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# Collective identity: a navigator in domestic and international politics

The case of Montenegro's debate on NATO-accession



# Abstract

Emerging scholarships on identity politics are challenging the traditional understanding of the relation between politics and identity; from politics shaping identity, to the other way around. The field has lately been successful in mapping out connection between identity and alliance formation, as well as demonstrating how identity shapes political attitudes and policy choices. Based on these findings, the aim of this study is to contribute to the emerging field by investigating how identity was contained and contested in Montenegro's parliamentary debate on NATO accession in 2015. Montenegro provides with an exceptional empirical window for studying identity in politics, because of the competing national identities: Montenegrin and Serb, which further are affiliated to country's party politics. The study was carried out through an integrative model of message-actor centric qualitative content analysis by the conceptual framework of identity as a variable and identity politics. The results of the study demonstrated contestation, and the use of identity as a tool by which the dominating groups attempted to promote and influence their interests and goals. Finally, this study calls for a wider integration of identity perspective in understanding domestic and foreign politics, as well as the connection between these two.

Keywords: *identity politics, collective identity, Montenegro, NATO, alliance, party politics, DPS, NOVA, Montenegrin, Serb.*

Words: 9 990.



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# List of abbreviations

DPS	The Democratic Party of Socialists of Montenegro ( <i>Demokratska Partija Socijalista</i> )
EU	The European Union
KAP	Aluminium Combine Podgorica ( <i>Kombinat Aluminijuma Podgorica</i> )
NATO	The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NOVA	The New Serb Democracy ( <i>Nova Srpska Demokratija</i> )
US	The United States of America





# 1. Introduction

The dynamics of alliance formation have traditionally been explained through a calculus of two features; first identifying a threat, and then reasoning of whom to ally with in order to combat the threat. Previous examples are dominated by the logic of anarchy, driven by materialistic means such as military or economical, in order to achieve balance between great powers (Barnett 1999, p. 401). In the light of the explanation that alliance formation is driven by material interests, some scholars have raised their voices and opposed the neorealist approach arguing that orthodox alliance theories lack capacity to provide explanation of other significant factors, such as identity (ibid.). The call for an ideational approach seems justifiable in understanding actions of [democratic] states, as they are not mechanical entities, driven solely by logic, but rather by politics; more concrete, the politics dictated by their citizens.

So, do states solely choose alliances in order to dodge threats? And if so, how do they reason with whom to form an alliance, and from what threat? These questions have come to shed light on the emerging school which seeks to understand state-behaviour through identity. When talking about identity and alliances, I refer to one state's identification towards the wider international community, but in order for one state to define with a particular identity, the identity question directs focus from the state's external self, to its internal one. The latter has opened a new way of studying state behaviour, namely, through scrutinising the domestic composition of states. Departing from the assumption that alliance formation can be explained through identity the problematisation arises in the question: what happens if one state's collective identity (which generates political actions, thus referred to as identity politics) is not coherent and groups with diverging interests are in internal competition?

In the light of Montenegro, a small state, which through the orthodox alliance theory should in all aspects be in favour of an alliance shelter, the approach towards joining The North

Atlantic Treaty Organisation (hereafter: NATO) has sparked debate where opinions, benignly expressed, are dichotomic. As a consequence of the scarcely given attention to identity in alliance politics, and rather the wider impact of domestic politics, this paper has the ambition to manifest, locating it from bottom up, the role of identity in multi-ethnic societies in relation to international politics. This is done by analysing the domestic debate of Montenegro's NATO accession through the eyeglasses of identity. In this study an attempt is done to demonstrate the use of identity as a tool in politics, also known as *identity politics* by the help of following research question: *How are arguments pro and anti-NATO formulated and contested based on identity?* More on research problem, aim and research question in the 1.3. section.

## 1.1. Background Montenegro and NATO

After obtaining independence from Serbia in 2006, Montenegro's political elite has worked towards joining the Western community. Said goal was epitomised by becoming a candidate to the European Union (henceforth: EU) and NATO. However, in 2015 Montenegro received an invitation to start accession talks with NATO and became a fully member in June 2017, (NATO 2017). Looking back in time, the aspiration of joining the western military alliance triggered what could be perceived as a domestic value conflict. The ruling political elite, the coalition For a European Montenegro, with *Demokratska Partija Socijalista* (The Democratic Party of Socialists of Montenegro; hence after DPS) on head of the coalition, faced dissatisfaction from the opposing side The Democratic Front, with *Nova Srpska Demokratija* (The New Serb Democracy; hence after NOVA) in the front. The divergence of opinions resulted in a debate that divided the citizens of Montenegro in pro- and anti-NATO. However, the debate within these two groups was not unexpected since the citizens of Montenegro traditionally have been exposed to polarisation as a consequence of the political parties' affiliation to identity.

### 1.1.1. Collective identity and political parties

Considering Montenegro's vast history of statehood, and as a consequence of being a part of the Former Republic of Yugoslavia (BBC 2016), Montenegro has served as an interesting empirical material for studies on identity. Earlier studies (Dzankic 2013; Milacic 2018), within the field, have diagnosed Montenegro, because of its multi-ethnic composition, with critical identity features having high chances of spilling into conflict. This composition of identities refers mainly to two of the biggest recognised national identities citizens of Montenegro identify with, i.e., Montenegrin and Serb (Dzankic 2013, p. 348-349). Said division has been present, but intensified due and after the independence vote from Serbia, where depending on what you voted for was in general metaphoric to what you identified with; pro-independence equaled supporting DPS, and anti-independence equaled supporting NOVA (Dzankic 2013, p. 361; Raznatovic 2015, p. 28). After the independence vote, the political elite began to use the identity card intensively as a political instrument in order to mobilise followers (Malicic 2018, p.116). The consequence of such politics is that Montenegro today is highly polarised as the distance between the left and right pole are maintained with strong emphasis on ethnic and national identities. In summary of what is written, the collective identity in Montenegro is split between two main identities being Montenegrin and Serb, which are further affiliated to the ruling political parties (Dzankic 2013, p. 353, 356).

The promotion of Montenegrin identity is linked to the political program of DPS which operates under a clear aim: to promote and strengthen the Montenegrin identity along with integrating into Western community (DPS 2018). Post independence DPS has worked towards constructing Montenegrin identity through various means, of which one, for instance, was changing the name of the national language from Serbian to Montenegrin (Dzankic 2013, p. 369). Additionally, as a part of reconstructing Montenegrin identity DPS has tried to reinforce positive attitudes for a greater support of military service and stances towards Western international actors. Furthermore, it is believed that the orientation of DPS towards the West contributed to the polarisation of attitudes concerning the foreign policy (ibid. p. 359). In a survey on identity, the number of those who identified as Montenegrins were equivalent with their political preference being DPS's politics or other For a European Montenegro party.

Furthermore, their preferences on foreign policy allies were alongside the DPS's politics, namely the Western community including EU and US (ibid. p. 360). Thereof, Montenegrin identity can be seen as synonym with support for DPS. Other characteristics of DPS, less relevant for the aim of this study, are social-economic ideology with the aim of promoting economic justice within the framework of liberal and capitalist economy (DPS 2018, p. 18-28).

On the contrary, to the ambitions of DPS, NOVA is a political party whose main aim is to presume and develop the national identity of Serbs in Montenegro (NOVA 2018). The same survey on identity, as mentioned in previous paragraph, showed that those who identified as Serbs also supported NOVA or other political parties who were anti-independence or formed the Democratic Front coalition (Dzankic 2013, p. 357). Additionally, the attitudes of respondents towards the West were less friendly, and on the question whom they preferred as Montenegro's closest ally the dominating answer was Serbia (ibid. p. 360). The latter reflected the essentialism of NOVA's politics: to reintroduce wider cooperation with Serbia (NOVA 2018). Finally, the politics of NOVA are driven by national conservatism, and concerning the social-economic policy, the difference between parties is not in obvious contrast as the identity affiliation is.

In my understanding, from studying literature on the topic of collective identity in Montenegro, and from what is said about respective party policy, I conclude in line with the scholars, that the predominating identities in Montenegro can be affiliated to the country's political parties; DPS and the For a European Montenegro coalition promoting Montenegrin, and NOVA and the Democratic Front coalition promoting Serbian identity. Moreover, a long rooted and undefined historical relation of these two identities has made the distinction of said identities fluid (Dzankic 2013, p. 353; Huszka 2003, p. 41), which can be seen as an obstacle in characterising each identity. In order to elude this obstacle these two identities will be studied through concepts and events where, based on historical response, their views have been contradictory. This because the construction of Montenegrin identity by DPS aimed to present the new identity in total opposition to Serb identity (Dzankic 2013, p. 413). However, there are several ethnic and national identities in Montenegro along the mentioned two, such

as: Muslim, Bosnjak, Albanian, Roma, etc., but these will not be directed any attention in this study separately as their stances are not dominant in the way the Montenegrin and the Serb identities are.

## 1.2. Previous research on identity politics

The debate around the endogenous relationship between identity and politics has lately been addressed in a new way. Usually, said relationship, has been understood through politics shaping identity, rather than the other way around. But, the emerging field which recognises identity as a catalyst of politics, has found that identity plays a role, for instance, in political preference, economic interests and, not least, in political conflict. The below section presents an overview of the literature and debate within the field that treats the role of collective identity in politics (also referred to as identity politics), along with the critique addressed towards the field. There are above all three themes that saturate the field: the top down, bottom up and the final arguing for fundamental relation between identity and the shaping of political attitudes.

To begin with the top down approach of identity in politics, in his work, *Identity and Alliances in the Middle East*, Michael N. Barnett (1996, p. 403) suggests ideational understanding of alliances. He argues that the orthodox theory of aggressive intentions and the recognitions of threats lay a support for an ideational understanding rather than materialistic. This argument goes on by explaining that it is hard to determine, solely through perception of power, which states should be perceived as threat or friends (Risse-Kappen 1996, p. 366-367). Instead, the determination of threat lies in the perception image of the other to whom Barnett (1996, p. 405-367) connects the notion of identity. Barnett's work manifests connection between shared identity and alliance formation, as he concludes that identity shapes the choice of alliance partner by exemplifying it with the US and Israeli alliance.

However, in order to join and participate in a particular community a state needs to share and uphold those values that are specific for the community in question. In order to do so the state needs to have a stable identity and keep a particular narrative going on in the internal arena

(Barnett 1996, p. 411). If the collective identity is not coherent, Barnett (ibid. p. 412) argues, changes in systematic pattern, caused by transnational, economical or military politics, will trigger comprehensive debate on the domestic arena concerning its collective identity, but also the state's relationship towards the wider international community. In conflicts as such, divided identity has usually been the main factor in sparking the debate (ibid. p. 411). Thomas Risse-Kappen (1996, p. 367), agrees with Barnett and, interposes that the international system is a product of the values and norms governing in each actor's domestic arena.

In contrast to the foreign policy spilling into domestic dispute, in her study " *'Take it outside!' National identity contestation on the foreign policy arena*", Lisel Hintz (2015) demonstrated how domestic debate on identity can be brought to the foreign arena. This was the case with Turkey where the political elite used the international community in order to politicise identity debate that was blocked on the internal stage. Hintz's study stressed the connection of the domestic debate driven by identity and its part in the international community. Moreover, the study affirmed that in the domestic spheres where the collective identity is not consistent identity can be used as a persuasive tool by competing groups in pursuing their interests or defining friends and enemies (Hintz 2015, p. 340). Thereof, identity is argued to play an important role in approaches towards the wider community.

In the light of identity politics and its relation to the foreign community, both Barnett's and Hintzel's contributions serve as important departure points in understanding identity as either a response to foreign policy, or a tool of transferring internal disputes to the international spotlights. Nevertheless, returning to the fact that changes in the foreign policy have contributed to conflicts concerning collective identity, the third approach examines the role of identity in relation to domestic political attitudes. Grigore Pop-Elechesa and Graeme B. Robertson (2018) showed in their study " *Identity and political preferences in Ukraine – before and after the Euromaidan*" the power of identity in relation to politics in general. Their findings revealed how ethnic and national identities, along with language, in multi-ethnic societies, shaped political attitudes (Pop-Eleches & Robertson 2018, p. 116). By studying identity and political preferences over time they demonstrated that people were more likely to change their political preferences to match their identity, rather than modify identities in order

to match their politics (ibid. p 117) which further strengthens the theory on the importance of identity.

Despite the success in mapping out the connection of identity politics to international and domestic affairs, some scholars have raised critical voices towards studying identity. Their main arguments emphasise the complexity of studying identity because of the concept's wide interpretation, making it analytically loose (Zehfuss 2001; Erskine 2012; Abdelal et al. 2009). The truth is, scholars within the field have themselves addressed the concern of using identity as a variable, as they lacked tools for measuring it. In 2006, as a response to said obstacle, Rawi Abdelal, Yoshiko M. Herrera, Alastair Iain Johnston and Rose McDermott proposed a new analytical framework introducing identity as a variable by equipping it with measurable attributes (more on this in the theoretical framework).<sup>n</sup> Using said approach researchers have been able to study identity in a new and more legitimate way.

### 1.3. Research problem, aim and research question

Given the brief review of collective identity, the thesis is that identity matters in a greater extent than it has been thought about. Previous research indicates that disputes both in internal and external arenas can in some ways be traced to identity as a card played in times of disagreement. Despite some contributions to this field, the discipline still gaps empty of empirical evidence in order to combat the critics directed towards identity as a variable. With that stated, in order to contribute to the field, this study aims to investigate the use of identity as a resource in pursuing various groups' interest in societies with divided collective identity. For the purpose of actual aim I have chosen to investigate the domestic debate on NATO accession in Montenegro, which serves as a great empirical window because of the country's political and collective identity composition. I will look at Montenegro's parliamentary debate on NATO and through examination of pro- and anti-stances on the NATO accession examine the role of identity in the debate through two steps. Firstly, identity content analysis will be carried out by the arguments including the following three dimensions: Kosovo, the NATO bombing of Serbia and Montenegro in 1999, and the relation towards the West, respectively the East. The second step will operate under the results extracted from the first step with the

ambition to demonstrate the contestation of identities in the debate. The research question which will guide this study is as follows: *How are arguments pro and anti-NATO formulated and contested based on identity?*

## 1.4. Delimitations

Taking in consideration the identity polarised politics in Montenegro, the purpose of this paper is to assess the significance of identity's role alone without taking into account any materialistic means that were brought up in the debate. However, I argue that the alternative factors, which without doubt permeates the debate, are less important in a debate as such as the dispute is mainly driven by the two biggest parties DPS and NOVA, which as I have outlined, are synonyms to the two competing identities in Montenegro.

## 1.5. Chapter outline

This study consists of five chapters. In the first introductory chapter the background and previous research, along with the aim and delimitations, are presented. Thereafter, the second chapter consists of theoretical framework and is followed by the methodology section which includes discussion of limitations, material and the implementation. The results are presented in the penultimate chapter followed by the conclusion of the study in the fifth, and final, chapter.



## 2. Theoretical framework

The *problematique* of incoherent collective identity in multi-ethnic societies will, as it has already been suggested, be analysed by applying identity perspective on the NATO debate. Due to the criticism in previous research: identity being a difficult phenomena to study, in this chapter the concept identity will be presented as a variable in order to allow for identity to be measured. This will be done through Abdelal et al.'s (2006) analytical framework of identity as a variable. Mentioned framework conceptualises identity drawing on already existing literature, but defines and packs it in a flexible conceptualisation which enables scholars to tailor it to their own needs in order to compare various types of identities and conduct nuanced operationalisation of the theoretical scholarships (Abdelal et al. 2006, p. 696).

Before wrapping identity in the variable-conceptualisation of collective identity with two dimensions: content and contestation, the prelude of this chapter will give space to the orthodox definition of the identity concept. Finally, this section will end with an explanation on how identity is used as a means to promote interests.

### 2.1. Identity

By tracing the roots of the idea of identity the term originates from Latin *idem*, meaning 'same', which leads to the term 'identical'. The term identical leads further to the fact that we are identical to one another and that we share common identities. By describing characteristics to itself one tends to identify with others who, one perceives, possess the same characteristics. On the contrary, post-structuralists stress that identity has originated from differences where "self-understanding is achieved in opposition to something that the *self* is not" (Jarvis & Holland 2015, p. 115). Thomas Hylland Eriksen (2004, p. 10) explains identity in line with differentiation, as a phenomena that tends to both unite and disunite people. A

metaphor of a fridge's reverse function is used to explain the divergence of identity; the heat inwards — the cold outward. The metaphor indicates that identity produces a sense of belonging to one group, thus automatically distinguishing one from other groups.

Despite various definitions on identity the definition remains vague, therefore the best known definition of identity is that it is a hard term to define. A great rule about defining identity is: what identity means is how it is thought about. Sticking to this rule, in this study identity will be referred to as *collective identity / identity politics*. Said concept is defined in accordance to the fridge-metaphor: a sense of belonging to a group sharing the same beliefs (in-group), which also are the factors which distinguish one group from other groups (out-group[s]). However, Abdelal et al. (2006) offer a definition on collective identity as a two-dimensional social category. The two dimensions: content and contestation, equip collective identity with attributes that allow comparison and differentiation among the vast types of identities. Some examples on collective identities are national, ethnical, cultural, civic, etc.

### 2.1.1. Content

The content dimension describes the meaning of collective identity. In other words, the content represents the fundamental elements of identity — something that supporters of a particular identity share which forms an in-group, and distinguish them from the out-group (Abdelal et al. 2006, p. 696). Furthermore, content is divided in four non-mutually-exclusive types in order to make the traditional non analytical concept of identity easier to grasp. These four types are as follows: constitutive norms, social purposes, relational comparisons and cognitive models.

The first one, *constitutive norms*, provides guidelines which through formal or informal rules set framework for the appropriate behaviour of the group. These constitutive norms serve as attributes for defining who 'we' are and how we should behave based on these rules (Abdelal et al. 2006, p. 697). Additionally, constitutive norms include a regulatory effect which dictates and regulates actions that supporters of particular identity should act through, and also leads other to the recognition of particular identity (ibid.). The regulatory effect is not necessarily

pictured in preferences of a group, but is rather defined through distinctive practices and boundaries of the group. The characteristics of constitutive norms can in some cases be intentional, but usually those norms are taken for granted. An example of constitutive norms are 'civilised states' which in the end of the twentieth century did not use chemical or nuclear weapons in battles ([Price & Tannenwald 1996 in] Abdelal et al. 2006, p. 697). Their behaviour was driven by performing a role where the constitutive norms of civilised states hindered them to use such weapons in pursuing their goal.

The manifestation of constitutional norms may be identified as internalised or habituated. For instance, norms can influence choices resulting in some behaviours being automatically and intentionally denied of one's identity (Abdelal et al. 2006, p. 697). Or, one may barely or fleetingly think over choice and as a result dismiss them. Finally, norms might be deeply rooted and acted upon completely unconsciously (Abdelal et al. 2006, p. 697-698).

The second type, *social purposes*, define the interest of particular identity and the goals members belonging to that identity should aim for (Abdelal et al. 2006, p. 698). The difference between constitutive norms and social purposes is that the former refers to social practices, while the latter helps define group interest and goals. Moreover, the component of social purposes is argued to be purposive, meaning that the group ascribes itself specific goals and acts on the behalf of who they think they are (ibid.).

The purposive content can be understood through historical examples where people because of national identities have claimed land and creation of a state where the boundaries are autonomous from the defined 'other' (Abdelal et al. 2006, p. 698). Another example, drawing on nationalism as well, are the Baltic countries which after the dissolution of Soviet-Union traced their national 'European' identity, who they believed was taken from them earlier in the century. By breaking up with the Soviet Union, and returning to Europe, the Baltic states structured the debate of their national interest by using the social purpose as means to their end (ibid.).

*Relational comparison* is the third component of collective identity which serves to define the in-group's relation to various out-groups (Abdelal et al. 2006, p. 698). With that said, an identity can be defined by stating what it is not; the relational comparison uses references and comparisons to define itself from the identities from which it is different. This component operates through discursive formulations of relation between groups. A great definition on relational identity is given by Barnett (1999, p. 9) in his work on the *Middle East* peace process by stating that identity represents:

the understanding of oneself in relationship to others. Group identities, in short, are not personal or psychological, they are fundamentally social and relational, defined by the actor's interaction with and relationship to others; therefore, identities may be contingent, dependent on the actor's interaction with others and place within an institutional context.

The relational characteristics of collective identity are many and are existent in all areas of social science. For instance, the historical form of relational comparison can be traced to the creation of French nationalism in comparison to England's barbarism, the NATO alliance and its composition of members sharing the same democratic values, the importance of constructing an 'other' during the creation of European identity, and so on (Abdelal et al. 2006, p. 698-9). Moreover, it is argued that the process of in-group creation "by necessity leads to devaluation of the out-group" (ibid. p. 699). Because of this connection, the actions are perceived as reactions to those who are different. Finally, the in-group's relation towards out-groups does not necessarily always have to be fearful or hostile, but friendly and positive as well.

The final type, *cognitive models*, is defined as a worldview or a framework — a window through which members of a particular social group see the world and their role in it. The crucial definition of cognitive models is stressed in following quotation:

What cognitive perspectives suggest, in short, is that race, ethnicity, and nation are not things in the world but ways of seeing the world. They are ways of understanding and identifying oneself, making sense of one's problems and predicaments, identifying one's interests, and orienting one's action. They are ways of recognising, identifying, and classifying other people, of construing sameness and difference, and of "coding"

and making sense of their actions ([Brubaker, Loveman and Stamatov] in Abdelal et al. 2006, p. 699).

Drawing from the definition above, cognitive models may take various forms. They can be traced to events where for instance two groups have different understanding of what constitutes knowledge or security (Abdelal et al. 2006, p. 699). In addition to worldview, cognitive models tend to strongly affect the interpretation and understanding of both presence, past, one self, the group, others, but also political interests. In such cases, Abdelal et al. (2006, p. 699) argue, identities affect perceptions of legitimacy, shared interests, as well as policy choices. Regarding the latter, previous literature has demonstrated how ethnic and regional identities (viewed as collective identities) shape interpretations of material conditions and define actors' interests and what preferences are perceived as appropriated and legitimate for each identity. Finally, analysing identity through the use of cognitive models, it will show how identity affects and how actors understand the world, along with how the actions they take will be influenced by the beliefs they share.

In summary of what is written in this subchapter, the content dimension serves as a theory of interpretation and is presented as an alternative approach to theory of action.

### 2.1.2. Contestation and identity politics

The second dimension of collective identity is composed by contestation. Contestation is defined as a differing views on the meaning of identity among members of a group. Contestation can be perceived as a degree matter, where some members share a wide meaning of identity, while the meaning of identity is less shared by other members. Identity contestation can take various forms. It is not unusual that it is depicted in comparative context, party debates, political platforms or speeches (Abdelal et al. 2006, 700). Identity contestation can take place with the ambition to evoke a sense of collective self. However, identity content, discussed in the previous section, is argued to be an outcome of social contestation within a group, making collective identity not *fixed or predetermined*, but rather under continual construction (Abdelal et al. 2006, p. 700). Moreover, the data extracted using contestation will shed light on the consensus and disagreement concerning constitutive norms,

social purposes, relational comparisons and cognitive methods between groups.

The contestation between groups can also be interpreted as identity politics understood in terms of politics based on group / collective identity, where identity is used as a tool in order to maintain a special position or promote and influence interests of a particular group. Identity politics, outlined by emphasising differences, rather than commonalities and particular community of identity, is a phenomena that began to bloom in late 1960s in US. Identity politics is explained as a political positions with which people identify depending on the aspects of their identity (Zaretsky 1998, p. 198-199).

In relation to the eminent connection between identity, domestic and international politics, stressed in the theoretical framework, as well as in the previous findings, it is of great concern to understand the role of identity in divided societies in relation to political outcomes. For the purpose of this study the debate on NATO will be examined through content features. The dimensions of identity content: constitutive norms, social purposes, relational comparisons and cognitive models, are interpreted based on preparatory work as relations and historical events which in relation to the leading coalitions appeared of importance. The use of the content and contestation dimensions is further elucidated in the upcoming methodological chapter.

## 3. Methodology

In this section the choice of method and material will be discussed in relation to the research question and theory. The aim of this chapter is to provide the reader of understanding how the research is carried out. The procedure is provided in detail in the operational section.

### 3.1. Qualitative content analysis

Content analysis is a well suited tool for analysing and critically assessing political messages (Beckman 2007, p. 9). Said method is usually of a quantitative characterisation because of the traditional use as an instrument to measure the frequency of various concepts in comprehensive texts, in order to explain what ideation has been present or has driven particular debate (ibid. p. 11). The convenience of content analysis is that it allows the author to analyse statements in a systematic way, thus minimising the risk to resort to baseless opinions or the power of rhetorics. Lately the use of content analysis has increased in qualitative purposes. The latter is driven by the aim not only to present the content of a text, but also to interpret its meaning. In qualitative content analysis the total focus from ideational is shifted to, and shared with, the importance of the actor, i.e., the messenger (ibid. p. 17). The difference is that studies using the former type aim to put the argument in the centre, making those who stand behind the argument less important. Contrary to text-centred, the actor-centred content analysis' particular focus is diverted towards the actor (e.g., newspapers, institutions, politicians or political parties) who through statements is maintaining a particular standpoint. Using qualitative content analysis with focus on the actor it is possible for the author to put effort into explaining the message or in some other way clarifying it (Neuendorf & Skalski 2009, p. 209) which additionally results in a, what Ludvig Beckman (2007, p. 18) states, a richer and dynamic analysis.

### 3.1.1. Qualitative content analysis and identity variable

The content analysis has recently witnessed greater incorporation in studies with the ambition to measure identity types. Professor in School of Communication Kimberly A. Neuendorf, and her assistant Paul D. Skalski (2009, p. 203), responded to the criticism directed towards identity studies by arguing that it is fully possible to study identity using the content analysis as long as there is a clear congruence between conceptualisation and operationalisation; which the quality of measurement will depend on. Additionally, the same duo, addressed criticism to scholars who have argued that qualitative analysis offers illumination of intensions behind the message that is studied (ibid. p. 209). Instead, if the ambition is to provide answer to both by using content analysis, they call for an 'integrative model of content analysis' approach, meaning a combination of message-actor centric analysis. Due to the aim of my study, being to foremost demonstrate the presence of identity, the combination of message-actor centric approach appears to be the most suitable method. The conceptual framework is consistent of the features ascribed to identity in the theoretical framework.

### 3.1.2. Limitations

A common limitation of text methods in general, including qualitative content analysis, is the subjective assessment of material. Because of the subjective interpretation it is not possible to claim absolute truths or effects. Consequently, the approaching of the material by qualitative content method in the following analysis is driven by the author's own understanding of the theory and its application on the material. It is of great significance to mention, and to remind the reader, that the author is aware of this limitation.

### 3.1.3. Alternative method

An alternative approach in analysing identity through text would be discursive analysis, but as its primary goal is to uncover changes in discourse and power relation, I believe it is not suitable for the aim of this study. As my aim is not to examine construction of each identity, or any of the above, but rather to analyse the presence of Montenegrin, respectively Serb identity, the qualitative content analysis qualifies as the most appropriate.



## 3.2. Material

The empirical material I have decided to use, in order to examine the content and contestation of identity in a multi-ethnic society, is a parliamentary debate on NATO. The material is an original transcription, i.e., not processed in any way, of the two day long debate between Montenegro's political elite. Furthermore, the material is obtained from the website of Montenegro's Government, and is therefore considered as primary source material. Due to its relevance, being a debate on solely the topic of NATO accession, it serves as a highly relevant empirical material. Finally, the empirical material consists of 254 pages and because of its size systematic selection will be made.

## 3.3. Operationalisation

Using content analysis, samples are systematically gathered from the material through a preparatory work. Furthermore, the sampling is conducted in two steps and is inspired by the content dimension of identity presented in the theoretical framework, along with the background of political parties. In the explanation of the latter, Montenegrin identity is interpreted as a synonym to DPS and the For a European Montenegro, meaning that their arguments are pro-NATO and are assumed to represent the Montenegrin identity. On the contrary, NOVA and the Democratic Front coalition's arguments on anti-NATO accession will serve as synonym to the Serb identity. This first step is as already mentioned, inspired by the parties' backgrounds and the *constitutive norms* which suggests actions based on standpoints.

The second step of the preparatory work draws on social purposes, relational comparison and cognitive models from which three *keywords* in terms of events of importance for both pro- and anti-NATO groups, have been extracted. The keywords are used to access the vast amount of material in order to single out the most appropriate qualitative content for closer examination. However, previous research and history have embedded the road for this second step as historically well known critical events for both groups have been interpreted in the light of the identity content. For instance, the NATO bombing of Serbia and Montenegro in

1999, was a response to the offensives on Kosovo led by Slobodan Milosevic, the president of Serbia at the time of joint Serbia and Montenegro (CNN 1999). During his period, in late 90's Montenegro began with attempts of distancing themselves from Milosevic's policy (Dzankic 2013, p. 414-415). The distancing is in this study understood as a significant point where Montenegro started to work towards a state image that they did not wanted to be affiliated to the politics of Serbia. Based on this background, the state of *Kosovo* and *the bombing in 1999 by NATO*, are assumed to be of dynamics in the debate as they include features of cognitive perception and relational comparison. Likewise the previous example, the additional dimension consisting of the *West* and *East* is chosen because of the parties' current disunited aim, along with the arguments of historical ties made for integrating Montenegro into the two current opposing communities. This also provides for a deep analysis of content in identity through for instance, the social purposes. In summary of what is written statements for analysing are gathered through search by using said dimensions as keywords. Thereafter, sorted statements are assessed through the theoretical framework of content and finally, contested. The relation towards EU is not included in the dimension of West, because the preparatory work showed, what can be perceived as paradoxical in relation to the parties standpoints, that all parties were in general positive to the EU.

## 4. Results & Discussion

In this chapter the selected content of the parliamentary debate will be analysed in two steps; first through the content dimension of collective identity, and then the results extracted from the first part will be examined through the dimension of contestation / identity politics. Before the analysis, a brief clarification on each identity will be presented in order to enhance the understanding of the examination of the material.

It is of great significance for understanding the following analysis to keep in mind that the relation between the Montenegrin and the Serb identity is argued to be fluid, but on the other hand also strongly affiliated to Montenegro's political parties. The latter constitutes the greatest dimension above all between the political parties in Montenegro and the parties will thus serve as synonyms for the two identities; DPS / the For a European Montenegro equal to Montenegrin, and NOVA / the Democratic Front equal to the Serb identity. Hereafter, the analysis of the three chosen dimensions which permeate the debate is presented; *the perception of Kosovo, the NATO bombing of Serbia and Montenegro in 1999 and the relation to and the perception of the Western and Eastern communities.*

### 4.1. The content of the Montenegrin and Serb identity

The first finding in the preparatory work showed on a strong regulation by the constitutive norms of each identity. Said result was expected as the parties followed the expectations suggested by the constitutive norms; the positive arguments for NATO accession were presented by the western-friendly DPS and the coalition For European Montenegro. By contrast, the anti-NATO arguments were expressed by the opposition: NOVA and the Democratic Front coalition. It is hard to conclude whether these actions were intentional or, as the theoretical framework suggests, deeply rooted and taken for granted. Consequently, the

constitutive norms are not suitable for deeper contestation analysis, other than that the identities are in clear contrast to each other.

#### 4.1.1. The content dimension of Kosovo

The dynamics of Montenegrin and Serb identity were in a greater extent notable in analysing the groups' relation to Kosovo through the content types of cognitive models and relational comparison. Said term, which refers to the state of Kosovo, did several times appear in both pro- and anti-NATO arguments. The anti-side referred to Kosovo as "...the southern Serbian province of Kosovo and Metohija...(PoM 2015, p. 100)" attributing it with the term "Metohija", which was expressed in the following example as well:

...NATO celebrated it for 78 days bombarding the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Montenegro and Serbia against all UN Charters, just because we did not agree to voluntarily give them an integral part of the then southern Serbian province of Kosovo and Metohija (PoM 2015, p. 207).

The term *Metohija*, from the Greek *metoh*, means *owned by the church*, and is by the Serbian State, and Serbs in general, used to indicate the spiritual nucleus of the Kosovo region for the Serbian nation (Vickers 1998). I argue that the reference to Kosovo in the anti-argument, by including the term *Metohija*, indicates strong affiliation to the Serbian nation, thus its identity. What is said, suggested through the cognitive models, is that the anti-group perceived Kosovo as a significant part of the Serbian culture. Moreover, by seeing Kosovo in this particular light, leads to an assumption that the group share a Serb identity. This is argued because on the base of cognitive perspective; a window through which the group sees the world, i.e., it suggests they identify as Serbs because of the way they think about Kosovo. Finally, the social purposes theory here suggests that the language used; the claiming of Kosovo as a Serbian province by attributing it with the historically loaded term of *Metohija* further explains the presence and features of the Serb identity.

However, Kosovo is not only attributed by the term *Metohija*, but is also referred to, exemplified in both the following quotations, and the previous above, as a: "southern Serbian province and "ewe lamb" of the Serb and Montenegrin people (PoM 2015, p. 209).

You're talking about Kosovo and Metohija, about the southern Serbian province, and you say that it was released. Who released it? ...Whose land is that,... It is a country of NATO, who occupied the southern Serbian province... (PoM 2015, p. 99).

The reference of Kosovo as a southern Serbian province has been interpreted as a denying of Kosovo's independence. As it is well known that the Kosovo independence is still not recognised by the Serbian State (Henic 2018), thus by referring to Kosovo as a Serbian province further fortifies the self-image of the anti-side and indicates a supportive relation towards the state of Serbia. Additionally, similar reference is made by a member of the Democratic Front indicating that Kosovo is not a state, but a community of Serbia, equalling it to the member's local community Mojanovici (a community with 1200, inhabitants (NEO 2018)) in Montenegro:

...The basic and legitimate aim of the NATO Pact, I say, a legitimate goal in their constructions and projections, was to create a so-called Kosovo State so that Americans can install the largest database in Europe and you all know it. And Kosovo is a state just as much as my Local Community Mojanovići (PoM 2015, p. 211).

In contrast to the anti-side, the pro-side addressed Kosovo in a more neutral way which did not indicate any remarkable perception of, or relation towards the state. With few exceptions the reference is made which indicated the recognition of Kosovo as an independent state from Serbia: "... and I will tell you that Milo Djukanovic recognised Kosovo as an independent state (PoM 2015, p. 209)". The hint of an independent and recognised Kosovo can, through relational comparison, be interpreted as a friendly relation towards Kosovo and, on the other side, opposing towards Serbia and its politics. The interpretation of the latter finding is based on the reference made to Milo Djukanovic, Montenegro's president, who according to the statement, did recognise the independence of Kosovo. Thereof, suggested by the relational comparison, I argue that the Montenegrin identity is contended in the reference to Kosovo, because by recognising Kosovo as an independent state the group is moderately opposing the Serbian perception of Kosovo. Finally, by the relational comparison it can be argued that the pro-NATO group's statement indicates what they are not, i.e., Serbs.

#### 4.1.2. The content dimension of the NATO bombing in 1999

In relation to Kosovo the NATO bombing of Serbia and Montenegro in 1999, is referred to in arguments on both sides. Both stances towards NATO, do even here, as in the case of Kosovo, follow the constitutive norms of given identities; the Democratic Front was critical of the bombing, whereas the For a European Montenegro coalition talked about the bombing with an effort of legitimising it.

I will let the following quotations exemplify the understanding of the bombing in 1999 by the anti-side: "...when the 19 strongest countries in the world bombed us on 19 March,...(PoM 2015, p. 207)", which was also expressed in additional ways:

Why are we against? We will not be part of those who bombed us in 1999, who, without the Security Council's decision, threw over about 50,000 depleted uranium missiles over our country when 2500 people died... (PoM 2015, p. 192).

Everybody knows that the NATO aggression against Serbia and Montenegro carried out in 1999 was past all the rules,... (PoM 2015, p. 194).

Regarding the cognitive perspective of the anti-side I have identified a strong negative perception of the historical even in question. As a consequence of the high referred number of casualties, the understanding of the word *us* is interpreted to reflect a joint state of Serbia and Montenegro, thus marking the out-group being NATO. Additionally, by referring to the bombing as *aggression*, further indicates that the anti-side did not perceive the bombing as *help*, but rather *attack*. Of what is said, I argue that the content of previous analysis indicates, and is strongly affiliated to the Serb identity which is in line with NOVA and the Democratic Front policy of anti-NATO and joint state of Serbia and Montenegro. Finally, the use of the same historical event, was in the following statement expressed as a concrete metaphor of the opposition's standpoint on both the bombing in 1999, and the NATO accession:

...So this was not a show, it was a simulation of air hazards, and you could not endure ten-seconds, because you're reminded of March 24, 1999, and by this resolution you are bombing us again today (PoM 2015, p. 207).

The identity content of the pro-side arguments including the bombing in 1999, can be traced through cognitive models as an attempt to legitimise the attack using the word: *humanitarian*:

During its existence, NATO had its own humanitarian side. When it intervened in Kosovo to prevent the ethnic cleansing of the people,...(PoM 2015, p. 24)

First, the thesis is that perhaps the most equitable war in history was in 1999, about Kosovo...I will not give a halo of liberation, but it has liberated Kosovo, that NATO, ... (PoM 2015, p. 98).

I argue for a strong dominance of the cognitive model in the arguments above; The For a European Montenegro coalition perceived NATO's action as *humanitarian* and necessary in order to *liberate* Kosovo. The word *liberated*, consequently, indicates that Kosovo was under aggression from an *oppressor*, which in this case was the Serbian State. I argue, through relational comparison, that the pro-side referred to the Serbian State as oppressors, which in its turn worked to define the Montenegrins as opposite; in line with the *humanitarian* NATO and its member states.

#### 4.1.3. The content dimension of the Western and Eastern communities

The way in which the Western, respectively the Eastern community (including those countries belonging to these sides), were talked about was another dimension that I found of importance in relation to identity. Starting with the anti-side's perception of the West the main arguments appeared to be critical of The United States of America (henceforth: US) and, with exception, the European Union in relation to the migration crisis:

Let's see, the country of Hungary and the whole of Europe, and especially Hungary, proved to be the worst ... the most unfortunate attitude towards refugees. On the other hand, we have Serbia that everyone praises for the best relationship, best organised for all these refugees. So it's not always true on that side and it's not always that way... (PoM 2015, p. 130).

In the example above, Hungary along with the other European countries, who practised anti-migration policy, were hardly criticised and compared to Serbia which served to be an example of the opposite: the *good*. Here, it can be argued that identity is contented through both cognitive perception; by interpretation of each states' action, and relational comparison; by the way of criticising or complementing respective state and its action. Moreover, the

relational comparisons of remaining arguments, including the Western community, were overall critical and directed towards the US:

The basic and legitimate aim of the NATO Pact, I say a legitimate goal in their constructions and projections, was to create a so-called Kosovo-state so that Americans can install the largest database in Europe and you all know it (PoM 2015, p. 211).

The NATO Pact is an offensive, military alliance that serves to accomplish the imperialist goals of the United States, instrumentalised and used to create conflicts, to open up fights around the world, and to confront large-scale confrontations (PoM 2015, p. 169).

Through cognitive perception, NATO is by the anti-side perceived as an *offensive military alliance* which serves as a mean for the ends of the US. This indicates the opposing group's negative perception of both the US and the NATO alliance. US is also criticised and attributed with the term *imperialist* which, understood through relational comparison, indicates the *bad* that anti-side does not want to be affiliated with. However, I have also assessed the way in which the anti-side talks about the West and East in relation to each other. For instance, the US is criticised for what the anti-side believes is their goal, i.e., to undermine Russia:

... the first Secretary General Lord ... said: NATO was formed to make Russia an autos, to insert America and to lower Germany to the bottom. I do 100% not need such NATO... (PoM 2015, p. 202).

In the statement above, relational comparison suggests, which in this example appears obvious, that the anti-group is distancing themselves from the Western community because of their bad perception of it, whereas it indicates a friendly and caring relation towards Russia. However, throughout the debate the anti-side's relation towards the Eastern community appeared in general friendlier than towards the Western. This is mostly expressed and argued through the perception of the East as the biggest investor in Montenegro, including the reference of the largest number of tourists being from Serbia and Russia (PoM 2015, p. 239). Said arguments, along with the following (see quotation below), were used by the opposition



members, as they stated, in order to *enlighten* the citizens of Montenegro of why they should not be in favour of NATO:

...we have now, and we will probably also in the future, and announce intrusive investments from those countries that are not in NATO, China is not in NATO, gave us a billion for the highway,... Azerbaijan, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar invests,... do you know who are the biggest clients of Porto Montenegro? Russian capital - Russians and now that the Russians have stopped, or this investment has not yet stoped, but it is slowing down... (PoM 2015, p. 44).

Despite the critical arguments of the West in general, presented by the anti-side, further findings of identity content, based on the relational comparison, indicated an additional friendly relation towards Serbia and Russia. For instance, in following example a member of the Democratic Front expressed his dissatisfaction about a reporting made on the RTCG's (Radio and Television of Montenegro) portal. He argued it was offensive for half of the Montenegrin people as the reporting was critical of Russia and the Amphilochi (the head of the Serbian Orthodox church):

... But the problem is when we hear from the portal of Television of Montenegro, the views of a certain Mrs. Milic, who says the following... "I would not lose the energy to convince the paid souls of Rusophiles and Amphilochi's followers." The RTCG portal Public Service has left the room for this obscure person where she insults more than half of Montenegro ahead of the debate in the Parliament... (PoM 2015, p. 65).

I argue that the words *paid souls of Rusophiles* and *Amphilochi's followers* was insulting to the member of the Democratic Front because of his identity. This can be argued to be a consequence, as in the earlier example because of the friendly and protective relation of Russia and the Serbian Orthodox Church. Said two features are of great importance for the Serbian State which cherishes the relation to its *Brother Russia* (Milacic 2015) and is a *supporter of Amphilochi's church*. Additionally, the same member directed a critique towards the fact that the reporting was broadcasted ahead of the parliamentary debate, which indicates a cognitive perception of the report as an attempt of RTCG to influence political policy.

Moreover, the content of identity and friendly relation towards the East, are through social purposes also found in arguments drawing on historical ties with Russia:

I want to ask you to explain to me your historical knowledge of where have we been forsaken by Russia, from your perspective, and do you remember that your beloved city, you have the right to say that, I appreciate it, today, as yesterday my Belgrade, at least once was defended by the Russian army? Do you think they defended us from friends at that time ... at the time of King Nikola the sovereign master raised a hundred temples in Montenegro, believe me in this little reliable historical word, every single by Russian money. No foreign political success of Montenegro in its history has been recorded without the support of Russia. But, here I am ready to learn, I would like to tell you where they betrayed us once more, I would not defend the Russian Federation because I do not have this legal capacity, and trust me it is not my intention to, the truth is defending itself. I've never said that we were on different sides or with Americans in two world wars and with the Americans and with the Russians on the right side. I do not like to choose, especially when there is a danger to the head that chooses. Thank you very much (PoM 2015, p. 196).

The argument used to show the connection between the Russian State and Montenegro, from the quotation above, signals identity content, not only through social purposes defined by historical perception, but also through relational comparison and cognitive perception; the former by the friendly and protective argument of Russia, and the latter picturing a perception of current relation with Russia by referring to the past. Finally, additional arguments, understood as identity features, which further affirm the anti-NATO side's friendly relation towards Russia are found in following arguments:

...This House is obliged to apologise to Russia, the Russian people and the Russian army for such statements. Please, we are obliged to react. Remember, the diplomatic relations between our two countries have lasted 300 years. Because of these 300 years these insinuations cannot be so easily overlooked. We can say what we want, but if there was no Russia two centuries ago, there would be no Montenegro (PoM 2015, p. 198).

... but it took my attention, which is that Russia never helped Montenegro. It's not my topic even though I know something about it and I do not run this topic as a central one, but this statement was very characteristic..., but I am returning to this that Russia has never helped. I am moving to the data, now it's not a long history, a well-known politician in Russia, on those parades near Putin, I think his name is Shoygu, said that 300 million was paid for KAP (PoM 2015, p. 244).

Just as in the case of the anti-side, the results of the pro-side's stances towards the West, respectively the East, followed the appropriate behaviour suggested by the constitutive norms. With that said, contrary to the anti-side, the pro-side's relation towards the Western community was positive and the identity content was manifested in both cognitive model and relational comparison in the following quotations:

...This further supports the fact that Montenegro has never been a neutral state in its historical existence, but clearly committed in cooperation with its Western allies, especially with the United States, which even after 1918 supported Montenegro's position as a sovereign state and the struggle for her freedom (PoM 2015, p. 25).

... We are in the South of Europe, Greece is in the South of Europe and it is assumed that Ancient Greece is actually a cradle of West European civilisation...Here we are talking about a society that we appreciate that we belong to and from which we always took everything we needed and what was the best (PoM 2015, p. 126).

The reference: *cradle of civilisation* works as a positive cognitive depiction of the Western Community, including NATO. Moreover, the Montenegrin identity is contended in the relational comparison expressed through the long roots to the Western society which Montenegro naturally belongs. However, throughout the debate, the pro-side promoted in general arguments in favour of the West, but was overall neutral in its arguments about their relationship with Russia. One argument critical of Russia was raised depicting it as a bad partner compared to the US:

...Historically we have never benefited with an alliance with Russia...whenever we have relied on Russia, we have experienced some unpleasant surprise. Now I will explain to you the example of the last Yugoslavia. American assistance to Tito's Yugoslavia was important. According to some estimates from 1945 to the beginning of the 1980s, Yugoslavia received one hundred billion dollars in grants from the West, led by America ... Since I do not have the time to tell you what's all that bad from Russia, mostly those who read history in the right way can see... (PoM 2015, p. 194).

The argument above implies friendly relation with the US and unwanted relations with Russia. Finally, the identity is contended in the cognitive perception of historically bad luck of partnering with Russia, contrary to the memory and understanding of the US.

## 4.2. Contestation of the Montenegrin and Serb identity

By analysing the debate through the three selected aspects the findings revealed high content of identity in the debate. The findings demonstrated clear distinction between the groups' perception of respective community, historical events, as well as opposed interests and goals. The opposing arguments and disunited views did in some cases, such as the reference to Kosovo and the East, have a wider meaning for the Serb identity than Montenegrin. However, even if the degree matter of identity meaning was uneven, in the dimensions of this analysis, I argue that there was a clear and intense contestation between the Montenegrin and Serb identity, for instance in the disunited cognitive perception of the bombing. Additionally, both groups emphasised differences in relation to the wider communities in their pro and anti-NATO arguments, which demonstrated that the political attitudes of all members operated under clear aspects of their particular collective identity. A clear illustration of the latter was given by the findings extracted by the constitutive norms.

In summary of the analysing chapter I argue that, the policies of both elite coalitions, the For a European Montenegro and Democratic Front, were based on reasonings which promoted beliefs and values of the two biggest national identities in Montenegro. Thus, my conclusion is that identity was utilised in the attempt to promote, influence and legitimise the differing views and interests of the contesting collective identities in Montenegro regarding the country's foreign politics.

## 5. Conclusion

By looking closer at the domestic debate on NATO accession it appeared clear that the two competing sides, pro and anti-NATO did, which could be traced in their standpoints and arguments, act through the frameworks set by their respective identity. The results revealed that the debate contained identity dimensions of the two biggest national identities in Montenegro, which were contesting in promoting the interests and goals essential for each identity. The long going and historically rooted disagreements between the Montenegrin and Serbs were brought up to life in a new arena in the light of national security and the relations towards the wider communities. However, this study arrived to the conclusion that states with incoherent identities are in a critical zone when it comes down to decision making where beliefs, values, interests and goals are not in line, thus making identity an important factor in politics. An incoherent collective identity will in most of the times result in a debate where the differing interests will compete against each other, making decision making within such entities complicated.

Furthermore, findings of this study support the thesis of previous scholarships on identity politics, and calls in line with scholars within the field, for a greater respect and attention of studying identity's role in politics. Finally, the way in which this study was carried out was eased by the affiliation of Montenegro's political parties to the dominating identities in the country. Thereof, if a similar study is to be conducted the framework of this particular study needs to be addressed with consciousness, because of the non static political field and the continual construction of identity as a phenomena.

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## 7. Attachments

### 7.1. The arguments on Kosovo and NATO bombing of Serbia and Montenegro in 1999

	Kosovo	both	Bombing 1999
Serb identity	<p>"...southern Serbian province Kosovo i Metohija ..." p. 100.</p> <p>"...NATO celebrated it for 78 days bombarding the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Montenegro and Serbia against all UN Charters, just because we did not agree to voluntarily give them an integral part of the then state of the southern Serbian province of Kosovo and Metohija." p. 207.</p>	<p>"You're talking about Kosovo and Metohija, about the southern Serbian province, and you say that it was released. Who released it? ...Whose land is that, ...? It is a country of NATO, who occupied the southern Serbian province. ..." p.</p> <p>"An attack on Kosovo was an attack on Yugoslavia, Kosovo is a "ewe-lamb" of the Serb and Montenegrin people ..." p. 209.</p>	<p>"...when the 19 strongest countries in the world bombed us on 19 March,..." p. 207.</p> <p>"...The basic and legitimate aim of the NATO Pact, I say, a legitimate goal in their constructions and projections, was to create a so-called Kosovo state so that Americans can install the largest database in Europe and you all know it. And Kosovo is a state just as much as my Local Community Mojanovići." p. 211.</p> <p>"...So this was not a show, it was a simulation of air hazards, and you could not endure ten seconds, because you're reminded of March 24, 1999, and by this resolution you are bombing us again today." p. 207.</p>
	Kosovo		Bombing 1999
Montenegrin and other identity	<p>"...and I will tell you that Milo Djukanovic recognized Kosovo as an independent state." p. 209.</p>		<p>"During its existence, NATO had its own humanitarian side. When it intervened in Kosovo to prevent the ethnic cleansing of the people, ..." p. 24.</p> <p>"First, the thesis is that perhaps the most equitable war in history was in 1999, around Kosovo. Certainly not. I will not give a halo of liberation, but it has liberated Kosovo, that NATO,..." p. 98.</p>

## 7.2. The arguments on East and West

	West		East
<b>Serb identity</b>	<p>The basic and legitimate aim of the NATO Pact, I say a legitimate goal in their constructions and projections, was to create a so-called Kosovo-state so that Americans can install the largest database in Europe and you all know it. p. 211.</p> <p>The NATO Pact is an offensive, military alliance that serves to accomplish the imperialist goals of the United States, again instrumentalised and used to create conflicts, to open up fights around the world, and to confront large-scale confrontations. p. 169.</p> <p>Let's see the country of Hungary and the whole of Europe, and especially Hungary, proved to be the worst ... the most unfortunate attitude towards refugees. On the other hand, we have Serbia that everyone praises for the best relationship, best organized for all these refugees. So it's not always true on that side and it's not always that way. Thank you. p. 130.</p>	<p>..., the first Secretary General Lord ... said: NATO was formed to make Russia an autos, to insert America and to lower Germany to the bottom. I do 100% not need such NATO... p. 202.</p> <p>... But the problem is when we hear from the portal of Television of Montenegro, the views of a certain Mrs. Milic, who says the following. On the eve of the debate in the Assembly, in response to the question that the deputies will vote on the resolution in the coming days, he replies: "I am following the situation now, who will be honest and who will not, who is thinking about selling his voice to the highest bidding, and who reasons for a better future of Montenegro. "Ashamed should be, not she,... but, the one who expresses such views; RTCG portal, ... Or this ... obscure person, judging by what the press writes about her and what serious people say about her in Serbia: "I would not lose the energy to convince Rusophiles of the paid soul and Amphilochi's followers." The RTCG portal Public Service has left the room for this obscure person that she insults more than half of Montenegro ahead of the debate in the Parliament... p. 65.</p> <p>...we have now, and we will probably also in the future, and announce intrusive investments from those countries that are not in NATO, China is not in NATO, gave us a billion for the highway,.... Azerbaijan, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar invests,... do you know who are the biggest clients of Porto Montenegro? Russian capital - Russians and now that the Russians have stopped, or this investment has not yet stoped, but it slowing down... p. 44.</p>	<p>The economy, I think, was mentioned as a powerful argument. So don't not we have the biggest exchange with Serbia, look at statistics, which is not a member of the NATO Pact? Is it not the largest number of tourists from Russia and Serbia? Where are the gentlemen's foreign investments? Where did we find the loan for the biggest investment in capital in the history of Montenegro for the highway? Have we found it in America, Canada, Australia, France, Germany, China in the most favorable conditions. But it's all a frog. NATO remains a priority, only that unenlightened citizens have not yet seen. They need to be enlightened. p. 239.</p> <p>Many historical arguments have been drawn. I would only draw one one, which is not something spectacular, but it took my attention, which is that Russia never helped Montenegro. It's not my topic even though I know something about it and I do not run this topic as a central one, but this statement was very characteristic. ... I made an excursus, the more beautiful the side of history, but I am returning to this that Russia has never helped. I am moving to the data, now it's not a long history, a well-known politician in Russia, on those parades near Putin, I think his name is Shoygu, said that 300 million was paid for KAP. p. 244.</p> <p>... I have no problem to say that I voted in favor of a common state with Serbia at a referendum, I have no problem saying that the referendum was stolen... p. 215.</p>

		<p>... Today members and sympathizers of the New Serbian Democracy are clearly against the membership of Montenegro in the NATO pact, because we do not want to participate and be part of an alliance whose ultimate goal, ... is the weakening of Russia and the occupation of Russia. p. 181.</p>	<p>I want to ask you to explain to me your historical knowledge of where we have been forsaken by Russia, from your perspective, and do you remember that your beloved city, you have the right to say that, I appreciate it, today, as yesterday my Belgrade, at least once was defended by the Russian army? Do you think they defended us from friends at that time? ... ,at the time of King Nikola the sovereign master raised a hundred temples in Montenegro, believe me in this little reliable historical word, every single by Russian money. No foreign political success of Montenegro in its history has been recorded without the support of Russia. But, here I am ready to learn, I would like to tell you where they betrayed us once more, I would not defend the Russian Federation because I do not have this legal capacity, and trust me it is not my intention to, the truth is defending itself. I've never said that we were on different sides or with Americans in two world wars and with the Americans and with the Russians on the right side. I do not like to choose, especially when there is a danger to the head that chooses. Thank you very much. p. 196.</p> <p>p. 198...without disputing the right of anyone to have his opinion on every issue, ... if this was said somewhere in a cafe, it would be all the same to me, but do not forget - this was said in the highest representative house of Montenegro , the army of the most hostile country that Montenegro had in its history was publicly indicted. This House is obliged to apologize to Russia, the Russian people and the Russian army for such statements. Please, we are obliged to react. Remember, the diplomatic relations between our two countries have lasted 300 years.Because of these 300 years these insinuations cannot be so easily overlooked over. We can say what we want, but if there was no Russia two centuries ago, there would be no Montenegro.</p>
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Montenegrin and other identity	<p>...This further supports the fact that Montenegro has never been a neutral state in its historical existence, but clearly committed in cooperation with its Western allies, especially with the United States, which even after 1918 supported Montenegro's position as a sovereign state and the struggle for her freedom. p. 25</p> <p>... We are in the South of Europe, Greece is in the South of Europe and it is assumed that Ancient Greece is actually a cradle of West European civilization...Here we are talking about a society that we appreciate that we belong and from which we always took everything we needed and what the best. p. 126</p> <p>Neut. In that context ... the relationship between Montenegro and Russia, the compliance of Montenegro's foreign policy with Russia's foreign policy, and make the only possible conclusion. It is that Montenegro does not have bad intentions with its aspirations, ... its goals for integration, towards Russia - its traditional friend, a traditional partner, but only good for its own country, ... p. 184.</p>	<p>Mr. Djukanovic has some illogicalities. First you expressed your view of communism that was very negative, and then you pointed out / Prekid / Russia, while you forgot that Russia is the first communist country, I think you know it perfectly well that today's leadership of Russia, that all of them are formerly Communists. The other thing you do is assume that anyone who is behind NATO is against Russia, which is not true. Do not forget that today Russia is a member of the Partnership for Peace, that Serbia is also a member of the Partnership for Peace. It seems that you are looking at the interests of someone else, not citizens of Montenegro. We do not look at the interests of neither Russia nor the United States, nor the interests of the NATO Pact. We are looking at the interests of the citizens of Montenegro. I ask the citizens, above all, in Montenegro, what is the interest of the citizens of Montenegro, with whom to be today, whether to protect the interests of some other states or the interests of the citizens of Montenegro. At this moment, I think it is best to be in company with the United States, Germany, France, Italy, with the whole developed world. Thank you. p. 187</p>	<p>"During its existence, NATO had its own humanitarian side. When it intervened in Kosovo to prevent the ethnic cleansing of the people,..." p. 24.</p> <p>"First, the thesis is that perhaps the most equitable war in history was in 1999, around Kosovo. Certainly not. I will not give a halo of liberation, but it has liberated Kosovo, that NATO, ..." p. 98.</p> <p>...Historically we have never benefited with an alliance with Russia...whenever we have relied on Russia, we have experienced some unpleasant surprise. Now I will explain to you the example of the last Yugoslavia. American assistance to Tito's Yugoslavia was important. According to some estimates from 1945 to the beginning of the 1980s, Yugoslavia received one hundred billion dollars in grants from the West, led by America. The next hundred billion is like a thousand billion now, of course not in money, but in technologies, licenses, various rights, opening the market, etc. ... Since I do not have the time to tell you what's all that bad from Russia, mostly those who read history in the right way can see... p. 194.</p>