

Re-designation of Ethnic Muslims as Bosniaks in Montenegro:

Local Specificities and Dynamics of This Process

Mehmed Đečević

Danijela Vuković-Čalasan

Saša Knežević

Faculty of Political Sciences: 2, University of Montenegro, Podgorica, Montenegro

The purpose of this article is to analyse the dynamics of the process of re-designation of ethnic Muslims as Bosniaks in Montenegro. Through a comparison with the analogous process in Serbia, certain specificities are indicated in the context of Montenegro. In line with the premises of the elite theory, we point to the divergent influence of the socially engaged members of the Slavic Muslim cultural corpus in Montenegro on the process of ethnic self-identification of Slavic Muslims in the country. The willingness of a part of this corpus to adhere to the views of the elite part of the population that opposed the ethnonym “Bosniak,” and insisted on retaining the ethnic designation “Muslim,” is interpreted through the lens of social constructivism. The article indicates the formation of the socio-political constructs of “Montenegrin” and “Muslim” that occurred in the last decade of the twentieth century. These two constructs are interlinked; the former is superior as it has ethnic and ethical-political semantic layers, while the latter is subordinate, and it partially stems from the positive sentiment of Slavic Muslims towards Montenegro as the country they inhabit. The relationship between these constructs interferes with the process of accepting national Bosniakhood in a part of the Muslim population in Montenegro. A comparison of the results from the last two population censuses in Montenegro indicates a trend of acceptance of the ethnonym “Bosniak” among the Slavic Muslim population in Montenegro. However, given the slow dynamics of the process, affected by the continuous exposure to factors that increase its complexity, national divergence of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro will most likely prevail.

Keywords: *ethnic Muslims; Bosniaks; Montenegro; population census; constructivism*

Introduction

Formal re-designation of Slavic Muslims in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia¹ (SFRY) from ethnic Muslims to Bosniaks has been a long-lasting process, initiated in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1993. The act provoked conflicting reactions in the former SFRY, as it was interpreted either as a reversion to the old national designation of Muslims, or as an attempt to form a political nation. While the majority

of Slavic Muslims native to Serbia (the area of the former Novopazarski Sandžak, in particular) embraced the designation Bosniak relatively quickly, the emergence of this ethnonym in Montenegro was greeted with dispute.² The process of re-designation of ethnic Muslims as Bosniaks in Montenegro has been significantly different from the corresponding process in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia.

Although it is impossible to discern substantial cultural differences between Montenegrin citizens who declare themselves Muslims and those who identify as Bosniaks, the preamble of the current Constitution of Montenegro, adopted in 2007, recognises them as two different peoples.³ Given that they belong to the same cultural entity, the following question emerges: what are the political and social factors that caused the division between the members of this cultural entity in Montenegro, and enabled its persistence, resulting in legal-constitutional, political, and administrative verification? Another contribution to the complexity of the matter is the fact that in Serbia, which had been in various forms of state union with Montenegro ever since the collapse of SFRY until the Montenegrin sovereignty referendum in 2006, the process of re-designation of ethnic Muslims as Bosniaks never caused significant disputes, nor was the difference between ethnic Muslims and Bosniaks ever constitutionally, politically, or institutionally recognised.

The aim of this article is to indicate some of the socio-political and social currents in Montenegro, as well as some of the specificities of the position of Slavic Muslims in the country that affected national self-identification of the Slavic Muslim cultural corpus in Montenegro, driving it toward fragmentation, rather than toward firm acceptance of national Bosniakhood, which was the case in Serbia. In order to better understand the circumstances that made the dynamics of acceptance of Bosniakhood among Slavic Muslims in Montenegro so specific, we will address several relevant topics: (1) a historic overview of the position of Muslims/Bosniaks in South Slavic countries; (2) a comparison of the trend of ethnic self-identification of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro and in Serbia; (3) a comparative analysis of the latest two population censuses in Montenegro; (4) the socio-political formation of constructs relevant to the process of ethnic self-identification of the analysed corpus in Montenegro, especially in the last decade of the twentieth century, and in comparison with the analogous process in Serbia.

The Analytical and Theoretical Framework

In this article, the designation South-Slavic Muslim (or Slavic Muslim) is used for denoting the cultural corpus that is autochthonous to several countries of the former SFRY, with the following distinct identity characteristics: shared cultural and confessional Islamic heritage; Serbo-Croatian is their mother tongue. Since the narrow subject of the article is the process of accepting Bosniakhood as an ethnic denomination on behalf of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro, we will start by stating that the subjective ethnic self-identification of this part of the Montenegrin population, as recorded by the relevant population censuses, is tripartite. A part of this

population declare themselves as “Montenegrin” (of Muslim denomination) and see themselves as part of the Montenegrin national corpus, which further implies that they perceive their cultural specificities as confessional.⁴ Another part of the population prefers the designation “Muslim” in expressing ethnicity, thus acknowledging their cultural distinctiveness as ethnic, and deriving the said distinctiveness from the confessional layer of their identity. The third part of the population uses the designation “Bosniak,” whose semantic origins are territorial, since the etymology of the term is tied to Bosnia.⁵ This part of the Slavic Muslim population in Montenegro uses the designation to associate itself with the entire Slavic Muslim cultural corpus, which is mainly autochthonous to the area of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In our analysis of the subject topic, we rely on two theoretical approaches that are, in this case, complimentary. Within the first approach, the contemporary elite theory, we analyse the effects of the factors that influenced ethnic self-identification of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro “from above.” Our approach to ethnicity within this theory is symbolic, since ethnicity is understood as a political phenomenon, and the profiling of ethno-national identities is mainly seen as a result of activities of the intellectual and political elite of the corpus. Our starting point for this article is Teun A. van Dijk’s notion of symbolic elites, defined as “groups that are directly involved in making and legitimating general policy decisions about minorities, namely, leading politicians, and those who directly address public opinion and debate such as leading editors, TV program directors, columnists, writers, textbook authors, and scholars in the fields of the humanities and social sciences.”⁶ The other approach, based on constructivist theory, enables us to understand why the insistence on retaining the designation “Muslim,” as expressed by the elite of the Slavic Muslim population in Montenegro, was supported by a part of the Slavic-Muslim cultural corpus in Montenegro. The constructivist metatheory, which sees the individual as an active creator of meaning, but also as a being that acts in line with what is observable in social interactions, shows that, depending on the perspective and interpretation, “the one and the same no longer has to be the one and the same.”⁷ Since this is what happened to Slavic Muslims in Montenegro, we will use constructivist concepts to indicate the process of forming the constructs “Montenegrin,” “Muslim,” and “Bosniak” in recent social and political processes in Montenegro, and aim at explaining the persistence of the ethnonym “Muslim” in this country.

As the main source of data for our analysis, we rely upon the relevant population censuses: the 2002 and 2011 censuses in Serbia, and the 2003 and 2011 censuses in Montenegro.

The Historical Perspective: Designation of South Slavic Muslims (in SFRY and the Predecessor States)

In order to understand the historical factors that contributed to generating ethnic fragmentation of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro, we will shortly refer to the circumstances

that shaped the growth of the Slavic Muslim cultural entity into a people/nation. We will provide an overview of the dynamics of acceptance of the ethnonym “Bosniak” by Slavic Muslims in Montenegro in the period succeeding the acceptance of this designation among Slavic Muslims in surrounding countries, where they are an autochthonous people.⁸

Historical sources relevant to this topic indicate that, following the final suppression of the Ottoman Empire from the Balkans in 1913, a minor part of Slavic Muslims became nationals of Montenegro and Serbia.⁹ A vast majority of the Slavic Muslim community was integrated into the Habsburg monarchy in 1878, in line with events in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Following that period, the Yugoslav national question was resolved, and a joint Yugoslav country was formed, uniting the Kingdom of Serbia (and Montenegro) and South Slavic countries of the Habsburg monarchy. The first such state was formed in 1918, called the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. During the formation negotiation procedures, the underlying opinion was that Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes are one people comprising three tribes and bearing three names, while other ethno-cultural communities, including South Slavic Muslims, were granted no particular distinctiveness.

The process of national affirmation of Slavic Muslims in Yugoslavia started after World War II, and evolved gradually. The Constituent Assembly of Yugoslavia adopted a Constitution in 1954 that entailed formal recognition of Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Montenegrins, and Macedonians as distinct national entities, unlike Muslims or Bosniaks. Imamović notes that by not being granted national recognition, Yugoslav Muslims were given the option to peacefully declare themselves Serbs, Croats or Montenegrins, depending on their cultural-political development.¹⁰ Filandra adds that the programme of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, adopted in 1958, recognised the “equality and the right of declaration for all Yugoslav peoples—Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians and Montenegrins,” while Muslims were not mentioned as a people or as a national minority holding distinct rights.¹¹

The aforementioned political decisions strongly affected the self-awareness of South Slavic Muslims, which as evidenced by the relevant censuses. On the first post-war census in Yugoslavia, South Slavic Muslims could “declare” their nationality using one of the constitutionally acknowledged entries (Serb, Croat, Montenegrin, Slovene, and Macedonian) or remain “undecided.”¹² Consequently, the 1948 census in Yugoslavia recorded 808,921 nationally undecided Muslims, 5.1 percent of the Yugoslav population. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there were 788,403 undecided Muslims, 30.7 percent of the Bosnian population; and in Serbia, 17,315 remained undecided (0.3 percent of the Serbian population); while only 387 (0.1 percent of the Montenegrin population) remained undecided in Montenegro. The majority of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro identified as ethnic Montenegrins, “in line with their cultural and political development,” while only a minor part opted for

“undecided-Muslim.” Ethnic self-declaration of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro during this census differed significantly from the self-declaration of the mainstream of the entire Slavic Muslim corpus.

The statistical designation “ethnic Muslim” was first introduced in 1961, with 972,960 people opting for it in Yugoslavia (5.2 percent of the Yugoslav population). This census recorded 842,248 ethnic Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 25.7 percent of the Bosnian population. There were 93,467 ethnic Muslims in Serbia, 1.2 percent of the Serbian population. In Montenegro, 30,665, or 6.5 percent of the Montenegrin population, used the designation “ethnic Muslim,” while other Slavic Muslims in the country chose the designation “Montenegrin.” The situation in Montenegro indicates ethnic fragmentation of Slavic Muslims in the country, given that Slavic Muslims made for far more than the registered 6.5 percent of “ethnic Muslims,” which also became evident in the 1971 census.

In 1960s, the League of Communists of Yugoslavia argued that the thesis on the national declaration of Bosniaks was a “remnant of the nationalistic view of the population” and that “it had no scientific foundations,” according to Šabotić.¹³ The confusion over national distinctiveness of South Slavic Muslims reached a final resolution in February 1968, when the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Bosnia and Herzegovina explicitly stated that Muslims are a distinct people.¹⁴ During the 1971 population census, issues regarding the subjective aspect of national identification of South Slavic Muslims were also resolved, as a vast majority of this part of the Yugoslav population embraced the national designation Muslim. This census recorded 1,729,932 ethnic Muslims in Yugoslavia—8.4 percent of the Yugoslav population. The vast majority of ethnic Muslims lived in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the time—1,482,430 people, or 39.6 percent of the Bosnian population. The census recorded 154,330 ethnic Muslims in Serbia, 1.8 percent of the Serbian population. In Montenegro, the majority of Slavic Muslims joined the mainstream of the ethnic corpus.¹⁵ The census recorded 70,236 ethnic Muslims in the country, 13.3 percent of the Montenegrin population.

The ethnic designation *Muslim* was used by members of the Slavic Muslim corpus during the two SFRY censuses that followed, in 1981 and 1991. It was adopted by Muslims in the Federal Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and those autochthonous to Serbia and Montenegro. During the 1981 population census in Montenegro, 13.4 percent of the population identified as Muslim, and 14.6 percent did so in 1991.¹⁶

The beginning of the 1990s was marked by the collapse of SFRY, followed by armed conflict, which reached Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992. In the midst of warfare, the “old historic designation Bosniaks” underwent revival. This decision was formally acknowledged during the First Bosniak Congress, held in Sarajevo, in the autumn of 1993 when the “Bosnian-Muslim population” reverted to their old designation, according to Imamović.¹⁷ For our theoretical framework, it is worth noting

that the Congress was organised by the Council of Bosniak Intellectuals, and that the elite of the Slavic Muslim corpus in Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted a Declaration on “reversion to the historical designation Bosniak”¹⁸ on this occasion. In the meantime, the results of the first post-war census in Bosnia, conducted in 2013, were published.¹⁹ According to the census, out of the 3,531,159 people comprising the population of Bosnia, 1,769,592 or 50.1 percent were Bosniaks. Given that 1,790,454 people in Bosnia stated that they were confessional Muslims, Bosniaks made for 98.8 percent of the total number. These results show that Slavic Muslims in Bosnia embraced the designation “Bosniak” as their ethnonym.

In summarising this initial overview, we first reiterate that South Slavic Muslims in SFRY had the option to declare themselves using a specific national designation during the 1971 census, which had an unambiguously positive impact on some aspects of their identity.²⁰ Until then, members of this population had not had the option to declare themselves using a unique, distinct ethnic entry, either in SFRY or in the South Slavic states that preceded its formation (the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, nor in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia).

Secondly, when South Slavic Muslims were recognised as a separate national entity in 1968, and when they were (for the first time) given the option to declare their identity through a distinct national designation, their ethnic distinctiveness was recognised through a designation that was, in fact, confessional: Slavic Muslims in SFRY could use the designation “Muslim,” which primarily indicates religious affiliation, and cannot be semantically linked with a country or a territory.²¹

Thirdly, national self-identification of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro started to resemble the same process among the entire Slavic-Muslim cultural corpus in SFRY, especially when the members of this corpus were given the chance to identify themselves using a unique, positively defined ethnonym. During the 1948 census, ethnic self-identification of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro was significantly different from the analogous process of the complete Slavic Muslim corpus. However, in between the 1971 and 1991 censuses, the trend of ethnic self-identification of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro converged toward the analogous trend of complete national maturation and unique self-declaration of Slavic Muslims in SFRY. All of the aforementioned renders the question of sudden fragmentation of Muslims in Montenegro during the last two censuses (in 2003 and 2011) particularly interesting.

Slavic Muslims in Serbia: A Firm Acceptance of Bosniakhood

The following table contains part of the data from the last two population censuses in Serbia, systematised according to the subject topic.²² The 2002 census was the first census in Serbia that recorded an initiative on behalf of the Slavic Muslims in Serbia to identify as Bosniaks.

Table 1
The Numbers and Percentages of Ethnic Communities in Serbia Recorded by
the Last Two Censuses^a

	2002		2011		Difference		Difference/2002 Percentage ^b
	Numbers	Percentage	Numbers	Percentage	Numbers	Percentage	
Serbs	6,212,838	82.9	5,988,150	83.3	-224,688	+0.4	-3.6
Montenegrins	69,049	0.9	38,527	0.5	-30,522	-0.4	-44.2
Yugoslavs	80,721	1.1	23,303	0.3	-57,418	-0.8	-71.1
Albanians	61,647	0.8	5,809	0.1	-55,838	-0.7	-90.6
Bosniaks	136,087	1.8	145,278	2	+9,191	+0.2	+6.8
Hungarians	293,299	3.9	253,899	3.5	-39,400	-0.4	-13.4
Muslims	19,503	0.3	22,301	0.3	+2,798	0	+14.3
Roma	108,193	1.4	147,604	2.1	+39,411	+0.7	+36.4
Croats	70,602	0.9	57,900	0.8	-12,702	-0.1	-18.0
Others	446,062	6	504,091	7.1	+58,029	+1.1	+3.6
Total	7,498,001	100	7,186,862	100	-311,139	-	-4.1

a. All the data from the population censuses in Serbia is available from: www.popis2011.stat.rs and <http://www.mtt.org.rs/Srbijapopis2002.pdf> (accessed 3 October 2015).

b. Data in this column represent the percentual growth rates of the isolated ethnic communities compared to the 2002 census results. It represents the difference in the percentage of the members of a particular community between the two censuses. Hence, it is an indicator of ethnic vitality of a community, which is more reliable than the difference in the numbers presented in the preceding column – showing the percentage of these ethnic communities in the total population of the country.

Table 1 suggests that the proportion of Bosniaks and ethnic Muslims in the entire population of Serbia is relatively small, and that Bosniaks and Muslims fall into the category of the few ethnic communities in Serbia that demonstrate demographic vitality over time, as indicated by the last column.²³ Additionally, the percentage of Bosniaks in the total population of Serbia increased in between the two censuses, albeit to a small extent (0.2 percent). For this article, the analysis of ethnic fragmentation of the Slavic Muslim cultural corpus is of particular significance, as illustrated by the following indicators.

Table 2
Bosniaks and Muslims in Serbia, According to the Latest Two Censuses

	2002		2011	
	Numbers	Percentage	Numbers	Percentage
Bosniaks	136,087	87.5	145,278	86.7
Muslims	19,503	12.5	22,301	13.3
Total	155,590	100	167,579	100

During the 2002 population census, a total of 136,087 Slavic Muslims in Serbia declared themselves “Bosniak,” while only 19,503 people chose the designation “Muslim”

(as indicated in Table 2). A similar ratio was recorded by the latest census in Serbia, in 2011. The process of re-designation of ethnic Muslims as Bosniaks in Serbia was not marked by significant fragmentation, according to the results of relevant censuses. In other words, this part of the population of Serbia followed the ethnic self-declaration of the mainstream of the people—the Bosniaks autochthonous to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The results of ethnic identification of Slavic Muslims in Serbia induced the process of renaming the umbrella organisation of Muslims in Serbia, the Muslim National Council of Sandžak, into the Bosniak National Council.²⁴ The final resolution occurred in 2003, following the census that officially recorded that the majority of Slavic Muslims in Serbia accepted the term *Bosniak* as their ethnonym. The homogeneity in terms of national self-identification of Slavic Muslims in Serbia was one of the reasons for not forming a separate national council for the minority of the population who identified as Muslim. This fact is significant for interpreting the various aspects of fragmentation of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro.²⁵

Population Censuses in Montenegro in 2003 and 2011: National and Religious Heterogeneity

In order to understand the trends that are relevant for our analysis, we will point out the data related to ethnic self-identification from the last two censuses in Montenegro.

Table 3
The Numbers and Percentage of Ethnic Communities in the Population of Montenegro Recorded by the Last Two Censuses^a

	2003		2011		Difference		Difference/2003 percentage
	Numbers	Percentage	Numbers ^b	Percentage	Numbers	Percentage	
Montenegrins	267,669	43.2	280,873	45.3	+13,204	+2.1	+4.9
Serbs	198,414	32.0	180,213	29.1	-18,201	-2.9	-9.2
Bosniaks	48,184	7.8	53,786	8.7	+5,602	+0.9	+11.6
Muslims	24,625	4.0	20,977	3.4	-3,648	-0.6	-14.8
Albanians	31,163	5.0	30,439	4.9	-724	-0.1	-2.3
Croats	6,811	1.1	6,021	1.0	-790	-0.1	-11.6
Others	43,279	6.9	47,720	7.6	+4,441	+0.7	+10.3
Total	620,145	100	620,029	100	+116	—	0

a. All the data from the 2003 and 2011 censuses in Montenegro are available from the Monstat website: <http://www.monstat.org/cg/> (accessed 15 October 2015).

b. The results presented in this column are slightly different from the officially published results, regarding Montenegrins, Serbs, Bosniaks, and Muslims. The 2003 census did not acknowledge “dual” ethnic designations; the people who declared themselves using a dual ethnonym were treated as members of the population designated by the first part of the ethnonym (e.g., Bosniak-Muslims were recorded as Bosniaks, Montenegrin-Serbs were Montenegrins). During the analysis of the 2011 census results, dual designations were presented in official publications, with figures associated to them. In order to make the results of the two censuses comparable, we applied the 2003 census methodology to analysing the 2011 census results. If the reader is interested in the raw data from the 2011 census, they are available from the Monstat website.

Regarding ethnic transfers between the two censuses, it is evident that the indicators of the percentage of ethnic communities in the total population of Montenegro remained relatively stable. The relative stability of the ethnic communities is underscored because of the assertions made within identity debates that followed the renewal of Montenegrin sovereignty in 2006 that “Serbs in Montenegro are a political category which will melt away by the next census” and that “all ethnic Muslims in Montenegro without exceptions identify as Bosniaks,” which would induce “a reduction of their percentage in the population to a level of statistical error.”²⁶ Contrary to these claims, Table 3 illustrates that although the latest census records a demographic growth of Montenegrins and Bosniaks, mostly at the expense of Serbs and ethnic Muslims, both of these ethnic groups (Serbs and ethnic Muslims) show certain demographic vitality. The most significant population drop since the 2003 census was recorded for ethnic Muslims (14.8 percent), while the Bosniak population increased in the same period (by 11.6 percent).

The Slavic Muslim Ethnic Corpus at the 2003 Census: The Beginning of Fragmentation

The 2003 population census was the first census in Montenegro that granted Slavic Muslims the opportunity to declare themselves Bosniaks, which followed the momentum gained by the process of re-designation of the mainstream of the people. The acceptance of the ethnonym “Bosniak” by Slavic Muslims in Montenegro caused opposing reactions, which is one of the specificities of the process that we submit to analysis.²⁷ A significant proportion of the Muslim intelligentsia in Montenegro, as well as the socially and politically engaged members of this ethnic group, supported the view that the designation “Bosniak” is adequate for the entire South-Slavic Muslim corpus (including Slavic Muslims originally from Montenegro), which was in line with the decisions made at the 1993 Bosniak Congress. A gathering of the elite representatives of the Slavic Muslim cultural corpus was organised in Montenegro, just like the one in Sarajevo, at which the participants signed the Declaration on the ethnic name Bosniak.²⁸ The Declaration explains that the part of the Slavic Muslim elite that partook the gathering saw the re-designation of ethnic Muslims as Bosniaks as a “return of Bosniaks to their old national name,” which was in line with how this process was interpreted by the Slavic Muslim elite in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in Serbia. In support of that thesis, the following arguments were commonly made:²⁹

1. The ethnonym “Muslim” is unsustainable in the long term as it does not point to ethnic/national but rather confessional identity.
2. The same designation was used for all South Slavic Muslims in all South Slavic states, regardless of the territory they inhabited.
3. The designation Bosniak had been used for centuries, especially in the period of the Ottoman rule, in the territory that is now part of Montenegro, inhabited by Slavic Muslims.

The cultural unity of this population was also underlined, along with the fact that if the “mainstream of the people” decided to “revert to the old designation,” the “periphery” is expected to do the same.³⁰

Parallel to this, a smaller group of socially engaged individuals manifested resistance towards the designation “Bosniak.” In that context, the NGO Matica Muslimanska, whose representatives supported the thesis on the distinct characteristics of “Montenegrin Muslims,” showed strong support of that thesis.³¹ According to representatives of Matica Muslimanska, this distinctiveness ought to be expressed through an appropriate designation, by keeping the term Muslim as the proper ethnonym. Prior to the 2003 census, followers of this thesis declared that Bosniaks are a “newly formed nation,” and that “Montenegrin Muslims have no connections with ‘newly created’ Bosniaks.” It was also underlined that the issue at hand was a “greater-Bosniak assimilation of autochthonous Montenegrin Muslims.”³² Thus, two loud and opposing currents were formed among the cultural corpus of the Slavic Muslim elite, which had a divergent influence on the ethnic self-identification of the members of this cultural entity during the 2003 population census. Public discussions and debates between these two alliances continued in the media up until the census.

Table 4 indicates how Slavic Muslims in Montenegro ethnically declared themselves at the 2003 census:

Table 4
National Self-identification of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro at the 2003 Census

	Numbers	Percentage
Bosniaks	48,184	57
Muslims	24,625	29.1
Montenegrians	11,710	13.9
Total	84,519	100

Table 4 illustrates that the absolute majority of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro (57 percent) accepted the term “Bosniak” at the 2003 census, but also that a significant portion of the members of this community (29.1 percent) adhered to the ethnic designation “Muslim.” Less than 14 percent of South Slavic Muslims in Montenegro declared that they belonged to the Montenegrin ethnic corpus.

The results of the 2003 census demonstrated that those Slavic Muslims in Montenegro who perceived their specificities as ethnic, rather than only confessional, were identified by the use of two ethnonyms—Bosniak and Muslim—in administrative and statistic terms, although not constitutionally and politically.³³ Despite the intense debates on the topic of ethnic self-identification of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro prior to the census, it was not until after the results of the

census were published that the fragmentation among the analysed population became a recognisable social fact, which formed the grounds for political processes that ensued, and that finally resulted in a political verification of the observed divergence in national self-identification. After the results of the census were published, the intellectual elite of Bosniaks in Montenegro supported the view that the people who declared themselves Bosniaks, and those who declared themselves ethnic Muslims were, in fact, one people who used different ethnic designations on the census.³⁴ It was underlined that “there was no evident division in terms of the national sentiment of the people,” that is, that “national Muslims do not perceive themselves as an entity that is separate and different from Bosniaks.” This stance was made explicit in public speeches of the supporters of the aforementioned thesis, since after 2003, they referred to their people as Bosniaks/Muslims rather than exclusively Bosniaks or Muslims.³⁵ Contrary to that, representatives of *Matica Muslimanska* energetically refuted the designation Bosniaks/Muslims, characterised it as “assimilatory,” and adhered to their thesis on “national distinctiveness” of ethnic Muslims and Bosniaks.³⁶ The disputes between the two elite groups prevailed even after the census.

Intercensal Political Events—The Division into Two Nations Receives Constitutional-Legal Verification

Meanwhile, Montenegro regained sovereignty, which was supported by Slavic Muslims, regardless of their ethnic identification, by voting for the independence of Montenegro on the referendum on its state-legal status.³⁷ Prior to the referendum, the Bosniak Party of Montenegro was formed, the first among significant political organisations gathering South Slavic Muslims in Montenegro ever since this ethnic group was granted the right to identify as Bosniaks. In the pre-referendum stages, this party negotiated with the political current that promoted Montenegro’s independence, only to join the current and support the renewal of Montenegrin sovereignty. Upon regaining sovereignty, the Montenegrin government adopted a new Constitution in 2007. The preamble of the Constitution stated that “members of peoples and minorities that live in Montenegro are Montenegrins, Serbs, Bosniaks, Albanians, Muslims, Croats and others.” During the long negotiations on the content of the Constitution, representatives of the Bosniak Party of Montenegro and individuals from the Social Democratic Party of Montenegro aspired to merging Bosniaks and Muslims in the preamble. However, these communities entered the legal act as separate ethnic entities. This is how the thesis on Muslims and Bosniaks being two completely different peoples, zealously supported by a part of the Slavic Muslim elite in Montenegro gathered around *Matica Muslimanska*, received constitutional and political verification. What followed, in line with the Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms, was the formation of national minority councils in Montenegro—two separate councils were formed for members of the two constitutionally recognised communities.

Consequently, members of a once-unified community could choose between two “ethnic entries” at the 2011 population census, which had administrative-statistical and legal-political grounds.

2011 Census: Sealed Division?

With the aim of identifying the trends in ethnic self-declaration of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro, Table 5 presents data regarding the analysed population from the 2003 and 2011 censuses.

Table 5
Ethnic Self-identification of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro According to the Last Two Population Censuses

	2003		2011		Difference: 2003 – 2011		
	Numbers	Percentage	Numbers	Percentage	Numbers	Percentage	Difference/2003
Bosniaks	48,184	57	53,786	61.3	+5,602	+4.3	+11.6
Muslims	24,625	29.1	20,977	23.9	–3,648	–5.2	–14.8
Montenegrins	11,710	13.9	12,933	14.8	+1,223	+0.9	+10.4
Total	84,519	100	87,696	100	+3,177	–	+3.8

Table 5 indicates that in the period between the last two censuses, a transfer occurred in which ethnic Muslims started declaring themselves Bosniak, and a smaller percentage started identifying as Montenegrin. At the 2011 census, a significant majority (61.3 percent) of South Slavic Muslims in Montenegro opted for the entry “Bosniak” as their ethnic designation—a majority greater than in the 2003 census (57 percent). Simultaneously, the percentage of ethnic Muslims in the Slavic Muslim population of Montenegro dropped by a few percent (5.2 percent), while the percentage of South Slavic Muslims who declared themselves Montenegrin at the 2011 census was slightly higher than in 2003 (increased by 0.9 percent). The trend of fading of the Muslim national option among the members of the Slavic Muslim cultural corpus of Montenegro is evident from the last column: the intercensal deficit of 3,648 people who opted for this ethnic designation represents a decrease of 14.8 percent of the number of ethnic Muslims in the 2003 census, while the population of Bosniaks and Montenegrins of Muslim denomination was on an increase. Table 5 unequivocally suggests that there is a trend of greater acceptance of ethnonyms with “territorial overtones” among Slavic Muslims in Montenegro (primarily, “Bosniak,” but also “Montenegrin”), while the notion of “ethnic Muslim” is proportionately losing the support of this part of the population.

Although the percentage of ethnic Muslims in the analysed period decreased, this trend is not nearly as dynamic as the representatives of the Bosniak national option had announced that it would be in the period preceding the latest census. Since 3.4

percent of the entire population of Montenegro are ethnic Muslims (Table 3), and ethnic Muslims comprise one quarter of the Slavic Muslims corpus in Montenegro (Table 5), the process of “reversion of Bosniaks to their old national designation” will most likely not be completed in the near future.

The mere prospect of preventing further divergence of representatives of what was once one people, and to reach a consensus on the issue of national self-identification seems to be irretrievably lost. This view is supported by the fact that the initial statistical division to Bosniaks and Muslims, created in between the latest two censuses, gained a constitutional and political dimension and that there are two opposing intellectual currents among the elite groups of the Slavic Muslim cultural corpus.

Serbia, Montenegro—Where Do the Differences in the Levels of Fragmentation Come from?

So far, we can infer that the complete Slavic Muslim cultural entity is caught in a process of defining their own identity, which sets a series of dilemmas before the representatives of this corpus in terms of their distinctive characteristics and ethnic self-identification. Various social and political factors affect the equation that results in the selection of one of the available ethnic identifications at the individual level, especially in the peripheral part of this cultural corpus. Finally, we will point out a primary factor that played a special role in making the process of ethnic fragmentation of the Slavic Muslim corpus native to Montenegro even more complex, compared to the status of Slavic Muslims in Serbia.

We believe that this circumstance had a direct socio-psychological effect, and that it made it possible for the thesis on national distinction between ethnic Muslims and Bosniaks, supported by a part of the Slavic Muslim elite in Montenegro, to thrive. This, in turn, significantly contributes to explaining the vitality of national Muslimhood in Montenegro.

Relevant sociological research records a high degree of identification of the Slavic Muslim population in Montenegro with the country that they inhabit, which is not the case with Slavic Muslims in Serbia, that is, the area of Sandžak. For example, results of research conducted after the 2003 census by the Centre for Democracy and Human Rights in Podgorica records that Bosniaks and Muslims in Montenegro express a higher degree of affiliation with Montenegro than any other minority that entered the preamble of the Constitution of Montenegro, save for Croats.³⁸ Interestingly, this research was conducted in a period when the Bosniakhood debate was a hot topic, and it confirmed that Bosniaks and Muslims showed greater affiliation with Montenegro than ethnic Montenegrins. Similarly, it showed that Croats and Bosniaks had the most positive attitude toward (at the time, newly adopted) state symbols—yet again more positive than ethnic Montenegrins. When we add the aforementioned practically unanimous support of Montenegrin independence on the referendum on behalf of Slavic Muslims, we reach the conclusion that the Slavic Muslim population in Montenegro strongly identifies with the state of Montenegro as a political unit, as

well as its symbols. This process of identification had a long development, starting from the Congress of Berlin in 1878, when Montenegro expanded to territories that were mainly inhabited by Slavic Muslims. The political experience of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro in that period was (given the circumstances) relatively positive, since the then-ruler of Montenegro, Prince Nikola Petrović, accepted the population as “equal subjects” and secured a certain type of ethno-cultural autonomy, as well as their representation in the state administration, that is, his court.³⁹

This process regained impetus during the events that marked the last decade of the twentieth century, which is also significant for this article. Slavic Muslims in Montenegro were labelled as a state enemy by representatives of aggressive Serb nationalists, and consequently repeatedly victimised on Montenegrin territory during war operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁴⁰ Simultaneously, all the explicit anti-war, people/non-nationalistic political parties that were active in Montenegro in that period, and that openly addressed the problems of minorities in the Montenegrin society, were pro-Montenegrin and pro-independence in the context of Montenegrin sovereignty.⁴¹ Given these circumstances, we believe that an overlap occurred between the contents of the two constructs that stand for different entities in political theory among the inhabitants of Montenegro, and their perception of political reality. Those two constructs are the political Montenegrin (an individual loyal to Montenegro as a political community, rather than a political community formed within Serbia and Montenegro; pro-independence/pro-sovereignty, anti-war oriented; against Greater-Serbian nationalist aspirations; respectful of ethnic pluralism and multiculturalism) and the ethnic Montenegrin (a representative of the Montenegrin people, or, generally, an individual whose ethnic identity is derived from general Montenegrin cultural characteristics). Under the influence of circumstances from the end of the twentieth century, as an opposition to Greater-Serbian exclusivity in the social discourse, a supranational (supra-ethnic) Montenegrin identity was formed whose essence is political-ethical rather than ethnic. This identity is politically inclusive, and as such, it is both open and associable for a large number of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro, who were inclined toward Montenegrin emancipation ever since the formation of the identity. The decision to define their ethnic identity within the scope of local Montenegrin characteristics (that had positive political connotations), rather than the scope of Bosniakhood outside the borders of Montenegro was evidently incentivised by political circumstances that contributed to the convergence of the needs of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro and political Montenegrin-hood, and the level of political literacy among the Montenegrin people, which was generally low.⁴²

Among the part of the Montenegrin population that identify as ethnic Muslims, the construct-ethnonym “Muslim” is subordinate, and partially derived from the construct “political Montenegrin,” which signifies the tendency to affiliate with Montenegro as a political community with pacifist ethical views. This identification is supported by the aforementioned general confusion over the matter of identity of the Slavic Muslim cultural corpus, and low levels of political literacy among the Montenegrin people, which made it possible for a construct that stands for one’s ethnic identity to be

derived from a construct that stands for political affiliation, rather than the construct that (in terms of its content) represents another political community—Bosnia and Herzegovina. The identification of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro with the country as a political community facilitated the formation of Montenegro as a civic state, which was insisted upon during the debates on the current constitution. According to Jelena Džankić, the “provisions of the 2007 Constitution of Montenegro outline the multivalent link between three different aspects of citizenship: citizenship as status (establishment of citizenship), citizenship as access (rights and interests), and citizenship as means of reinforcing statehood (emphasis on sovereignty, no mention of ethnicity).”⁴³ With regards to the third aspect, the Montenegrin constitution accepts the civic concept of the political national-state identity, which, in definition, is more inclusive of the various ethnonational affiliations in the country. All of these factors contribute to the formation of a perspective within which identity is not defined on the basis of belonging to the same cultural entity that exists in more than one country; on the contrary, the fact that the country of origin is different for this part of the population is used as proof of ethnic distinctiveness. This viewpoint is aligned with the aforementioned attitude of *Matica Muslimanska*.

Things are significantly different with Slavic Muslims in Serbia and their identification with the country they inhabit. The early political experience of Slavic Muslims in Serbia in terms of integration with the country was different than the experiences of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro: territorial expansion of Serbia in the nineteenth century, until the First Balkan War in 1912–1913 (i.e., the inclusion of the Sandžak area), was followed by suppression and forced deportation of Muslims from the liberated territories.⁴⁴ Lately, the identification of Slavic Muslims in Serbia with the country has been impeded by the fact that the institutions and political structures that contributed to generating Serb nationalism and war conflict in the last decade of the twentieth century were mainly centred in Serbia.⁴⁵ To support this thesis, we point to research that indirectly yet precisely illustrates the matter at hand. Backović and Spasić assert that the citizens of Novi Pazar, mainly populated by Slavic Muslims, feel far less affiliated with Serbia than the citizens of other towns that were encompassed by the research, mainly ethnic Serbs living in Kragujevac, Šabac and Užice.⁴⁶ The results of this study indicate a low degree of affiliation with the home state among Slavic Muslims in Serbia. Similarly, Vasić postulates that for the two ethnic communities in Serbia that were encompassed by his research, Bosniaks and Serbs, identification with their own people is of greater importance, compared to that for the other ethnic communities.⁴⁷ Simultaneously, the author states that the matter of religious affiliation is a priority both for Bosniaks and Serbs. Vasić concludes that the “matter of national identity and affiliation is of greatest priority for Bosniaks (as a nation that is still in the process of forging its identity) and then for Serbs.” We can draw the inference that the level of affiliation among Slavic Muslims in Serbia with the country they inhabit is lower than the level of affiliation among Slavic Muslims in Montenegro. Slavic Muslims in Serbia are evidently more open to Bosniakhood compared to the same corpus in Montenegro because

Bosniakhood provides them with the form of group identity they can associate with, given that identifying with the Serbian nationality is not likely. Additionally, they see Bosniakhood as a platform for articulating their political interests, as well as their ethnic distinctiveness.⁴⁸ The need for Slavic Muslims in Serbia to complete their identity through Bosniakhood was stimulated by the fact that the Constitution of Serbia prioritises the ethnic concept of organisation of the state / political community, which is less inclusive than the Montenegrin state model.⁴⁹ When seen from this perspective, the fact that the request for political autonomy of Sandžak was more strongly supported in Serbia than in Montenegro is explicable.

Finally, this implies that, unlike Slavic Muslims in Serbia, Muslims in Montenegro were not brought to the point of defining their identity by crossing state borders and identifying with national Bosniakhood, and that a portion of them derive their ethnic identity from the country they inhabit. For this reason, we are inclined to interpret the persistence of “national Muslimhood” in Montenegro as a result of long-lasting social and political forces that generated a hybrid construct that has a twofold function for those who adhere to it. The first function is to emphasise the distinctiveness of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro in comparison with other peoples who live in the country and speak the same language.⁵⁰ Its other function is to emphasise the political and ethnic grounds of this part of the population in the home state, through nominal distinctiveness (in comparison with Bosniaks), which was an option that Slavic Muslims in Serbia were denied because of the aforementioned circumstances. Moreover, the fact that a part of the population of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro identifies as Montenegrin becomes a hindrance for accepting Bosniakhood as an ethnic option, when seen from the perspective of the factors we previously described.⁵¹ A contribution for this sort of identity perception among the Slavic Muslim population in Montenegro is certainly the strong and positive sentiment toward the country itself, as suggested by research that we mentioned earlier in the article. Another factor is the fact that this part of the population (along with the rest of the population of Montenegro) is poorly informed about topics related to political processes and the turbulent, unresolved process of defining the identity of the cultural corpus of Slavic Muslims.

Concluding Remarks

There are three significant factors that determined the dynamics of the process of acceptance of the ethnonym “Bosniak” among the Slavic Muslims in Montenegro: the division into two opposing currents on the matter among the elite: the legal-constitutional verification of the fragmentation of the Slavic Muslim corpus into Bosniaks and ethnic Muslims and the sociopolitical events that shaped the perception of the members of this corpus on the matter of national self-identification. Given the strong support of the distinction between ethnic Muslims and Bosniaks, voiced by a part of the Slavic Muslim elite, as well as the fact that the fragmentation of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro received constitutional verification, it is unlikely that the

debate between Bosniaks and ethnic Muslims will be resolved with a consensus. Since identity interpretation among the members of the Slavic Muslim population in Montenegro is affected by social and political events, it is to be expected that the future ethnic self-identification will depend on the political processes in the country and the region. The current constellation of the relevant socio-political determinants renders the “transfer” of ethnic Muslims into Bosniaks real, although the process is very slow, as illustrated in the article. The political and intellectual elite that we can define as the symbolical elite—if we consistently follow the terminological framework—played the most important role in this process. The process of re-designation of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro may serve as an example of how the process of forming an identity within the constraints of ethno-national communities also depends on the way in which the relevant political elites constitute the common, national-state, and political identity. Its (non)inclusiveness may increase or decrease the speed of consolidation of the ethno-national identity. In this case, the identification of the members of the Slavic Muslim ethno-national corpus with the civic national-state Montenegrin identity slowed down the process of acceptance of Bosniakhood. In order to gain new coordinates to follow this development, we must wait for the next census in Montenegro, when the representatives of the cultural corpus of Slavic Muslims in the country will once again have the opportunity to confirm their ethnic identity/identities.

Notes

1. Throughout the article, we will refer to the state union according to its official name in the relevant period of time: Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, and Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

2. Hereinafter, this area will be referred to as “Sandžak,” the way it is normally referred to in political discourse. This border area is culturally recognisable, and it encompasses both Serbian and Montenegrin territories. One of its cultural characteristics is the significant presence of Slavic Muslims.

3. The preamble states that the Constitution was adopted on the basis of “the determination that we, as free and equal citizens, members of peoples and national minorities who live in Montenegro: Montenegrins, Serbs, Bosniaks, Albanians, Muslims, Croats and others, are committed to democratic and civic Montenegro.” The content of the Constitution is available from http://www.ombudsman.co.me/docs/izvjestaji/Ustav_Crne_Gore.doc (accessed 1 October 2015).

4. The article primarily links the members of the Slavic Muslim corpus in Montenegro who recognised their cultural distinctiveness as ethnical, and not just confessional, in declaring themselves as Muslims and Bosniaks at the censuses. If we adhere to the criteria of defining a cultural corpus on the grounds of objective cultural specificities, we could also treat the members of this community who identify as Montenegrin as members of the Slavic Muslim population. While focusing on ethnic Muslims and Bosniaks, we will consider the relevant parameters related to Montenegrins of Muslim denomination when appropriate in the article.

5. The ethnonational designation Bosniak had several different meanings throughout history. Redžić provides an overview of its use in the works of eminent historians, and identifies the origins of the content and terminology of the Bosniak-Muslim ethnos in a medieval people called Bosnians. After the Ottoman occupation of Bosnia, the name Bosnian was replaced with Bosniak. During the long Ottoman rule, the name Bosniak slowly became used only for the Muslim population, according to Đilas. See Redžić, *Sto*

godina muslimanske politike: u tezama i kontraverzama istorijske nauke: geneza bosanske, bošnjačke nacije (Sarajevo: Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2000); N. Gaće, *Bošnjak Adil Zulfikarpašić* (Zurich: The Bosniak Institute, 1994).

6. T. van Dijk, *Elite Discourse and Racism* (London: Sage, 1993), 46.

7. D. Stojnov, *Od psihologije ličnosti ka psihologiji osoba* (Novi Sad: Mediterran Publishing, 2011), 69. The term *construct* as used in this article is aligned with the methodological demands of the constructionist meta-theory. For more about the constructionist meta-theory in social sciences, see J. Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality* (New York: Free Press, 1997); V. Burr, *An Introduction to Social Constructionism* (London: Routledge, 1995).

8. Apart from Montenegro, we analyse Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina because Slavic Muslims from the former SFRY represent the autochthonous population in these countries. Although there are Slavic Muslim communities in large centres in Croatia and Slovenia, they are mainly not autochthonous; rather, they were formed by a mechanical movement of the population (i.e., migrations). We believe that this affected the national self-identification of the Muslim population, which is why the comparative part of the article only addresses the countries formed after the collapse of SFRY where Slavic Muslims are autochthonous.

9. Ž. Andrijašević and Š. Rastoder, *Istorija Crne Gore* (Podgorica: Centre for Emigrants of Montenegro, 2006).

10. M. Imamović, *Historija Bošnjaka* (Sarajevo: Preporod, 2006), 526.

11. Š. Filandra, *Bošnjačka politika u XX stoljeću* (Sarajevo: Sejtarija, 1998), 225.

12. Methodological guidelines on the 1948 census stated that “Muslims of Yugoslav ethnic origin can declare as: Serb-Muslim, Croat-Muslim etc., or undecided-Muslim. In the analysis, Serb-Muslims were treated as Serbs, and Croat-Muslims as Croats, while undecided Muslims were treated as undecided Muslims.” In addition, the data from the 1948, 1961, 1971, and 1981 censuses, which we analyse, is taken from D. Grabeljšek, S. Damjanović, S. Jovanović, and M. Kosić-Kovačević, eds., *Nacionalni sastav stanovništva SRF Jugoslavije* (Belgrade: Federal Statistical Institute, 1991).

13. I. Šabotić, “Nacionalno pitanje Bošnjaka—Muslimana u projekcijama Komunističke Partije / Saveza Komunista Jugoslavije,” in *Identitet Bosne i Hercegovine kroz historiju*, ed. H. Kamberović (Sarajevo: Historical Institute, 2011), 127-154.

14. *Ibid.*, 144.

15. The increase in the number of ethnic Muslims in the total population of Montenegro from 6.5 percent (1961 census) to 13.3 percent (1971 census) was not a result of a growing birth rate of the Slavic Muslim population of Montenegro, or of migration of this cultural corpus into the country; rather, for the major part, it was a result of the acceptance of the ethnic designation “Muslim” on behalf of the members of this cultural corpus.

16. D. Marinković, ed., *Popis stanovništva, domaćinstava, stanova i poljoprivrednih gazdinstava u 1991. godini* (Belgrade: Federal Statistical Institute, 1995).

17. Imamović, *Historija Bošnjaka*, 569.

18. Details on the congress are available from the Council of Bosniak Intellectuals website: <http://www.vkbi.ba/> (accessed 26 July 2016.)

19. Data from this census is available from the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina website: <http://www.popis2013.ba/> (accessed 28 July 2016).

20. Here we refer to the fact that previous designations that were adopted as official for Slavic Muslims were, in fact, never derived from real characteristics of the people, but rather addressed the *absence* of particular features of identity (such as the designation *undecided*).

21. Bosniak authors mainly suggest that the term “Muslim” represented a compromise in a context when the requests of the Muslim community for national emancipation could no longer be ignored, and when they had to pacify the Serb and Croat conservative groups, who were categorically opposing the acceptance of “a new people,” especially if acceptance implied using an ethnonym with a territorial overtone (which was the case with the ethnonym Bosniak). Ibraković states that the term “Muslim,” as an ethnic designation, “is used to create/acknowledge one of the rare nations of the modern era that does not cover a unique territory.” See D. Ibraković, *Bosna, islam-Bošnjaci: Etnološko-povijesne skice* (Sarajevo: Faculty of Political Sciences, 2008). In support of this view, we add that Milovan Đilas, one

of the most prominent political actors in the post-war Yugoslav scene, indicates that in the first few post-war decades, Yugoslav authorities expressed evident hostility toward the requests of the political representatives of Slavic Muslims for this cultural corpus to be politically recognised as a people. In a dialogue with Adil Zulfikarpašić on the topic of non-recognition of the national distinctiveness of this ethnic community, Đilas states, "We had expected that Muslims would divide into Serbs and Croats." See N. Gaće, *Bošnjak Adil Zulfikarpašić*. The authors imply that there was an intention to fragmentise the members of the Slavic Muslim corpus under the pressure that Muslims can only be a confessional community, rather than ethnic. The corpus would be divided into ethnic Serbs and Croats (and, potentially, Montenegrins). As demonstrated in the article, a similar strategy was employed during the FPRY 1948 census. Some authors argue that certain geo-political circumstances contributed to the national emancipation of Slavic Muslim, and to the selection of the ethnonym used for identifying this part of the Yugoslav population. Šabotić, for example, writes that "the Yugoslav image in Islamic countries, which were a significant part of the Non-Aligned movement" was dependent on "its attitude toward Bosniaks." See I. Šabotić, "Nacionalno pitanje Bošnjaka–Muslimana u projekcijama Komunističke Partije / Saveza Komunista Jugoslavije."

22. The table contains data on ethnic communities: (1) who comprise more than 1 percent of the population of Serbia, according to the analysed censuses; (2) who do not comprise more than 1 percent of the total population of Serbia, but are relevant for further analyses in terms of comparison with the situation in Montenegro (this refers to Montenegrins, Albanians, Croats, and ethnic Muslims).

23. Table 1 shows that Bosniaks in Serbia are a large ethnic community, in the context of ethnic minorities. Nonetheless, the percentage of Bosniaks in the population of Serbia is far smaller than the percentage of the members of the Slavic Muslim cultural corpus in the Montenegrin population.

24. The information was obtained from the Bosniak National Council website: <http://www.bnv.org.rs/o-nama/> (accessed 7 October 2015).

25. Although Slavic Muslims in the Serbian part of Sandžak are relatively homogenous in terms of acceptance of ethnic Bosniakhood, they are significantly heterogeneous in terms of the political options they support. One part of the Bosniak population in this area supports the politics of Muamer Zukorlić, a former mufti, and a current representative in the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia. His politics are energetic and inflexible in their relationship with Belgrade. Another group of Bosniaks in the Serbian part of Sandžak is closer to the softer political current, whose representatives in Belgrade used to voice the views of this part of the population. The gap between the homogeneity in ethnic self-declaration, and heterogeneity in the political preferences of Slavic Muslims in Serbia suggests that political preferences are not as important an explanatory factor in the process of national self-identification: the majority of Slavic Muslims in the Serbian part of Sandžak declare as Bosniak, regardless of the preferred political option.

26. See <http://www.gusinje-plav.com/2009pages/pohod.html> (accessed 10 October 2015).

27. For more details on the debates on this topic, see V. Koprivica, *Polemike: Gospodine akademice, avetinjo jedna* (Podgorica: Forum for Human Rights, 2006), 80–127; Š. Rastoder, "Muslimani–Bošnjaci, kako vam je ime?" *Almanah* 23/24 (2003): 27–38; H. Bašić, "Još oko naziva Bošnjak," *Almanah* 23/24 (2003): 39–43; R. Rastoder, "Usud imena," *Almanah* 23/24 (2003): 65–93; Š. Rastoder, "Bošnjaci–Muslimani i popis stanovništva u Crnoj Gori 2003," *Almanah* 25/26 (2003): 217–27.

28. This rally was organised in Podgorica in March 2003. The statements from the rally, as well as the text of the Declaration with the names and signatures, are available from the double issue of the journal *Almanah*. *Almanah* 23/24 (2003).

29. See Š. Rastoder, "Muslimani–Bošnjaci"; R. Rastoder, "Usud imena"; and H. Bašić, "Još oko naziva Bošnjak"; the bibliographic items that are referenced in footnote b of Table 3; and E. Kočan, "Putokaz Putniku," *Almanah* 23/24 (2003): 47–48.

30. Proponents of this thesis argued that there is a difference between the notions "home country" and "mainstream of a people"; that is, the mainstream of the Slavic Muslim corpus live in Bosnia and Herzegovina, their mother country, while the peripheral part of the people live in Montenegro and Serbia, which makes these countries their home countries.

31. Details on Matica Muslimanska, including their views on the national issue, are available from <http://www.maticamuslimanska.me/> (accessed 20 October 2015).

32. Footnote b in Table 3 contains some relevant bibliographic items on this matter.

33. We are referring to Slavic Muslims in Montenegro who recognised their cultural distinctiveness as ethnic, and identified themselves as either Bosniaks or ethnic Muslims, unlike the part of the population that recognised their cultural specificities as confessional and declared themselves Montenegrin (of Muslim denomination). This is the ethnic corpus whose members identified themselves by the ethnonym “Muslim” until, and including, the 1991 census.

34. An overview is given in Rastoder 2004, “Bošnjaci–Muslimani i popis stanovništva u Crnoj Gori 2003.” A similar attitude was voiced by almost all the leading intellectuals and the socially and politically engaged representatives of the Bosniak ethnic corpus in Montenegro.

35. This tendency was evident during public speeches of the political representatives of Bosniaks in Montenegro. This was the case in the intercensal period (2003–2011). Since recently, there has been a tendency among the representatives of Slavic Muslims in Montenegro to declare themselves Bosniaks.

36. For example: J. Bibežić, “Nacionalni identitet i ime muslimanskog naroda Crne Gore,” in *Kulturna baština muslimanskog naroda Crne Gore*, ed. A. Kurpejović (Podgorica: Matica Muslimanska Crne Gore, 2006), 79–88.

37. An overview of the census results at the municipal level allows us to infer that Montenegrin sovereignty was strongly supported in municipalities populated by Slavic Muslim. The strongest support came from the municipality of Rožaje, where Bosniaks and Muslims comprised 88.7 percent of the population, according to the 2003 census (valid at the time of the 2006 referendum). Overall, 91.3 percent of the municipality’s population supported Montenegrin sovereignty. Comparably, only 52.6 percent of the population in Nikšić, the second most populated town, opted for sovereignty. The percentage of the Muslim population in this town is negligible, while Montenegrins comprise 62.6 percent, and Serbs comprise 26.7 percent of its population. The results of the referendum are available from: <http://www.osce.org/sr/odihr/elections/montenegro/20099?download=true> (accessed 15 October 2015). An overview of the referendum results by the polling stations indicate that there were virtually no votes against Montenegrin sovereignty at the stations where Muslims and Bosniaks comprise the absolute majority of voters. These results were published in an extra edition of the newspaper *Vijesti*, 24 May 2006.

38. The results of this research are available from the CEDEM website: <http://www.cedem.me/me/ostala-istraivanja/send/31-ostala-istrazivanja/833-socijalni-identiteti-kolektivni-simboli-i-dravno-pitanje-crne-gore-septembar-2004> (accessed 18 October 2015).

39. For more details, see Ž. Andrijašević and Š. Rastoder, *Istorija Crne Gore*, 223–28.

40. As an example, we refer to the crimes against Muslims in the area of Bukovica, Montenegro, near the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina (the municipality of Pljevlja). Several civilian Muslims/Bosniaks were executed in this area during the armed conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and some committed suicide upon suffering torture. For more details, see, J. Durgut, *Bukovica 1992-1995: Etničko čišćenje, zločini i nasilja* (Podgorica: Almanah, 2003).

41. An exception are the national parties that represent minorities in Montenegro, such as the Party of Democratic Action, which represented Slavic Muslims in the 1990s, which was anti-war-orientated. Therefore, we are referring to the *people parties of pro-Montenegrin provenance*, such as the Liberal Alliance of Montenegro and the Social Democratic Party. These parties, together with other *people, pro-Montenegrin parties*, were both *anti-war* and *against Serb-nationalism*, thus protecting the *minorities* in Montenegro, who were under great social and political pressure at the time.

42. It was only after the socialist period that the people in Montenegro started familiarising themselves with the principles of functioning of the multi-party system, and the notions relevant to understanding human rights and the rights of minorities, along with the various approaches to ethnic relationships.

43. J. Dzankić, “Understanding Montenegrin Citizenship,” *Citizenship Studies* 16, no. 3–4 (2012): 337–51, 349. On the concept of citizenship in light of winning minority rights, see J. Dzankić, “Montenegro’s Minorities in the Tangles of Citizenship, Participation, and Access to Rights,” *Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe* 11, no. 3 (2012): 40–59.

44. For more details, see S. Bandžović, *Iseljavanje muslimanskog stanovništva iz Srbije i Crne Gore tokom XIX stoljeća* (Sarajevo: El–Kalem, 1998).

45. The personification of Serb nationalism during the 1990s was Slobodan Milošević, and the Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Science and Arts was published in 1986. It was accepted by the people (in Montenegro as well) as the “Greater-Serbia manifest.”

46. Novi Pazar is a town where Slavic Muslims constitute the majority of the population (around 80 percent according to the 2011 census), and the unofficial centre of the Sandžak. For the research referenced in the body of the article, see Backović and J. Spasić, “Identitet grada: Mišljenje lokalnih aktera u četiri urbane sredine,” in *Strukturni i delatni potencijali lokalnog razvoja*, ed. M. Petrović (Belgrade: Sociological Association of Serbia and Montenegro, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, 2014), 153–80.

47. J. Vasić, “Verski i nacionalni identitet mladih intelektualaca u Srbiji,” in *Postsekularni obrt*, ed. M. Blagojević, J. Jablanov-Maksimović, and T. Bajović (Belgrade: University of Belgrade, Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, 2013), 117–58.

48. We believe that a comparative analysis of political preferences among Bosniaks in Serbia and Montenegro would show that the majority of Bosniaks in Serbia vote for national parties or parties whose names evoke the importance of the Sandžak region, while Bosniaks in Montenegro mainly vote for *people* parties.

49. For more details, see D. Vuković-Čalasan and M. Dečević, “Izazovi izgradnje građanskog identiteta u Crnoj Gori: postreferendumske podjele i sporovi političkih partija,” *Etničke i migracijske teme* 1 (2015): 7–39, 22.

50. Here, we adhere to the view that the Bosnian, Montenegrin, Croatian, and Serbian languages are four standardised variations and four official names for one linguistic system. A subject of another analysis could be the fact that the declaration on the native language in Montenegro is not in line with the declaration on ethnicity.

51. We demonstrated that the number of members of the Slavic Muslim cultural corpus in Montenegro who identified as Montenegrin was even greater at the 2011 census than it was in 2003. The positive sentiment among Slavic Muslims in Montenegro towards their country could be one of the factors that drew this part of the Muslim corpus away from identifying with Bosniakhood, which was recognised by members of Matica Muslimanska. In the period preceding the 2003 census, they associated the promotion of Bosniakhood with potential “disturbance of the stability and territorial integrity of Montenegro” (elaborated in more detail in Koprivica, *Polemike: Gospodine akademike, avelinjo jedna*, 95). The following was emphasised: “Manipulation of the so-called unbreakable bonds between Muslims in Montenegro and Bosnia (i.e., Bosniaks) which leads to linking their fate with the fate of Bosniaks and Bosnia as a country . . . are ideas and attitudes both nonsensical and unacceptable for the Muslim people in Montenegro, who create their own present, past and history in their home country, with Montenegrins and other peoples that live in Montenegro” (ibid., 125).

Mehmed Dečević is a teaching assistant at the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Montenegro. His main interest is within the field of social work with groups and individuals, as well as community based social work. He is also interested in the politics of multiculturalism, and social work with ethnic minorities and socially excluded groups.

Danijela Vuković-Čalasan is an assistant professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Montenegro. Her scientific field of interest includes ethnic and national relations and identities, globalisation, political ideologies, and politics of multiculturalism.

Saša Knežević obtained his doctorate at the University of Belgrade. He has published three books and numerous articles in various journals. From 1997 to 2002, he was a president of the Montenegrin Association of Historians. He currently serves as a professor of History and International Relations at the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Montenegro.