

## TRADER KANJOŠ MACEDONVIĆ AS A MONTENEGRIN NATIONAL MYTH

*Marijan PREMOVIĆ*

University of Montenegro, Faculty of Philosophy, Department of History,  
Danila Bojovića bb, 81400 Nikšić, Montenegro  
e-mail: marijanp@ucg.ac.me

### ABSTRACT

*This paper presents the story of Kanjoš Macedonović (1870), written by Montenegrin author Stjepan Mitrov Ljubiša (1822–1878). The tale of Kanjoš, a well-known literary text about the protagonist's visit to Venice in the 15th century, lends itself to numerous historical, humanistic, and interdisciplinary interpretations. In the paper, the author reconstructs the historic significance of Kanjoš's battle with the giant Furlan, a symbolic representation of the relationship with Venetian authorities and the granting of trade privileges as a reward to the medieval Montenegrin Paštrovići clan. Kanjoš is a national hero characterised by high moral standards and a desire to fight honestly for the rights of his people. The paper analyses the importance of this narration in terms of national literary myth and as a symbol of the Montenegrins' struggle for independence in the 19th century. One of the essential components of this struggle was resistance. Along with the story, the paper elucidates the influence of the writer Stjepan Mitrov Ljubiša on Montenegrin nation building in the second half of the 19th century in which mediaeval history played a major role.*

*Keywords: Kanjoš Macedonović, national myth, Venice, Paštrovići, Montenegro*

## IL COMMERCIANTE KANJOŠ MACEDONVIĆ COME MITO NAZIONALE DEL MONTENEGRO

### SINTESI

*L'articolo presenta la storia di Kanjoš Macedonović (1870), scritta dall'autore montenegrino Stjepan Mitrov Ljubiša (1822–1878). La storia di Kanjoš è una nota opera letteraria che tratta della sua visita a Venezia nel XV secolo e che fornisce una varietà di informazioni storiche, umanistiche e interdisciplinari. L'autore ricostruisce il significato storico della sua lotta con Furlan, il simbolismo dei rapporti delle autorità veneziane e l'acquisizione di privilegi commerciali come ricompensa per la tribù montenegrina dei Paštrović. Kanjoš è l'identificazione di un eroe nazio-*

*nale, caratterizzato da elevati standard morali e disposto a combattere onestamente per i diritti del suo popolo. L'articolo analizza l'impatto di questa storia come mito letterario nazionale e uno dei simboli del Montenegro, formatosi nella lotta per l'indipendenza nella seconda metà del XIX secolo, il cui elemento integrante è la resistenza. Seguendo questa narrazione, l'articolo interpreta l'influenza dello scrittore Stjepan Mitrov Ljubiša sulla formazione dell'identità nazionale montenegrina, attraverso la storia medievale, nella seconda metà del XIX secolo.*

*Parole chiave: Kanjoš Macedonović, mito nazionale, Venezia, Paštrovići, Montenegro*

## I.

This paper aims to show how the work of the Paštrovići author Stjepan Mitrov Ljubiša, Kanjoš Macedonović, (1870) influenced the emergence of an artificial narrative that has developed into the national myth of the Paštrovići tribe and Montenegrins. The purpose of this paper is to encourage a more complex interpretation of this story, with resistance and battle as its elements. We will try to show in the example of this literary work how Ljubiša participated in the process in the second half of the 19th century. Scientific studies paid solid attention to the story of Kanjoš Macedonović (Ljubiša & Levstik, 1954; Čadenović, 1972; Pogačnik, 1981; Jelušić, 1997; Jelušić, 2005; Zenović, 2014; Jovanović, 2016; Čelebić, 2019), which, with its interpretative potential and symbolism as a literary work, provides a number of analyses.

Stjepan Mitrov Ljubiša belongs to a generation of leading Montenegrin and South Slavic authors. He was born in Budva in 1824, in the Paštrovići tribe (Ljubiša & Levstik, 1954, 4–7; Milutinović, 1975, 7). The latest research into the report of the Junior Elementary School in Budva, where Ljubiša studied, revealed that he was born two years earlier, in 1822 (Martinović, 2014, 235). Budva was then part of the Austrian Dalmatia, formed after 1815 from the former Venetian lands, Dalmatia and Boka, and the Dubrovnik Republic. From Rab to the north to Sutomore to the south, the territory is known as the Kingdom of Dalmatia and it remained a province of Austria until 1918. At the time, Dalmatia was one of Austria's poorest provinces, with numerous peasants, impoverished nobility, weak bourgeoisie, numerous clergy, and a few nationally conscious intellectuals. In the 19th century, the Montenegrin coast was under strong pressure and ambitions of the pro-Italian autonomist party. The Slavic population had bad memories of the centuries-long Venetian rule (1423–1797), resulting in a stronger awakening and character of southern Dalmatia. Ljubiša belonged to the Slavic front, formed against foreign rule, and he acted through the Dalmatian People's Party. This political organisation was formed in

1861 by Croats, Serbs and Montenegrins. From the very beginning, one of the leaders was Stjepan Mitrov Ljubiša, the most prominent representative of the Boka Kotorska. He played a very prominent role in political and national activities, starting with the status of languages in public life, through raising national awareness (Petrović, 1976, 125–145; Čelebić, 2019, 95–110, 142–143).

At the age of 39, Ljubiša was a candidate for a member of the Vienna State Parliament. From 1863 to 1876, he was a member of the Dalmatian Parliament and the Imperial Council in Vienna. He was a representative of Herceg Novi, Risan and Budva. He was a literature lover, and although he was anti-Italian, he was very interested in classical Italian literature (Lodovico Ariosto, Dante Alighieri, etc.). The political inspiration for his activities was the community of Dalmatia with Croatia and Montenegro. Austrian sources state that in the Parliament of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, he supported the Slavic people from his region, rejecting Italian linguistic and cultural domination (Petrović, 1976, 125–132). In 1867, the Austro-Hungarian Compromise was established, which definitely included Dalmatia in the Austrian countries. From that moment on, Ljubiša had been moving closer to Montenegro. In 1869, people in southern Dalmatia rebelled against the introduction of the new military Austrian law introducing the general compulsory military service. That year, the Krivošije Uprising broke out, and Ljubiša then established contact with Montenegrin Prince Nikola Petrović. For several weeks, the Boka Kotorska had declared autonomy and independence. Soon after, in the village of Knežlaz (Kotor), Bokelji were given the imperial word that the law would not be enforced in the Boka Kotorska. On those grounds, the agreement and reconciliation between Bokelji and the Austrian government were achieved. Austria thus re-established the rule over the armed Bokelji (Jovanović, 1970; Subotić, 1970). In 1870, Ljubiša wrote a story about Kanjoš Macedonović, creating literature work in line with his program, aimed at shaping the language into a symbolic tool that will shape the Montenegrin nation. At the end of his political career, in late 1870s, Ljubiša moved to Dobrota, near Kotor. He sold his private library there to feed his family. This fact casts light on the life of this man, spent in high politics, with sublime storytelling gift and ideas, ended in poverty. He died in Vienna in 1878 (Ljubiša & Lestvik, 1954, 14; Martinović, 2014, 235–245).

In written sources, the name of Kanjoš was mentioned in the Paštrovići in the 16th century,<sup>1</sup> but Kanjoš Macedonović is a fictional historical figure. Inventing a new heroic past is the best way to create the notion of a nation within the heroic monumental idea. The narrated collective memory presents a history of the past that explains the present and serves as the basis for planning the future (Kuljić, 2006, 212, 208, 218). On the other hand, the search for memory creates an identity dimension of the relationship with the past (Cubitt, 2019). In the 19th century, the literature was in the service of national efforts implying that its main characteristic was ideological and political instrumentalization. According to Ljubiša's wish, the folk tale has a function to show its political activity

1 Among the fourteen Paštrovići noblemen who decided at the beginning of March 1423 in Drobni Pijesak to recognize the Venetian rule, Kanjoš Bladenović Blizikuća was mentioned. A small village of Kanjoši still exists in the Paštrovići (Vukmanović, 2002, 29, 128).



*Fig. 1: Stjepan Mitrov Ljubiša (Wikipedia).*

in the national mythical image and in the national political agenda. In line with political developments in the second half of the 19th century, Ljubiša created a national and literary figure that would serve as the basis for literary creation and national struggle (Radović, 1955, 120). The choice of the character of the protagonist already indicates the specific nature of Montenegro's tradition and nation at that time. At the time of establishing national states in the Balkans, language became one of the most important unifying elements of national states. Various national mythologies in literature were then formed as progressive ideas (Pogačnik, 1981, 148–149). At the time, the literature formed an important link between memory and identity due to the understanding of the past, and the most concise form was found in literary plots and myths (Neumann, 2008, 334–335).

## II.

The Paštrovići cover a coastal area in Montenegro between Budva and Bar (Vukmanović, 2002, 5–7). In historical sources, they are mentioned for the first time in the mid-14th century. Following the death of Montenegrin ruler Balša III Balšić in 1421, the Paštrovići became part of the Serbian Despotate. That is when the battle between Serbia's Despot Stefan Lazarević and Venice over Montenegro's coastal region began. On the

other hand, the Ottomans started breaking into Montenegrin coastal areas. The Paštrovići, between Serbian Despotate and the Ottomans, opted for Venice (Božić, 1979, 105–115). In 1423, representatives of the municipality of Paštrovići concluded an agreement with the Venetians, recognizing the sovereignty, and they became a part of its southernmost region, Venetian Albania. The Paštrovići promised their new rulers a free service in war and any other work in the territory from Bar to Kotor and their surroundings. On the other hand, the Venetians guaranteed internal self-government, rights, and borders. For products from Paštrovići, no customs duties would be charged in Venice or other Venetian regions. The contract was formally made legal by the Doge of Venice, Francesco Foscari, in 1424. The alliance with the Venetians was to protect the Paštrovići from the Ottomans (Čoralić, 2011, 1–2). Venice ruled over the Paštrovići until 1797. That year, the Austrians took over the Paštrovići, and from 1807 to 1813, the Paštrovići were under Napoleon's rule. From the end of 1813 to June 1814, they were under the rule of Montenegro. At the request of the Russian Emperor Alexander I, Montenegrins ceded the Paštrovići and the Boka to Austria, which remained under its rule until 1918 (Vukmanović, 2002, 250–251).

The Paštrovići were interested in participating in the foundation of the Montenegrin state, but the economic and political elite was not developed in the second half of the 19th century. Residents of the Montenegrin coastal region in the 14th and 15th centuries had economic ties with Dubrovnik and Venice. Trade exchange was very important for the living of the population. The surplus of agricultural and artisan products was sold. Merchants from the Montenegrin coast traded mainly salt, oil, wine, and fabrics (Premović, 2018, 880–882). At the end of the 15th century, the Venetians imposed customs duties on the Paštrovići to protect their own products. For that reason, in 1481, the Paštrovići sent emissaries to Venice to complain about the violation of the agreement made in 1423. The Venetians again accepted their pleas and requests for the abolition of customs. In the 16th century, the trade was revived. Trade was very important for the Paštrovići because it was their primary source of sustenance. In the late 16th and 17th century, attempts were made to introduce the tax, but the Paštrovići successfully resisted. This is the historical foundation of the motif in the tale of Kanjoš Macedonović, the long struggle of the Paštrovići tribe to trade freely in Venetian markets, free from duties (Čađenović, 1972, 167–168). That is the reason why Ljubiša chose a true rebel trader as a constituent myth. Ljubiša uses memory to point to general relations in the past and present in a specific socio-cultural context. A culture of protecting the memory from oblivion is very important, as it shapes the identity as well as the attitude to history (Ifversen, 2010, 452–454).

The formation of modern nations was part of a movement that covered most of Europe in the 18th and 19th century. The political, economic and cultural movements of national identities were then shaped. The tale shows Montenegro's identity through its interpretation in the present. The story's central event is a duel with giant Furlan. Kanjoš Macedonović coincides with the Slovenian myth of Fran Levstik Martin Krpan and belongs to the *antemurale* category (Darovec, 2014, 271). The myth from the past presents the memory of ancient times and explains the present. It is an extraordinary way of exploring collective memories, mindset, and social relationships

(Tamm, 2013, 463). The history of the Paštrovići autonomy under Venice is a part of the cultural memory. The tale of Kanjoš and Furlan relates to the *mnemohistory* concept, which implies that they remember the past, and those events are remembered as important facts (Assmann, 2011, 15–33). It was the free trade that had left a strong mark on the collective memory, which can be followed in Slavic folk literature, thus presenting the historical and literary basis for the tale of Kanjoš Macedonović. The concept of cultural memory is part of a continuous process where memories focus on specific items (Cubitt, 2019, 139), in this case, free trade. Ljubiša's selection of Kanjoš for the protagonist reflects a specific attitude toward the Montenegrin nation, and the following are identified in him: trader, rebel, a fighter for the Paštrovići tribe, and saviour of the community from the Venetians. In any case, the selection of a trader as the main character points out the specificities in shaping the Montenegrin nation in the folk tale of Kanjoš (Pogačnik, 1981, 145, 148–149). Through this tale, Ljubiša provides a source and purpose of identity in the Paštrovići and Montenegrins' fight for independence in the process of national awakening and autonomy of the Balkans peoples.

### III.

The plot of the tale Kanjoš Macedonović was set in the 15th century, but political circumstances actually refer to the 1870s, in fact, the Ottoman wars, from the viewpoint of small heroes fighting for life and despising death. Ljubiša was a supporter of the school of thought of Vuk Stefanović Karadžić as regards collection of folk legends and tales (Čelebić, 2019, 95–99, 135–149, rem. 69). In his tale of Kanjoš, the author points out that almost every member of the Paštrovići tribe knows it. The story is relatively simple: the Paštrovići trader Kanjoš Macedonović leaves for Venice with a boat full of oil, wine, tallow, and socks to trade with the Venetians, hoping that they would not make any trouble for him and that they would respect the agreement and peace they had made. Kanjoš is an illustration of the medieval trader and his trade in produce from the Montenegrin coast. However, he faces numerous obstacles, trickery, difficulties selling goods. On the other hand, the Venetians want to charge duties on his goods. Kanjoš is trying to resolve things with the Venetian administration, and that is when his drifting around the offices and the courts began, waiting endlessly at many closed doors. The Venetians despise him, underestimate his qualities and values. A bald lawyer shuts the door in front of his face saying that *he knows more when he's sleeping than Kanjoš when he's awake*, in a desire to belittle him. The Venice administration was portrayed negatively, as slow and inefficient with at least one specific outer marker. Those are people bald, lame, short-sighted, with ridiculous posture, walk, and suits. They despise, refuse, and deceive a man who is in trouble. Kanjoš would wait for a few hours for the reception only to be told to come one or two days later. Deeply disappointed with the Venetians' behaviour, he decided to withdraw and stop trading (Ljubiša & Lestvik, 1954, 17–21).

At the same time, another fatal and disturbing situation was happening in Venice, shaking the entire Republic. A fearless warrior named Furlan came from the Province of Friuli, challenging the Doge of Venice to a duel or surrender. The Doge was



*Fig. 2: Kanjoš at the reception at the Venetian administration (illustrated by Albert Kinert, in Ljubiša, 1950s, 13).*

an older man and was unable to find a brave deputy. Kanjoš heard that from a man from Brčko at the tavern where he had lunch. The member of the Paštovići tribe said he would be willing to accept the duel with Furlan. This information reached the Venetian administration, which called him the following morning for a reception. Kanjoš made fun of the false heroism of the Venetian people, emphasising to the Venetian administration that there were hundreds of brave young men in his country who could easily defeat the giant. For such a statement, Kanjoš was called to appear before the Dodge. The hero is short, unappealing, and weak, thus giving Ljubiša the opportunity to create a series of interesting scenes. During the reception at the Dodge and Venetian nobility, Kanjoš is bothered by his height, so as he talks about it, he sighs: “Alas, if only I had been taller!” The Venetian lords then became more interested in his clothes than his personality and heroic deeds. He was unhappy with the fact that he could not represent his people with his physique as much as he could with his speech (Ljubiša & Lestvik, 1954, 22–24; Čađenović, 1972, 171–173). The Dodge asked Kanjoš to bring a brave warrior from his country. He got tempting promises



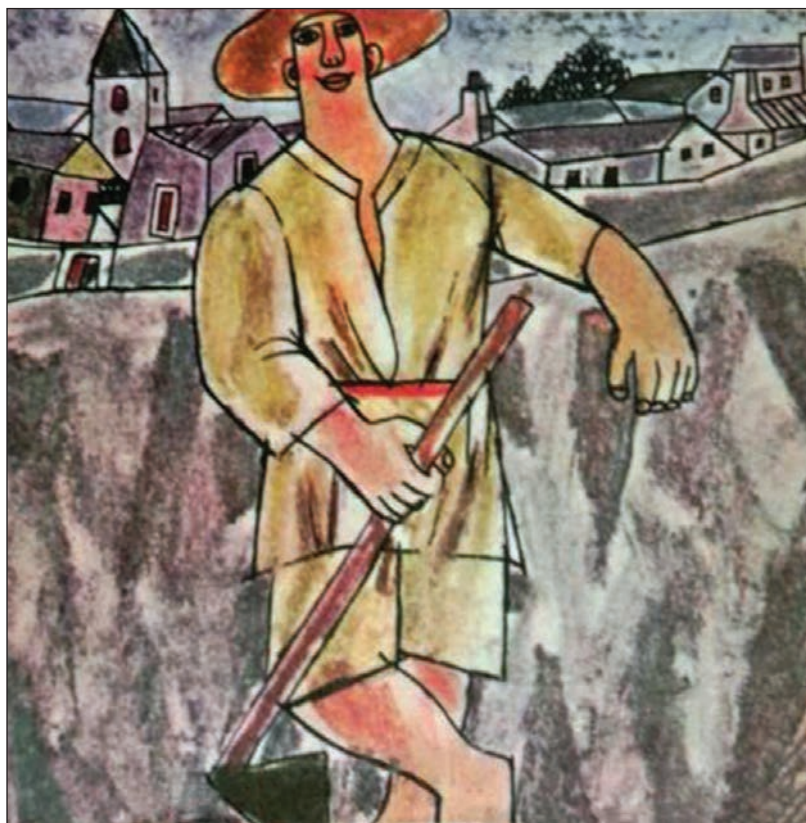
*Fig. 3: Drobnji Pijesak, place where the Paštrović held meetings of their assemblies (Wikipedia).*

and free trade offers from the Dodge. That motivated him to return to his tribe and find someone to confront Furlan instead of the Dodge. Pleased, Kanjoš returned to the Paštrovići to give them the Dodge's message at the assembly of all adult Paštrovići. The Assembly of Paštrovići took place at Drobnji Pijesak and that was the site where they made decisions on all important matters. At the assembly, Kanjoš informed the members of his tribe about the situation that had befallen the Venetian Republic, and that it was looking for their hero. The Paštrovići negotiated about whom to send to Venice to defend their honour and save face. The Assembly decided to send Kanjoš to the duel with Furlan. Kanjoš admitted he was unable to go because he was short. The members of the Assembly told him: "If it cuts you down, we will send back a taller one [...] If you die, we will mourn you wonderfully, and every one of us, when we come to Venice, will visit your grave" (Ljubiša & Lestvik, 1954, 26–27).

Kanjoš's short stature and physical weakness did not inspire confidence in the Venetian noblemen. The Dodge made the following comment on Kanjoš: "This one is as frail as a twig, not fit for a duel." Ljubiša uses death in the language to channel and motivate Kanjoš's response: "The great and powerful went to the great and powerful, and you were quite lucky to get me." That is the essence of Ljubiša's



writing Kanjoš Macedonović, to show the Venetians through ridicule and scorn. No one among the Venetians believed Kanjoš would be able to defeat the fierce giant Furlan. Ljubiša portrays Venetians as liars, hypocrites, arrogant, plain cowards who let another man fight for their interests. Kanjoš left for the island in a boat. His internal monologue shows the turmoil in his mind, disappointment when he realised that he was risking his life for “the fearful and pompous scoundrels [...] if I had only sat at home like a gentleman.” When he found out that Kanjoš was his adversary and came to the island as the Dodge’s representative, Furlan thought he was joking. Kanjoš answered “You’ll quickly get to know me but let’s cross our swords; I’ve got no time to waste.” Kanjoš surprised Furlan by pushing his boat adrift because only one would be needed. He turned an unfavourable situation to his advantage and expressed his self-confidence in this way (Ljubiša & Lestvik, 1954, 28–29). He turned a duel into a negotiation process. That is David and Goliath’s fight. The negotiations



*Fig. 4: Kanjoš Macedonović (illustration taken from the title page from the book: Jože, 1967).*

between Kanjoš and Furlan reflect the long negotiating experience of Stjepan Mitrov Ljubiša during the Reichsrat sessions. Kanjoš fought with a sword, but perhaps even more with his tongue. Kanjoš won the duel because he turned Furlan so that the sun glared into his eyes. He was speaking as he was wielding a sword; he was speaking at the moment of killing Furlan, which makes him a bloodthirsty humourist (Jelušić, 1997, 1120–1125; Jelušić, 2005, 197–203). He took advantage of the laws of nature and used his wisdom to defeat the enemy. By defeating a much stronger enemy, Kanjoš proved that a smart man of a strong spirit, with ideals and faith in himself, can compensate all the physical shortcomings with his skill and wisdom. Kanjoš's duel with Furlan shows his ingenuity, resourcefulness, shrewdness and rhetorical ability to hide his fear with "great" words and self-confident posture. He surprised himself as well as others and marked his name with superior ethical traits. The tale of Martin Krpan who planted basswood bludgeon to Brdavs (Ljubiša & Levstik, 1954, 4–7; Pogačnik, 1981, 142–143; Darovec, 2014, 273–274). Both examples are interesting expressions of skill and spirit.

The winner of the duel, Kanjoš, wants for his prize nothing more than a charter allowing him and the Paštrovići to trade freely. The fight for trade shows a long-standing tradition of exchanging all kinds of goods between the population on the eastern side of the Adriatic and Venice. Trade represented the continuity of the Paštrovići life as an essential component of life, as well as community, survival and acquiring wealth. The most important thing is a myth created by an invincible merchant, a Paštrovići farmer, with his victory over notorious Furlan. The tale also reflects Ljubiša's traits, as he was a statesman and a diplomat. He had both trading and negotiation skills. Kanjoš fulfilled the will of the Paštrovići because he was ethically devoted to them. He brought Furlan's ring and sword as a gift to the Dodge, and the Venetian dignitaries organised a ceremony at St. Mark's Church in his honour. After that success, the Dodge rewarded him with a chest full of gold, which he refused with an explanation that they should put more in the chest than take out, and then he put his own ducat into it. He thus proved that he did not care for the treasure and that all he wanted was honouring agreements and promises. Then the Dodge offers his daughter's hand in marriage (Ljubiša & Levstik, 1954, 30–32), but, like Martin Krpan, Kanjoš refuses the Princess's hand in marriage (Darovec, 2014, 288). He stated that it was their custom to marry women of their own tribe. The hero sees that in Venice, the world is based on power and money, not on honour and integrity, as in Montenegro, and acts contrary to the expectations of the Venetians. He thus emphasizes his honour and dignity, for his life has no price, nor can it be paid for. In addition to chivalry, Ljubiša highlighted the ethical virtues of Montenegrins. Namely, the story ends with Kanjoš's only wish fulfilled: gaining free trade privileges. As a reward, he will accept that the Venetians do not charge duties to Paštrovići and that the coast is named Slavic. Kanjoš expresses the sacrifice of the Paštrovići in relation to the Venetians, which was still vivid in the collective memory. Kanjoš's world is honesty, honour and humanity, and it should be the foundation of every society; without them no nation can successfully develop. In the epilogue of this tale, it was noted that the Venetians



*Fig. 5: Duel of Kanjoš and Furlan (the title page from the book illustrated by Albert Kinert, in Ljubiša, 1950s).*

failed to respect the agreement and that they were again making trade difficult, as before (Ljubiša & Levstik, 1954, 4–7, 30–32; Pogačnik, 1981, 149–151). In the end, the narrator emphasizes that the Venetians ended up as they deserved, which is an allusion to the downfall of the Venetian empire.

#### IV.

Cultural memory is an ability that allows us to create an identity about ourselves (Assmann, 2008, 109); in this case, it is linked to a literary story from the 15th century. The characteristic of literary works is metaphor and symbolism for establishing individual national myths, creating the impression of the authenticity and eternity of a hero

(national) of economic activity in the chosen national territory. The success of the story is undoubtedly rooted in the fact that the author's starting point was the mindset of the Montenegrin nation, the historical reality, and the collective memory of the Paštrovići (Pogačnik, 1981, 151–153). The tale created a hero, as culture code of the small tribe of Paštrovići and the Montenegrin people. Its struggle for survival expresses authenticity, embedded in the major cultural flows (Jovanović, 2016, 353).

With the tale of Kanjoš, Ljubiša also presented the life of the Paštrovići during the Venetian rule.<sup>2</sup> The Paštrovići were willing to sacrifice “small” Kanjoš for the great Venetian state. Kanjoš's sacrifice on behalf of his tribe was needed as a memory of the new national Montenegrin state that was being established at the time. The cultural memory in a tale actively contributes to shaping history and is an important factor of perception that influences human activity (Cubitt, 2019, 129, 142). The tale evokes memories of the heroic and ethical traits of the national history of the Paštrovići. The identity of the Paštrovići and Montenegrins is presented through the tension in the duel and victory.<sup>3</sup> The nation needs a usable past to create a community's history and destiny. The cultural memory is equally referring to the past and the future, how to perceive the present better, make sense of it, and determine its place between the past and the future (Kuljić, 2006, 35, 237).

Kanjoš's story is a dynamic one, coloured by humour, comedy at one moment, and irony and bitterness at another (Đurović, 2001). Kanjoš is an exponent of tribal will and instrument of Venetian policy, while heroism belongs to the entire Paštrovići tribe. Kanjoš sends a message: if one wants to win the fight, physical strength is not enough; one has to faith in oneself, one's ideals, strong will, determination, and strong spirit, all that Macedonović had (Čađenović, 2001). The myth of Kanjoš is a heroic symbol of the long resistance of the Paštrovići under the rule of the Venetian Republic as well as the powerful instrument of social and political mobilization.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, the continuity myth (ethnic and heroic) was an important historical mainstay for the creation of new Balkan states (Kuljić, 2006, 170). The task of the literary tales of Kanjoš Macedonović and Martin Krpan was the national awakening and nation-building (Darovec, 2014). The myth of Kanjoš was an important aspect of the self-determination of Montenegrins and influenced the creation of a heroic spirit. In the political struggle of Montenegrins for independence, 1876–1878 and 2006, this tale suggested that the faith in oneself and one's ideals, shrewdness, and resourcefulness can help to win various battles fought to preserve one's ethnic origin. The element of heroic struggle and honour is essential: just as Kanjoš fought for his people and the benefit of all, so should the nation fight for its freedom and self-determination.

2 See more about cultural memory in the past and present: Straub, 2008, 215–227; Wertsch, 2012, 173–185.

3 For literary texts and their effects on cultural memory please cf. Assmann, 1995; Neumann, 2008, 333–342.

4 Cf. example: Balkelis, 2008, 111–145.

TRGOVEC KANJOŠ MACEDONVIĆ  
KOT ČRNOGORSKI NACIONALNI MIT*Marijan PREMOVIĆ*Univerza v Črni Gori, Filozofska fakulteta, Oddelek za zgodovino, Danila Bojovića bb, 81400 Nikšić, Črna Gora  
e-mail: marijanp@ucg.ac.me

## POVZETEK

*Prispevek obravnava zgodbo črnogorskega pisatelja Stjepana Mitrova Ljubiše (1822–1878) o Kanjošu Macedonoviću (1870). Pripoved o Kanjošu je znano leposlovno besedilo o junakovem obisku Benetk v 15. stoletju, ki ponuja številne možnosti za zgodovinske, humanistične in interdisciplinarne interpretacije. V duhu političnih dogodkov v drugi polovici 19. stoletja je Ljubiša ustvaril narodnega in literarnega junaka, ki je služil kot izhodišče za književno ustvarjanje in narodni boj. Značaj osrednjega lika njegove zgodbe je zrcalil svojskost črnogorskega izročila in naroda v tistem obdobju. Kanjoš Macedonović je bil pripadnik klana Paštrovičev, ki je bil med letoma 1423 in 1797 pod beneško vladavino. Z dogovorom, sklenjenim v Benetkah leta 1423, so bile Paštrovičem obljubljene pravice do prostega trgovanja v Benetkah in deželah pod beneško oblastjo. Kanjoš je zgodba o srednjeveškem trgovcu in njegovem trgovanju v Benetkah, ki se prične z beneško kršitvijo dogovora iz leta 1423 in zahtevo, da Kanjoš za blago, s katerim trguje, plača carino. Njegovi poskusi, da bi zaplet uredil pri beneški upravi, se izrodijo v romanje od enega urada in sodišča do drugega in čakanje pred številnimi zaprtimi vrati. Nato se v Benetkah pojavi velikan Furlan in izzove beneškega doža na dvoboj. S Kanješevo izjavo, da je v njegovi domovini na stotine pogumnih mladih mož, ki bi zlahka premagali velikana, v zgodbi nastopi preobrat. Beneški dož prosi Kanjoša, naj pripelje nekoga iz Paštrovičev, da se bo boril s Furlanom, in mu v zameno obljubi trgovske privilegije. Skupščina Paštrovičev v Drobnom Pijesku soglasno izbere Kanjoša za svojega zastopnika. Kanjoš je neuglednega videza, drobne in šibke postave, kar Ljubiši omogoči ustvarjanje niza zanimivih prizorov. Z nizko postavo in telesno šibkostjo Kanjoš med beneškimi plemiči sprva ne vzbuja zaupanja, vendar se v dvoboju z velikanom Furlanom izkaže za iznajdljivega, domiselnega in premišljenega nasprotnika, predvsem pa odličnega retorika, ki z »velikimi« besedami in samozavestno držo spretno prikriva svoj strah. Gre za bitko med Davidom in Goljatom v fizičnem smislu. Kanjoš je izkoristil naravne zakone in z modrostjo premagal veliko močnejšega sovražnika. Ljubiša je z napetostjo in zmago v njunem dvoboju izrazil značaj Paštrovičev in Črnogorcev. Kanjoš dokaže, da pameten človek odločnega duha, ki zaupa vase, lahko telesno šibkost nadoknadi s spretnostjo in modrostjo. Protagonist prinese Furlanov prstan in meč kot darilo dožu. Za uspeh ga dož želi nagraditi s skrinjo zlata, vendar jo Kanjoš zavrne. Prav tako zavrne poroko s princeso, ki mu jo ponudijo. Zgodba se konča z izpolnitvijo njegove edine želje: da bi za celotni klan Paštrovičev pridobil privilegije prostega trgovanja. Trgovina je za Paštroviče in vso njihovo skupnost predstavljala*

*pomemben element v življenju, možnost preživetja in povečevanja premoženja. Ob koncu zgodbe je izpostavljeno, da se Benečani dogovora niso držali in so trgovanje, kot že poprej, vnovič otežili. Največji pomen zgodbe pa je v izoblikovanju mita o nepremagljivem trgovcu, kmeta iz Paštrovicev, ki je porazil zloglasnega Furlana. V političnem boju Črnogorcev za neodvisnost, med letoma 1876–1878 in znova leta 2006, je bila zgodba o Kanjošu nosilec sporočila, da je z vero vase in v svoje ideale, s preudarnostjo in iznajdljivostjo mogoče doseči zmago v boju za ohranitev lastne etnične identitete. Prvini junaškega boja in časti sta tu bistvenega pomena: tako kot se je Kanjoš boril za svoj klan in za dobrobit vseh, tako naj bi se črnogorski narod boril za svobodo in pravico do samoodločbe.*

*Ključne besede: Kanjoš Macedonović, nacionalni mit, Benetke, Paštrovići, Črna gora*

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