original scientific article
received: 2011-05-05

UDC 323.1:398.22(497.4)

MYTHS OF NATIONHOOD: SLOVENIANS, CARANTHANIA AND THE VENETIC THEORY

Veronika BAJT
The Peace Institute – Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies, Metelkova 6, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
e-mail: veronika.bajt@mirovni-institut.si

ABSTRACT

This paper stems from a theoretical reflection on the concepts of multiculturalism, transculturality and national identity within the perspective of studies of nationalism, situating a particular case study (Slovenia) within a broader academic debate about the construction of national identities in the contemporary world marked by processes of transnationalism, globalisation and regionalisation. Even though humanity has always been a patchwork of multicultural, multilingual and multiethnic co-existence, national states remain secluded in ideals of monocultural national identities, constructing national myths and histories in order to demarcate separate symbolic national memberships. This article contends that both the top-down and bottom-up activities of so-called national elites work on constructing and elevating one selected national culture and history, taking allegedly "ethnic bonds" as a starting point for creating nation-ness that is supposedly unique and separate. This is particularly pronounced in multiethnic environments within similar cultural frameworks, where differences between nations need to be accentuated and constructed as fundamentally diverse. Drawing on the example of Slovenian ethno-national identity construction, the article argues that national myths play a pivotal role in creating difference and promoting national uniqueness.

Key words: nationalism, national identity, national elites, national myths, ethnogenesis, Slovenia, Caranthania, the Venetic theory

I MITI DELL'IDENTITÀ NAZIONALE: GLI SLOVENI, LA CARANTANIA E LA TEORIA VENETA

SINTESI

Il presente articolo nasce da una riflessione teorica sui concetti di multiculturalismo, transculturalità e identità nazionale nella prospettiva degli studi di nazionalismo, e colloca un particolare studio analitico (Slovenia) in un più ampio dibattito accademico sulla costruzione delle identità nazionali nel mondo contemporaneo, segnato da processi di transnazionalismo, globalizzazione e regionalizzazione. Anche se l'umanità è sempre stata un mosaico di coesistenza multiculturale, multilingue e multietnica, gli stati nazionali rimangono isolati negli ideali delle identità nazionali monoculturali, costruendo miti e storie nazionali al fine di delimitare delle simboliche e distinte appartenenze nazionali. L'articolo sostiene che sia con le attività dall'alto sia con quelle dal basso le cosiddette élites nazionali s'impegnano a costruire ed elevare una cultura e storia nazionale selezionata, prendendo dei presunti "legami etnici" come punto di partenza per creare un'identità nazionale che si suppone unica e distinta. Questo è particolarmente marcato in ambienti multietnici all'interno di simili contesti culturali, dove le differenze tra le nazioni devono essere accentuate e quest'ultime costruite come fondamentalmente diverse. Attingendo all'esempio della costruzione di un'identità slovena etno-nazionale, l'articolo sostiene che i miti nazionali svolgano un ruolo fondamentale nella creazione delle differenze e nella promozione dell'unicità nazionale.

Parole chiave: nazionalismo, identità nazionale, élites nazionali, miti nazionali, etnogenesi, Slovenia, Carantania, teoria veneta

INTRODUCTION

Ever since the dramatic improvements in infrastructure and technology for transportation and communication, particularly after the Second World War, social sciences have been ripe with analyses of how these processes affect people's interaction, change social values and demarcations of the familiar. Becoming a catchword at the end of the 20th century, "globalisation" was adopted as a concept to explain the new modalities of living, where more people can travel faster and to more distant parts of the world. New technologies and digital media such as the Internet, satellite broadcasts, and mobile phones not only enable interpersonal communication and a connected presence but also bring together a previously unthinkable "global audience" for simultaneously performed global events. Does all this, however, mean that the intensity of cross-cultural exchange and the blurring of ethnic, national, religious, racial, gender, sexual and other differences diminishes the power of community (i.e. in-group) affiliations?

Addressing a gap in existing research, this paper stems from a theoretical reflection on the studies of nationalism and attempts to explain the unabated appeal of national affiliations by associating a particular case study (Slovenia) with a broader academic debate about the construction and promulgation of national identities in the contemporary world that is marked by processes of transnationalism, globalisation and regionalisation. Rather than being surprised at the continuous power of ethnic, national, racial or religious identifications (as well as prejudice, animosity and conflict, cf. Sedmak, 2010), this article attempts to explain the persistence of nationalism and national identity by pointing to their roles as emotional anchors in the contemporary world of increased globalising influences. Put differently, theoretical attempts to diminish negative perceptions of the Other, such as the so-called intergroup contact theory (Pettigrew, 1998), fall short of explaining why national states, as well as ethno-national attachments, continue to hold sway over people's feelings of belonging and loyalty.[1] As one of the key theories in the social sciences for improving intergroup relations, the intergroup contact theory rightly claims that intergroup contact helps to improve attitudes toward different types of often stigmatised groups, such as racial, national and ethnic minorities, homosexuals, the homeless, and people with disabilities (Pettigrew, Tropp, 2011). My argument is complementary to the hypothesis of intergroup contact, yet instead of engaging in the debate on how increased intergroup contact promotes a cessation of previously existing animosities, it is of relevance for this article that the existence of similarities between groups which claim to be different actually harbours the potential for tensions. Creating difference hence becomes of pivotal importance, particularly in cases where groups are close (e.g. not separated by distinct languages), because the assimilation of one group by the other is feasible (Schöpflin, 2000).

And while ethnicity, like any social identity, is always a product of contact, not isolation, the boundary-creating effects of national myths are examined here as pivotal to both historic nation-building processes, as well as contemporary nationalisms. This paper demonstrates this point by reviewing the myth-making tenets of classical nation-building and by analysing selected examples of recent attempts at retrospective nationalism. By projecting mythical accounts of ethnogenesis, national identity becomes grounded in the primordial confines of blood and belonging, rather than in a civic elective membership in a community of multiethnic and multicultural solidarity. Although ethnicity is an aspect of relationship, not a cultural property of a group (Eriksen, 1993; cf. Kolstø, 2005), both the top-down and bottom-up activities of so-called national elites work on elevating one selected "national culture", using allegedly ethno-cultural components for creating nation-ness which is supposedly unique and separate. These processes are particularly pronounced in multiethnic environments within similar cultural frameworks, where differences between nations need to be accentuated and constructed as fundamentally diverse. The nationalisation of public sphere, institutions and collective memories is a classic trait of all national states, which may adopt banal nationalising practices (e.g. Billig, 1995) or more virulent constructions of nationhood (e.g. Kolstø, 2009).[2] Even though humanity has always been a patchwork of multicultural, multilingual and multiethnic co-existence, national states remain secluded in ideals of monocultural national identities, constructing national myths and histories in order to demarcate separate symbolic national memberships.

A specific Slovenian national consciousness preceded the formation of the national state, and due to a historic lack of statehood, nobility, military, economic or political elites, it was the formalisation of a distinctive literary

1 I am fully aware of oversimplifying both processes of globalisation one the one hand and social identity formation (e.g. national attachment) on the other. This simplification is purposeful, since dealing with the complexity of globalisation merely in its cultural implications would surpass the scope of this article, let alone addressing the phenomenon's economic, social and political dimensions as well. In the same vein, it is not my aim to engage in the traditional debates surrounding the formation of nations and nationalism, but rather to point at the necessity of contextualising contemporary nationalising practices in both historical trajectories of nationalism as well as in current transnational realities.

2 Nationalisation represents ethnicised ideas of separate nationhood. Though it is beyond the scope of this paper to elaborate more on processes of nation-building and homogenising actions of national states, allow me to simply note that nationalising practices pertain both to historic trajectories of national movements as discussed in classical accounts of nationalism, as well as to processes of contemporary ethnicisation of national states, as exemplified by current European states' migration, integration, citizenship and naturalisation policies.

language that helped elevate a separate Slovenian national identity in the 19th century. While the construction and reproduction of Slovenian national identity needs to be understood with regard to its connection with certain specific pre-existing cultural and linguistic patterns, explorations of nationalism have yet to offer an analysis of the role of mythology for Slovenian nationhood. It is widely established that "ethnic components" have been of vital importance for the nation and its survival. Moreover, regardless of their actual presence in the national past, or their created "invented tradition" (Hobsbawm, Ranger, 1983) with little or no historical relevance, the Slovenians *believe* that they share certain characteristics that *make* them Slovenians and tend to see these national traits as stretching far back into history.

This paper re-examines the position of national elites, seeing their role in the processes of nationalism as not only related to the early stages of nation-building and providing the impetus for the national movements of the 18th and 19th century, but also as essential in terms of the vitality of contemporary nationalist ideas and practices. Using the example of attempts at linking Slovenian nationhood to ancient origins of pre-modern statehood (e.g. Caranthania), the cyclical re-emergence of nationalist myths, particularly those addressing the question of ethnogenesis, is argued as having served as a mobilising force for establishing national uniqueness and legitimising the nation's existence.[3] This is frequently juxtaposed by populist political claims to redress historical injustices or divert public attention from an impending crisis. This paper therefore offers a sociological account of the importance of historical continuity for the idea of the nation, arguing that national myths and histories are constructed with the aim of demarcating separate symbolic national memberships.

ELITES AND THE CREATION OF NATION-NESS

> The cultural shreds and patches used by nationalism are often arbitrary historical inventions. Any old shred and patch would have served as well (Gellner, 1983, 56).
>
> We should not be misled by a curious, but understandable, paradox: modern nations and all their impedimenta generally claim to be the opposite of novel, namely rooted in the remotest antiquity, and the opposite of constructed, namely human communities so "natural" as to require no definition other than self-assertion. (Hobsbawm, 1983, 14)

An array of mainstream research on nationalism has identified political elites and intellectuals as those who most commonly initiate national demands, thus representing the key figures in building national identity and forming national myths and rituals. The role of national elites is therefore central to many analyses of nationalism (e.g. Hobsbawm, Ranger, 1983; Hroch, 2000). This specific group of people, whose attributes make them politically or administratively more powerful than the everyman, is singled out due to their specific social position. They may be powerful because of their ascribed title, status or possessions, but often these are well-educated people who do not necessarily occupy any specific positions of prestige or power. John Hutchinson (1987) distinguishes between humanist intellectuals and secular intelligentsia, yet despite a divergence in their interests refers to both as "ethnic revivalists".

Historically, it was often the dominant power elites who "invited masses into history" (Nairn, 1981), changing themselves only insofar as their new "image" appealed to the broader community of the nation, with which they suddenly came to identify and whose interests they claimed to be representing. From transforming peasants into Frenchmen (Weber, 1976) to "We have made Italy, now we must make Italians"[4], examples of such top-down state-to-nation historical formations are numerous. Yet the motives behind national "awakening" and agitation are different. Some authors argue that peripheral elites feel deprived and cut off from power centres, thus forming their own separatist nationalisms in order to break loose from suppressing bonds, consequently establishing their own sovereign political entity. Gellner's Ruritanians (1983), Nairn's peripheral elites (1981), and Anderson's Creole pioneers (1991) are cases in point. Acknowledging that elites are always associated with and play a pivotal role in determining the expression of nationalism, elite nationalism is, however, not in itself enough for popular nationalism (Whitmeyer, 2002, 324). Supported by empirical evidence where popular nationalism did not develop in spite of elite involvement, Whitmeyer's argument is that elites create the means for nationalistic expression and take advantage of it, yet are not the direct creators of nationalism. In other words, although the role of the elite and educated classes in national movements is undoubtedly important, the modernists' emphasis on the role of political elites and institutions should always be complemented by a bottom-up approach that takes into account the non-elite strata of the population. Montserrat Guibernau hence talks about "potential intelligentsia" and defines them as "those educated individuals who, if the nationalist movement succeeds, are likely to become its leaders" (Guibernau, 1999, 91).

The beginning of every national movement depends on the passion of a group of people (Hroch, 2000);

3 These attempts, though quite marginal on the overall, have nonetheless proved to be resilient and thus mark not only the two decades of Slovenian independent statehood but also entail a longer trajectory.

4 Allegedly the statement of Massimo d'Azeglio after the unification of Italy.

whether these are political elites of de-colonising "third world" nationalisms, or intellectuals who ceaselessly work on "discovering" the national past, their aim is the same: they provide the ground on which nationalisms can stand and are thus perceived in national histories as national "awakeners". The past, namely, is a "powerful source of legitimacy for those who would change the present for a new future" (McCrone, 1998, 52). It is also significant how particular elites shape the expression of nationalism, taking into account that at least to some degree they conflate "national goals" with their own needs. The actual circumstances and the level of elite involvement with politics depend on specific factors, yet what matters most is the fact that behind every nationalism or national movement real people act as purveyors of national identity, promoting the elevation of the nation and employing political action for its success. But for nationalism to be successful it needs to be supported by different social classes; it needs the illusion of the homogeneity of the nation and mass public support. In so-called established nations, of course, this public support ebbs and flows, yet national affiliations remain quite firmly grounded. In order for this to be possible, the *reality* of the nation plays a key role. Though representing only a small portion of the population, without the "national vision" of these nation-builders nations would lack the appearance of the *realness* so significant for emotional identification, and people could not be mobilised for "national goals", at least not as readily.

The role of elites in the processes of historic nation-formation has been accentuated especially in the modernist theories of nationalism, where the enlightened intelligentsia are recognised as being the first to lead the way into the new world where religious authorities had lost their influence (cf. Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1983; Anderson, 1991). Due to changes in the political organisation of social life and the consequent emergence of the modern national state, their function was to construct national identities. Sometimes, these were already present in the form of solid ethnic identities and just needed some re-appropriation. Oftentimes though, considerable "re-inventing" was necessary. It has thus been the task of the educated classes to explore the specific history of their nation and provide "maps" of their community (McCrone, 1998, 53). Nineteenth-century Europe's interest in peasant traditions, folklore and customs serves as an example of the diligence which scholars exhibited in this regard. "Pre-historic" myths, symbols, customs and folklore were the basis on which new national cultures were built. Whether these "descent myths" were the creation of political elites who enlarged their circle of interest to broader masses because they needed people's support, or the consequence of the romanticist nineteenth-century search for one's national past, it served the homogenisation and unification that the modern national states needed; putting the one selected core nation on a pedestal and, if not already granted, demanding political independence.

What the classical theories of nationalism leave out, however, is the contemporary continuation of the nationalist construction of difference. Rather than limiting the theoretical gaze to nation-building processes that are habitually analysed as a matter of the past, they need to be studied as constantly evolving. In the present, national states have far from stopped investing in the myth-making nationalist constructions of separate national histories. And as pointed out by Eric Hobsbawm (1983), what becomes a national tradition is oftentimes partially or even wholly invented, yet always meaningfully constructed in order to enhance national identity and the feeling of togetherness.

THE ETHNICISATION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY

The role of invention and construction in every nation is both clearly evident and, indeed, necessary. Nevertheless, national elites would face a much harder task in inculcating national identities were they not to draw on some sort of pre-existing regional, cultural, religious or other affiliations. Moreover, traditions are not simply inherited, "they have to be reproduced" (Calhoun, 1997, 50). This is why national states invest in educational systems, public symbols and the organised perpetuation of nationhood; and this is why nationalism is much more than just a political principle that supposedly ceases to exist once national states are created. The complex nature of nationalism lies in its exceptional ability to adapt to different socio-political and historical circumstances. It is because nationalisms use the idea of the nation as a community, and of national identity as its most characteristic trait, that they are so powerful. Whether they accentuate the more pluralist civic or the purely ethnic elements of identification, nationalisms' true power lies as much in their banal invisibility as it does in their chauvinist forms.

It is particularly significant that new and fragile states are anxious to establish themselves as legitimate national communities, and problems have been known to arise when a national state lacks the appearance of being based on only one ethnicity. In such cases, uniting the nation under a sole myth of descent might represent quite a hindrance. One of the most important elements of every successful nationalism is its primary belief in the distinctiveness of its nation. A bond needs to be shared and for many nations this bond has been the language. Legitimised with the national movement of the late 18th century, when *Sprachgeschichte* came to be understood as *Volksgeschichte* (Štih, 2005, 232), the Slovenian case shows that evocations of a "golden age" or collective memories of an ancient homeland have been much less prominent. The symbolic "homeland", or what would nowadays be termed Slovenian ethnic territory, has always been greater than the area of the present Slovenian state, as is the

case with most nations. It is also a fact that borderland areas have always experienced considerable permeation of different cultures and languages, thus making clear-cut linguistic identifications hard to establish. One such example would be the similarities between dialects along borders between states; a kind of "dialect continuum" making them much closer to each other despite the fact that their states' codified languages are quite distinct. A continuum of dialects exists "where those people whose villages are physically close to each other have learned to understand each other" (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000, 9). Moreover, the notion of different *dialects* is essential if the states are to maintain the idea of separate *languages* (Billig, 1995), therefore, the contemporary Slovenians speak the "Slovenian language", including dialects that are close to languages of the contiguous states.

In 1991, Slovenia wasted no time in attempting to differentiate itself from its predecessor, Yugoslavia, for with independence came the need to change its public symbols and establish itself as a sovereign state. The Slovenian national identity has been renegotiated in the light of changes connected to the collapse of communist ideology, the break-up of Yugoslavia and the establishment of an independent Slovenian state. Post-1991 rewriting of history textbooks, the change of state symbols and the renaming of public places provide an illustration of the change in national memory (Bajt, 2009), yet these official alterations have also reflected a recent popularisation of an ethnicised national mythology.

Moreover, Slovenia was established as a state *of* and *for* (cf. Brubaker, 1999) the Slovenian nation without much difficulty. Or, to be more precise, and this is crucial, without difficulty for those residents who were considered ethnic Slovenians. Namely, the formation of Slovenia as a national state *of* the Slovenian nation resulted in a massive violation of human rights against over 25,000 permanent residents who were not automatically accepted as a part of the new national community. Kept under wraps and out of public debate until 2002, the plight of inhabitants from the former Yugoslavia who were excluded from Slovenian citizenship and, more importantly, who were removed from the register of permanent residents of Slovenia, became known as "the erasure".[5] The erasure is paramount to understanding the policies that should address Slovenia's multiethnic reality (e.g. policies on integration and migration, minorities, naturalisation), yet remain secluded to the ethnicised framework of preferential treatment of the "core" nation.[6] The very functioning of the Slovenian state institutions, policies, even public opinion confirms the complex interdependence between the core nation and disprivileged minorities, which are excluded through the nationalist and racist logic of non-belonging. Regardless of dry legalistic official proclamations, Slovenian citizenship has been defined in terms of ethnicity (as *ius sanguinis*). Rather than taking into account the territorial principle, which would imply that permanent residents would have automatically become Slovenian citizens rather than erased residents, the logic underlying the exclusion of the erased people is also manifested in the exclusionary attitudes that Slovenia as a national state and the Slovenians as its majority nation may adopt towards the Roma, Muslims, immigrants, and various other marginalised minorities. That Slovenia was conceived as the state *of* and *for* the Slovenian nation is confirmed, among other, by the Constitution, where the establishment of the state is explained with "the fundamental and permanent right of the *Slovene nation* to self-determination; and from the historical fact that in a centuries-long struggle for national liberation *we Slovenes* have established *our national identity* and asserted *our statehood*".[7]

ETHNOGENESIS AND MYTH-MAKING IN RETROSPECTIVE NATIONALISM

Nationhood is not something one is born with, despite commonsensical beliefs in the perennial and primordial roots of ethnicity, but rather a cognitive process of recognition through socialisation. It is, therefore, essential for the establishment of coherence that the factors, which lead to members of two groups seeing each other as different rather than as members of a unifying collective, are frequently "mythical" rather than "factual" (Kolstø, 2005, 3). Ethnogenesis should thus be seen as an evolving process of constant transformation (Štih, 2005), reflecting particular socio-political circumstances of any given historical moment when they may be called upon to serve the reification and establishment of a national community.

Nations have to determine the basis of their being, and national myths, as sets of beliefs that a community holds about itself, serve as unifying mechanisms. Consolidating the group inwardly, mythical accounts of what unites "our" nation at the same time distinguish the "us" from outsiders – the Others. Myths are accounts

5 25,671 people were erased from the register of Slovenia's permanent residents in February 1992. For years the state representatives kept claiming that these people's status had only been "transferred" from the records of Slovenia's permanent residents (in times of Yugoslavia) to the register of "foreigners" (once Slovenia became independent). Although the Constitutional Court ruled that no constitutional basis existed for this state's act, a number of people to this day still remain with their status unresolved. Though it is impossible to adequately discuss all the complex facets of the erasure within the scope of this article, the topic of the erased is immensely important for understanding the Slovenian nationalism and particularly the state-building nationalising practices of post-1991 Slovenia. For more, see Dedić et al., 2003; Zorn, Lipovec Čebron, 2008; Kogovšek, Petković, 2010.

6 For example, special rights and privileges are granted to immigrants who are considered "ethnically" belonging to the Slovenian nation.

7 Preamble to the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, 1991, emphasis added.

of how something "began to *be*" (Eliade, 1964, 6) and because they are always about perceptions rather than historically validated truths, it is the content and not the accuracy of the myth that matters (Schöpflin, 1997, 19). Myths are regarded as dealing with realities because they are perceived as "true histories", "sacred stories" (Eliade, 1964). Myths of nationhood often draw from territorial attachment to a specific land, frequently related to a golden age, or particular events which supposedly happened *in illo tempore*. In Ukraine and Belarus, for instance, recent attempts to disentangle national myths of descent from traditional Russophile historiography (Wilson, 1997) have resembled similar strivings found in the territories of Yugoslavia's successor states which try to disengage from sharing Slavic roots.

The symbolic return to the golden age is an important part of nationalism because it mobilises the nation "to meet the challenges of nation-formation through a myth of national history and destiny" (Smith, 1997, 59). In this way, myths develop "a sense of togetherness" that enables people to "become the heirs of their ancestors" (Misāne, Priedīte, 1997, 160). Whether myths are constructed through supposed biological links of the present population with a common ancestor (myths of genealogical ancestry), or via a belief in the "cultural affinity and ideological 'fit' with presumed ancestors" (myths of ideological descent), both types are present in every national myth (Smith, 1999, 58).

The Slovenian nation is primarily identified by language and searching for speakers of this particular vernacular in the past as marking the Slovenian history has long remained unproblematised even by historiography. While any direct correspondence between early medieval peoples and modern nations is a myth rather than accurate portrayal of the past, modern national states accentuate the continuity and identification of their core nation with the distant past, i.e. the Early Middle Ages, even Antiquity. The history of Europe thus escapes the confines of academic debate and becomes a constant site of contestation (cf. Geary, 2005). And it is precisely when analysing myths as boundary-making mechanisms which separate social groups that one can understand their potential for nation-building. Myth is thus "a key element in the creation of closures and in the constitution of collectivities" (Schöpflin, 1997, 20) and as such it is vital in turning chaos into cosmos (Eliade, 1957).

CARANTHANIA AS THE MYTH OF SLOVENIAN *ANTIQUITAS*[8]

It is fascinating how precisely the nationalists are able to locate their ancestry, even though the historical "origins" of nations remain disputable. Any attempt to form a taxonomy of myths reveals how they can overlap and be contradictory at the same time. While "different myths receive emphasis at different times to cope with different challenges", one of the most commonly spread is the myth of territory (Schöpflin, 1997, 28). In the Slovenian case, the early medieval state Caranthania has been portrayed in nationalist myths, mass media, but also occasionally in official teachings of history (cf. Bajt, 2009) as that particular ancient territory where the nation expressed itself in its finest form. Recently as a part of the so-called Venetic theory, in such primordial accounts the Slovenians are argued to have inhabited their present-day homeland already in prehistoric times, while the Slovenian language was formed a long time ago, remaining almost unchanged until the present. Though historians have called on the need to surpass myths in Slovenian historiography (e.g. Štih, 1997, 2005, 2006), conceptions of Slovenian history as commencing in the Early Middle Ages with the state of Caranthania remain the hallmark of amateur "historians" with a nationalist agenda and which resonate in popular ideas of the "Slovenian" past.[9]

In the late 1980s, when the situation in Yugoslavia persistently failed to live up to its utopian promises of a better tomorrow, some Slovenians found it comforting to believe that their roots were not of Slavic but of Venetic origin. Distancing themselves from Slavs, from *the other* Yugoslavs, Slovenians were supposedly the descendants of the Veneti, a prehistoric group that allegedly survived the Celtic and Roman rule in the eastern Alpine region. The Venetic theory claims that the Veneti split into several subgroups, one of which was to form the "forerunners" of the Slovenians.[10] Reading Jožko Šavli, an economist and a prominent proponent of the Venetic idea, some believe that his account offers convincing argumentation and "impressive linguistic and topographical evidence" (Požun, 2000, 10). Historians, however, argue that the Venetic theory's material evidence is far from sufficient to decipher ethnic affiliations to a certain culture (e.g. Vidic, 1999) and highlight that

8 I here adopt Kolstø's (2005) typology of myths as boundary-making mechanisms, focusing on one of the three types: myths of being *sui generis*, myths of being *antemurale*, and myths of *antiquitas*.

9 See, for example, Felicijan (1967) who writes about "Slovenians" as early as 568, Požun (2000) who adopts the Venetic idea, and Gow and Carmichael (2000, 12) who recognise "Slovene customs, including the ritual of investiture by peasant voting" in the seventh century Caranthania.

10 The argument that the Slovenians are of Venetic origin was first made public in 1985 in the form of a news article written by Jožko Šavli and published in Vienna (Skrbiš, 2002). Matej Bor, a poet and a linguist, Ivan Tomažič, a Catholic priest based in Vienna, and Jožko Šavli, an economist, have been the main proponents of the Venetic theory. They joined forces in 1988 to publish a book on the subject. Originally published in German (*Unsere Vorfahren die Veneter*), its English version came out in 1996, entitled *Veneti: First Builders of European Community*. See also Šavli, 1990.

the peoples of the Early Middle Ages "were not communities of shared origin but poly-ethnic communities" (Luthar, 2008, 87).[11]

In a comparative perspective, similar developments have been noted to accompany the collapse of Yugoslavia also in Croatia (e.g. Pavlaković, 2009), Serbia (e.g. Bieber, 2002; Pantelić, 2011), or Macedonia (e.g. Brunnbauer, 2005), to name just the most often studied examples. Moreover, ideas of the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina being direct descendants of the Bosnian nobility of the Middle Ages, arguments about the eight millennia of Serbian heritage, or recent inclusions of ancient Macedonians in the national narrative of Macedonia (as well as its allusions to Alexander the Great – primarily to vex Greece) all reveal attempts at assisting the nation's survival. Regardless of their particular content, the national myths are those sacred stories of the nation that "establish, maintain or defend its identity" (Misāne, Priedīte, 1997, 158) and as such play a particularly potent role in times of social upheaval – as witnessed by the end of the Cold War and the break-up of multinational countries such as Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. Myths can be used in order to demonise the enemy at the same time as offering stories of the in-group suffering that "deserves" retribution, as for instance the Kosovo myth (for more, see Bieber, 2002). Such myths of redemption and suffering should be understood as myths of powerlessness that claim a moral superiority for having suffered, demanding compensation for that powerlessness and making a virtue of passivity and fatalism (Schöpflin, 1997). Put differently, defeated nations "invent myths to explain their misfortune and to assist their survival" (Davies, 1997, 141). In essence, the role of national myths is therefore to present history (of a given nation) "as a morality play of national resistance and revival against the main national 'Other'" (Wilson, 1997, 183).

It is not uncommon that such myths of unjust treatment exist side by side with more self-legitimising myths of ethnogenesis and antiquity, as well as myths of kinship and shared descent (Schöpflin, 1997). Myths – and their interpretations – change, particularly because they are frequently used by political elites to re-create public memories, change values, support selected political projects. The key issue of interest here is how different historical, archaeological or linguistic argumentation can be used to fit the specific needs of nationalist discourses, depending also on the broader political and social climate. Clearly, if being of Venetic origin, the Slovenians were separated from the other "Balkan" Slavs, a term not popular mostly due to its "imprecise and pejorative designation" (Pavlowitch, 1999, 331). It is not surprising that the Venetic theory was popularised in the late 1980s when the Slovenian nationalist elite started to feel a need for disassociation from Yugoslavia. Similarly, a book titled "Serbians, the Oldest Nation" (Luković-Pjanović, 1990) – a linguistic attempt at proving the pre-ancient Indian origins of the Serbian nation – was published in Belgrade in 1990.[12] A brief excursus into the field of social psychology explains the need of every individual and every social group to establish a positive identity. In the constant search for self-esteem, sometimes situations occur which hinder positive self-categorisation. People then tend to react in different ways, one of them being to select a different in-group of association and identification.[13] In the case of some Slovenians, switching from being Slavs – a stigmatised and often pejorative designation – to a new identity of being of a more "cultured" Venetic descent, made them believe that their dissatisfactions with other (Yugo)Slavs were in fact firmly grounded in their ancient "Latin" traditions, consequently justifying and giving sense to their presumed "natural" difference. In this way, theories on the absolute autochthonousness of Slovenians have always been an indicator of crisis, emerging especially in the 16th, 19th and 20th centuries, and accompanying watershed political events (the Reformation and Counter-Reformation of the 16th century, the "spring of the nations" of 1848, and dissatisfaction with Yugoslavia in the 20th century).[14]

As hypotheses placing the "beginnings" of the nation far back into the prehistoric period, "autochthonous" theories that map a particular people as occupying the same historical place through time thus also construct national myths of possessing a historical right to a given territory. The importance of such "invented traditions" makes the Slovenians no exception in their attempts to establish continuity with the past. Theories propagating "Slovenian European indigeneity" (Skrbiš, 2008, 142) have included ideas of Scandinavian and Etruscan origins of Slovenians and were particularly useful as a tool of national emancipation for the 19th century Romantic nationalists (Štih, 1997). This striving for continuity re-

11 The discussion about the Slovenian ethnogenesis is ongoing, yet with a very moderate public response, only occasionally re-emerging in the media. As an example of more prominent nation-wide media coverage, in October 2003 the national television hosted a late-night debate among invited linguistic and archaeological experts and proponents of the Venetic theory (a theologian and a chemist) titled "Veneti – our Ancestors?" (RTV Slovenija, Prvi program, *Polnočni klub: Veneti – naši predniki?*, 3. 10. 2003). On the Internet, however, the presence of these debates is much more pervasive and several websites include substantive sections devoted to such discussions.

12 It is significant that the first edition was published in the USA, revealing a wider trend of emigrant communities' ardent support for nationalist ideas that were thwarted by the communist Yugoslav authorities. The various debates on the Slovenian ethnogenesis have also generally encountered a more welcoming approach abroad (e.g. Austria, USA).

13 The cognitive wing of social psychology, notably Tajfel (1993) and Turner (1985), offer explanations of inter-group behaviour and explain why and how people form their social identities. For more, see for instance Augoustinos et al. (1996) and Abrams and Hogg (1990).

14 Similarly, popular media in Croatia have recently reported on a "sensational" discovery that the Bosnian Croats are not Slavs but old Balkanites. The contributions highlighted that a "scientific team" has discovered "the true origin of Croatians" (e.g. Kuljiš, 2011).

flects one of the most important elements of every successful nationalism: its primary belief in the distinctiveness of "its" nation. Whether the emphasis is on shared ancestry, ancient homeland or a more modern political view of a civic community, a bond needs to be shared. In the case of the Slovenians, this bond is the language. Much less prominent have been evocations of a golden age and collective memories of an ancient homeland. Still, the claims of a direct historical bond with the state of Caranthania cannot be overlooked, since they echo a wider nationalist revisionist desire. It is crucial not to dismiss such tendencies simply because their appeal has so far remained limited.

The Venetic argumentation hence reflects revisionist attempts of an expanding number of people to supersede the historical association of Slovenians with passivity and serfdom, which stems from the nation's stateless existence, small numbers, and is also heavily reflected in Slovenian cultural production (e.g. folksongs, poems, novels that are filled with lyrical yearning for freedom or expressions of depression and resignation). At pains to show how Caranthania was in fact the first Slovenian state and claiming that Veneti (or rather *Slo*veneti) – not Slavs! – were the indigenous inhabitants of the current Slovenian territory and direct ancestors of contemporary Slovenians, these ideas evolved in opposition to Yugoslav historiography of South Slavic shared origin and their melting together in the "brotherhood and unity" of the Yugoslav community.[15] The Venetic theory challenged this and even though the general consensus remains that Slovenians are Slavs, the seed of doubt appears to be welcomed in allowing a belief in the primordial aspects of the Slovenian nation.

Moreover, masked in the "patriotic" rhetoric, mythologised takes on the past have also entered public collective memory. Ceremonial re-enactments of "Slovenian history" in annual public rituals celebrating the state's independence frequently use the widely accepted and generally non-problematic literature-related symbolism of the national past, and in official historical depictions the myth of Slovenian ethnogenesis remains downplayed.[16] Nevertheless, at least on two occasions the idea of Slovenian *antiquitas* has entered the public collective memory: in the national coat of arms and in the currency. National states perpetuate selected public memory through official history taught in schools, public places, national holidays and symbols such as the flag and the anthem, being helped by historical novels, films, and the rhetoric of political leaders. With their banal presence in people's lives, numerous daily reminders of nationhood (cf. Billig, 1995) contribute to the specific nationalised Slovenian history.[17] For example, the coat of arms includes a representation of Triglav Mountain, and symbolises the Adriatic Sea and Slovenian rivers. Its third element, however, the three golden Celeia stars, has been adopted from the supposedly Slovenian medieval counts of Celje. This appropriation obviously draws a link between the modern state of Slovenia and medieval nobility. As an even more blatant example of mythologising the national past, the selection of the ducal stone motif for the national side of the Slovenian euro coin caused quite a stir.[18] Meant to indicate the country of issue, the euro coins tend to depict portraits of monarchs or various national monuments and symbols. As such, the decision to select the princely stone for the national side of the 2 cent Euro coin was to reflect "the ancient symbol of the hierarchical organization of power in the Slovenian consciousness".[19] Yet, the ducal stone is located in Austria, who also stakes a claim to its role in the Austrian national identity.[20]

Claiming that Caranthania was the first Slovenian state is a way of building a territorial myth of an ancient homeland. It is also a myth of ethnogenesis and antiquity that separates the Slovenians from the other Slavs by way of arguing they are the direct ancestors of an ancient autochtonomous population that survived all subsequent migrational flows and population mixing. This, moreover, makes Caranthania a myth of kinship and shared descent that constructs an idea of the organic nature of ethnic groups (Schöpflin, 1997). Such myths see the nation as a family, excluding all ethnic foreigners from the community of "us". Finally, it is the supposed democratic nature of Caranthania's political traditions that convinces certain Slovenians of the election of the Slovenian people, legitimating their moral and cultural superiority. The potential for dangerous exclusionary practices based on such national myths is self-evident particularly considering that such historical myth-making gives credence to claims for control over specific territories. And myth-makers will, of course, tend to focus on the period of the state's greatest expansion, the so-called golden age (Kolstø, 2005).

15 The Venetic theory's principal aim is to undermine the prevailing migration theory, which claims that Slovenians are the descendants of Slavs who migrated around the sixth century.

16 However, see Simonič (2009) for more on how Caranthania is evoked also in official public ceremonies.

17 For more on this point, see Bajt, 2009.

18 The ducal, also known as princely stone bears a particular symbolic value for Carinthian Slovenians in Austria. The stone played a central part in investiture ceremonies of the dukes of Caranthania, and later Frankish counts, as well as princes of Carinthia. Traditionally, a peasant would first sit on the duke's stone and thus lead the ceremony in the local language, ceremoniously transferring the power to the duke (cf. note 21 below).

19 See http://www.evro.si/o-evru/slovenski-kovanci/ for the full official explanation.

20 The ducal stone has been moved around Austria several times, particularly in 2005 following the proclamation of Slovenia's intent to use it as its national symbol on Euro coins.

The Slovenians trace their descent through the persistence of their "distinctive cultural" quality, notably their language. At the same time, a biological link with the past is established when the community is seen as descending from a noble and heroic ancestor, like the Venetic theory of ethnogenesis attempts to prove. Caranthania and its symbols represent the Slovenian need for historical continuity. As a nation which did not form an independent state until the late 20th century, having its own customs and institutions embedded deep in history strengthens the idea of its uniqueness, its territorial claims and its inner solidarity. Caranthania provides a source of Slovenian cultural closeness to assumed ancestors and the rich symbolism of this long vanished state's public rituals still attracts attention today.[21]

The most avid proponents of the Venetic theory and retrospective nationalist beliefs in primordial origins of the Slovenian nation are self-proclaimed "patriotic" associations and movements that have sprung up across Slovenia particularly in recent years. Promoting unmistakably exclusionary and discriminatory policies, these groups draw their membership particularly from adolescent boys and young men. Even though they may profess differing values and aims, which span from open racism to more "subdued" chauvinist nationalism, groups such as *Blood & Honour*, *Slovenski radikali* (the Slovenian Radicals), *Hervardi*, *Tukaj je Slovenija* (This is Slovenia) and *Stranka slovenskega naroda* (The Party of the Slovenian Nation) are nonetheless examples of how patriotism is used to legitimise intolerant xenophobic and racist rhetoric. Moreover, all have eagerly adopted purportedly "ancient Slovenian" insignia, most notably the black panther of Caranthania.

Although these groups remain relatively limited in size and socio-political impact, it is significant that they draw noted public interest and enjoy the support of fringe politicians, but also a nod of approval of some mainstream political parties. Spurred by intolerant nationalist individuals who attempt to use populist rhetoric in order to (re)gain public support, it is particularly worrisome that intolerant, xenophobic and racist rhetoric has been moved from the obscurity of extremist organisations to a problematic accompaniment of certain political actors. While they are at pains to show their avid patriotism, their exclusionary attitudes towards multiethnic, multiconfessional and multicultural co-existence are clearly chauvinist, with frequent racist undertones.

CONCLUSION

Political ideology and theories of nationalism, particularly the so-called modernist stream of thought, anticipated the demise of nationalist forms. Political realities, however, indicate that national identities remain. Loyalties that can broadly be described as "ethnic" continue to hold their importance, while also becoming important in new ways (Fenton, 1999). Arguing against the reification of nations or "ethnic communities" and being acutely aware of the danger to naturalise differences as stemming from time immemorial, this article contends that social meanings attributed to national differences are nonetheless sociologically significant. Moreover, relying on selective appropriations of history, the power of nationalisms lies in constructing myths, traditions, symbols, and images as exclusively national traits that then foster claims of national uniqueness. Hence, the nation is claimed to possess a common way of life, a uniting culture and national history that provides a link both to the past and the future, allowing a belief in shared national destiny.

This article avers that both top-down and bottom-up activities of so-called national elites work on constructing and elevating one selected national culture and history, taking allegedly uniting ethno-cultural traits as a starting point for creating nation-ness that is supposedly unique and separate. As exemplified here by the discussion of the question of Slovenian ethnogenesis, the role of "national agitators" or cultural "revivalists" in the emergence of the Slovenian national identity has not stopped but remains an ongoing attempt of nationalist historic revisions. The importance of historical continuity for the idea of the nation is invaluable and recent attempts to adopt Caranthania and its symbols as "Slovenian" reflect the need for historical permanence. A nation without an independent state until the late 20th century, the idea of having a direct link to ancient customs and institutions strengthens the supposed Slovenian uniqueness and the nation's inner solidarity, but also legitimises territorial claims. Caranthania provides a source of Slovenian cultural closeness to the assumed ancestors and aids the revisionists' desire to supersede the historical association of Slovenians with passivity and serfdom. Most significantly, it is a sharp break with the Yugoslav past.

Despite the reality of the world being a collage of multilingual, multicultural and multiethnic co-existence, this article argues that national states remain secluded in ideals of monocultural national identities, constructing national myths and histories in order to demarcate separate symbolic national memberships. Situated within the sociology of nationalism and analysing a particular Slovenian example, the article maintains that national myths play a pivotal role in creating difference and promoting national uniqueness. Due to the historical absence of autonomous civic institutions,

21 Some (e.g. Felicijan, 1976; Požun, 2000) even believe that Thomas Jefferson used the ancient custom of the installation of the dukes of Caranthania as his inspiration for the American Declaration of Independence. Namely, Caranthania's ritualised investiture ceremony of enthroning the duke was rich in the symbolism of social contract. The duke symbolically changed into peasant clothes and accepted his power from a peasant, thereby indicating that the very people he was subsequently to govern awarded him the power.

the Slovenians relied on their presumed descent ties and language as key factors in mobilising a distinct cultural identity. Moreover, this supposedly distinct identity has to be reproduced in order to form a particular tradition of Slovenian-ness, yet, as noted here, it frequently links with populist simplifications and mythicised claims to a glorious national past. Such claims, particularly when employed by self-proclaimed "patriotic" groups which factually promote cleavages and chasms along the constructs of ethnicity, nation, culture, race, gender, sexuality, and so on, become the problematic emblems of mono-vocal discourses of exclusion and discrimination.

NACIONALNI MITI: SLOVENCI, KARANTANIJA IN VENETSKA TEORIJA

Veronika BAJT
Mirovni inštitut – Inštitut za sodobne družbene in politične študije, Metelkova 6, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenija
e-mail: veronika.bajt@mirovni-institut.si

POVZETEK

Izhajajoč iz refleksije o konceptih multikulturalizma, transkulturnosti in nacionalne identitete v okviru študij nacionalizma, članek umešča izbrano študijo primera (Slovenija) znotraj širših znanstvenih razprav o vzpostavljanju in konstrukciji nacionalnih identitet. Hkrati je raziskovanje nacionalne identitete neločljivo povezano s sodobnimi globalizacijskimi procesi in vplivi (npr. nadnacionalnih povezav in tokov) kot tudi s sočasnimi silnicami lokalizacije, individualizacije in splošnega preseganja nacionalnega. Kljub dejstvu, da svet sestavljajo kompleksne mreže transnacionalnih umeščenosti in da realnost ne odraža nacionalnih držav, ki bi pomenile osamljene otoke enokulturne in monoetnične zamejenosti, se dejanske prakse večkulturnega sobivanja le redko zrcalijo v nacionalnih politikah, ki vztrajajo pri idealih izključevalnih, monokulturnih oziroma etnokulturno definiranih nacionalnih identitet. Prispevek kritično preprašuje zgodovinske in sodobne silnice izoblikovanja in ohranjanja slovenske nacionalne identitete, s posebnim poudarkom na konstrukciji nacionalnih mitov kot tistih elementov, ki legitimirajo obstoj in edinstvenost naroda, in s postavitvijo »narodnih korenin« globoko v preteklost ustvarjajo nacionalistične podlage za argumentiranje vsakršnih sodobnih zahtev »v imenu naroda«. Članek se osredotoča na vlogo nacionalnih elit v vzpostavljanju nacionalne identitete in prepoznava njihovo tradicionalno zgodovinsko »narodnobuditeljsko« vlogo tudi v sodobnem času, kjer prevzemajo funkcijo definiranja in legitimacije »nacionalnih interesov«. Ustvarjanje kohezivnosti navznoter (homogenizacija naroda) in razločevanje od Drugih sta predstavljena kot dve pomembni posledici nacionalnih mitov, katerih vloga zato ostaja pomembna, saj vedno znova poenostavljajo kompleksnost sveta in umeščajo skupnost ter jo definirajo kot edinstveno.

Ključne besede: nacionalizem, nacionalna identiteta, nacionalne elite, nacionalni miti, etnogeneza, Slovenija, Karantanija, venetska teorija

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abrams, D., Hogg, M. A. (eds.) (1990): Social Identity Theory: Constructive and Critical Advances. New York, Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Anderson, B. (1991): Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. London, Verso.

Augoustinos, M., Walker, I., Donaghue, N. (1996): Social Cognition: An Integrated Introduction. London, SAGE Publications.

Bajt, V. (2009): Postkomunističko obnavljanje slovenačkog kolektivnog pamćenja i nacionalnog identiteta. In: Đerić, G. (ed.): Pamćenje i nostalgija: Neki prostori, oblici, lica i naličja. Beograd, Institut za filozofiju i društvenu teoriju, 83–114.

Bieber, F. (2002): Nationalist Mobilization and Stories of Serb Suffering: The Kosovo Myth from 600th Anniversary to the Present. Rethinking History, 6, 1, 95–110.

Billig, M. (1995): Banal Nationalism. London, SAGE Publications.

Brubaker, R. (1999): Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Brunnbauer, U. (2005): Ancient Nationhood and the Struggle for Statehood: Historiographic Myths in the Republic of Macedonia. In Kolstø, P. (ed.): Myths and Boundaries in South-Eastern Europe. London, Hurst & Company, 262–296.

Calhoun, C. (1997): Nationalism. Buckingham, Open University Press.

Davies, N. (1997): Polish National Mythologies. In: Hosking, G., Schöpflin, G. (eds.): Myths and Nationhood. London, Hurst & Company, 141–157.

Dedić, J., Jalušič, V., Zorn, J. (2003): The Erased: Organized Innocence and the Politics of Exclusion. Ljubljana, Mirovni inštitut.

Eliade, M. (1957): The Sacred and the Profane. The Nature of Religion. London, Harvest.

Eliade, M. (1964): Myth and Reality. London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd.

Eriksen, T. H. (1993): Ethnicity & Nationalism. Anthropological Perspectives. London, Pluto Press.

Felicijan, J. (1967): The Genesis of the Contractual Theory and the Installation of the Dukes of Carinthia. Klagenfurt, Družba sv. Mohorja v Celovcu.

Fenton, S. (1999): Ethnicity. Racism, Class and Culture. London, MacMillan.

Geary, P. J. (2005): Mit narodov. Srednjeveški izvori Evrope. Ljubljana, Studia humanitatis.

Gellner, E. (1983): Nations and Nationalism. Oxford, Blackwell.

Gow, J., Carmichael, C. (2000): Slovenia and the Slovenes: A Small State and the New Europe. London, Hurst & Company.

Guibernau, M. (1999): Nations without States: Political Communities in a Global Age. Cambridge (UK), Polity Press.

Hobsbawm, E. (1983): Introduction: Inventing Traditions. In: Hobsbawm, E., Ranger, T. (eds.): The Invention of Tradition. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1–14.

Hobsbawm, E., Ranger, T. (eds.) (1983): The Invention of Tradition. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Hroch, M. (2000): Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations. New York, Columbia University Press.

Hutchinson, J. (1987): The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism: The Gaelic Revival and the Creation of the Nation State. London, Allen&Unwin.

Kogovšek, N., Petković, B. (eds.) (2010): The Scars of the Erasure. Ljubljana, Mirovni inštitut.

Kolstø, P. (ed.) (2005): Myths and Boundaries in South-Eastern Europe. London, Hurst & Company.

Kolstø, P. (ed.) (2009): Media Discourse and the Yugoslav Conflicts: Representations of Self and Other. Farnham, Ashgate.

Kuljiš, D. (2011): Senzacionalno otkriće tima Dragana Primorca: Hrvati nisu Slaveni nego stari Balkanci. Jutarnji list (on-line edition), 27. 8. 2011. Http://www.jutarnji.hr/hrvati-nisu-slaveni-nego-stari-balkanci--dosli-smo-ovdje-prije-25-tisuca-godina-i-nismo-se-makli/968931/ (11. 9. 2011).

Luković-Pjanović, O. (1990): Srbi – narod najstariji. Beograd, Dosje.

Luthar, O. (ed.) (2008): The Land Between: A History of Slovenia. Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang.

McCrone, D. (1998): The Sociology of Nationalism: Tomorrow's Ancestors. London, Routledge.

Misāne, A., Priedīte, A. (1997): National Mythology in the History of Ideas in Latvia: A View from Religious Studies. In: Hosking, G., Schöpflin, G. (eds.): Myths and Nationhood. London, Hurst & Company, 158–169.

Nairn, T. (1981): The Break-Up of Britain: Crisis and Neo-Nationalism. London, Verso.

Pantelić, B. (2011): Memories of a Time Forgotten: The Myth of the Perennial Nation. Nations and Nationalism, 17, 2, 443–464.

Pavlaković, V. (2009): Crvene zvezde, crne košulje: simboli, komemoracije i sukobljene istorije Drugog svetskog rata u Hrvatskoj. In: Đerić, G. (ed.): Pamćenje i nostalgija: Neki prostori, oblici, lica i naličja. Beograd, Institut za filozofiju i društvenu teoriju, 43–81.

Pavlowitch, S. K. (1999): A History of the Balkans 1804–1945. London, Longman.

Pettigrew, T. F. (1998): Intergroup Contact Theory. Annual Review of Psychology, 49, 65–85.

Pettigrew, T. F., Tropp, L. R. (2011): When Groups Meet: The Dynamics of Intergroup Contact. Abingdon, Psychology Press.

Požun, B. J. (2000): Shedding the Balkan Skin: Slovenia's Quiet Emergence in the New Europe. UK, Central Europe Review.

Schöpflin, G. (1997): The Functions of Myth and a Taxonomy of Myths. In: Hosking, G., Schöpflin, G. (eds.): Myths and Nationhood. London, Hurst & Company, 19–35.

Schöpflin, G. (2000): Nations, Identity, Power. The New Politics of Europe. London, Hurst & Company.

Sedmak, M. (2010): Sociologija in medkulturnost. In: Sedmak, M., Ženko, E. (eds.): Razprave o medkulturnosti. Koper, Univerzitetna založba Annales, 53–71.

Simonič, P. (2009): Kaj si bo narod mislil? Ritual slovenske državnosti. Ljubljana, Zupaničeva knjižnica.

Skrbiš, Z. (2002): The Emotional Historiography of Venetologists: Slovene Diaspora, Memory and Nationalism. Focaal: European Journal of Anthropology, 39, 41–55.

Skrbiš, Z. (2008): The First Europeans' Fantasy of Slovenian Venetologists: Emotions and Nationalist Imaginings. In: Svašek, M. (ed.): Postsocialism: Politics and Emotions in Central and Eastern Europe. Oxford, Berghahn Books, 138–158.

Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (2000): Linguistic Genocide in Education – or Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights? London, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Smith, A. (1997): The "Golden Age" and National Revival. In: Hosking, G., Schöpflin, G. (eds.): Myths and Nationhood. London, Hurst & Company.

Smith, A. D. (1999): Myths and Memories of the Nation. New York, Oxford University Press.

Šavli, J. (1990): Slovenska država Karantanija: Institutio Sclavenica. Ljubljana, Karantanija.

Štih, P. (1997): Avtohtonistične in podobne teorije pri Slovencih in na Slovenskem. In: Karantanien – Ostarrichi 5. Ljubljana, Mohorjeva založba, 25–49.

Štih, P. (2005): Nacionalizem kot zgodovinski nesporazum (spremna beseda). In: Geary, P. J.: Mit narodov. Srednjeveški izvori Evrope. Ljubljana, Studia humanitatis, 221–237.

Štih, P. (2006): Miti in stereotipi v podobi starejše slovenske nacionalne zgodovine. In: Ferenc, M., Petkovšek, B. (eds.): Mitsko in stereotipno v slovenskem pogledu na zgodovino. Ljubljana, Zveza zgodovinskih društev Slovenije, 25–47.

Tajfel, H. (1993): Experiments in Intergroup Discrimination. In: Aronson, E., Pratkanis, A. R. (eds.): Social Psychology, Volume III. Elgar Publishing.

Turner, J. C. (1985): Social Categorization and the Self-Concept: A Social Cognitive Theory of Group Behavior. Advances in Group Processes, 2, 77–122.

Vidic, M. (ed.) (1999): Ilustrirana zgodovina Slovencev. Ljubljana, Založba Mladinska knjiga.

Weber, E. (1976): Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France 1870–1914. Stanford, Stanford University Press.

Whitmeyer, J. M. (2002): Elites and Popular Nationalism. British Journal of Sociology, 53, 3, 321–341.

Wilson, A. (1997): Myths of National History in Belarus and Ukraine. In: Hosking, G., Schöpflin, G. (eds.): Myths and Nationhood. London, Hurst & Company, 182–197.

Zorn, J., Lipovec Čebron, U. (eds.) (2008): Once upon an Erasure: From Citizens to Illegal Residents in the Republic of Slovenia. Ljubljana, ČKZ – Študentska založba.