic, 2018, p. 5).

One of the reasons for excluding Njegos from the school curriculum is the fact that the Petrovic Njegos dynasty, during the development and modernization of Montenegro, during its rule in the first half of the 19th century, relied on Russia in foreign policy.

The separation of spiritual and state power in Montenegro occurred during the reign of Prince Danilo, in the second half of the 19th century. Although later his successor, the prince from 1910 and the king of Montenegro, Nikola Petrovic, due to political aspirations to the royal throne of the Kingdom of Serbia, in the Constitution of the Principality of Montenegro from 1905, which made Montenegro a constitutional monarchy, inserted the clause that is the Montenegrin Orthodox Church autocephalous, although it was only autonomous in its activities as the Montenegrin Bishopric after the abolition of the Patriarchate of Pec in 1766. Today, that church acts as non-canonical, because it is not canonically recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople (the 'green patriarch'), as opposed to the canonical Serbian Orthodox Church. In support of the illegality, illegitimacy, and non-canonization of the MOC, the fact that the bishop of the canonically unrecognized Montenegrin Orthodox Church, M. Dedeic, was excommunicated and anathematized (decided by the Holy Mysteries and excommunicated from the Church community) due to canonical offenses, as a cleric in Rome, by Constantinople Patriarch Bartholomew (the 'green patriarch').

With the Congress of Berlin in 1878, Montenegro gained independence and territorial expansion, i.e. exit to the Adriatic Sea. After 1918, when the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was created, Montenegro became an integral part of it, and King Nikola abdicated in favor of his son-in-law Peter I and the Karadjordjevic dynasty, and then, at the request of all Serbian bishops, it was formed and unified Serbian Orthodox Church in the entire territory of the Kingdom of SCS, 1920. The territory of Montenegro officially became the Zeta Region of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and in 1929 it was reorganized into the larger Zeta Banovina of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (srpskaenciklopedija.org).

In the Second World War, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was attacked by the Axis powers in 1941 and on July 12, 1941, they founded the puppet Independent State of Montenegro under the Italian protectorate headed by Sekula Drljevic (srpskaenciklopedija.org). In 1944, the

Partisans succeeded in liberating Montenegro, which after the war became one of the 6 republics of the FNRJ with headquarters in Titograd (today's Podgorica) (srpskaenciklopedija.org).

The concept of Montenegro was inspired by the 'Comintern and Montenegrin communists who later got hold of the state helm', because that construction was welcome for them to destroy the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (Andjelkovic, 2020). The Alliance of Serbs from the region reminds that the construction of 'Montenegrin homeland identity' alludes to 'Croatian national identity', that is, to the Frankish-Ustasha origin of the term homeland, which has been used since the time of the Independent State of Croatia until today (RTRS, 2020). 'In Montenegro, supporters of the Roman Church advocate that Montenegrins are 'Red Croats' who were reformed and Serbianized by Saint Sava with violent methods, and their state Duklja was destroyed. Today, Dukljan's ideology is being revived again, as is the Croatism of the Montenegrins' (Milosevic, 2004, p. 122). Therefore, the idea of Montenegrin national identity (Montenegrinism) comes from the constructions of Savic Markovic Stedimlja and Ivo Pilar, that Montenegrins are 'descendants of 'red Croats', because the Dukljan region was supposedly part of 'Red Croatia' ', so Montenegrins are culturally part of the western of the world, to which they owe their western cultural identity, although on some occasions they were forced to accept the Serbian name (Rastko.rs). Even the Dukljan Academy of Sciences and Arts once printed a flyer with the following content before the elections: 'The Dukljan Academy of Sciences and Arts (DASA) invites you to vote for 'Victory is for Montenegro - Milo Djukanovic's Democratic Coalition', which will realize the historical dream of Montenegro as integral part of Red Croatia' (Milosevic, 2004, p. 122).

After the so-called Anti-Bureaucratic Revolution, at the end of 1988 and the beginning of 1989, Momir Bulatovic, Milo Djukanovic and Svetozar Marovic came to power in Montenegro, who mainly represented Slobodan Milosevic's policy in Montenegro (srpskaenciklopedija.org). After the introduction of multiple parties in the SFRY, the Democratic Party of Socialists of Montenegro (the reformed Alliance of Communists of Montenegro) won the first elections in Montenegro, and Momir Bulatovic became the president of Montenegro, while Milo Djukanovic became the prime minister (srpskaenciklopedija.org).

After the dissolution of the SFRY, the citizens of Montenegro supported its remaining in the federation with Serbia in the 1992 referendum. In 1996, Djukanovic began to distance himself from the politics of Slobodan Milosevic and came into conflict with his party colleague, the President of Montenegro, Momir Bulatovic. Both of them, as representatives of the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS), ran for the post of President of Montenegro in the 1997 elections, in which Djukanovic won. After 2000, Djukanovic openly advocated for the independence of Montenegro. In 2003, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was reorganized into the state union of Serbia and Montenegro, with the possibility of calling a referendum on independence after three years. At the referendum on May 21, 2006, a majority of 55.3% voted for the option of an independent Montenegro. The independence of Montenegro was proclaimed on June 3, 2006 (srpskaenciklopedija.org).

Therefore, the first attempt to create an independent Montenegrin identity was sponsored by the Italian fascists, and the second by the Yugoslav communists, and in both cases by totalitarian ideological regimes.

Since the May 2006 referendum and the independence of Montenegro from the union with Serbia, thanks to the plebiscite majority of votes of Muslims from Montenegro (over 50% of the votes), and then also of Croats and Albanians, collective memory and historical facts have been tried to be falsified, in order to lose its mark in Montenegro, together with the 'disputable' genius of Njegos. By eliminating, from the educational system, Njegos's creativity, in which the Kosovo struggle and the Serbian national idea (state ideal of the complete

liberation and unification of the Serbian people - integral serbism) are glorified, a fluid Montenegrin identity is constructed.

During the DPS government, i.e. their anti-Serbian ideological project after 2011, not only Njegos (Petar II Petrovic) but also other writers and poets, who make up the top of South Slavic literature, were removed from textbooks for primary and secondary schools: Matija Beckovic, Desanka Maksimovic, Aleksa Santic, Mesa Selimovic and others (Kadic, 2012), so that a decade later (2021), the relevant Ministry announced the correction of the injustice, i.e. the change of the curriculum in order to bring back the disqualified writers (Iskra, 2021).

'The constant of all Montenegrin politics and their cultural orientation from 1945 until today is the denial, on the one hand of Njegos's Serbian national and linguistic identity, and on the other, the Orthodox content of his work. The communists were the first to start with this, the Montenegrin chauvinists continued, and today they do it with special concern, the so-called globalists, suspecting him of all kinds of things, including male chauvinism' (Veselin Matovic, Serbian language professor from Niksic in Kadic, 2010).

The goal of all this is to build, in the words of the former President of Montenegro, Djukanovic, "the Montenegrin homeland identity". On that path, of the eradication of the remaining traditional foundations of the Serbian religious and national identity, it is necessary the confiscation of the assets of the Serbian Orthodox Church through the controversial Law on Freedom of Religion from 2019, through which the assets (temples and monasteries of the Serbian Orthodox Church) would be transferred to the Montenegro state, and then ceded, perhaps, even to the Roman Catholic Church. Because of these aspirations, the Serbian Orthodox Church was labeled as an instrument of creating the so-called 'Serbian world' (RTCG, 2020), i.e. the tool of the so-called Great Serbian nationalism against Montenegrin separatism, Montenegrin identity dualism and Montenegrin statehood. In order to weaken the key obstacle of the Montenegrin state project and the European path of Montenegro, Milo Djukanovic, although a declared atheist, announced the restoration of the autocephaly of the Montenegrin Orthodox Church (MOC) despite the opposition of the Episcopacy of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Montenegro. That is why, during the coronavirus pandemic and in spite of it, on the territory of Montenegro, Lities and prayers of the believing people in Montenegro were spontaneously started in the fight for the holy places, i.e. Serbian Orthodox monasteries, mostly built before 1918.

It is obvious according to which pattern construction of identity works, i.e. projecting oneself in the present on the falsifications of the past, and by what means it is most adequately achieved. This anti-Serb Montenegrin ideological project was also supported by the holders of the Bosniak ethno-political concept, constructing their own identity through the aforementioned abuses, more precisely by turning Njegos into a 'genocidal poet' and 'ideologue of ethnic cleansing', for the sake of legitimizing the myth of the 'Srebrenica genocide', caused by the 'Serbian genocidal mentality', the roots of which allegedly go back precisely to this cultural heritage.

'... Muslims, that is, from the middle of the war, Bosniaks, again no less paradoxically, respond with the construction of their people as the founding people of the ancient state, in contrast to Serbs and Croats, who are supposedly immigrants from their 'reserved homelands' across the Drina and Una, or Orthodox or Catholic Bosnians. Although, in fact, the only distant and blurred medieval traces of Bosnian statehood come from the 15th century, when there were no Muslims, let alone Muslims, in this area, nor does modern Bosnia and Herzegovina have any state-legal continuity with those medieval memories' (Kecmanovic, 2005, p. 155; on the construction of 'Bosnian identity' see more in Tanaskovic, 2010).

Due to all the machinations of the regime with the ideological project of constructing Montenegrin identity, the regime (Democratic Party of Socialists) lost power in the regular

parliamentary elections on August 30, 2020, after more than three decades in favor of the opposition parties, i.e. the coalition of the Democratic Front, URA and the Democrats.

The key factor in the historical change in the elections in Montenegro was the URA, as a liberal green and civil movement, the United Reform Action, which became part of an expanded grouping related to the European Green Party (balkanenergynews, 2022). Therefore, as a reaction to the establishment of dominance (through the creation of a presentational identity and an erased space), the forces of resistance are strengthening, in the form of new alternative and spontaneous (grassroots) social movements (Civil Movement United Reform Action (URA), in Montenegro) of the left center and social-liberal ideological provenance. URA is a pro-European green political party, which received the status of a parliamentary party in the parliamentary elections of 2016, and on the occasion of the parliamentary elections in August 2020 formed a coalition and platform 'Black on white'.

The government of Prime Minister Dritan Abazovic, leader of the URA movement and proponent of the idea of an ecological state and the fight against crime and corruption, as the main environmental problem, was established, but it was voted no-confidence in 2022. The decision to call extraordinary parliamentary elections in 2023 was made after the parliamentary majority did not form a new one, nor did it reconstruct the existing government of Dritan Abazovic. Either way, Dritan Abazovic, an Albanian of Islamic faith, and civic political provenance, will be remembered as a colossal figure in Serbian history because of his heroic decision to sign the Fundamental Treaty of Montenegro with the Serbian Orthodox Church, i.e. His Holiness the Serbian Patriarch Mr. Porphyry, with which Abazovic stood in defense of the holy places of the Serbian Orthodox Church and its people (according to Dzomic in relativizacija, 2023) and thus proved that the ideal of Christian liberalism was achieved in Montenegro from the postmodern period, as a necessary perspective for the future and orientation of secular Europe, according to M. Pera (2010), referred to in his work by Z. Krstic (2012).

In the presidential elections held in March, i.e. April 2023, the candidate of the Europe Now Movement, Jakov Milatovic, convincingly defeated Milo Djukanovic, thanks to 60% of the votes won, while in the extraordinary parliamentary elections, held on June 11, 2023, Europe Now! became the strongest political group in Montenegro, winning 24 mandates. The Europe Now movement is a movement of liberal provenance with a focus on economic issues and anti-corruption, which is an environmental issue.

Is there an alternative to identity engineering?

Manuel Castells, at one time, pointed out the possibility of building an identity through common resistance to preserve the cultural diversity of the world. The justification for this rests in the consequences of the changes that occurred under the influence of globalization. These consequences marked the weakening of the 'legitimizing identity'.

The future of identity lies in the resistance of people and movements to their own destruction, which will be avoided by connecting nature, histories and cultures, uniting geographical and socio-economic characteristics, which creates a sense of closeness and connection among groups in the struggle for common values and goals. However, it is important to note that such tendencies would not be aimed at creating a European cultural identity, because there is no common European culture and history (Weiler & Fries, 1990). While, on the other hand, some authors claim that the European identity has always been of a Christian character and part of the Christian heritage, but that, after the process of secularization, it is necessary to restore it, in order to overcome the identity crisis (Pera, 2010).

Castells described the emergence of strong resistance identities, in a networked society, 'which digs into the security of the community, not wanting to be swept away by global currents

and radical individualism'. Such an identity is built around traditional values such as God, nation, family, resorting to ethnic signs and the defense of territory as a means to ensure the closure of their camps' (Kastels, 2002, p. 362).

A sufficiently corroborating example for this phenomenon is the grouping of the people of the former Yugoslavia, after the collapse of communism and the socialist supranational identity constructed under it (legitimizing identity), around national movements, which later grew into parties, which sprung up at the will of the base led by nationalism and historical revanchism. Nationalist resentments, frozen for many years in the communist freezer, with the first multi-party elections in the 1990s, erupted with the long-awaited democratic freedom. However, bearing in mind the explosion of ethno-nationalism in the 1990s, as in the case of the former Yugoslav climate, caused by the collapse of communism, this identity of resistance can also end up in its radical form - religious fundamentalism - which culminated under the umbrella of the combined forces of the Muslim nationalist and radical Wahhabi movements.

An alternative can be seen in the freedom of self-identification, but this does not imply the tendentious falsification of historical facts about origins. Also, an alternative can be seen in the ability to adapt collective identities towards the Other, or Others, with mutual respect and acceptance. If they are unable to achieve this and exist (or pretend to do so) as closed, autarchic entities, the conflict between them will certainly always be reported. So, as the French philosopher, Alain de Benoit, says: 'The alternative is clear: either we will go towards a multipolar world (pluriversum), which I hope, or we will go towards a unipolar world society (universum) dominated by Americans' (according to De Benoit, 2013).

Concluding considerations

The research indicated the problem of deontologization of social reality, i.e. its emptying of its immanent purpose, and the problem of the political construction of identity, which is the birthplace of totalitarian practices. The danger of universalization also means the danger of universalizing the idea and practice of totalitarianism.

It was also pointed out that by implementing the process of political construction of identity, identity becomes a place of permanent crisis. The current crisis of everyday life and the crisis of (Montenegrin) identity is an integral part of the crisis of new forms of capitalism and stems both from the colonization of the lifeworld (everyday life) and from the growth of narcissism and individualism in postmodernity.

The crisis of everyday life is the reason that identities will remain threatened until the question of questioning alienation is raised, in accordance with instrumental-rational interpersonal relations and a mindset oriented towards unlimited economic growth and excess consumption (consumerism). Nevertheless, the crisis is also a kind of chance to get out of the 'Matrix', primarily the internal, 'individualized' one. However, the 'escape' from one form of alienation should not become an escape into the alienation of private life.

Education has become a mechanism of reproduction of the socio-economic system. Therefore, control over education is the unsurpassed goal of the system, in order to produce one 'only' type of experience and reality. Through education, the understanding of reality is constructed and thus the appropriate structure of consciousness is established.

The research also leads to the finding that, as a reaction to the establishment of world domination (through the creation of a presentational, i.e., performative identity and erased space), the reactionary forces of resistance, i.e. identities of resistance, in the form of new alternative and spontaneous (grassroots) social movements (Civil Movement United Reform Action - URA, Movement Europe Now - MEN) and the like are strengthening. Resistance movements give a chance to use the capacities and potentials of everyday life. That field now becomes the terrain of self-defense against the expansion of the system and the main area of

political struggle for a different, more humane, and alienated society, in which everyday life would once again be imbued with 'festivity' (the absolute Other), sacralized. It is precisely the field of creating new possibilities, the poor, underdeveloped, marginal field of everyday life, which today destabilizes the Western project of the universal history of humanity.

Therefore, despite the involvement of world power centers in creating atomized individuals, fragmented and fluid identity, ideal for manipulations and preventing subversive activities, resistance movements are still growing. Those resistance movements are new collective forces, created on the basis of the attempts of individuals to find salvation and refuge in activities related to the preservation of cultural heritage and the identity based on it. That would also be the meaning of their existence, i.e. to preserve the diversity of lifestyles, the diversity of cultures that will enable an individual or a group to guarantee the rights that belong to them as an individual, group, or nation, without infringing the rights and uniqueness of others, either individuals, groups or nations.

Therefore, the alternative can be seen in the ability to adapt collective identities towards the Other, i.e. Others, with mutual respect and acceptance. Also, the alternative to identity engineering is the freedom of self-identification, but without the tendentious falsification of historical facts about the origin, specifically of the 'Montenegrin people'.

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