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## **KOSOVO AND METOHIJA IN THE 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY**

### **The Political, Ideological, Demographic and Cultural Coordinates of the Ethnic Cleansing of Serbs from Southern Areas of Serbia**

#### **General Remarks**

The question of Kosovo and Metohija is, first of all, an inseparable part of Serbian history, overall Serbian-Albanian relations and the history of the Balkans. Finally, it is inseparable from the main developments of European history, especially during the last few centuries.

Therefore, an academic explanation of this problem is in itself highly complex and requires exhaustive and interdisciplinary academic research, not only from the standpoint of historical sciences but also from the standpoint of ethnology, linguistics, anthropology, especially cultural anthropology, and the history of mentality and social psychology. The root of the matter needs to be elucidated and, at the same time, unacceptable simplifications which can be heard everywhere today must be avoided.

The question of Kosovo and Metohija is one of the crucial questions of recent Serbian history, especially in the past 150 years. This is not a question that pertains to a single event or that can be linked to a single person. Many events and major historical Balkan and European problems play a part in this entangled knot. Perhaps the most substantive and essential appraisal can be made from the standpoint of European civilisation – the centuries-old clash of European cultural and moral values, on the one hand, and the values of Asian and oriental civilisation which came to these parts with the arrival of the Ottomans, on the other, is reflected most vividly in Kosovo and Metohija.

## I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF EVENTS IN KOSOVO AND METOHİJA: OLD SERBIA AND THE ALBANIANS

Contemporary developments in the Balkans have recently intensified interest in the problems of the Balkans. Regrettably, the Balkans, which are mostly spoken and written about as an exotic part of the world, provoke the attention of more developed cultural areas only on when crises arise or wars break out.

A number of world religions and several different cultural traditions exist in the area of the Balkans which, geographically, is relatively small. The complexity and multi-layered nature of certain historical problems or processes of considerable duration can be attributed to this fact, although this is often ignored in interpretations of Balkan developments or, even more frequently, is simplified to such an extent that historical reality is distorted.

In order to understand and explain the internal world of the Balkans and Kosovo and Metohija and the complex combination of political, social and religious circumstances, and the history of Balkan mentality and culture in the broadest sense of the term, it is indispensable to proceed from historical material and the multitude of different testimony on the ancient and recent history of the region because if it is not founded on documents and historical sources, a discussion of individual aspects of the problem of Kosovo and Metohija may appear to constitute an attempt to prove certain political theses or represents a mere repetition of individual prejudices and stereotypes.

Serbian-Albanian relations are among the "burning" themes in recent Balkan history. In recent years, the "Albanian question" in Old Serbia and Serbian-Albanian relations in Kosovo and Metohija, the southern parts of Serbia, have been spoken and written about at length in international political and academic circles. This was done in great measure without sufficient knowledge of the matter or by interpreting history exclusively from a contemporary political angle, with a clear aspiration to subordinate a vision of the past to the needs of the political moment.

### **Pan-Illyrianism – the Ideological Basis of the Greater Albania Idea**

The Memorandum of the Forum of Albanian Intellectuals of Kosovo signed by Rexhep Qosja, the President of the Forum,<sup>1</sup> and sent to international factors on 26 October 1995 represents an example of the tendentious interpretation of Balkan history and Serbian-Albanian relations. This text, which drastically distorts historical truth and obfuscates the essence of Serbian-Albanian relations in Kosovo and Metohija, persistently repeats a series of worn-out clichés and stereotypes based on the Pan-Illyrian idea and anti-Slavism which, it is assumed, may appeal to West European political circles and the public at large. In several places, emphasis is placed on the historical and ethnic "Illyrian-Albanian identity" dating back to ancient Dardania and reference is made to the assertion of Albanian author Ismail Kadare that "Kosovo is a land where the advance of the Slavs was stopped in the early Middle Ages. It ended the Pan-Slavic dream: to conquer and Slavicise the main European peninsula." It is stated, for example, that Albanians of all three faiths fought against the centuries-long rule of the Ottoman Empire, that the "Albanian ethnic territories" in which Kosovo and Metohija are included and the "Albanian areas in southern Serbia

<sup>1</sup> *Vijiki*, 28 October 1995. "The Self-Determination of Albanians – the Only Just Solution" (in Albanian).

and Montenegro” were occupied by the South Slavs and that these territories “can only be the last remaining colonies in Europe today.” The Memorandum persistently puts forward the thesis on systematic and constant Serbian “hegemony” and “expansionism” and asserts the following: “The Serbian state-sponsored terror over Albanians represents a special chapter of a centuries-long policy under Russian auspices, ever since Albanian territories were first conquered. The permanent strategy in the monstrous Serbian projects of the second half of the nineteenth and the whole of the twentieth century was to ethnically cleanse Albanian territories and populate them with Slavs.” The Memorandum further states that Serbia “continues to destroy Albanian historical and cultural landmarks even today and to erect its own Serbian church and historical monuments, and to inundate Kosovo with signs in the Cyrillic script, just like in the Middle Ages, to create a Serbian image.” These are just some positions among a host of other similar ones with which the Albanian intellectual and political elite addresses the European public.

A more profound explanation of events in Kosovo and Metohija would require far more space than is available in this brief academic report. We wish to point to just some aspects of the historical roots of Serbian-Albanian relations in Old Serbia which must be borne in mind if an objective interpretation and a well-intentioned understanding and explanation of these relations are desired. One of the questions which has drawn the attention of contemporary researchers and which is interpreted in such a way so as to provide legitimacy to the contemporary political aspirations of the Albanians is the question of their origin and native lands in the early period of Albanian history. The Pan-Illyrian idea became the ideological basis of Greater Albanian aspirations in the Balkans in the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

European scholars differ in their opinions about the origin of today’s Albanians. Most of these views were presented by the German scholar Georg Stadtmüller in his work *Forschungen zur albanischen Frühgeschichte*, published in Wiesbaden in 1966 (the first edition was published in Budapest in 1942).<sup>2</sup> The French consul in Janjina, Pouqueville, considered, for example that the Albanians came to the Balkans from Caucasian Albania, in the early Middle Ages, and that, therefore, the population was not autochthonous.<sup>3</sup> However, the prevailing scientific opinion is that the Albanians are essentially a new ethnic group which emerged in the first centuries of the Middle Ages, on old Balkan foundations, through a mixture of different elements of old paleo-Balkan substrata – Illyrian, Dacian (Dardanian) and Thracian. Therefore, the Albanians cannot be described as the direct descendants of the Illyrians or Dardanians.<sup>4</sup>

The question of the origin and native land of the Albanians has particularly attracted the attention of Albanian scholars and writers. Recently, the German researcher Peter Bartl accurately noted that Albanian researchers approach the problem in an uncritical way, construing various theories: “The image which Albanian science has created about its own early history is simplified, uncritical and construed. It is not possible to establish linguistic evidence of the kinship of the Illyrian and Albanian languages”.<sup>5</sup> The prominent Albanian linguist E. Cabej notes

<sup>2</sup> Georg Stadtmüller, *Forschungen zur albanischen frühgeschichte*, zweite erweiterte auflage, Albanische Forschungen 2, Wiesbaden 1966.

<sup>3</sup> F.C.H.L. Pouqueville, *Voyage dans la Grece*, II, Paris 1820, p. 505.

<sup>4</sup> *Iliri i Albanci /Illyrians and Albanians/*, collection of works, Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences – Department of Historical Sciences, Belgrade, 1988. See: Milutin Garašanin, *Considerations finales*, pp. 369-375.

<sup>5</sup> Peter Bartl, *Albanien, Vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, Regensburg-Munich 1995, p. 21.

that "it would be unscientific and even naïve to project contemporary situations in the past in a straight line."<sup>6</sup>

There is no doubt in scientific circles today that the Kosovo and Metohija areas of Serbia which are today largely populated by Albanians, in addition to other ethnic groups, are not the native areas of the Albanian people. Albanians were first referred to in history in the 11<sup>th</sup> century by Ana Komnina who spoke about "Arbanon", located in a hilly area in the interior of present-day Albania. Stadtmüller claims, on the basis of sources, that Arbanon encompassed the valley of the Shkumbiu River, both sides of the Mat river, Kroja and some other neighbouring areas.<sup>7</sup> He states in several places that by virtue of the fact that it is naturally closed off, the Mat River area represents the "relict area" of the Albanians ("Reliktgebiet"). Stadtmüller explicitly claims that the relict area of the Albanians should not be sought in the areas of Old Serbia ("Altserbien): "The large areas constituting Old Serbia (Kosovopolje, Metohija, the Novi Pazar Sandžak are not, by virtue of their position, summer but winter pasture lands. . . . Therefore, these areas do not have the geographical insularity which is an essential characteristic of relict areas. The easily accessible areas from all sides once played a major role as the heart of the old Serbian state (of Raška). . . . Hence, the pre-Albanian relict area should not be sought in Old Serbia."<sup>8</sup>

When Serbian-Albanian relations in Old Serbia are referred to, then one generally has the contemporary demographic situation in mind, on the basis of which an attempt is then made to extend Albanian continuity to the earliest of times.<sup>9</sup> It is superfluous to prove that this method is inaccurate and unscientific. The areas of Kosovo and Metohija never formed part of any Albanian state in the past. The Albanians did not represent the majority population in that part of Old Serbia until more recent times. These areas are far removed from the "native areas in which the Albanians were formed in the early Middle Ages."<sup>10</sup> It is well-known that for a time, during the 13<sup>th</sup> and first few centuries of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the southern border of the Serbian medieval state was at the Mat River in what is present-day Albania, up to the time of the great conquests of the Serbian Emperor Dušan, after which the whole of Albania with the exception of Drač found itself within the Serbian empire. On the basis of this historical fact, the Serbs cannot, however, lay claim to the lands that form present-day Albania.

The very name "Kosovo" which is widely used in Europe today never had the meaning that they wish to give it today, that of a separate historical and ethnic whole, with the intention of separating it from the whole of the Serbian ethnic area and the name "Serbia". The name "Kosovo" is above all linked to the old geographical concept of Kosovo Polje – the plain around the Sitnica and Laba rivers, surrounded by mountains on all sides.<sup>11</sup> It was only more recently, from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, that this concept began to spread as a result of the name of the Turkish administrative area, the Kosovo Vilayet which, however, encompassed all of Old Serbia. Following liberation from the Turks in 1912, Kosovo and Metohija again

<sup>6</sup> E. Cabej, *Le probleme du territoire de formationi de la langue albanaise, Iliria*, V 1976, p. 7.

<sup>7</sup> G. Stadtmüller, op. cit, pp. 167 and 173.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 87.

<sup>9</sup> Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo. A Short History*. London, 1988.

<sup>10</sup> Sima M. Ćirković, "Kosovo i Metohija u srednjem veku /Kosovo and Metohija in the Middle Ages, in *Kosovo i Metohija u srpskoj istoriji /Kosovo and Metohija in Serbian History/*, Belgrade, 1989, p. 36.

<sup>11</sup> /as printed/ Martino Segono di Novo Brdo vescovo di Dulcigno. *Un umanista serbo-dalmata del tardo Quattrocento. Vita e opera*, ed. A. Pertusi, Rome, 1981, pp. 91-92.

became part of the Kingdom of Serbia and subsequently the common Yugoslav state. These areas of Serbia acquired the special status of a territorial and political unit only after World War Two. This status was derived from the programmatic positions of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the Comintern on the solution of the national question in the Yugoslav state. The two-term name of the area, "Kosovo and Metohija", as one of several areas of Old Serbia, was in use until 1968 when the Albanian communist leaders administratively abbreviated it to "Kosovo", leaving "Metohija" out, which was motivated by political reasons related to Albanian expansionist nationalism in all these regions.

### **European Cartographers and Researchers on Kosovo and Metohija as a Constituent Part of Serbia (under Turkish Rule)**

The Serbs came to inhabit the areas that are today Kosovo and Metohija in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries with the arrival of the Slavs in south-eastern Europe. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the areas of Kosovo and Metohija became part of the medieval Serbian state and since then and up to the present day have been known as historical Serbian areas in European science. From the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, these areas became the seat of the Serbian state (Prizren became the capital of the Serbian kings and there were a number of royal palaces and residences in Kosovo). Up until the Turkish conquests, these were the major cultural areas in the Serbian state, as evinced by approximately 1,300 monasteries, churches, the remnants of churches and other Serbian monuments in around 1,100 settlements in Kosovo and Metohija (around 350 settlements have still not been examined).<sup>12</sup> The most famous are the Patriarchate of Peć, the Banjska, Gračanica, Dečani and Sveti Arhandeli monasteries near Prizren and the Bogorodica Ljeviška church. That is where the name Metohija derives from – from the Greek word *metoh* which means "church property" and not "religious community" as is sometimes thought. Many famous families of the Serbian nobility, the elite of Serbian society, originated in the area of present-day Kosovo and Metohija. The famous prince Lazar Hrebeljanović, who was in the forefront of the struggle against the Turks, was born in the medieval town of Prilepac in the Novo Brdo area. It is therefore understandable that the historical battle between the Serbs and Turks, which was of decisive importance in Serbian history, took place in Kosovo Polje on 15 June 1389. The soldiers of the Turkish Sultan Murat I and his vassals were opposed by the Serbian army of Prince Lazar, Vuk Branković and a detachment of soldiers sent by the Bosnian King Tvrtko I, who was crowned with the "double crown" in 1377 as an heir to the Serbian Nemanjić dynasty. Both Prince Lazâr and Sultan Murat lost their lives at Kosovo Polje. Kosovo Polje became a symbol of Serbian resistance to the Turkish conquest, and was followed by five centuries of enslavement under Turkish rule. Hence this toponym and area have a special place in the Serbian collective consciousness, in Serbian epic poetry, literature and Serbian art.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Olga Zirojević, "Prvi vekovi tuđinske vlasti" /First Centuries of Foreign Rule/ in *Kosovo i Metohija u srpskoj istoriji* /Kosovo and Metohija in Serbian History/, Belgrade 1989, p. 101; *Cultural Heritage of Kosovo and Metohija*, Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade 1999, p. 135.

<sup>13</sup> Slavenko Terzić, "Kosovske teme u srpskoj političkoj i kulturnoj misli (tokom XIX i početkom XX veka)" /The Themes of Kosovo in Serbian Political and Cultural Thought (During the 19<sup>th</sup> and at the Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century)/, published in *Nacionalni identitet i suverenitet u Južnoj Evropi* /National Identity and Sovereignty in Southern Europe/, Belgrade 2000, pp. 247-258.

Several centuries of Turkish rule over these areas with their administrative names did not manage to suppress the conviction of the Serbs and other European researchers and travel writers that the areas formed constituent parts of Serbia. As a rule, West European travel writers and particularly cartographers designate – for example, the Italian geographer Giacomo Gastaldi in 1566, the well-known “geographer of the Venetian Republic”, V. Coronelli on his map in 1692, and many French and other cartographers of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries – the areas of Kosovo and Metohija as parts of Serbia or the “Kingdom of Serbia”. In 1689, the Italian humanist and cartographer Giacomo Cantelli de Vignola (1643-1695) dedicated his first regional map of Serbia to Cardinal Alfosno Liti; the map embraces the entire territory of present-day Kosovo and Metohija (*IL REGNO DELLA SERVIA detta altrimenti RASCIA*).<sup>14</sup> The cartographer Cantelli de Vignola designates the Drim River in present-day northern Albania as the border between Serbia and Albania. These areas are designated as parts of Serbia in many maps in the famous atlases of Johann Baptist Homann from the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and in maps published by Homann’s successors in Nuremberg in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (1802, 1805 and other).

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Kosovo and Metohija are more frequently termed parts of “Old Serbia” which was still under Turkish rule, in order to differentiate between “Old Serbia” and “new Serbia”, the principality of Serbia which was created on liberated Serbian land in the period from 1804 to 1815. For example, in 1871 Major Peter Kukulj of the Austro-Hungarian General Staff includes these areas in “Turkish Serbia” – “Türkisch-Serbien (Stara Srbia, Alt-Serbien)”.<sup>15</sup> On the very eve of the First Balkan War in 1912, another Austrian researcher, Dr. Karl Peucker, refers to Kosovo and Metohija as areas of Old Serbia,<sup>16</sup> as do the Russian Slavists and diplomats Aleksandar F. Gilferding, the first Russian Consul in Sarajevo in 1857, and Ivan S. Yastrebov, Russia’s Consul in Prizren in the 1860s and 1870s, in their works, written in Russian, entitled *Travels in Herzegovina, Bosnia and Old Serbia and Old Serbia and Albania*.<sup>17</sup> The Frenchman Gaston Gravier also uses the term “Old Serbia”.<sup>18</sup> One of the pioneers of Albanology, Theodor Ippen, who for a time was Austro-Hungary’s Consul in Skadar, calls the area “Old Raška”.<sup>19</sup>

It has already been stated that until recently, the Albanians were never the majority population in Kosovo and Metohija. There is no reference in Byzantine sources to Albanians on what is today Serbian, that is to say Yugoslav territory. The first Turkish censuses (“dephters”) from 1455 and 1485 which were taken after this part of Serbia was conquered in the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and which were published in Sarajevo and Tirana record settlements with old Albanian names on the periphery of Metohija, with a stronger concentration in areas behind Đakovica.

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<sup>14</sup> “Il regno della Servia detta altrimenti Rascia”, descritto da Giacomo Cantelli da Vignola. Rome, Giovanni Giacomo de Rossi, 1689.

<sup>15</sup> Peter Kukulj, Major im K.K. Generalstabe, *Das Fürstenthum und Türkisch-Serbien (Stara Srbia, Alt-Serbien). Eine militärisch-geographische Skizze (Im Manuscript gedrückt)*, Vienna, 1871.

<sup>16</sup> *Karte von Makedonien, Alterserbien und Albanien 1:864,000, Mit kartographischen, historischen und statistischen Beilagen zum Verständnisse der makedonischen und albanischen Frage*, Bearbeitet von Dr. Karl Peucker, IV. Auflage, Vienna, 1912.

<sup>17</sup> A. F. Gilferding, *Travels in Herzegovina, Bosnia and Old Serbia*, translated from Russian and annotated by Branko Čumić, Sarajevo, 1972; I.S. Yastrebov, *Old Serbia and Albania*, Srpska književna akademija XLI, Beograd 1904, p. 267.

<sup>18</sup> Gaston Gravier, *La Vieille Serbie et les Albanais*, Paris, 1911.

<sup>19</sup> Theodor Ippen, *Novibazar und Kossovo (Das Alte Rascien)*, Vienna, 1892.

Almost all toponyms in this area are of Serbian or Slavic origin. Of 280 settlements in Metohija and Altin (which also encompasses part of present-day Albania), only 30 settlements have old Albanian names, 8 have names of mixed origin and all the remaining settlements have old Serbian names. In the area of Serbian ruler Vuk Branković incorporated in the Turkish census of 1455 right after the conquest, which for the most part encompasses Kosovo and Metohija, there isn't a single settlement that has an old Albanian name.<sup>20</sup> These sources show that Orthodox Serbs constituted the vast majority in this part of Serbia in the first decades of Turkish rule and this situation persisted until the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>21</sup>

The reports of Roman missionaries and official visitors that can be found in the Vatican archives speak about events in this part of Serbia under Turkish rule, particularly in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. For example, writing about the population of Prizren and Priština in 1623 and 1624, the apostolic visitor Petar Masarek states that there are many Serbs there who speak the "Illyrian language" and "have a Patriarch in Peć, also a Serb, who was born in Janjevo". "Many Serbian churches and fine buildings from earlier times can be seen in Prizren," Masarek writes, adding that "the Turks have transformed two churches into mosques as they have done in many other places." Writing about Priština, the apostolic visitor notes that "in addition to Turks, many Serbs live in Priština."<sup>22</sup> In the reports of the Roman missionaries, Prizren is mentioned as the "capital of Serbia" and "the most beautiful place in Serbia." Writing about the wide-spread presence of the Serbs and their language in his report from 1633, P. Masarek notes that a large number of Serbs live in the dioceses of Skadar, Ljesh and Zadrima in Albania.<sup>23</sup> Fra B. Palacuolo's report from 1637 mentions Đakovica and the Dečani monastery; Palacuolo states that there are many Serbs in Đakovica and that "Serbs also live above Đakovica, where there are only three Roman Catholic homes, and then Serbian villages continue . . ."<sup>24</sup>

### **European Action Against Turkey at the End of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century and the Beginning of Major Ethnic Changes in the Southern Areas of Serbia**

The catalyst for the change in the ethnic structure of the population in the period of Turkish rule occurred at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century when the Serbs actively participated on the side of Christian Europe in the war against the Ottoman Empire and then, fearing reprisals, were forced in 1690 to flee in large numbers (30,000 families) with Patriarch Arsenije III Čarnojević at their head to the Hapsburg monarchy (for centuries, the seat of the Serbian Patriarch was in Peć and Prizren was the royal capital). European news reports at the time mentioned horrific crimes

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<sup>20</sup> Hamid Hadžibegić, Adem Hanzić and Esref Kovačević, "Oblast Brankovića – opširni katastarski popis iz 1455." /The Area of the Brankovićs – Extensive Cadastral Census from 1455/. *Monumenta turcica historiarum Slavorum meridionalium illustrantia, tomus tertius, 2<sup>nd</sup> series – c4nsuses – book 2*, volume I (translation into Serbo-Croatian), volume 2 (photocopy), Oriental Institute in Sarajevo, Sarajevo 1972; Selami Pulaha, *Defteri i regjistriti te sanxhakut te Shkodres i vitit 1485*, Tirana, 1974, pp. 414-473.

<sup>21</sup> *Naselja i stanovništvo oblasti Brankovića 1455. godine* /Settlements and Population in the Area of the Brankovićs in 1455/, ed. academic Miloš Macura, Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences, Demographic Anthology, book VI, Belgrade 2001, p. 791.

<sup>22</sup> *Zadužbine Kosova – spomenici i znamenja srpskog naroda* /The Endowment of Kosovo – Monuments and Landmarks of the Serbian People/, Prizren-Belgrade, 1987, pp. 607-609.

<sup>23</sup> *Zadužbine Kosova*, pp. 607-609.

<sup>24</sup> *Zadužbine Kosova*, pp. 607-609.

against the Serbs. Using present-day terminology, one may say that the process of ethnically cleansing this part of Old Serbia began at that time. In addition to other authors, in his book *La sacra lega contro la potenza ottomana*, Simplicioano Bizozeri describes the large-scale crimes committed by the Turkish army and Albanian troops against the Serbs: "A scene of misery was created, because the infidel barbarians who arrived were ruthless towards the innocent residents whom they put to the sword irrespective of age or gender; those who, induced by promises, abandoned the mass of refugees in the forests where they had fled to save their lives, were also killed. After all the residents were slaughtered, their miserable huts were torched and turned to ashes; only the towns of Priština, Peć and Prizren were spared from being set on fire because the Albanians moved into the towns to spend the winter there . . ." <sup>25</sup> The extermination of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija in the first few months of 1690 is mentioned in many reports by the papal nuncio in Vienna. In a letter dated 25 February 1690, the papal nuncio states: "Reprisals against the unfaithful lasted a full three months without any intervention by the Porte until the attacked areas were completely conquered." <sup>26</sup> The forced departure of around 30,000 Serbian families, followed by the moving in of Albanians from northern Albania, marked the beginning of major changes in the ethnic composition in the region. <sup>27</sup> The situation changed gradually. It was only at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that the Albanians gained a slight majority over the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija.

The process of Orthodox Serbs being driven out of Kosovo and Metohija by Muslim Albanians under Turkish rule continued in the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. From the early 18<sup>th</sup> century on, the fertile areas of Old Serbia came to be inhabited by Albanians who came down from their native mountain areas in Albania. The profound crisis which the Ottoman Empire was undergoing manifested itself in Kosovo and Metohija in acts of violence and anarchy conducted by the Albanians who had moved in and who were utterly intolerant towards the indigenous Serbian population. A part of the Serbian population sought a way out by accepting Islam which, given the existing circumstances of political and social domination by the Albanians as Muslims, led to their gradual albanisation. This phenomenon was noticed in the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by both foreign and domestic researchers and has been followed to present times. I.S. Yasterbov presented valuable information in his work *Stara Srbija i Albanija*, the French anthropography specialist Gaston Gravier in *La Vielle Serbie et les Albanais*, and by Jovan Cvijić, Atanasije Urošević and Milisav Lutovac. The ethnologist Mirko Barjaktarević wrote that until recently, a large number of Albanian families in Metohija and throughout Kosovo "asserted even with pride (but without regretting that they had accepted Islam) that they were of Serbian origin." Their old Serbian last names – Bojković, Dobrić, Rajković and Tomašević – were preserved as nicknames. In 1965, Barjaktarević spent the night in the home of Ukšin (formerly Vukašinović) whose ancestors came to Orahovac from the village of Dapsići near Berane. <sup>28</sup> Mark Krasnići also writes about this in an

<sup>25</sup> Simplicioano Bizozeri, *La sacra lega contro la potenza ottomana*, II, Milano 1700, pp. 5-6.

<sup>26</sup> The crimes committed against the Serbs are also referred to in letters dated 26 February and 12 March 1690. Invaluable documents about the position of Christians in the Ottoman Empire in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century can be found in Marko Jacov's *Le missioni cattoliche nei Balcani durante la Guerra di Candia (1645-1669)*, I-II, Citta del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1992.

<sup>27</sup> Miranda Vickers, *The Albanians. A Modern History*. London, New York 1995, p. 13.

<sup>28</sup> Mirko Barjaktarević, "Međuetnički odnosi Srba i Arbanasa" /Serbian and Albanian Inter-Ethnic Relations/ in *Etnički odnosi Srba sa drugim narodima i etničkim zajednicama* /Ethnic Relations



anthropographic study in Orahovac published in Priština in 1957.<sup>29</sup> Ethnographic research shows that “there are over 1,000 albanised Serbian families” in Kosovo and Metohija.<sup>30</sup> As M. Barjaktarević points out, the Albanian communist authorities after World War II exerted their influence in various ways “so that these accounts and stories would be suppressed, neglected and forgotten as quickly as possible.” Milovan Radovanović’s recently published exhaustive work, *Etnički i demografski procesi na Kosovu i Metohiji* /Ethnic and Demographic Processes in Kosovo and Metohija/ offers a synthesis of all these long-standing complex problems.<sup>31</sup>

The above-mentioned foreign researchers and travel writers such as Ami Boue,<sup>32</sup> Joseph Muller,<sup>33</sup> Johann Georg von Hahn,<sup>34</sup> Ivan Stepanovich Yastrebov,<sup>35</sup> and others have provided valuable testimony about these processes in Old Serbia. They elucidate in a convincing manner ethnic and religious conditions following the islamisation of the Serbs and, in particular, the large number of different forms of violence and terror against Serbs of the Orthodox faith.

Interesting information was provided in 1838 by Joseph Muller about the population in the districts of Peć, Đakovica and Prizren in Metohija. 31,650 Orthodox and Muslim Serbs lived in the towns of Peć, Đakovica and Prizren in comparison with 23,650 Muslim and Catholic Albanians. The Orthodox Serbs in Prizren had an absolute majority (16,800 in comparison with 6,150 Catholic and Muslim Albanians); Orthodox and Muslim Serbs also enjoyed an absolute majority in Peć in comparison with Catholic and Muslim Albanians (11,050 in comparison with 500), while Albanians, primarily Muslims, had an absolute majority in Đakovica (17,000 in comparison with 3,800).<sup>36</sup> In terms of the religious structure of the rural population of the three districts, the Muslims constituted the majority in relation to the Christians (80,150 compared to 56,250). In 1864, the Archimandrite of Dečani monastery, Hadži Serafim Ristić, published a book about crimes against the Serbs (with specific information about the places, crimes and the names of the victims and perpetrators) entitled *Plač stare Srbije* /The Lament of Old Serbia/, dedicating it to William Denton, “friend and defender of the Serbian people.”<sup>37</sup> Violence against the Serbs and their expulsion from these areas intensified after the Berlin Congress (1878) and especially towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, concerning which the Government of the

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Between Serbs and Other Ethnic Groups and Communities/, Ethnographic Institute of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences, Belgrade, 1998, p. 58.

<sup>29</sup> Krsta Vitošević, *Orahovac*, Belgrade 1996, pp. 286-301.

<sup>30</sup> Mile Nedeljković, *Kosovo i sveti rat* /Kosovo and the Holy War/, Belgrade, 1999, pp. 202-219.

<sup>31</sup> Milovan Radovanović, *Etnički i demografski procesi na Kosovu i Metohiji*, Belgrade 2004, p. 662.

<sup>32</sup> Ami Boue, *Recueil d'itinéraires dans la Turquie, d'Europe. Détails géographiques, topographiques et statistiques sur cette Empire*, I, II, Vienna 1854; pp. 180-200, 315-321, 111-117; Idem., *La Turquie d'Europe*, I-IV, Paris, 1840.

<sup>33</sup> Dr. Joseph Muller, *Albanien, Rumelien und die osterreichisch-montenegrinische Gränze*, Prague, 1844.

<sup>34</sup> Dr. Johann Georg von Hahn, *Albanesische Studien (Erster Heft)*, Vienna, 1853; J.G. von Hahn, *Reise von Belgrad nach Salonik*, Vienna 1862 (especially chapters XVI-XXII); J.G. von Hahn, *Reise durch Gebirge des Drins und Wardar*, Vienna, 1867.

<sup>35</sup> I.S. Yastrebov, *Stara Serbia i Albanien. Putevne zapiski*. Srpska književna akademija, XLI, Belgrade, 1904.

<sup>36</sup> Joseph Muller, op. cit., 12, pp. 77-78 and 82-83.

<sup>37</sup> *Plač stare Srbije*, written and published by the Archimandrite of Visoki Dečani, Hadži Serafim Ristić in Zemun in 1864.

Kingdom of Serbia published a book of documents in Serbian and French in 1899.<sup>38</sup> The book was prepared for the International Conference in The Hague.

The French publicist and researcher Victor Berard, who witnessed the suffering and persecution of the Serbs at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, wrote the following: "If the present anarchy lasts another ten years, Serbs will be able to establish whatever kind of schools they like in Old Serbia so they can send bishops and priests to every town and village, but the priests will not find a single Christian to give religious instruction to and schools will not find a single Slav to educate. Slavs are forced to flee before the Albanians or die and their disappearance in the entire country is only a question of years, and a few years at that."<sup>39</sup> Among foreign researchers, the French scholar Gaston Gravier provided an exhaustive scholarly explanation of this phenomenon in his study *La Vieille Serbie et les albanais*, published in Paris in 1911.<sup>40</sup> Gravier, like Berard before him, had travelled through these areas. In the study he describes the situation in Metohija, especially in the Drim River valley and in Orahovac and its environs. "Almost all the Muslims in this region," Gravier writes, "are Serbs who recently converted to Islam. It appears that most conversions took place at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many conversions took place less than 25 years ago, and there are a large number of families which include members of both the Orthodox and Muslim faith."<sup>41</sup>

Despite the fact that for years they had been driven out of Old Serbia (they mostly fled to the Kingdom of Serbia), according to some information, the Serbs (both Orthodox and Muslim) still constituted around half the population of Kosovo and Metohija at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This is evident in Austro-Hungarian research conducted primarily for the General Staff in Vienna, published in *Detailbeschreibung des Sandzaks Plevlje und des Vilajets Kosovo* in 1899.<sup>42</sup> The most convincing evidence of this can be found in the map of the Polit. Eintheilung, Nationalitäten und religionen, an attachment to this extensive study.

### **The Albanian League in Prizren (1878-1881) and the Incorporation of the National Idea in Panislamic and Expansionist Plans Towards Christian Neighbours**

The creation and especially the nature of the Prizren League in 1878 represent an unavoidable subject in all studies devoted to recent Albanian history. As a rule, the League's role as a liberation movement is highlighted while its Panislamic character which constitutes the main determinant of the League's political and religious activity is ignored. The League's expansionism in terms of its Christian neighbours and the

<sup>38</sup> *Documents diplomatiques, correspondance concernant les actes de violence et de brigandage des Albanais dans la Vieille Serbie (Vilayet de Kosovo)*, 1898-1899, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Belgrade, MDCCCXCIX, pp. 1-145.

<sup>39</sup> V. Berard, *La macedoine*, Paris, 1896, p. 139. The suffering of the Serbs and the influence of Austro-Hungarian policy is also discussed in Berard's book *La Turquie et l'hellenisme contemporain*, Paris 1900, pp. 291-292; Krunoslav J. Spasić, *Viktor Berar o prilikama i na Kosovu krajem prošlog i početkom ovog veka* /Victor Berard on Events in Kosovo at the End of the Last and the Beginning of this Century/, Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences – interdepartmental committee for the study of Kosovo and Metohia, Kosovo and Metohija Anthology 1, Belgrade 1990, pp. 239-268.

<sup>40</sup> Gaston Gravier, *La Vieille Serbie et les Albanais*, extrait de la Revue de Paris du 1 November 1911, Paris 1911.

<sup>41</sup> Gaston Gravier, op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>42</sup> *Detailbeschreibung des Sandzaks Plevlje und des Vilajets Kosovo* (Mit 8 Beilagen und 10 Tafeln). Als Manuscript gedruckt, Vienna, 1899.

crimes committed against Christians during these events which lasted from 1878 to 1881 are also ignored.

Assessments of the nature of the Prizren League often overlook the political and religious circumstances in which it emerged and the main direction of its activity. The League emerged at the end of a major international crisis, the Great Eastern Crisis (1875-1878) at a moment when there were expectations that an international conference would be held to deal with the establishment of a new political situation in the Balkans. The League was more the making of Turkey and some great powers such as Austro-Hungary and Great Britain than that of the autochthonous Albanian liberation movement.<sup>43</sup> The Serbian-Turkish wars of 1876 and 1877/1878 and the Bulgarian and Greek uprisings represented a constituent part of efforts by Christian peoples in the Balkans to free themselves of centuries-long Ottoman rule and to establish their independent national states. The efforts of these peoples did not encounter the solidarity of neighbouring Muslim Albanians. According to the reports of French diplomats in Salonika in the spring of 1885, they opted for the establishment of "Arnautistan" within the framework of the Ottoman empire, guided by religious and tribal fanaticism.<sup>44</sup>

The Albanian national renaissance took place later than that of other Balkan peoples. Its main protagonists were Orthodox and Catholic Albanians who were at a higher level of social and cultural development. During the Great Eastern Crisis (1875-1878), the Muslim Albanians, who represented a significant majority of the total Albanian population, sided completely with the Ottoman Empire and were the fiercest defenders of the theocratic character of Ottoman society, opposing any europeanisation of society. The more educated and wealthy segment of Muslim Albanians who lived in Istanbul and some other places were integrated within the Ottoman state and social structures and did not make any distinctions between the interests of Albanians and those of the whole Ottoman Empire in the Balkans. The main motive for this attitude on the part of Muslim Albanians was religious identification and the Islamic character of Ottoman society.

In 1959, the Croatian historian Bernard Stulli published in Zagreb an extensive study entitled *Albansko pitanje (1875-1882)* /The Albanian Question (1875-1882)/ which was based on outstanding historical sources.<sup>45</sup> Stulli writes that Albanian troops in the Turkish army "were the main striking force which was traditionally used against other peoples in the Ottoman empire," and that these "irregular troops', mostly consisting of Albanians, committed much violence and looting."<sup>46</sup> On several occasions Stulli cites Austro-Hungarian reports which for the most part were drawn up on the basis of observations up close and which credibly reveal the basic programmatic line of the Prizren League and its statute (sessions of the League were held in the Prizren mosque).<sup>47</sup> Stulli interprets the Austro-Hungarian reports as follows: "Albanians and Albania are not explicitly referred to in any of the 16 articles

<sup>43</sup> On the complex relationship of the great powers towards the Albanian factor and the manipulation of the idea of a Greater Albania, see Bogumil Hrabak, *Prvi izveštaji diplomata velikih sila o Prizrenskoj ligi*, Balcanica IX, Belgrade, 1978, pp. 235-289; Slavko Dimevski, "'Prizrenska liga' spored izveštajte na stranskite konzuli," *Glasnik Instituta za nacionalna istorija*, 3, Skopje, 1975, pp. 101-123.

<sup>44</sup> S. Dimovski, op. cit, p. 122.

<sup>45</sup> Bernard Stulli, *Albansko pitanje (1875-1882)*, Yugoslav Academy of Arts and Sciences, book 318, Zagreb 1959, pp. 287-391.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, p. 316.

<sup>47</sup> *Correspondenzen des K. u. K. gemeinsamen ministeriums des aussern uber orinlalische angelegenheiten (7 April 1877-3 November 1878)*, Vienna 1878, pp. 113-115 and 116-118.

of the Statute; simply, Muslims are the political subject of the League; in Article 4 they say that 'in keeping with the sublime religious law (the Sheriat), they will protect the lives, property and honour of the loyal non-Muslim' population; in Article 7 they speak of the need for an association with 'our suffering compatriots and members of the same faith in the Balkans'; and in the final article, Article 16, they describe abandonment of the League as apostasy "from Islam"! They always speak very generally about 'nation and homeland', 'country', 'our parts', a 'Balkan country', 'in the Balkans' and so forth."<sup>48</sup> In addition to its undisputed Panislamic character at the service of the Ottoman state and religion, Stulli also perceives "Albanian expansionism" aimed at its neighbours in the League's programme.<sup>49</sup>

Things, of course, changed at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Instead of the Ottomans, it was now Austro-Hungary that exerted a decisive influence on the political conduct of the Albanians. In the Albanian national movement, Austro-Hungary saw a suitable instrument to fulfil its imperial political ambitions in the Balkans. The collapse of the Ottoman Empire was in sight and the question of establishing a new relationship among political forces in the Balkans now emerged. The historian Ferdo Hauptmann has rightly concluded that by promoting Albanian nationalism and expansionism, Austro-Hungarian diplomacy was busy erecting a barricade before the actual collapse of the Ottoman Empire "so that certain national states in the Balkans would not be able to expand beyond the narrowest of frameworks and disrupt the balance of forces." In the political combinations of Austro-Hungary's foreign policy, the idea of an independent Albania became a "means whereby the Balkan states would be restricted from expanding and Italy, which had been defeated in Ethiopia, prevented from moving into the Balkans as the Ottoman position in the Balkans came to an end."<sup>50</sup> The Sarajevo historian Hamdija KAPIDŽIĆ arrived at a similar conclusion as he researched Austro-Hungarian preparations on how to solve the Albanian question in the Balkans following the expected denouement of the Balkan question. His portrayal of the consultations held in the Hofburg in Vienna in 1896 indicate that top political officials in the Monarchy agreed with the idea of founding an independent Albania which would rely on and be a protectorate of Austro-Hungary. Commenting on the role of Benjamin Kalay, the Minister of Finance and Administrator of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the time, KAPIDŽIĆ concludes: "In such a state, Kalay saw not only an obstacle to the expansion of Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria and Italy into this region but also an obstacle to the establishment of an 'iron ring' of Balkan states under Ottoman leadership around the Monarchy."<sup>51</sup> Other great powers also had their "favourites" among other Balkan peoples.

The Monarchy's support for Greater Albanian expansionism in Old Serbia conformed to the main direction of Austro-Hungarian political aspirations in the Balkans and, within that framework, towards Old Serbia. Vienna considered that the displacement of Serbs from this province was in the interest of Austro-Hungary's Balkan policy. This policy thwarted attempts to reach political accommodation

<sup>48</sup> BernardG Stulli, *Albansko pitanje (1875-1882)*, p. 323.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 329-330.

<sup>50</sup> Ferdo Hauptmann, "Uloga Zajedničkog ministarstva financija u formiranju austrougarske politike prema Albaniji uoci kretske krize," works of the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo, book IV (1966-1967), 39, pp. 35-44.

<sup>51</sup> Hamdija Kapidžić, "Pripreme za austrougarsko prodiranje u albansko etničko područje iz Novopazarskog Sandžaka", works of the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo, book VI (1970-1971), 429, pp. 415-429.

between the Serbs and Albanians in order to wage a common struggle against the Ottomans. On the eve of the liberation of Old Serbia in 1912, the political leaders of the Kingdom of Serbia attempted to establish ties with representatives of local Albanians in order to wage a common struggle against the Ottoman Empire. On the eve of its campaign, the Serbian government addressed the Albanians with a proclamation which stated that the Serbian army was going to fight the Turks to free the Serbs and Albanians, that it would ensure a peaceful life and preserve the property and old customs of the Albanians and guarantee that they would administer their own churches and schools.<sup>52</sup> However, the religious identification with Ottoman rule and the powerful influence exerted by Austro-Hungary on the Albanian political leadership were far stronger than the idea of Balkan solidarity.

**The Albanian Minority in Yugoslavia and Restless Europe:  
the Destabilisation of the Yugoslav State with the Assistance  
of Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany and the Comintern**

Between the two world wars, part of the Albanians who continued to live in the Serbia and, from 1918 on, the Yugoslav state, demonstrated secessionist tendencies which were openly supported on the eve of the Second World War by strong fascist forces in Europe, primarily in Italy and Germany. After 1918, the Albanians of Kosovo and Metohija took part in the political life of the Yugoslav state. At the elections held on 18 March 1923, their Džemijet party won 14 seats in the Yugoslav Parliament. However, a number of those who organised and led armed rebellions against the Yugoslav authorities fled to neighbouring Albania where they held important positions in the Albanian government as ministers or deputies for Kosovo in the Tirana parliament. They were the main advocates of Greater Albanian ideology and organised terrorist actions against the Yugoslav state.<sup>53</sup> Hasan-bei Priština, Bajram Curi, Derviš Mitrovica, Bedri Pejani, Ćerim-beg Mahmudbegović and Ibrahim Đakova played an especially prominent role. Following the treaties of 1926 and 1927, Albania found itself under complete Italian domination, and the émigrés from Kosovo and Metohija became, for Mussolini, an important instrument in the struggle against Yugoslavia, together with the fascist Ustasha groups of Ante Pavelić and the groups of Ivan-Vančo Mihailov which were closely affiliated with them.<sup>54</sup> Faced with such challenges, the Yugoslav Government sought ways to defend its territory. As part of these plans, at the request of the Institute for the Country's Defence of the General Staff, the historian Dr. Vaso Ćubrilović wrote, in 1937, a strictly confidential report providing for the possibility of moving a number of Albanians out in agreement with the governments of Turkey and Albania. However, this document was never implemented nor was it adopted by any official state organ. This is borne out by the following statistics: from 1927 to 1939, 19,279 Yugoslav citizens moved to Turkey and 4,322 to Albania. While it may be assumed that

<sup>52</sup> "Dokumenti o spoljnoj politici Kraljevine Srbije 1903-1914," V-2, Belgrade 1985, doc. nos. 555, 564, 646; Mihailo Vojvodić, "Prilike na Kosovu i Metohiji i politika Srbije 1881-1912. godine," *Istorijski časopis XXXVIII* (1991), pp. 163-190.

<sup>53</sup> Ljubomir Dimić and Đorđe Borozan, *Jugoslovenska država i Albanci*, volumes I and II, Belgrade 1998-1999, pp. 785 and 891.

<sup>54</sup> Giovanni Zamboni, *Mussolinis Expansionpolitik auf dem Balkan*, Hamburg 1970, pp. 307-387.

Albanians principally moved to Albania, Yugoslav citizens from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Raška and other areas moved to Turkey.<sup>55</sup>

When Mussolini occupied Albania in early April 1939, a well-organised subversive and terrorist action against Yugoslavia and Greece was launched in Kosovo and Metohija in Epirus (Çamëria) in May of that same year, mainly through raids and attacks by *kaçaks* (renegades). During his visit to Tirana in the second half of August 1939, Count Ciano announced that Italy would enable the creation of a Greater Albania in the foreseeable future. Tirana was flooded with irredentist slogans, signs, placards and banners; the crowds chanted "Kosovo, Çamëria".<sup>56</sup> In July 1940, the Italian Governor of Albania, Giacomini, visited the area of Kuks with a group of officers, making no effort to conceal his intention to investigate the possibility of launching an armed breakthrough towards Prizren. In October 1940, Mussolini's divisions attacked Greece and in April 1941 they attacked Yugoslavia. A bureau whose task it was to organise the Albanian "irredentist" movement in Yugoslavia was established in Rome in 1939. As soon as Albania was occupied, a fascist party was formed and the whole spectrum of political, economic and cultural activities was placed under its control. The party paper, *Tomori*, was published in Tirana. In January 1940, the leader of the Albanian fascist party in Skadar, Kolj Biba, stated that some parts of Yugoslavia and Greece would soon be annexed.

### Kosovo and Metohija in Fascist Greater Albania

The outbreak of World War II and the attack launched on Yugoslavia by fascist forces on 6 April 1941 marked the dismemberment of the Yugoslav state and the incorporation of the greater part of Kosovo and Metohija within the fascist entity of Greater Albania. With the help of their compatriots from Albania and under the auspices of the fascist forces, the local Albanians committed large-scale crimes against the Serbs. A large number of Serbs were expelled from their homes (including a number of settlers who had moved from underdeveloped areas between the two wars to mainly uninhabited pasture land in Kosovo and Metohija). According to the information of the US Office of Strategic Services, from April 1941 to August 1942, Albanians killed approximately 10,000 Serbs.<sup>57</sup> There is no precise information available about the number of Serbs expelled from Kosovo and Metohija during fascist occupation, or about the number of Albanians who were settled in this area from Albania. According to research conducted to date, around 100,000 Serbs were expelled during the occupation.<sup>58</sup> Around 80,000 to 100,000 Albanians moved

<sup>55</sup> Branislav Gligorijević, *Fatalna jednostranost /Fatal One-Sidedness/*, on the occasion of Dr. Branko Horvat's book *Kosovsko pitanje /The Kosovo Question/*, Zagreb 1988, *Istorija 20. veka I-II /History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, I-II/*, (1988), pp. 189-190 and 178-193; Teodor Andelić, *O raseljavanju Albanaca pred Drugi svetski rat (4) /On Moving Albanians Out on the Eve of World War II/*, conversations with academic Vasa Čubrilović, *Borba*, 15 March 2002.

<sup>56</sup> Vuk Vinover, *Fašizam i jugoslovensko-albanski odnosi na početku Drugog svetskog rata, Istorijski zapisi 1-2 /Fascism and Yugoslav-Albanian Relations at the Beginning of World War II, Historical Records 1-2/*, Titograd 1970, pp. 104-105; Vladimir Dedijer, *Jugoslovensko-albanski odnosi (1939-1948) /Yugoslav-Albanian Relations (1939-1948)/*, Belgrade 1949, pp. 123-127.

<sup>57</sup> Serge Krizman, *Maps of Yugoslavia at War. Massacre of the Innocent Serbian Population committed in Yugoslavia by the Axis and Its Satellite from April 1941 to August 1942*, Washington, 1943.

<sup>58</sup> Dr. Kosta Čavoški, "Uspostavljanje i potonji razvoj kosovske autonomije" /The Establishment and Subsequent Development of Kosovo's Autonomy/ in *Kosovo i Metohija u srpskoj istoriji /Kosovo and Metohija in Serbian History/*, p. 398.

to Kosovo and Metohija from Albania during World War II. After the war, Yugoslav organs determined a number of 72,000 to 75,000 settlers, although this number was not definite.<sup>59</sup> It is well-known that the Italian intelligence service OVRA planned to populate Kosovo and Metohija with around 100,000 Albanian settlers.<sup>60</sup>

Albanian migration to Kosovo and Metohija in the post-war years was made possible by what was essentially a completely open border between Albania and Yugoslavia, especially in certain periods. This important problem in Serbian-Albanian relations has not been sufficiently researched and substantive academic research has yet to be done.

### **The Autonomy of Kosovo and Metohija as a Means of Weakening the Position of the Serbs in Tito's Yugoslavia**

As part of its strategy of weakening the Serbs in the future Yugoslavia, the Yugoslav Communist leadership headed by Josip Broz Tito did nothing to rectify the consequences of the forced change in the ethnic makeup of Kosovo and Metohija when the country was under fascist occupation. On the contrary, the Yugoslav communists encouraged the strengthening of the Albanian position in these areas of Old Serbia, and there is reliable archival information confirming this. The similarity between Austro-Hungary's Balkan policy in Old Serbia and the policy implemented by the Yugoslav leadership headed by Tito was evident. In an exhaustive report on circumstances in Yugoslavia and the Balkans written in 1944, English Major John Henniker writes: "I believe in Tito's assertion that he is not interested in Kosovo's future which he would give to Albania if it wanted it."<sup>61</sup> This area, despite the fact that it is considered to be the cradle of the Serbian people, does not even have a Serbian majority now, Henniker writes. During the war, the area was controlled by the Ballistas, "who suppressed and perpetrated terrible crimes against the Serbian minority. Many Serbs joined the Partisans or Chetniks in Serbia, Macedonia or Montenegro to avoid persecution by the Ballistas."

It was quite logical to expect that the expelled Serbs would return to their properties in Kosovo and Metohija after World War II, thereby rectifying the injustices committed as a result of fascist aggression against the Yugoslav state. Instead, on 6 March 1945, the new Yugoslav Communist authorities headed by Tito adopted a "Temporary Ban on the Return of Colonists to Their Former Places of Residence" (even though the Serbs were not only colonists but were also an indigenous ethnic group in the area) which states: "The return and resettlement of colonist (settler) families which used to live in Macedonia, Kosovo, Metohija, Srem and Vojvodina has been in evidence recently, without the permission of the authorities," and, consequently, a decision was adopted "temporarily forbidding the return of colonists to the places where they used to live; everyone must stay where they are presently residing."<sup>62</sup> Soon after liberation, on 3 August 1945, the "Law

<sup>59</sup> Dušan T. Bataković, *Kosovo i Metohija. Istorija i ideologija* /Kosovo and Metohija. History and Ideology/, Belgrade-Valjevo-Srbinje 1998, p. 156.

<sup>60</sup> Dr. Veselin Đuretić, "Kosovo i Metohija u Jugoslaviji" /Kosovo and Metohija in Yugoslavia/ in *Kosovo i Metohija u srpskoj istoriji* /Kosovo and Metohija in Serbian History/, p. 329.

<sup>61</sup> *Blgarija nepriznatijat protivnik na tretija Rajh*, Ministry of Defence, National Centre for Military History, Sofia 1995, p. 169.

<sup>62</sup> Decision of the National Committee of the Liberation of Yugoslavia, "Temporary Ban on the Return of Colonists to the Places Where They Used to Reside, *Official Gazette of Democratic Federative Yugoslavia*, no. 13, 16 March 1945.

Revising the Allocation of Land to Colonists and Prospective Buyers of Land in Macedonia and in the Area of Kosovo and Metohija,"<sup>63</sup> and on 2 November 1946, the "Law on Revising the Allocation of Land to Colonists and Prospective Buyers of Land in the People's Republic of Macedonia and the Autonomous Region of Kosovo and Metohija" were adopted.<sup>64</sup> These laws prescribe the conditions under which "colonists and prospective land buyers" from Kosovo and Metohija may forfeit or retain the right to land, on the basis of which a revision was carried out and individual decisions were made about who was to lose or retain his land. Those who retained their land were given a deadline to return by 30 September 1947. "If they do not return by that time and do not begin to farm the land, they will lose the right to the land previously allocated to them, and to all buildings, installations, livestock, plants and machinery on the land, without any compensation." This land and the property on it for which no compensation was offered became part of the land reserves which were then managed in accordance to the regulations of the Law on Agrarian Reform and Internal Colonization of the People's Republic of Serbia of 14 November 1945.<sup>45</sup>  
*/as printed/.*

These legal measures clearly indicated the basic orientation of the national policy conducted by the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia headed by Tito, which sided with the open nationalism of so-called "small peoples" to the detriment of the Serbs, thereby objectively creating the basic premises for the beginning of the disintegration of the Yugoslav Federation beginning in the late sixties. With their rights degraded right after World War II, from the end of the sixties and up to the promulgation of the Yugoslav Constitution in 1974, the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija became second-rate citizens and were subjected to the violence and terror of their Albanian neighbours, with the full support of the authorities. According to this Constitution, the provinces in Serbia (Serbia was the only Republic to have two provinces) almost obtained the status of federative units. Power in the province was almost entirely concentrated in the hands of the Albanians, and the relationship of political forces in the Yugoslav communist leadership was such that Albanian radical nationalism enjoyed full support. In order to remain in power, the Serbian communist leadership closed its eyes before this violence. In two decades, the plan to ethnically cleanse Kosovo and Metohija was to a large extent implemented.<sup>65</sup> The Serbs were forced to flee from the southern parts of Serbia to the central areas of the Republic of Serbia. There are vast archive files from different sources on this subject which have only partly been published in Serbia although, regrettably, they have not been published in other European languages on a wider scale.

To understand Serbian and Albanian relations in the Balkans, and especially in Kosovo and Metohija, one must, above all, familiarise oneself with the abundant archival documentation in existence. The factor of historical legacy should not only be taken into account, but also other components of this problem such as political,

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<sup>63</sup> Law Revising the Allocation of Land to Colonists and Prospective Land Buyers in Macedonia and the Kosovo and Metohija Area, *Official Gazette of Democratic Federative Yugoslavia*, no. 56, 5 August 1945.

<sup>64</sup> Law Revising the Allocation of Land to Colonists and Prospective Land Buyers in the People's Republic of Macedonia and the Autonomous Region of Kosovo and Metohija, *Official Gazette of the People's Federative Republic of Yugoslavia*, no. 89, 5 November 1946.

<sup>45</sup> Law on Land Abandoned by Colonists in the Autonomous Region of Kosovo and Metohija, *Official Gazette of the People's Republic of Serbia*, no. 9, 28 February 1947.

<sup>65</sup> Dimitrije Bogdanović, *Knjiga o Kosovu /Book on Kosovo/*, Belgrade 1990, pp. 301-314.



economic, social, cultural and religious aspects. Without such an approach, it is not possible to find a reasoned and rational explanation to a complex problem which, frequently oversimplified in the European media (the Serbs are perceived as those responsible for alleged Albanian suffering), essentially becomes even more complicated nor is it possible to find a just and civilised solution.

## II THE KOSOVO ESSENCE OF SERBIAN IDENTITY

In the cultural topography of every nation, there are places which are held in high esteem and regarded with exaltation – places of particular emotional import. Kosovo is such a place for the Serbs, the pillar of the broad cultural and spiritual spectrum of the Serbian world. Kosovo as a word and symbol is the main element in the historical culture of the Serbian nation.

There is an evident tendency in Europe and other parts of the world to impose a false image of our history and particularly of Kosovo and Metohija and this effort is sometimes taken to absurd lengths by transforming that image into caricature. The imposition of a false identity was begun long ago and has its clear-cut and long-term goals. The struggle for the “new identity” of these areas has lasted for over a century, from around the time of the Berlin Congress (1878). In a review of Theodor Ippen’s work *Novibazar und Kossovo* (1892), Lajos Taloci /as printed/ writes that Ippen brings into question “Greater Serbian lies” that Kosovo and Novi Pazar were always Serbian and that, consequently, they continue to be Serbian. Accepting the thesis put forward by Albanian propaganda, Noel Malcolm says that the Serbs have always occupied Kosovo militarily and apply “a colonial model of rule” there.

If we proceed from the western model of national identity and the concept of a nation “understood as a community of culture whose members are united and homogenised by a common historical memory, myths, symbols and traditions,”<sup>66</sup> then there can be no doubt that Kosovo represents the crux of Serbian identity. As an inexhaustible repository of historical memories and associations, it is embedded in the collective consciousness of the Serbs and the totality of their creative work.

Kosovo is not a Serbian myth, as it is often referred to in the world and even in our country – this is actual, living Serbian history. The Kosovo myth and legend derive from the Serbian consciousness of the great suffering of an entire culture, the developed Serbian society of the Middle Ages. Kosovo and Metohija are the most densely populated parts of Serbian lands. These areas have the greatest demographic concentration and are the centres of greatest cultural strength. Up to a century ago, Serbs constituted around 50% of the population in Kosovo and Metohija. Many Serbian castles are located there – Svrčin, Pauni, Nerodimlje, Štimlje and others. /The medieval Serbian ruler/ Dušan was crowned king in Svrčin. The seat of the Serbian Church and the most important monasteries are to be found in Kosovo and Metohija: the Patriarchate of Peć, Dečani, Gračanica, Bogorodica Ljeviška, Banjska, Sveti Arhangel near Prizren and others. There are developed economic and commercial centres: Priština, Peć, Foča and Vučitrn. The main mining centres are also in Kosovo and Metohija: Trepča, Novo Brdo and Janjevo. Many famous Serbian families belonging to the nobility such as the Brankoviće, Hrebeljanoviće, Musiće and Vojinoviće lived there.

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<sup>66</sup> Grigorije Božović, “Pet stotina pedeset godina od Kosovske bitke” /Five hundred and Fifty Years from the Battle of Kosovo”, *Politika*, 28 June 1939.

In order to understand the problem of Kosovo and Metohija, it is very important to clarify the position of Kosovo themes in Serbian national integration as well as Kosovo myths and symbols, the role played by Kosovo in the Serbian liberation movement in the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and even further afield, in the Serbian cultural and social transformation of this period – in political thought and national ideology, literature, science and the art of this period. The essence of Kosovo is to be found in its rich epic heritage, the magnificent Kosovo cycle of epic poetry, the large number of folk stories and the great Kosovo legend which rests, as one author puts it, “on the mysterious Kosovo puzzle”,<sup>67</sup> but this is a subject in itself. This was a culture which rested on its old civilisation and which served as the spiritual defence of its own and Christian civilisation under the rule of a foreign Ottoman and oriental civilisation. The Kosovo legend always “incorporated political, religious and national symbolism.”<sup>68</sup> “In the story,” Vojislav Đurić writes, “the Kosovo heroes live throughout Serbian land, from east to west and from north to south,” and Prince Lazar and Miloš Obilić are always the main protagonists. Various areas, mountains, rivers and many villages in Serbian lands are connected in a multitude of ways to the Kosovo heroes; this points to the “exceptional degree in which the Serbian people are preoccupied with Kosovo which is comparable in world history with the Jewish preoccupation with their lost homeland.”<sup>69</sup>

The Serbian people entered the 19<sup>th</sup> century and began their struggle for liberation with a clear awareness of the foundations and fate of their old state and the borders to which this state extended. They knew that they were fighting to restore the state which had been taken away from them by force. The Serbian insurgents, and their educated ancestors during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, especially in Southern Hungary, and the common, uneducated people throughout the Serbian provinces – knew about the fateful significance of Kosovo in Serbian history. All of folk art spoke of the fall of the state, the sources of that fall, and the revered figures of the defenders. This can be seen in Zaharije Orfelin’s poem *Pláč Serbiji* /Lament for Serbia/ and in the works of the great Serbian educator, steeped in rationalism, Dositej Obradović, who in 1803 wrote:

“What emotion these words still evoke in the Serbian heart today:  
Had anyone heard the prince rebuking them in anger:  
He who does not come to the battle of Kosovo,  
May nothing from his hand bear fruit.  
This is how this is chanted, *in an elevated manner*, in Omir.”<sup>70</sup>

The leader of the uprising, Karađorđe Petrović, also unambiguously expresses his awareness of the importance of Kosovo in the Serbian struggle. According to the notes of priest Matija Nenadović, Karađorđe said that he had “collected /the weapons/ and had summoned all Serbs to take up arms and take revenge upon the Turks, both

<sup>67</sup> Grigorije Božović, *Pet stotina pedeset godina od Kosovske bitke* /Five Hundred and Fifty Years After the Battle of Kosovo/, *Politika*, 28 June 1939.

<sup>68</sup> Nenad Ljubinković, “Kosovska bitka u svome vremenu i u videnju potomaka ili logika razvoja epskih legendi o kosovskome boju” /The Battle of Kosovo in Its Time and as Seen by its Descendants or the Logic of the Development of Epic Legends on the Battle of Kosovo/, *Kosovo u pamćenju i stvaralaštvu* /Kosovo in Memory and in Works of Art/, compiled by Nenad Ljubinković, Belgrade 1989, p. 127.

<sup>69</sup> Vojislav Đurić, *Kosovski boj u srpskoj književnosti* /The Battle of Kosovo in Serbian Literature/, Belgrade 1900, p. 53.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 315.

for prince Aleksa and for all the princes and brothers of ours whom the Turks had cut down and killed and to shake off, in God's name, the yoke which the Serbs have been bearing ever since Kosovo."<sup>71</sup> This awareness is shared by Lukijan Mušicki in his poem *Na Vidovdan /On St. Vitus' Day/* (1817), and especially by Vuk Karadžić who did so much, with his vast efforts to collect epic and folk songs and stories, to preserve folk epics and other works of art in Serbian culture and literature. Although he may not have always been aware of it, Vuk carried out an immense task in terms of the spiritual unification of all Serbian provinces.

From 1804, the beginning of Serbian liberation, until the final liberation of Kosovo and Metohija and all of Old Serbia in 1912, there was no Serbian statesman or political leader or a single political party whose political concepts and programmes did not include the idea of Kosovo and its liberation. Understandably, this was expressed to a greater or lesser extent depending on the individual, but also on the general political and social circumstances. Sometimes Kosovo was referred to as a warning of the tragic fate of the people, or as an example of the misfortune afflicting the people as a result of disagreement among the nobles, but no one questioned the fact that the liberation of Kosovo was the main point of the Serbian liberation struggle. This may be seen in all the variants of national programmes in which the liberation of Old Serbia represents one of the main objectives. Other Balkan, that is to say European states recognise this objective as legitimate except for, understandably, Turkey and Austro-Hungary in the period after the Congress of Berlin.

### **Kosovo Themes in Serbian Literature and Art during the 19<sup>th</sup> and at the Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

The themes of Kosovo, the Kosovo motifs and symbolism and the protagonists of the Kosovo legend represent the central subjects not only of the Serbian national idea in a narrow political and state sense, but also of the whole of Serbian literature and art which form the essence of national identity. There is no significant author who has not written about these subjects – in plays, epic poems, poetry, historical novels or other genres, from Jovan Sterija Popović's play *Miloš Obilić /Miloš Obilić/* (1828) and Sima Milutinović Sarajlija's play *Tragedija Obilić /The Obilić Tragedy/* (1827/1982, published in 1837), Njegoš's works including *Slobodijada /Epic of Freedom/* (1835), *Luča Mikrokozma /Ray of the Microcosm/* (1845), *Gorski Vijenac /Mountain Wreath/* (1847), *Lažni car Šćepan Mali /False Tsar Šćepan Mali/* (1851), Matija Ban's works including *Car Lazar ili propast na Kosovu /Tsar Lazar or the Defeat at Kosovo/* to Jakov Ignjatović's novel *Đurađ Branković /Đurađ Branković/* (1859) and other works, the novels of Ljubomir Nenadović, Đuro Jakšić's play *Seoba Srbalja /Migration of the Serbs/*, Marko Miljanov and Stevan Sremac's works *Zaboravljeni Obilići /The Forgotten Obilićes/* (1902) and *Smrt Cara Lazara /The Death of Tsar Lazar/* (1905), Ivo Vojnović's *Šmrt majke Jugovića /The Death of the Mother of the Jugovićes/* (1912) and Ivo Ćipik's travelogues *Na Kosovu /In Kosovo/* (1912). There is no major Serbian poet in the 19<sup>th</sup> or at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century who did not write about Kosovo, ranging from Lukijan Mušicki, Petar Preradović in his poem "Kosovo polje" /The Field of Kosovo/, Sterija and his "Davorje na polju Kosovu" /Lament at the Field of Kosovo/ (1854), Branko Radičević, Ljubomir Nenadović, Đura Jakšić and his poem "Kosovo" (1857), Jovan

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid, p. 316.

Jovanović Zmaj and his poems “Na Zadušnice” /On All Souls’ Day/ and “Kosovska Poruka” /The Message of Kosovo/, Laza Kostić and Vojislav Ilić with their poems “Kosovski sokolovi” /The Falcons of Kosovo/ (1889) and “Muratovo Turbe” /Murat’s Turbe/ (1893), Dragutin Ilić’s “Kosovska himna” /The Kosovo Hymn/, Aleska Šantić and his poems “Prizrene stari” /Old Prizren/ (1912) and “Jutro na Kosovu” /Morning in Kosovo/ (1913), to the poems of Jovan Dučić such as “Paž” /Page/ and especially Milan Rakić’s poems “Božur” /Peony/, “Simonida”, “Na Gazimestanu” /At Gazimestan/ and others, and Sima Pandurović’s poem “Obilić” and others.<sup>72</sup>

Historical motifs, the misfortune at Kosovo and the battle of Kosovo are also present in various forms of Serbian pictorial art – the great artistic composition “Kosovska bitka” /The Battle of Kosovo/ (1776) in the dining room of Ravanica monastery, the work of Amvrosije Janković (which was destroyed by the Ustashas in World War II), and other paintings including “Smrt Cara Uroša” /The Death of Tsar Uroš/ at Jaska monastery, “Kosovski boj” /The Battle of Kosovo/ (1853) on the wall of the church in Tovariševo in Bačka, “Miloš Obilić ubija Murata” /Miloš Obilić Kills Murat/ (1871) in the vault of the church in Ostojićevo, “Smrt Kneza Lazara” /The Death of Prince Lazar/ (1885) in the cathedral in Niš, and “Obretenje glave Kneza Lazara” /The Decapitation of Prince Lazar/ (1905) by the same artist. Kosovo motifs can also be found in the art of Đorđe Krstić, Moša Glišić, Nadežda Petrović, Dragoslav Vasiljević Figa, Mihailo Milovanović and other Serbian artists. This cycle ends with Dragutin Inkiostrije’s painting “Osvećeno Kosovo” /Kosovo Avenged/ (1912). Kosovo is also, to a lesser extent, a theme in the work of Serbian sculptors. Jovan Jovanović Zmaj has left sketches for his “Projekat za spomenik na Kosovu” /Project for a Monument in Kosovo/, while Đorđe Jovanović sculpted the famous “Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima” /Monument to the Kosovo Heroes/, first displayed to the public in Kruševac in 1904. Testifying to the strength of the Kosovo motifs is the fact that other Slavic artists, primarily Croats and Czechs, devoted their work to them; this was most strongly evinced in Ivan Meštrović’s “Vidovdanski hram” /St. Vitus’ Temple/. Mention should also be made of small pieces such as Njegoš’s “Obilića medalje” /Obilić medal/ (1847) for courage, and many other medals. The Kosovo motifs and figures are present on a large number of lithographs and copperplate prints produced during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>73</sup>

### **Prizren as the Restored Capital and the Idea of Liberating Kosovo**

Until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Serbian people retained their awareness of the great attainments of their medieval society. In all political programmes, literature and poetry, the city of Prizren, as the old capital from the times of the Nemanjićs, is most often seen as the future Serbian capital. Throughout Turkish rule, of the numerous Nemanjić capitals, it was almost exclusively Prizren that was continually sung about, often as the “Serbian Constantinople”. The Montenegrin Prince Bishop and great poet Petar II Petrović Njegoš, “the tragic hero of Kosovo thought,” as Ivo Andrić writes, remarks in a letter to prince Aleksandar Karađorđević that his sole wish is to see all the Serbs united, and then he would go to Peć, as the Serbian spiritual capital, and the Serbian prince to Prizren as the Serbian secular capital.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, pp. 319-447.

<sup>73</sup> Dejan Medaković, *Kosovski boj u likovnim umetnostima* /The Battle of Kosovo in the Arts/, Belgrade 1990, pp. 17-43.

The thought of Prizren as the future capital lived on in the minds of many young people, especially in the 1860s. There was a strong Serbian middle class in Prizren and the paper *Kosovo* was published in the Serbian and Turkish languages. A young people's literary society of the time, *Srpska Nada* /Serbian Hope/ from Belgrade, sent the following greetings to the United Youth of Serbia: "May God grant that we meet in Prizren soon." The young people of Negotin had the following to say: "Think of Sarajevo and Prizren and that we may meet them in brotherly harmony."<sup>74</sup> Montenegro's ruler, Prince and subsequently King Nikola I Petrović Njegoš, whose work follows the thought of the Kosovo vow, remarks in a letter to Prince Mihailo Obrenović on the occasion of the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Second Serbian Uprising in 1865 that this event "led to the liberation of our dear Serbia and avenged, in honour, the bitter Kosovo affront."<sup>75</sup> Almost fifty years later, on the eve of the liberation of Kosovo and Metohija, following a request made by Metropolitan Mitrofan Ban that he be buried in the monastery in Cetinje, King Nikola replied: ". . . Do you want, knight of Kolašin, to betray us in our exploits, and to be buried under the Eagle's crags? And where are your Dečani, your Patriarchate, Prizren? That's where one should be buried, Your Eminence! Either in the black earth, or in the womb of Vuk's Šara and Kačanik!"<sup>76</sup> The programme of the People's Liberal Party of 1881, the party of Jovan Ristić, states that "the holy flag of Kosovo, Mišar and Takovo" which fluttered on the ramparts of Niš and "by Gračanica in Kosovo" "could have been unfurled again" on the historical path of Serbian liberation during the Great Eastern Crisis of 1875-1878.<sup>77</sup>

As with other European peoples – the Italians or Germans, for example – the patriotism of the Serbian youth was very pronounced, especially in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Their patriotism revolved around Kosovo, its motifs and heroes. At a session of the Serbian Young People's Association in 1849, a young secondary school student, Stevan Ćirić, entitled his statement in the form of a question: "Will We, Can We and Dare We Advance on Kosovo?"<sup>78</sup> Jovan Skerlić cites the verses of a young Serb in the Austrian regiments during the battle near Solferino in 1859 which were inspired by the momentum of Italian unification:

"Rise, Serb! Emperor Dušan's grave,  
Lazar's holy bones  
Call you not to be a slave."<sup>79</sup>

All those who were singing, Skerlić writes, "reiterated with Jakšić: "O flat field of Kosovo! Our bloody wound!"<sup>80</sup> The dream of all young poets, including Branko Radičević, was to write an epic poem about Kosovo. The new Serbian folk songs, inspired by the Serbian fighting for liberation in the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and especially between 1875 and 1878, are founded on the Kosovo idea, as may be

<sup>74</sup> Jovan Skerlić, *Omladina i njena književnost (1848-1871)* /Young People and Their Literature/, Belgrade 1925 p. 129.

<sup>75</sup> Nikola I Petrović Njegoš, *Pisma* /Letters/, Cetinje 1969, pp. 49-50.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 378.

<sup>77</sup> Vasilije Krestić-Radoš Ljušić, *Program i statuti srpskih političkih stranaka do 1918. godine* /Programme and Statutes of Serbian Political Parties to 1918/, Belgrade 1991, p. 122.

<sup>78</sup> Jovan Skerlić, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155.

seen in Maksim Šobajić's collection of poetry entitled *Osveta Kosovska /Avenging Kosovo/*, published in Novi Sad in 1879.<sup>81</sup>

The constant reversion to Kosovo was not only part of European national romanticism obsessed with the past and the cult of the Middle Ages. It was also a consequence of the great suffering of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century which further heightened people's awareness about Kosovo's role in Serbian history and the calamity that happened on the battlefield.

In order to obscure the drama of Old Serbia, ill-intentioned authors explain everything with the alleged Serbian tendency to myth and a mythic way of thinking. The first great sufferings of the Serbs in modern history and the first major ethnic cleansing of the Serbs occurred in Old Serbia and in Kosovo and Metohija. Thus, Kosovo was not only the embodiment of a major misfortune of the Serbian people towards the end of the Middle Ages, but also the embodiment of a great misfortune suffered by part of the Christian world in the presence of and with the complicity of a large part of Christian Europe.

#### ***Plaç Stare Srbije /The Lament of Old Serbia/ in the Middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century (Albanian Violence Against the Serbs)***

Kosovo became synonymous with the absence of a minimum of Christian solidarity, both in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In 1864, the Archimandrite of Dečani monastery, Hadži-Serafim Ristić, published a well-known book, *Plaç Stare Srbije /The Lament of Old Serbia/* in Zemun. In the preface to the book, the Archimandrite states that he expects Christian solidarity, describing to the world "the situation of miserable Christianity in Turkey." He writes: "In accordance with my duty and calling to improve the situation of wretched Christians in Turkey who have suffered the lashes of tyrannical mistreatment and killings from the day when Serbian glory was defeated at the field of Kosovo and to the present day, I undertook every possible action; however, I have seen little success to date despite all the efforts and actions I have made."<sup>82</sup> The Archimandrite devoted his book to Anglican priest William Denton, "generous friend and defender of the Serbian people." Denton's book *Christians in Turkey* (London, 1863) consists of documented evidence about Turkish and Albanian violence. He acquainted England and Europe with the suffering of the Christians. Thirty years later, a large compilation of texts, also documented, about Albanian crimes against Serbs in Old Serbia, entitled *Iz najcrnje Evrope /From Darkest Europe/* was published thirty years later.<sup>83</sup> Comparing crimes in Kosovo and Metohija with crimes in other parts of the world, the author, Ivan Ivanić (writing under the pseudonym Srbin Srbinović) writes: "What has been happened in recent years in Albanian areas and Old Serbia surpasses all the horrors of the Middle Ages, earlier massacres in Armenia and the current ones in Crete. These are such acts of violence and such atrocities which do not exist today even among the cannibals in Patagonia and Australia or among the savages in darkest Africa. *That is*

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<sup>81</sup> *Osveta kosovska. Junačke pjesme srpske /Avenging Kosovo. Heroic Serbian Songs/*, composed and written by Maksim M. Šobajić, Novi Sad 1879.

<sup>82</sup> *Plaç Stare Srbije /Lament of Old Serbia/*, written and published by the Archimandrite of Visoki Dečani, Hadži Serafim Ristić, Zemun 1864.

<sup>83</sup> Srbin Srbinović (Ivan Ivanić), *Iz najcrnje Evrope. Ubistva, pljačke, otimačine i zulumi u Staroj Srbiji, arnautluku, Debru i Mačedoniji /From the Darkest Europe. Killings, Looting, Robbery and Oppression in Old Serbia, Albanian Areas, Debar and Macedonia/*, Belgrade, 1896.

why we have given these lines, with the borders etched in black, the title *Iz najcrnje Evrope*.” Three years after Ivanić’s book came out, a work entitled *Arnautski zločini nad Srbima u Staroj Srbiji 1898-1899* /Albanian crimes against the Serbs in Old Serbia, 1898-1899/, prepared for the Hague Conference, appeared three years after Ivanić’s books.<sup>84</sup> The veracity of the material was confirmed by numerous foreign researchers including, A.F. Gilferding, Ivan Stepanovich Yastrebov, Victor Berard, Mary Durham, Gaston Gravier and others.<sup>85</sup>

Consciousness of Kosovo’s import also lived on in other Serbian areas, wherever the Serbian people lived, even at the periphery of Serbian ethnic and cultural space. The first play on the subject of the Kosovo legend about “Prince Lazar’s Battle” was written in Boka Kotorska, “most probably in Perast,” in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>86</sup> The famous Serbian author, Jakov Ignjatović, wrote that in his childhood, his cousin Sima Ignjatović, his guardian and teacher, chief notary of the city of Buda, died with “the vow that his bones were to be transferred to Prizren.”<sup>87</sup> Ivo Vojnović of Dubrovnik wrote the dramatic epic *Smrt Majke Jugovića* /Death of the Mother of the Jugovića/. His brother, Lujo Vojinović, wrote that in going back to folk poetry, tracing the traditional relations of the Serbian Empire and Dubrovnik, he wished “to create for a moment the majestic city which was a possible refuge for the last knight of Kosovo. . .”<sup>88</sup>

### **The Commemoration of the 500<sup>th</sup> and 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo (1889 and 1989)**

The strength of the Kosovo idea was particularly manifested around 1889, at the time when the 550<sup>th</sup> anniversary /as printed/ of the battle of Kosovo was commemorated. In late 1888, a central board in charge of the commemoration of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the battle of Kosovo was established in Ruma in Srem, owing to the vicinity of Ravanica and Vrdnik which contains the reliquary with the relics of Prince Lazar. A large ceremony was held in the Knin Krajina, the Dalmatian Kosovo. The Serbs from the six villages in the area (Ramljani, Zvjerinac, Uzdojle, Ridane, Markovac and Orlić) and two hamlets (Rađe and Šarovac) have preserved the belief that their ancestors came from Kosovo Polje. The Church of Saint Ilija was built in the village of Markovac in 1589. In 1889, the elderly bishop Stefan Knežević invited the Serbs to come to the dedication of the New Lazarica church in Dalmatian Kosovo on St. Vitus Day and thousands of Serbs from northern Dalmatia, southern

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<sup>84</sup> *Documents diplomatiques, correspondance concernant des actes de violence and de brogamdage des Albanais dans la Veille Serbie (Vilayet de Kosovo); 1898-1988*, Ministere des affaires etrangeres, Belgrade, MDCCCXCIX, pp. 1-145.

<sup>85</sup> Gaston Gravier, *La veille Serbie et les Albanais*, extrait de la Revue de Paris, 1 November 1911, Paris 1911.

<sup>86</sup> Martha Freund, “Prve dramske obrade legende o Kosovskom boju” /The First Dramatic Portrayals of the Battle of Kosovo Legend/, *Kosovo u pamćenju i stvaralaštvu* /Kosovo in Memory and Art/, pp. 233-234.

<sup>87</sup> J. Skerlić op. cit., p. 162.

<sup>88</sup> Raško V. Jovanović, “Narodna pesma 'Smrt majke Jugovića' u videnju i u dramskoj obradi Iva Vojinovića” /The Folk Song *Death of the Mother of the Jugovića* in the Play of Ivo Vojinović/, *Kosovo u pamćenju i stvaralaštvu*, pp. 233-234.

Lika, Bosanska Krajina, Bukovica, Ravni Kotari, the Knin and Cetina Krajinās gathered at the church that day.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Mirko Ležajić, "Proslava Vidovdana na dalmatinskom Kosovu" /Celebration of St. Vitus Day in Dalmatian Kosovo," *Politika*, 20 June 1939.



**THE LAMENT OF OLD SERBIA**

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Written and published by  
The Archimandrite of Visoki Dečani

**Hadži Serafim Ristić**

**In Zemun  
Printed by I.K. Soproža  
1864**

Bookshop NIKOLIĆ Belgrade – Bitoljska /illegible/
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*/Printed in English:/* The front page of the book by Hadji Serafim Ristić, *Plać stare Srbije* (The Lament of Old Serbia). The book includes a complaint to the sultan Abdul Aziz that presents detailed evidence of the crimes committed by the Arbanians against the Orthodox Serbs in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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CORRESPONDENCE  
ON  
ALBANIAN VIOLENCE  
IN  
OLD SERBIA

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Jov. N. Tomitch

**1898-1899**

**Belgrade**  
**State Printing Press of the Kingdom of Serbia**

**M DCCC XCIX**

A document collection of the Government of the Kingdom of Serbia containing parts of the correspondence with the Turkish Government prepared for the 1899 Hague Conference.

In addition to playing a role in national integration and as a reminder of the moral values of the grand legacy of Kosovo, the return to Kosovo themes during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries represented an opportunity for a critical recollection of the causes of the downfall of the Serbian state and society. When the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the battle of Kosovo was commemorated, Čedomilj Mijatović was the President of the Serbian Royal Academy. With an appropriate tone of inspiration, Mijatović delivered a lengthy speech entitled “Kosovo”, uttering warnings of a contemporary nature. Possessing literary talent and a capacity of perceiving history as drama, Mijatović began his speech with the following words: “With fear and trepidation, I raise my voice to summon you to go to the large graveyard of Kosovo. In just four days, the entire Serbian people will visit that graveyard in spirit, shed their tears on it, adorn it with flowers, burn incense for it with their sighs, approach it with a heart full of love and leave it with a heart full of pride. This is the first time in history that a people are conducting a memorial service for what happened five hundred years ago. In four days, all of Serbian land will be transformed into a large temple of God, in which an entire people with millions of thankful hearts and millions of deeply moved souls will celebrate and thank God for having given them the heroes of Kosovo. May this ceremony of ours today be a small service in preparations for that great liturgy of the people! Let this service of ours be a quiet evening prayer to the great holiness of Kosovo!”<sup>90</sup> In 1889, Čedomilj Mijatović analysed the causes and consequences of the Kosovo tragedy. The idea of state unity he said, “was much too new and demanded grave sacrifices” which the powerful feudal lords were not prepared to make. Within the borders of exclusively Serbian lands, “the idea of state unity has not blunted by any means the sharpness and power of provincial aspirations.” For the great majority of Balkan peoples, “the external danger was neither clear nor evident.” Having seen the disintegration of the Serbian people, Prince Lazar “systematically undertook to reconcile, bring closer and unite Serbian lands and to create an alliance of Serbian peoples with other Christian peoples.” Forfeiting his life on the battlefield for that idea, he enveloped the thought of “national unity within a saint’s circle.”<sup>91</sup> “The new history of Serbia, a history of great trials, long suffering, ceaseless fighting and inextinguishable glory began” with Kosovo.

The Chief of the General Staff, General Staff Colonel Jovan Mišković delivered a more severe speech than that of the President of the Royal Academy on St. Vitus Day in 1889, at a commemoration in the Belgrade officers’ hall, entitled “The Battle of Kosovo”. Mišković began his speech with the following words: “On today’s day five hundred years ago, thousands of Serbs, our famous ancestors, died a heroic death on the sorrowful field of Kosovo, fighting for their people, faith and homeland.” Following a detailed analysis of the military course of the battle and the way it has been reflected in folk songs and tradition, Mišković clearly stressed some messages of the battle of Kosovo at the end of his speech. “It does not suffice to know what happened and how it happened; instead, we should emulate our renowned predecessors in their illustrious deeds and avoid their misdeeds,” Mišković said. The outcome of the battle of Kosovo is the consequence of many previous political developments, primarily related to the way in which the state and the army were

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<sup>90</sup> Čedomilj Mijatović, “Kosovo. Beseda u Svečanoj sednici Kraljevske akademije 11-og juna 1889” /Kosovo. Speech at the Formal Session of the Royal Academy on 11 June 1889/; *Otađbina – književnost, nauka, društveni život* /The Homeland – Literature, Science and Social Life/, owned and edited by Vladan Đorđević, book 22, Belgrade 1889, I.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, II-III, XIII-XIV.

organised. "We have seen how our state is rent by factions; we have seen the disagreements and envy among officers. The people as whole, it is true, had both honour and courage, but the organisation of the state and army was weak," Mišković said. The Ottomans were better organised military, capable of mobilising and concentrating their forces more quickly, and had better discipline and tactics. "All this together had to yield the results that it did. The battle of Kosovo is the fruit of all our state, social and military errors and virtues. Since they tipped the fateful scales of history, a sorrowful termination had to ensue. This was the inevitable consequence of historical developments. And since we know why we failed and where we erred, it is our obligation to avoid these mistakes.

The best tribute we can pay to the heroes of Kosovo for their proven patriotism and immense sacrifice will be when their descendants prove by their deeds that they are capable of realising the idea for which they fought in Kosovo.

That is why we must foster agreement and friendship amongst ourselves, develop our virtues and organise a worthy, disciplined and reliable army so that we can, when the time comes, achieve our national idea: the unification of the Serbian people."<sup>92</sup>

Kosovo as a theme lives on in Serbian culture and society, in all its parts and in all Serbian provinces at a time when Kosovo and Metohija and the whole of Old Serbia did not form part of the modern Serbian state. This is quite understandable. Both in a state and political sense and in spiritual and cultural terms, Kosovo is the foundation of Serbian identity, the basic source of thoughts of liberation and the inspiration for many literary and artistic works. No other toponym has the strength of that of Kosovo. Kosovo and Metohija form an integral part of the Serbian spiritual, cultural and state identity. Many European and non-European peoples and their cultural and political elites have long been aware of this.<sup>93</sup> During World War I (1914-1918), the day of the Battle of Kosovo (St. Vitus Day) was formally commemorated in the United States, Great Britain and France. For example, in June 1918, the anniversary of the battle of Kosovo was officially commemorated in the United States as a formal day in honour of Serbia and other occupied peoples, and many lectures, ceremonies and speeches were held throughout the country. A special service was held in the New York's St. John the Divine Cathedral, at which Howard K. Robins compared the suffering of the Serbs with that of the Jews. The anniversary of the Kosovo battle was similarly commemorated in Great Britain in 1916 and in other years, as well as in France.<sup>94</sup>

The 1989 commemoration of the 600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the battle of Kosovo in Gazimestan in Kosovo Polje was the first such anniversary commemorated in Kosovo Polje (because in 1889 it was still under Ottoman rule). Around twenty years and more before this celebration, the Serbs of Kosovo and Metohija were subjected to acts of terror and persecution on a daily basis. Despite everything that happened in the meantime, the Serbs have not forgotten the magnitude and significance of the Kosovo legacy in Serbian history and in the history of Christian Europe. They were also reminded of this by the monumental work entitled *Zadužbine Kosova* /The Legacies

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<sup>92</sup> Jovan Mišković, "Kosovska bitka (15. juna 1389. godine). Na pedesotogodišnjem pomenu u Beogradskoj oficirskoj kasini 15. juna 1889. godine" /The Battle of Kosovo (15 June 1389). At the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration in the Belgrade Officers' Hall on 15 June 1889), *Otadžbina*, book 22, XVI-XXXVIII.

<sup>93</sup> T.A. Emmert, *The Kosovo Legacy, Serbian Studies*, vol. 5, no. 2, 1989.

<sup>94</sup> M. Vickers. *Between Serb and Albanian. A History of Kosovo*. London 1998, p. 97.

of Kosovo/ with over 850 pages, which was published in Prizren and Belgrade in 1987. The Bishop of Raška and Prizren was head of the organising committee at the time, and this function is performed today by the Serbian Patriarch Pavle. The large gathering of around 1,000,000 people at Kosovo Polje on St. Vitus Day in 1989 was an act of remembering a decisive battle waged by the Serbian people in defending their country and civilisation before the Turkish onslaught and of the major contribution provided to the defence of Christian Europe.

### III HISTORICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF A GREATER ALBANIA

There has been no extensive analysis either in the domestic or foreign academic communities of the historical and ideological roots of the Greater Albanian national project which would be of help in providing a better understanding of and in explaining contemporary events in south-eastern Europe.<sup>95</sup> This has given extensive scope for what is, regrettably, a powerful propaganda machine today which rejects the only reliable facts, making up, in their place, incredible deceptions, on which it founds the perception of the region's past and present. An attempt is made to represent a megalomaniac project of an ethnically purse state, with no rights for other ethnic groups, as a question of the basic human and national rights of Albanians. The best evidence of this is the fate of Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija following the arrival of international occupation forces in 1999.

#### **The Idea of an Albanian National State between Panislamism and Europe's Imperial Policies in the Balkans**

The concept of a Greater Albanian state did not arise as the authentic expression of the Albanian national movement. As opposed to other Balkan peoples – the Serbs, Greeks, Bulgarians and Romanians – there was no attempt by the Albanians to organise themselves politically and create a national state until the beginning of the Great Eastern Crisis (1875-1878). Regional and religious identity dominated among the Albanians. Random forms of disobedience to the central authorities constituted the expression of conservative resistance by Muslim feudalists to the reforms which the Ottoman Empire tried to implement during the 19<sup>th</sup> century under the pressure of the great European powers. It is well-known that the Bosnian and Albanian feudalists were the staunchest defenders of Islamic theocratic society and that for the longest time they put up the fiercest resistance to the central authorities in Constantinople in their attempts to introduce at least some degree of order in the functioning of the state.

Such conditions among the Albanians were not only an expression of the economic, social and cultural underdevelopment of Albanian society but also of the lack of any kind of modern Albanian political elite. Albanian Muslims provided the main source of strength of the expansionist Albanian movement. If individual examples of cultural efforts by Albanians which primarily emerged in the diaspora (Constantinople, Egypt and southern Italy) are not taken into account, the Albanian Muslims were the Ottoman Empire's strongest fist in suppressing Christian

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<sup>95</sup> Dr. Đorđe Borozan's book, *Velika Albanija /Greater Albania/* is the first serious work devoted to this problem: *Velika Albanija, Porijeklo, Ideje, Praksa /Greater Albania: Origin, Ideas, Practice/*, Belgrade 1995, p. 570.

movements in south-eastern Europe. With their patriarchal and oriental Asian-based society, they represented the main obstacle to the europeisation of this part of Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The insignificant Roman Catholic minority in northern Albania, primarily in the area of Skadar, and the more numerous Orthodox community in the south of Albania which was under the strong influence of the Greek cultural centre represented an exception.

All attempts made by Balkan Christians to have Albanians join them in the common struggle against the Ottoman Empire, with the goal of national liberation and the modernisation of their societies, proved futile. At the beginning of the Great Eastern Crisis, the Albanians were the major perpetrators of crimes among regular Ottoman and particularly irregular troops (bashi-bazouks) in their clashes with Christian rebels. During the Crisis, the Albanians did not join, in any manner, the Christian liberation movements in the Balkans.

It is quite clear that the creation of the Albanian League in 1878 and its political programme were not an expression of the authentic liberation efforts of Albanians, whose efforts in this regard were belated in comparison with other peoples. The League was an instrument, primarily in Ottoman hands, and then in the hands of other powers, to preserve the Ottoman Empire. An Albanian Central Revolutionary Committee was created in Constantinople in April 1878 (Abdul Frasheri, Pashko Vaso, Sami Frasheri, Zija Prishtina, Jani Vreto and others) which worked on organising resistance by the Albanian population to the liberation actions of Montenegro, Serbia and Greece. Abdul Frasheri published in the foreign press the alleged protests of the Albanian population against the actions of these Christian states.<sup>96</sup> According to the reports of the French Consul /?Krizhevsky/ in Salonika, the Ottoman authorities distributed weapons to the Albanian population and secret meetings were held in mosques at which, in addition to Albanian leaders, emissaries from Constantinople took part.<sup>97</sup> This was a way of manipulating the interests of the Albanian people, as demonstrated by the fact that the Ottomans put an end to the League as soon as it began making demands for stronger autonomy from the central authorities.

It was not coincidental that the creation of the Albanian League coincided with preparations for the Congress of Berlin which placed the Eastern Question on its agenda. The attempt of Russia, as one of the great powers, to settle the so-called Eastern Question on its own, and to secure its interests by establishing a large Slavic state – a greater Bulgaria – with the San Stefano peace treaty (1878), encountered the forceful opposition of the other great European powers. Even though the concept of a Greater Bulgaria embraced a significant chunk of territory populated on one side with a majority Serbian population and a Greek population on the other, the Ottomans considered, enjoying the support of English diplomacy, that the Albanians would be the best means of putting an end to the Slavic and, in general, Christian “danger”. Ever since that time and up to the present day, the Albanians have presented themselves to the West European public as the main barrier to the alleged penetration of Panslavism in south-eastern Europe and as the alleged genuine factor of europeisation in this region. In essence, the “Greater Albania” project, as the offspring of the Balkan policy of the great powers, was opposed to the liberation

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<sup>96</sup> Jean Larmeroux, *La politique exterieure de l'Autriche-Hongrie 1875-1914*, volume 1, Paris 1918, p. 231; Frederik Gilbert, *Les paas de'Albanie et leur histoire*, Paris 1914, pp. 275-283.

<sup>97</sup> Archives du Ministere des Affaires entrangeres (Paris), Correspondance politique (AAE), Salonika, volume 5, no. 3, 22 July 1878; S. Dimovski, op. cit., p. 107.

movements of the vast majority of Balkan Christians which were genuinely (with certain exceptions) aimed at modernising south-eastern Europe on the basis of original principles of the liberal and democratic European tradition.

A megalomaniac project in the hands of the Ottoman Empire and other powers confronted in 1878 another megalomaniac project, in Russia's hands. This was an indicator that neither Russia nor the other great powers cared about an equitable solution to the Eastern Question but, rather, about the creation of states which would guarantee their strategic interests in the Balkans.

In its original, initial programme, the Greater Albania political concept was entirely characterised by Panislamism and radical political Islam. In essence, it continues to bear these traits today. The Albanian political elite endeavoured only from time to time – when it was concerned with securing the support of some of the great powers – to conceal the explicitly Islamic characteristics of the pillars of this ideology. Today, this concealment is better organised and more artful. In Old Serbia and primarily in Kosovo and Metohija, and in the areas of what is today western Macedonia, a militant form of Islam prevailed which the mountain-dwelling Albanian population of northern Albania bore with it in its chaotic penetration into more cultivated and fertile parts of these regions. There is an attempt today to portray the historical mayhem, accompanied by Muslim violence perpetrated over centuries against the near-by Christian population, as the alleged oppression of Albanians by neighbouring Christians.

### **The Ottoman Imperialist Legacy in Europe as the Basis for Albanian National Pretensions and the Concept of an “Ethnically Pure State”**

It is an established fact in European science, as has been stated earlier, that the original areas of the Albanian people are the areas of what is today central Albania. It has already been mentioned that the well-known German Albanologist, Georg Stadtmüller, stated that the original area of the Albanians encompassed the valley of the Shkumbiu River, both sides of the Mat river, Kroja and some other neighbouring areas.<sup>98</sup> The history of the Albanians and Albanian society is far more complex than it is made out to be in recent times. This is not only true of the area of present-day Albania but also of neighbouring states in which Albanians live as national minorities. Their religious diversity and pronounced tribal identity have been and remain a constant source of internal mutual conflicts which make this state exceptionally unstable. This “unstable” nature of the young state endangers above all the non-Albanian peoples in Albania itself and in its vicinity. One must also bear in mind the fact that large Slavic settlements existed for centuries in the area of what is present-day Albania and that Slavic toponyms have to a large extent been preserved to the present day. Despite the fact that in 1938, the Albanian government decided to urgently change the “foreign names” of cities, villages and rivers, 538 Slavic toponyms have been registered. According to incomplete figures, the Serbian minority in Albania after World War II numbered 30,000 to 40,000 people. They had no rights whatsoever in Albania. The historian Jovan Bojović has published an invaluable book entitled *Izbeglice iz Albanije u Crnu Goru 1991. godine* /Refugees from Albania to Montenegro in 1991/ on this subject. From the beginning of March to the beginning of April 1991, 1,671 persons arrived in Montenegro, the majority

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<sup>98</sup> Georg Stadtmüller, *Forschungen zur albanischen fruhgeschichte*, zweite erweiterte auflage, Albanische Forschungen 2, Wiesbaden 1966, pp. 167 and 173.

from the area of Skadar and primarily from the village of Vraka. After 1948, Serbs of Orthodox or Muslim faith were Albanised by force. Their last names were changed; for example, Brajović was changed to Ferezaj, Martinović to Shuto, Popović to Popaj, Vukčević to Maljaj, Krstović to Nikolaj and so forth. Their personal documents stated that they were “Shqiptars”. Their church and old cemetery in Skadar and Vraka were demolished. “One couldn’t speak Serbian in public. You could speak any language in the world,” a resident of Vraka said, “but not Serbian. You could only speak your native (Serbian) language with your family.”<sup>99</sup> In more recent times, since the establishment of the first Albanian state in 1912, and especially during the rule of the Albanian communist dictator Enver Hoxha, a significant part of the non-Albanian, particularly the Slavic population, with the exception of the Greeks, was Albanised by applying the most brutal means of state repression.

The “Greater Albania” project was directly connected to the consequences of Ottoman conquests in south-eastern Europe, especially the wars waged by the European Christian powers against the Ottomans in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. In a certain sense, it has remained to this day an extension of the Ottoman imperial spirit in Europe and the manner of life, customs and mores that were characteristic of south-eastern Europe during Ottoman rule. The Christian population of the part of Europe under Ottoman rule, primarily Old Serbia and the northern part of Macedonia, joined en masse the struggle of the European powers following the seizure of Vienna (1683) to drive the Ottomans from Europe. As a reprisal for the defeat of the Europeans (1690), this population was subjected to large-scale crimes and basically to what were the first instances of ethnic cleansing on a large scale. The destructive Ottoman military campaigns enabled ethnic Albanians to move from their native lands to the countries in which their neighbours, both Slavs and Greeks, lived. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, large numbers of Albanian herdsmen began to make their way down from the mountainous areas of their land to the fertile parts of Kosovo and Metohija, where the majority population were Orthodox Serbs, and to the areas of what is today western Macedonia, from Skoplje to Bitolj, inhabited, in addition to what were undoubtedly Serbs, by Macedonian Slavs.

In addition to large-scale and almost regular crimes, the process of conquering Old Serbia was characterised in abundance by other examples of breaking up the compact Serbian ethnic population (forcible islamisation, various forms of robbery, plunder, the demolition of religious edifices and a series of other forms of terror). This is borne out by many travel writers, and especially the already mentioned Roman missionaries and official visitors. Among a large number of Vatican sources, a report of the Skopje archbishop Matija Masarek from 1764 provides convincing testimony about these processes. In the area around Đakovica, the archbishop registered new colonies of Albanians who had left their rugged areas and moved to the cultivated lands of Metohija. These Albanian newcomers to Serbia, as recorded by archbishop Masarek, did not heed Christ’s Gospel and instead rapidly converted to Islam, driving the Orthodox and Catholic residents from their villages and taking over their property (*“maledetti Albanesi, i quali per forza si sono impadroniti di quasi tutti li terreni scismatici e cattolici serviani”*).

A similar process took place in the border areas between Albania and Greece. Under the Ottomans, Albanians emigrated toward Greek lands, especially Epirus. As the Greek liberation movement grew stronger, the Ottomans used Muslim Albanians

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<sup>99</sup> Jovan R. Bojović, *Izbjeglice iz Albanije u Crnu Goru 1991* /Refugees from Albania to Montenegro in 1991/, Historical Institute of Montenegro, Titograd 1991, pp. 7-78.



to ensure their rule in the greatest possible areas of Epirus and Thessalia. This was explained by Greater Albanian ideology as follows: "A single homogeneous people lives in the area from the banks of the Bojana River up to Jannina. An area which Greek religious and other propaganda denies the Albanians extends from Jannina to the bay of Ambracia, and the Albanians predominate there if not in numbers then in the strength of their resistance."<sup>100</sup>

That Kosovo and Metohija, which Albanian writers often refer to as "Albanian land" were indisputably the central areas of the Serbian people is confirmed by the fact that the most impressive Serbian architectural and spiritual landmarks were created there. In Kosovo and Metohija alone, around 1,400 monasteries and other Serbian landmarks were built. The most famous among them were the Patriarchate in Peć, the Banjska, Gračanica, Dečani, and Sveti Arhandeli monasteries near Prizren, the Bogorodica Ljeviška monastery in Prizren. . . . A logical question arises: why would the Serbs build the seat of their religion, the Patriarchate in Peć, in an area in which they were not a majority and which was not the central area in which their people lived?

### **The Serbs as the Majority Population in Kosovo and Metohija on the Eve of the Establishment of the Prizren League in Prizren (1878)**

The major changes in the ethnic structure of the population in this part of Old Serbia occurred in the period from the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> to the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and from the Congress of Berlin in 1878 until the area was liberated from Ottoman rule in 1912. They were essentially the consequence of a conflict between the Islamic Ottoman feudal concept, on the one hand, and the European Christian concept of society on the other. Samuel Huntington is right when he refers to similar processes today as the "clash of civilisations". Kosovo and Metohija are even today perhaps the most convincing example of such a clash, except that the radical Islamicism of the Albanian secessionist movement is rather artfully disguised through the use of European phraseology and European symbols.

Numerous testimonies by foreign authors bear witness to ethnic, political and religious circumstances in these parts during the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, at a time when the Albanians as part of the Ottoman feudal system became the main factors of local authority and the masters of the Christian population. For example, Joseph Muller provides figures from 1838 about the religious and linguistic structure of the population in Peć, Prizren and Đakovica in Metohija; in Peć, Orthodox and Muslim Serbs held a majority (92.09%) in relation to Catholic and Muslim Albanians (4.17%). In Prizren, Muslim and Christian Serbs accounted for 73.68% of the total number of residents (24,950), while Muslim and Catholic Albanians accounted for 16.63%. Đakovica alone had a pronounced Albanian majority; Muslim and Catholic Albanians accounted for 80.76% and Christian and Muslim Serbs for 18.05% of the population.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>100</sup> Bernard Stulli, *Albansko pitanje (1875-1882) /The Albanian Question (1875-1882)/*, work of the Yugoslav Academy of Arts and Sciences, book 318, Zagreb 1959, p. 325.

<sup>101</sup> Dr. Joseph Muller, *Albanien, Rumelien und die osterreichisch-montenegrinische Gränze*; Prague 1844, pp. 73-78. See: Dr. Johann Georg von Hahn, *Albanesische Studien*, Vienna 1853; J.G. von Hahn, *Reise von Belgrad nach Salonik*, Vienna 1861; Ami Boue, *Recueil d'itinéraires dans la Turquie d'Europe. Détails géographiques, topographiques et statistiques sur cette Empire*, I-II, Vienna 1854,

Peter Kukulj, a Major in the Austro-Hungarian General Staff, published in Vienna in 1871 invaluable information about the population of the Prizren sanjak, that is to say Metohija and Kosovo. The information is invaluable precisely because it demonstrates demographic and ethnographic conditions a full ten years before the Albanian League was founded in Prizren and the organised expulsion of Serbs from these old Serbian areas began. According to Kukulj, the Prizren sanjak had approximately 500,000 residents, including the following ethnic groups and faiths given below:

Ethnic groups:

– Serbs . . . . .	318,000
– Albanians . . . . .	161,000
– Turks . . . . .	2,000
– Vlachs (Gogs) . . . . .	10,000
– Gypsies and Cherkez . . . . .	9,000

Faith:

– Orthodox (Serbs and Gogs) . . . . .	250,000
– Muslims (Albanians, Serbs, Gypsies, Cherkez, Turks . . . . .	239,000
– Catholics (Albanians, Serbs) . . . . .	11,000 <sup>102</sup>

The fact that Prizren, a town in Old Serbia at the very edge of Albanian ethnic areas was chosen as the place where the Albanian League would meet in 1878 undoubtedly testifies to the exceptionally far-reaching Albanian goals. It was precisely in Prizren that a strong obstacle to the further strengthening of the Serbian liberation movement in Old Serbia was to be created. And it is no coincidence that the Albanian League session was not held in Albania, for instance in Drach, Valona, Tirana or some other place. Areas in the neighbourhood of Albania such as Kosovo, Metohija, the area that is today western Slav-populated Macedonia and northern Epirus, in which the Albanians settled principally in the period from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century thanks to various Ottoman campaigns, started to be called “Albanian lands” from the time of the Great Eastern Crisis (1875-1878). The Albanian League, established on the eve of the Congress of Berlin, undertook to prevent the liberation of “Albanian land” from neighbouring ethnic groups. The League’s documents reveal the essence of the movement. Sessions were held in the Prizren mosque, and Islam was the special attribute of the Statute (Kararname). Albanians and Albania are not explicitly mentioned in any of the 16 articles of the Statute; instead, there are general references to “nation and homeland,” “country”, “our parts”, “Balkan country”, “in the Balkans” and so forth. Muslims are quite simply the political subject of the League; Article 7 refers to the need of establishing a league with “our suffering countrymen and members of the same faith in the Balkans” and in the final article, Article 16, withdrawal from the League is termed as apostasy “from Islam”.<sup>103</sup> The

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pp. 180-220; Vladimir Stojančević, *Etničke, konfesionalne i demografske prilike u Metohiji 1830-tih godina* /Ethnic, Confessional and Demographic Conditions in Metohija in the 1830s/, Collected Papers of the Roundtable on Academic Research Related to Kosovo, Belgrade 1988, pp. 99-112.

<sup>102</sup> P. Kukulj, *Das Fürstenthum Serbien und Türkisch-Serbien (Stara Srbija-Alt-Serbien)* . . . , pp. 148-149.

<sup>103</sup> Bernard Stulli, op. cit., p. 323.

gathering was attended by Muslims, owners of large estates, from Raška and even Bosnia and Herzegovina. The British Consul General in northern Albania, Kirby-Green, referred to the Albanian League in 1880 as an organisation including “. . . the most fanatical Muslims in the land. These men are imbued with extreme religious fanaticism and hatred towards Christians. With perhaps the exception of Mecca, Prizren is the most dangerous place for a Christian in any Muslim land.”<sup>104</sup>

### **The Continuity of the Greater Albanian Idea from the First to the Second Prizren Leagues (1878-1962)**

The programmes of the so-called Peć League in 1899 and the so-called Second Albanian League in 1943 essentially rest on similar ideological foundations. The Second League was organised in Prizren under the auspices and with the direct assistance of the German Reich. The main ideologue of the Second League, Xhafer Deva, who in late 1944 withdrew with the Germans towards Vienna and Berlin, established the Third Prizren League in New York in 1962 and was its President until his death in 1978. “The Prizren League and the National Committee “Free Kosovo” have acted in conjunction since 1978 with a common platform as the Kosovo Association.<sup>105</sup> Naturally, the programme goals once the Ottomans were driven back from Europe in 1912 and following the establishment of an independent Albanian state were slightly adjusted to new political circumstances and to new patron powers. The insistence of an ethnically pure Albanian state and the rejection of any kind of multiethnic concept are typical of the ideological programme of Greater Albania.

In conformity with such a programme, the organised ethnic cleansing of Serbs and other non-Albanians from areas proclaimed “Albanian lands” was commenced, as had been stated already, following the Congress of Berlin. From 1876 to 1912, around 150,000 Orthodox Serbs were forced to move out of Old Serbia, or what was the Kosovo vilayet at the time.<sup>106</sup> Ismail Kemal Bey Vlora, the President of the first Albanian Interim Government in 1912, had similar ideas. As Prime Minister, he asked the great powers to cleanse “Albanian soil” of Slavs and Greeks.<sup>107</sup> Elsewhere he praised the Albanians for having expelled “Christian Slavs” with their rifles and by means of violence.<sup>108</sup>

Following the First Balkan War in 1912, in which Albanians fought on the side of the Ottomans, an ambassadorial conference in London determined in 1913 the borders of the newly-established Albanian state. In November 1921, an ambassadorial conference in Paris decided to recognise Albania as an independent and sovereign state (earlier, in 1920, Albania had become a member of the League of Nations). Even though the ambassadorial conference in Paris determined in principle borders which essentially coincided with the decisions of the London Conference, the definitive border between the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and Albania was determined in the Demarcation Protocol of the International Commission in Florence on 26 July 1926.

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<sup>104</sup> Citation in M. Vickers, *Between Serb and Albanian* . . . , p. 47.

<sup>105</sup> D. Borozan, op. cit., . . . pp. 368-369.

<sup>106</sup> K. Gersin, *Altserbien und die albanische Frage*, Vienna 1912, p. 29.

<sup>107</sup> Ekrem Bey Vlora, *Lebenserinnerungen, Band I* (1885, reprinted 1912), Munich 1968, p. 275.

<sup>108</sup> Ekrem Bey Vlora, *Die Wahrheit über das Vorgehen der Jungturken in Albanien*, Vienna 1911, p. 43.

The Albanian state encompassed the greater part of Albanian ethnic territories. It is completely understandable that it was not possible to draw clear-cut ethnic borders in the Balkans in which extensive migrations and the intermixing of ethnic groups, languages and religions occurred in the course of centuries of Ottoman rule. A number of Albanians who, as mentioned earlier, settled in Old Serbia in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, continued to live within the Kingdom of Serbia; however, tens of thousands of Orthodox and Muslim Serbs continued to live in the newly-established Albanian state, just as a large number of Greeks also remained in the Albanian state on the basis of a decision by the great powers.

/see map on page 57 of the original text/

/caption:/

Map of Ali Fehmi Kosturi which has been repeatedly distributed since 1938; from Dr. Đorđe Borozan's book *Velika Albanija. Porijeklo-ideje-praksa* /Greater Albania. Origin, Ideas, Practice/, Belgrade, 1995.

/see map on page 58 of the original text/

/caption:/

A map of "Greater Albania" which was officially used in Albania during World War II; from Dr. Đorđe Borozan's book *Velika Albanija. Porijeklo-ideje-praksa* /Greater Albania. Origin, Ideas, Practice/, Belgrade, 1995.

The areas aspired to under the concept of a Greater Albania have historically never been part of an Albanian state. However, a number of Albanian political feudal leaders from the period of Ottoman rule who lost their privileges when the Ottoman Empire disintegrated could not accept the borders of the newly-established states in the Balkans, and immediately launched actions aimed at destroying the new states, primarily Serbia and Greece. This activity, especially pronounced on the eve of World War II, enjoyed the direct support of the fascist powers, especially fascist Italy.

### **Fascist Greater Albania – “A Fortress Which Will Rule the Balkans without Compromise”**

The Greater Albania irredentist activity between the two world wars enjoyed the strong support of fascist powers which wanted to break the newly-established Yugoslav state as an alleged creation of the “Versailles system”. This was primarily in the interest of fascist Italy but also of the Third Communist International (the Comintern), based in Moscow. In early 1920, the Greater Albania “Kosovo Committee” established links with the Comintern; in December 1921, Bajram Curi, one of the leading figures in this organisation, visited the Soviet emissary in Vienna to discuss the question of Kosovo and Metohija, and gave him a memorandum on the Committee’s intentions.<sup>109</sup>

The leaderships of fascist and communist political organisations competed in supporting the separatism of Kosovo and Metohija’s Albanians. Fascist Italy directly supported the actions of Albanian terrorist (kachaks) in Yugoslavia, which were led by Azem Bejta, in the years after World War One. The leaders of this movement, Hasan Priştinja and Mustafa Kruja, received, in the beginning, 50,000 liras per month from the Italian government and later around 200,000 liras, and from September 1927 much more. The Italian government coordinated the activity of Croatian and Bulgarian fascists headed by Ante Pavelić and Ivan-Vančo Mihailov and that of Hasan Priština and other leaders of the separatist Greater Albanian movement of Yugoslavia’s Albanians.<sup>110</sup> A propaganda brochure of Kosovo Committee member Mehmed Vokši (*Tutta l’Albania di tutti gli Albanese*), in which the “territories” of the future Greater Albania were designated, was published in Rome in 1931. These borders, according to Vokši, “starting from the Adriatic coast, from the bay of Špica, lead northward to Bar, and following a north-easterly direction, /include/ Skadar Lake, Trgoviška Brda, Skadar, Hoti, Gruda, Gusinje, Plav and Peć, the entire high plateau in the north to Mitrovica, Kuršumlja and Prokuplje; from there /the borders/ descend southward to Kumanovo, following the line bordered by the towns of Skoplje, Bitolj, Kastori, Art and Prevez.”<sup>111</sup>

Beginning with 1939, the activity of fascist Italy towards Greece and Yugoslavia became stronger and more organised. As is well-known, Italy occupied Albania on 7 April 1939. Count Ciano, Marshal Badoglio and other fascist ministers were obsessed with annexing Kosovo and Metohija and Čamerija (Epirus) to the “new Albania”. When the German-Italian pact was concluded on 21 May 1939, Ciano emphasised to Ribbentrop “Albanian’s importance for future strategic breakthroughs by the Axis in the Mediterranean and in the Balkans.” Ciano noted Ribbentrop’s

<sup>109</sup> Nicolas C. Pano, *The People’s Republic of Albania*, Baltimore 1968, 27 (footnote 30).

<sup>110</sup> Giovanni Zamboni, *Mussolinis Expansionpolitik auf dem Balkan*, Hamburg 1970, p. 313 (footnote 25).

<sup>111</sup> Đ. Borozan, op. cit., p. 121.

position in his *Diary*: "He is delighted with our intentions to transform Albania into a fortress which will relentlessly rule the Balkans."<sup>112</sup>

In July 1939, Count Ciano gave instructions to Albanian emigrants for an action to be conducted in Epirus and in Kosovo and Metohija; he often repeated that the Kosovo-Albanian irredentism represented "a knife aimed at Yugoslavia's back!" That same year, a bureau which was to organise the Albanian irredentist movement was established in Rome. Italy wholeheartedly assisted the new leaders of the Greater Albanian "Kosovo Committee", Bedri Pejani and Ibrahim Đakova. The Italian intelligence centre in Kuks was, from 1939 on, the centre of Greater Albanian activity aimed against Yugoslavia and the main basis of subversive and sabotage activity. An Albanian fascist party was established in Albania and during a visit to Tirana on 19 August 1939, Count Ciano promised that the project of a Greater Albania would be implemented soon. Germany's attack on Poland in early September 1939 strengthened the Greater Albanian action.

In early 1940, Kolj Biba, the Secretary of the Albanian Fascist Party, stated in Skadar that Italy would soon annex parts of Yugoslavia and Greece inhabited by Albanians. A new "Kosovo Committee" was established that same year in Tirana /headed by/ Ćerim-beg Mahmudbegović from Peć. During August 1940, the Italian papers *Giornale d'Italia*, *Il Popolo d'Italia* and *Corriere Vaticano* conducted a campaign advocating the Greater Albanian project and sought urgent solutions for the "chronically difficult" position of the Albanian minority in Greece and Yugoslavia.<sup>113</sup>

When World War Two broke out and somewhat later, the fascist forces, headed by Germany and Italy, launched an attack on Yugoslavia, the bloody implementation of the Greater Albania project commenced. "On the basis of Mussolini's Decree of 29 June 1941, Decree no. 165 was adopted on 22 July whereby parts of Yugoslav and Greek territory (Kosovo, Metohija, the western parts of Macedonia, the eastern areas of Montenegro and Čamerija) were annexed to Albania."<sup>114</sup> The greater part of Kosovo (except for the Podujevo, Vučitrin and Kosovska Mitrovica district) and the whole of Metohija were attached to fascist Greater Albania. The Germans insisted that Kosovska Mitrovica and Trepča remain in their hands. Parts of Gnjilane and the Uroševac district to the north of Pasjan, Kačanik, Vitina and Sirinička Župa were attached to the newly-created Greater Bulgaria. Areas of western Macedonia including Tetovo, Gostivar, Kičevo, Debar, Struga and Sv. Naum also became part of Greater Albania. On the basis of the Vienna Agreement of 24 April 1941, a demarcation line was established between Greater Bulgaria and Greater Albania, but the Bulgarians were dissatisfied with the demarcation. Mustafa Kruja, Prime Minister of the puppet government, held a lecture on the natural and historical roots of Greater Albania in the Royal Italian Academy of 30 May 1941. He said that "Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler would give the Albanian people, following the victory of the Axis powers and the establishment of a new (fascist) order, a national state which would embrace the broadest ethnic borders and form an inseparable community with fascist Italy."<sup>115</sup> In June 1942 he visited Kosovo and Metohija and in a meeting with Albanian leaders clearly stated that "an effort should be made to cleanse the Serbian population in Kosovo as soon as

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., p. 187.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p. 219.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., p. 300.

<sup>115</sup> Ali Hadri, *Okupacioni system na Kosovu i Metohiji 1941-1945 /The Occupation System in Kosovo and Metohija 1941-1945/*, JIČ (1965), p. 42.



possible. . . . All indigenous Serbs should be declared colonists and as such sent by the Albanian and Italian authorities to concentration camps in Albania. Serbian colonists should be killed.”<sup>116</sup> Yet again, it was demonstrated that there was no place for a single people except Albanians in the Greater Albanian project.

During the four years of occupation (1941-1945), much was done to fulfil the Greater Albanian project in Kosovo and Metohija. The local Albanians, with the help of their compatriots from Albania and under the protection of the occupying forces, committed large-scale crimes against the Serbs. The European public is not familiar with the scope of these crimes. According to US intelligence services (Office of Strategic Services), from April 1941 to August 1942, Albanians killed around 10,000 Serbs.<sup>117</sup> Serbian Orthodox priests were arrested and killed. The Bishop of Raška and Prizren, Serafim, was arrested and confined in Tirana where he died on 13 January 1945. In the area under Italian occupation, Albanians killed 14 priests and a nun. Damaskin Bošković, head of the Dečani monastery, was brutally killed, while priests Luka Popović, Uroš Popović and Slobodan Popović were killed during mass.<sup>118</sup>

When Italy occupied these areas, in addition to the ethnic cleansing that was initiated, the Greater Albania political and cultural programme began to be implemented systematically in all spheres of life. An insignificant number of Serbian children who attended school under Italian occupation were forced to study in Albanian. The same was true of children in Western Macedonia. Serbs were expelled in large numbers from Kosovo and Metohija and an equivalent if not larger number of Albanians from Albania settled in their place (some historians believe that around 100,000 people did so).<sup>119</sup> By April 1942, there were around 60,000 refugees from Metohija and parts of Kosovo, which had become part of Greater Albania, at the southern borders of German-occupied Serbia. This markedly changed the ethnic structure of this part of Serbia or rather, Yugoslavia and was in essence one of the most important premises for the successful continuation, after World War II, of the Greater Albanian programme under communist rule. Such activity by the communist oligarchy (Hodža, Nimani, Deva, Bakali and Vlasi) of Kosovo and Metohija's Albanians was wholeheartedly supported by the party and state leadership of Broz's Yugoslavia. Following the capitulation of fascist Italy, the Germans encouraged the establishment of the so-called Second Prizren League in Prizren in late 1943. The League was organised under the patronage of Abwerh, the German military intelligence service, and was headed by Đafer Deva, Bedri Pejani, Ismet Kriezui and others. The terror to which the Serbs were exposed, which included a large number of individual and large-scale crimes, lasted until March 1944 when it began to abate.

In addition to a multitude of other testimonies available, Hermann Neubacher, the Third Reich's special political representative in south-eastern Europe from the fall of 1943, spoke about the dimensions of the ethnic cleansing of Serbs from these areas:

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<sup>116</sup> Dimitrije Bogdanović, *Knjiga o Kosovu* /Book on Kosovo/, Belgrade 1990, pp. 248-249; Jens Reuter, *Albaniens nationale Frage* (in): Konrad Clewinihg-Jens Reuter (Koordination) *Der Kosovo-Konflikt. Ursachen – Akteure – Verlauf*, Munich 2000, p. 158.

<sup>117</sup> Serge Krizman, *Maps of Yugoslavia at War. Massacre of the Innocent Serbian Population Committed in Yugoslavia by the Axis and Its Satellite from April 1941 to August 1942*, Washington 1943.

<sup>118</sup> *Spomenica pravoslavnoga sveštenstva – žrtava fašističkog terora i palih u narodno-oslobodilačkoj borbi* /Memorial to Orthodox Priests – Victims of Fascist Terror and Those Who Died in the People's Liberation Struggle/, Belgrade 1961, p. 117.

<sup>119</sup> Jens Reuter, *Albaniens nationale Frage* . . . , p. 158.

“The Sciptars made haste to expel as many Serbs as possible from the country. The local oppressors often accepted gifts in gold from those being expelled in return for a permit to leave. . . . When General Nedić conveyed his bitter complaints to me, I urgently suggested that the Albanian government put an end to the persecutions. When I saw that my intervention had remained unsuccessful, I asked to resign from my mission to Albania; I would have to let someone else defend Albania from Bulgaria’s greed for territory. Džafer Deva, who was influential in Kosovo, promised that he would intervene and he did so successfully. Despite this, much misery was caused after 1941.”<sup>120</sup> When fascist Italy capitulated, the notorious Skenderbeg SS Division consisting of Albanians was established under the German occupation administration, and pursued the Greater Albanian project until these areas were finally liberated.

### **Sham Communist Internationalism in the Service of the Greater Albania Idea under the Guise of Affirming the Nationalism of “Small Peoples”**

The Communist movement between the two world wars, headed by the Comintern, banked heavily on the activity of the Albanian irredentists. In 1928, Albanian émigrés in the USSR established the Albanian communist group. Just as in other parts of Yugoslavia where, after 1928, the communists cooperated with fascist groups whom they referred to as “national revolutionary groups”, the Yugoslav communists also counted on cooperation with extreme Albanian nationalists. For example, in its resolution, the Fourth Congress of the Yugoslav Communist Party /KPJ/ held in Dresden in 1928, expressed the solidarity of revolutionary workers and peasants “with the Albanian national and revolutionary movement represented by the Kosovo Committee and call[ed] on the working class to wholeheartedly assist the struggle of a dismembered and oppressed people for an independent and unified Albania.” Somewhat later, in mid-1937, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia established the KPJ District Committee for Kosovo and Metohija which represented the foundation for the future autonomy of this area in Communist Yugoslavia. The organisation of Tito’s Yugoslavia rested entirely on the Communist Party’s pre-war organisation and territorial structure.

A series of decisions reached by Tito’s Communist movement indicate that the Yugoslav Communist leadership headed by Josip Broz Tito was consistent in its strategy of weakening the Serbs in the future Yugoslavia and that the Albanians were one of the factors employed in that strategy. This was also noticed by foreign observers of events in Yugoslavia during World War II. Major John Henniker Major, a member of the British military mission in southern Serbia, who headed the local allied mission to the main staff of the partisan movement of Serbia, noted the following in late 1944: “I believe Tito’s statement that he is not interested in Kosovo’s future which he would give to Albania if it wanted it.”<sup>121</sup> If one bears in mind this global national strategy of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, it becomes clear why the Communist leadership did not do anything to remedy the consequences of the forcible change in the ethnic structure of this part of Serbia under fascist occupation. It was quite logical to expect the expelled Serbs to return to their

<sup>120</sup> Hermann Neubacher, *Sonderauftrag Sudost 1940-1945*, Göttingen 1953., p. 116.

<sup>121</sup> *Blgarija nepriznatijat protivnik na tretija Rajh*, Ministerstvoto na otbranata – Nacionalni centar po voenna istorija, Sofia 1995, p. 169.

properties in Kosovo and Metohija after World War II, thereby rectifying the injustices caused as a consequence of fascist aggression against the Yugoslav state. Instead, the new Yugoslav Communist government headed by Tito adopted, on 6 March 1945, a "Temporary Ban on the Return of Colonists to Their Former Places of Residence" (even though the Serbs were not only colonists but were also an indigenous ethnic group in the area) which states: "The return and resettlement of colonist (settler) families which used to live in Macedonia, Kosovo, Metohija, Srem and Vojvodina has been in evidence recently, without the permission of the authorities," and, consequently, a decision was adopted "temporarily forbidding the return of colonists to the places where they used to live; everyone must stay where they are presently residing."<sup>122</sup> Soon after liberation, on 3 August 1945, the "Law Revising the Allocation of Land to Colonists and Prospective Buyers of Land in Macedonia and in the Area of Kosovo and Metohija,"<sup>123</sup> and on 2 November 1946, the "Law on Revising the Allocation of Land to Colonists and Prospective Buyers of Land in the People's Republic of Macedonia and the Autonomous Region of Kosovo and Metohija" were adopted.<sup>124</sup>

Thus the results of occupation by fascist Italy and Germany during World War II and the sanctioning of these results by the Yugoslav Communist leadership in effect represented the first stage of the Greater Albanian political project. Everything that happened in Tito's Yugoslavia strengthened Greater Albanian political ideology which in the new circumstances was artfully disguised under the communist slogan of "brotherhood and unity" and what was essentially sham internationalism.

### **The Abuse of a High Degree of Autonomy. Indoctrination with Greater Albanian Ideology**

Yugoslav communists remained true to the Comintern strategy of giving in to the extremist nationalism of "small peoples". In practice, from day to day the Albanian political oligarchy used all the resources of state power (the police, educational system, judiciary and cultural institutions) which was entirely in Albanian hands in this part of Serbia, implemented the ethnic cleansing of Kosovo and Metohija and prepared the way for their incorporation into a future Greater Albania. As a national minority in Serbia, the Albanians had an Academy of Sciences of Kosovo in Priština (this was, for a minority, probably a unique case in the world), a university with classes in the Albanian language, Priština Radio and Television in the Albanian language and numerous other institutions. They abused this greatest possible degree of autonomy which exceeded all European standards and they used the full power they enjoyed to indoctrinate the Albanian population, especially young people, with Greater Albanian national ideology.

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<sup>122</sup> Decision of the National Committee of the Liberation of Yugoslavia, "Temporary Ban on the Return of Colonists to the Places Where They Used to Reside, *Official Gazette of Democratic Federative Yugoslavia*, no. 13, 16 March 1945.

<sup>123</sup> Law Revising the Allocation of Land to Colonists and Prospective Land Buyers in Macedonia and the Kosovo and Metohija Area, *Official Gazette of Democratic Federative Yugoslavia*, no. 56, 5 August 1945.

<sup>124</sup> Law Revising the Allocation of Land to Colonists and Prospective Land Buyers in the People's Republic of Macedonia and the Autonomous Region of Kosovo and Metohija, *Official Gazette of the People's Federative Republic of Yugoslavia*, no. 89, 5 November 1946.

Greater Albanian chauvinist propaganda reached its peak between 1975 and 1980, following the adoption of the Yugoslav Constitution in 1974 which granted the provinces in Serbia the attributes of statehood and federal constituents. The border between Yugoslavia and Albania did not, to all intents and purposes, exist. During the golden age of Stalinism in Tirana – which inspired incredibly fanatical ideological hatred towards the Serbs – delegations from the Albanian capital arrived in Kosovo and Metohija almost every day. The lack of any kind of freedom and democracy in Albania was compensated by the retrograde ideology of ethnically cleansing Serbs from Old Serbia and the publication of pseudo-academic works. In the period from 1975 to 1980 (according to data which still remains incomplete), 237 professors and teachers from Albania lectured at the University in Priština and in other schools in Kosovo and Metohija (among them Meidani, until recently President of Albania); 62 professors and teachers from this province of Serbia visited Albania; 183 academic researchers from the University of Priština did graduate work in Albania, and 62 academic researchers from Albania pursued graduate studies in Priština. Over 20% of all textbooks, particularly those related to the humanities, which were used in schools in Kosovo and Metohij, were imported from Albania.<sup>125</sup>

As Serbian and Slavic enclaves were being eradicated in Albania, the same was being done in Kosovo and Metohija. During the 1970s, the Institute for Albanology drew up a directory of places whose existing Serbian and Slavic names were to be changed in order to conceal the ethnic origin of the settlements.<sup>126</sup> Nevertheless, up to NATO's occupation of these areas in 1999, there were 200 Albanian and over 1,000 Serbian or old Slavic names for settlements.<sup>127</sup> By the early 1980s, in addition to several academic journals such as *Gjurmime Albanologjike*, Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija had ten papers in the Albanian language: *Rilindija* (a daily with a circulation of over 100,000 copies in 1979), *Zani i rinis*, *Jeta e re*, *Pioneri*, *Perparimi*, *Shendeti*, *Fjala*, *Bata e re*, *Skendija* and *Bat*. Despite everything, they used the publications to spread national hatred instead of fostering a spirit of tolerance and understanding and promoting relations with other ethnic groups. What is paradoxical in this whole situation is the fact that the Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija who claim that they were systematically oppressed and persecuted over the centuries achieved such a level of development in Serbia that today it is Priština rather than Tirana that wishes to play the role of the main creator of a Greater Albania. The "Greater Albania" project, with the guiding idea of "all Albanians in a single state", not only represents a belated and the very last example of 19<sup>th</sup> century national romanticism, but also brings into question existing internationally recognised borders, jeopardises stability in the whole of south-eastern Europe and poses the threat of a Third Balkan War breaking out. The Albanian political and intellectual elites demonstrate a considerable lack of understanding for the logic of European politics.

### **The Albanian Academy of Sciences and the Ideological Legitimation of Greater Albanian Pretensions in the Balkans**

<sup>125</sup> Jans Reuter, "Das Kosovo-Problem im Kontext der jugoslawisch-albanischen Beziehungen" in *Albanien im Umbruch*, Munich 1990, p. 88.

<sup>126</sup> Bogumil Hrabak, "Širenje arbanaških stočara po ravninama i slovenski ratari srednjovekovne Albanije" in *Stanovništvo slovenskog porijekla u Albaniji* /Population of Slavic Descent in Albania/, Titograd 1991, p. 115.

<sup>127</sup> Branislav Krstić, *Kosovo pred sudom istorije* /Kosovo Before the Court of History/, Belgrade 2000, pp. 237 and 318-322.

The "Platform for the Solution of the Albanian National Question", adopted by the Albanian Academy of Sciences in Tirana on 20 October 1998 testifies to the above. In the preface, Albanian academics take as their starting point the false premise that Albanians have "for thousands of years populated . . . Kosovo as a territorial whole, with a number of centuries-old towns and an ancient culture." Naturally, they draw biased and politically tendentious conclusions: "In recent times, the disorders in Kosovo have grown in scale dramatically as a result of Serbian police terror. The obstinacy of Belgrade which refuses to recognise and grant comprehensive rights to Kosovo Albanians, has created the risk that conflict may break out beyond its borders – on the Balkan peninsula and perhaps beyond." The Albanian Academy does not support proposals for the autonomy of Kosovo and Metohija either within the framework of Serbia or that of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, advocating, instead, "a solution to the national question as a whole." Greater Albanian ideology attempts to base its territorial pretensions on Panilirism, representing present-day Albanians as the "descendants of the ancient Illyrians" and, consequently, the areas that were once inhabited by the Illyrians would be incorporated into a Greater Albania. Another major Albanian deception is related to the establishment of a "historical Kosovo" and to giving the Ottoman Kosovo vilayet the attributes of an alleged Albanian vilayet. The historical truth is quite different. In the first place, this vilayet was first established following major political changes following the Great Eastern Crisis from 1875 to 1878 and Austro-Hungary's occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was one of scores of vilayets which were administrative units of the Ottoman Empire.

The Platform of the Albanian Academy states: "The geographic area of the Kosovo vilayet was for the most part populated with Albanians and that is why the fact that it coincides with the ancient province of Dardania, whose seat was also in Skoplje, is not surprising." However, Austro-Hungarian researchers who as a rule were partisan towards the Albanians did not find an Albanian majority in the Kosovo vilayet at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. On his map of Macedonia, Old Serbia and Albania published in Vienna in 1912, Dr. Karl Peucker states that there is a Slavic majority in the Kosovo vilayet ("Serbs and Bulgarians"). Of a total of 980,000 residents, according to Dr. Peucker, 447,000 were Orthodox and Muslim Slavs – 430,000 were Muslim Albanians while an insignificant number were Christian, 90,000 were Turks, 10,000 were Muslim gypsies, and 2,000 were Jews and members of other ethnic groups.<sup>128</sup> Albanians academics even talked about the Serbian state's "occupation of Kosovo" at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, even though at that time Serbs lived in Kosovo and Metohija which was part of the Byzantine Empire. There are constant repetitions later on in the text to the effect that Belgrade "annexed" Kosovo in 1912 and even that Serbia, "motivated by territorial pretensions," was to blame for the outbreak of World War I.

Despite all the information available about the demographic explosion of the Albanian minority in Serbia and the constant and rapid decline in the numbers of Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija, the Albanian Academy of Sciences repeats the phrase used by aggressive Serbian nationalists regarding the "policy of ethnically cleansing" Albanians: "The persistent continuation of the policy of ethnic cleansing will push

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<sup>128</sup> /at this point in the original document, the footnote numbers are out of order. From here on, the number from the document will be given in square brackets: [137] *Makedonien, Altserbien und Albanien* 1:864,000, Bearbeitet von Dr. Karl Peucker, IV Auflage, Vienna 1912.

Serbia even deeper into adventurism from which there is no way out, which it became involved in in 1913. In short, Serbia can rid itself of the gangrene called Kosovo only if it withdraws its forces from the area.” The absurdity of the entire interpretation of the demographic processes and demographic expansion of Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija reaches a culmination in the following sentence: “Despite the large-scale moving out under Belgrade’s coercion, their number grew continually.”<sup>129</sup> Noting that the Republic of Serbia “lost the right on the basis of which it justified its sovereignty over the Province of Kosovo,” the Albanian Academy of Sciences concludes in October 1998 (more than five months before NATO’s aggression against Serbia and Yugoslavia) that the “only possible solution . . . is the rapid international intervention which would force Belgrade to recognise a Republic of Kosovo separate from Serbia, allowing its people the right to establish the status of a Republic.”<sup>130</sup>

The clear Greater Albania ambitions of the Albanian Academy of Sciences set out in the Platform, in the formulation of which Albanians from Kosovo and Metohija also took part, are manifested in putting forward the concept of a so-called “historical Kosovo”. This term as such has never been mentioned anywhere, either in published works or other sources, except for Albanian propaganda publications which have appeared in recent years. Kosovo is above all a geographic concept and for centuries it has designated the plain around the Sitnica and Laba rivers. The name began to spread at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by way of the Ottoman administrative name, the Kosovo vilayet, but on every occasion, two areas – Kosovo and Metohija – continued to be clearly distinguished. The names “Kosovo” and the “area of Metohija” were imposed in 1968 when the two-term name of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija was replaced by Kosovo. In the mid-1980s, the prominent Serbian historian, academic Sima Ćirković pointed out that “the name Kosovo is used to encompass parts of Montenegro and Macedonia in which there are Albanians, on maps printed in Albania as propaganda material.”<sup>131</sup> The concept of a “historical Kosovo” embraces the following: in addition to what is referred to “Kosovo proper” (actually, present-day Kosovo and Metohija), new concepts have been invented – “eastern Kosovo” (Bujanovac, Preševo and Medveda), “southern Kosovo” (the area of Skoplje, Tetovo, Gostivar, Kičevo and Kumanovo in present-day Republic of Macedonia, together with the area around Debar and Struga) and “north-western Kosovo” (Plav, Gusinje and Rožaje in Montenegro). This is a rare example of historiographic falsifications and manipulations.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> [138] *Platforme per gjidhien e ceshtjes shqiptare*, Tirana 1998, pp. 41-42.

<sup>130</sup> [139] *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>131</sup> [140] Sima M. Ćirković, “Kosovo i Metohija u srednjem veku” /Kosovo and Metohija in the Middle Ages/ in *Kosovo and Metohija u srpskoj istoriji* /Kosovo and Metohija in Serbian History/, Belgrade 1989, p. 23 (footnote 6).

<sup>132</sup> [141] Platform, p. 23.

#### IV ALBANIAN ETHNIC CLEANSING OF KOSOVO AND METOHIIJA

##### **From the Struggle for the Legitimate Rights of the Albanian Minority in Serbia to the Struggle for Ethnically Pure Territory with the Aim of Attaching Parts of Serbia to Greater Albania**

In recent years, the broadest segments of the international public, and not just academic circles, have been confronted with an inadmissible and almost incredible distortion of the historical truth about Serbs and Kosovo and Metohija as the centre of their culture. There are many examples of biased interpretations of various events in Balkan and European history but it is almost impossible to find an instance of such manipulation with historical facts. The Albanians in Kosovo were never victims of ethnic cleansing by the Serbs; instead, it is the Serbs, unfortunately, who were the victims of large-scale ethnic cleansing carried out by the Albanians in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (especially from 1878 to 1912) under Ottoman rule, during World War II (1941 to 1945) within the framework of a fascist Greater Albania sponsored by fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, and in the period after World War II, with the support of the communist regime of Tito's Yugoslavia. The most salient example of such manipulation is Noel Malcolm's recently published book, *Kosovo. A Short History*.<sup>133</sup> In the course of 1999 and 2000, two other books were published which largely aspired to offer, in a biased way, "historical legitimacy" to the separatist and terrorist movement of the Albanian movement in Serbia and Yugoslavia and a moral and political alibi for NATO's aggression against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1999.<sup>134</sup>

The Ottoman conquests in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century cut short the great cultural achievements of the Christian peoples in the Balkans. This was also the fate of Serbian medieval society. Its political, social and cultural elites were destroyed; many medieval towns, churches, monasteries and other cultural landmarks were demolished. As former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger has accurately pointed out in a number of instances, Kosovo and Metohija are the most striking example of the clash, in a small area, of the two above-mentioned cultural and social models. A large percentage of Albanians in Albania accepted Islam; however, almost the only thing they accepted from Islamic civilisation was the spirit of militant and radical Islam which bears within it the need to conquer the territories of others, but has no special spiritual or cultural content. Serbs, and other Christian peoples in the Balkans, extended strong support to the efforts of Christian Europe to drive the Ottomans out of Central Europe (especially from the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and on). Following the defeat of the Christian coalition in the fighting with the Ottomans and the withdrawal of European forces from the southern parts of what is today Serbia, Albanians from Albania began, under Ottoman rule, to settle in Serbia, first in the Metohija area and later in Kosovo. This historical fact is of decisive importance in changing the ethnic picture of this part of Serbia over the following three centuries.

##### **The Ideology of an Ethnically Pure Greater Albania and Racial Hatred Towards the Slavs**

<sup>133</sup> [128] Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo. A Short History*. Macmillan, London 1998, p. 492.

<sup>134</sup> [129] Wolfgang Petritsch, Karl Kaser, Robert Pichler, *Kosovo – Kosova. Mythen, Daten, Fakten*, Klagenfurt, Vienna, Ljubljana, Tuzla, Sarajevo 1999, pp. 363 and XLIII; Konrad Clewing and Jans Reuter, Koordiantion, *Der Kosovo – Konflikt*. Ursachen, Akteure, Velaut, Munich 2000, p. 568.

Visiting Peć and Dečani in Metohija in 1903, the English woman Mary Edith Durham, author of *Through the Lands of the Serb*, wrote the following: "The story of Old Serbia is one of miserable and constant pain. The suffering of the Christian peoples in the Balkans is nothing new. It began with the arrival of the Ottomans and will last as long as they are here. As far back as 1690, the intolerable fate of the Serbs of Old Serbia led to the migration of no less than 37,000 families to Hungary (families including uncles and their children). The Albanians then moved to the land and properties that had been vacated and were allowed to devastate them with impunity from then on."<sup>135</sup>

The process of newly-arrived Albanians who were predominantly Muslim driving out on a daily basis the Orthodox Serbs, as Christians began at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>136</sup> The most brutal phase of the destruction of monumental Serbian places of worship (the destruction of Sveti Arhandeli near Prizren, Serbian Emperor Dušan's monumental endowment, the transformation of the famous Bogorodice Ljeviške monastery into a mosque in 1756) and cultural monuments began at this time and was accompanied by various forms of violence and crime. Numerous historical sources in the Vatican and Vienna archives as well as in the archives of other countries testify to this. The Albanians who arrived from Albania were exclusively herdsmen and they brought their herds of livestock and took over the fertile fields of Metohija and Kosovo. They don't have their cultural landmarks in this area.

If they did not flee, the Orthodox Serbs accepted Islam in large numbers in order to survive in the areas where they lived and later, the second or third generation, gradually lost their Serbian ethnic identity in an Islamic Albanian environment. In science, this phenomenon is known as albanisation or the "Albanian" phenomenon. These are processes of long duration which can be understood only if the general political, social and spiritual conditions of the remote provinces of the Ottoman Empire in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries are understood. For a long time, the Albanians were a minority in comparison with Orthodox Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija, but they had the strong support of the Ottoman authorities, in which they themselves took part, holding high-ranking positions in the Ottoman administration.

The well-known British historian, Harold William Vazeille Temperley, clearly said that "the Mussulmanised Serbs known as Arnauts are the bitterest foes of the Serb."<sup>137</sup> Temperley was a professor at Harvard and Cambridge and in 1921 he was the British representative in the committee for Albanian borders. Many European authors and travel writers mentioned earlier have recorded the process of the gradual ethnic cleansing of Serbs and Old Serbia (Joseph Muller, Aleksandar F. Gilferding, Victor Berard, Ivan St. Yastrebov, Gaston Gravier and others). Albanian crimes against the Serbs in Metohija and Kosovo in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century are presented in documented form in the book of the Archimandrite of Dečani monastery, Hadži Serafim Ristić, *Plaç Stare Srbije /The Lament of Old Serbia/*. The ethnic cleansing of Serbs intensified after the creation of the Albanian League in Prizren in 1878 which unambiguously set forth its aspirations for the creation of a Greater Albania. The prominent European historian Konstantin Jireče claims that from 1878 to 1912,

<sup>135</sup> [130] Mary E. Durham, *Through the Lands of the Serb*, London 1904, p. 310.

<sup>136</sup> [131] Dr. Konstantin Jireček, *Albanien in der Vergangenheit* (in) *Illirisch albanische Forschungen*, Zusammengestellt von Dr. Ludwig von Thalloczy, I. Band, Munich and Leipzig 1916, pp. 86-87.

<sup>137</sup> [132] Harold W.V. Temperley, *History of Serbia*, London 1917, p. 309.



around 150,000 Orthodox Serbs moved out from Old Serbia to the central areas of present-day Serbia (at that time, the Kingdom of Serbia).<sup>138</sup> Despite the fact that Serbs were forcibly driven out from Kosovo and Metohija in large numbers, the ratio between Orthodox and Muslim Serbs and mostly Muslim Albanians in these areas was 50:50% a hundred years ago (according to Austro-Hungarian military and intelligence reports from 1899, the ratio of Orthodox, Muslim and Catholic Serbs and Muslim and Catholic Albanians was 43.70:47.88%).<sup>139</sup> In 1905, H.N. Brailsford writes convincingly about this process in his book entitled *Macedonia*.<sup>140</sup> Brailsford even states that Albanians “manifest semi-feudal terrorism towards the Slavic world.”<sup>141</sup> At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Austro-Hungary supported the penetration of Albanians into Old Serbia. The British researcher R.G.D. Laffan writes: “The number of Albanians has increased in Old Serbia because they were supported and encouraged by Austria.”<sup>142</sup> One should look at the ethnic map of Serbia published by Alfred Stead in London in 1909 which shows that there were very few ethnic Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija and that for the most part they were “Albanised Serbs.”<sup>143</sup>

In addition to a multitude of Russian, French and other sources, the documentation of English diplomacy also testifies to this process. For example, on 7 May 1901, Sir George /?Banham/ wrote to the Marquis Lansdown that 40 Serbian families were forced to flee to the Kingdom of Serbia as a result of Albanian terror.<sup>144</sup> On 9 September 1901, another English diplomat, Young, also wrote the following to the Marquis Lansdown: “Old Serbia is still an unquiet area because of the lawlessness, revenge and racial hatred of the Albanians.”<sup>145</sup> In the same report, Young added that the persecution of the Serbian population was continuing and that 600 Albanians with the help of 50 Turkish soldiers “have reduced a village of 60 households to one-fourth of what it was.”<sup>146</sup> Young’s report from December 1901 states that from spring to December, 250 Serbian families were driven out to the Kingdom of Serbia as a result of Albanian terror.<sup>147</sup>

This process stopped with the liberation of Old Serbia and the entire Balkan peninsula from Turkish rule through the joint struggle of Balkan Christians in 1912. It was repeated in even more brutal form during World War II, under Nazi fascist Greater Albania, when most of Metohija and part of Kosovo was attached to this entity, created by the occupiers. As stated earlier, in addition to around 10,000 Serbs killed during the fascist occupation of Kosovo and Metohija, 80,000 to 100,000 Serbs

<sup>138</sup> [133] Konstantin Jireček, *Ibid.*, p. 87; K. Gersin, *Altserbien und die albanische Frage*, Vienna 1912, p. 29.

<sup>139</sup> [134] *Polit. Eintheilung, Nationalitäten und Religionen*. Published as the enclosure to the book: *Detailbeschreibung des Sandžaks Plevlje und des Vilajets Kosovo* (Mit 8 Beilagen und 10 Tafeln). Als Manuscript gedruckt, Vienna 1899, p. 306.

<sup>140</sup> [135] H.N. Brailsford, *Macedonia. Its Races and Their Future*, New York 1971, pp. 90 and 274-277.

<sup>141</sup> [136] *Ibid.*, p. 90.

<sup>142</sup> [137] R.G.D. Laffan, *The Guardians of the Gate. Historical Lectures on the Serbs*. Oxford 1918, p. 90.

<sup>143</sup> [138] *Servia by the Servians*, Compiled and edited by Alfred Stead, with a map of London. William Heinemann, 1909.

<sup>144</sup> [139] *Turkey, No. 1 (1903). Correspondence. Respecting the Affairs of South-Eastern Europe*, London 1904, p. 45.

<sup>145</sup> [140] *Ibid.*, “Old Servia and the Albanian Border. Old Servia is still an area of disturbance owing to the lawlessness, vendettas, and racial jealousies of the Albanians,” p. 88.

<sup>146</sup> [141] *Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>147</sup> [142] *Ibid.*, p. 102.

were expelled, while approximately the same number of Albanians from Albania settled as colonists in the Serbian areas during this period.<sup>148</sup> Hermann Neubacher, the Third Reich's special political representative for south-eastern Europe from the fall of 1943, also writes about the crimes.<sup>149</sup> "The Sciptars made haste to expel as many Serbs as possible from the country. The local oppressors often accepted gifts in gold from those being expelled in return for a permit to leave. . . . When General Nedić conveyed his bitter complaints to me, I urgently suggested that the Albanian government put an end to the persecutions. When I saw that my intervention had remained unsuccessful, I asked to resign from my mission to Albania; I would have to let someone else defend Albania from Bulgaria's greed for territory. Džafer Deva, who was influential in Kosovo, promised that he would intervene and he did so successfully. Despite this, much misery was caused after 1941."

### **The Strategy of Seizing Territory on the Basis of Ethnicity and Property Ownership**

Instead of returning the expelled Serbs to their homes and properties, the new communist authorities banned them from going back. The final phase of the ethnic cleansing of Kosovo and Metohija was carried out under communist rule by the political leadership of the autonomous province of Kosovo and Metohija. All power was concentrated in the hands of the Albanians in the province, and instead of taking advantage of autonomy to promote the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic nature of Kosovo and Metohija, they strove to ethnically cleanse all Serbs from this Serbian area.

Out of opportunism, academic circles have not dealt with this great drama of the Serbian people in Old Serbia. The number of Serbs expelled remains to be determined, although one should bear in mind that precise information for all those expelled does not always exist. The expulsion of Serbs began right after 1945 simultaneously with the ban on the return of those expelled earlier during World War II. The largest numbers of Serbs were expelled from 1966 to 1981. According to Blagoje K. Pavlović's *Albanizacija Kosova i Metohije* /Albanisation of Kosovo and Metohija/, over 220,000 Serbs moved out of Kosovo and Metohija in this period (Pavlović also cites Montenegrins but there is no doubt that Montenegrins are Serbs).<sup>150</sup> In his book *Naseljavanje Kosova iz Albanije* /Populating Kosovo from Albania/, Predrag Živančević remarks that "for over 40 years, full state and political power in Kosovo and Metohija was in the hands of émigrés from Albania and 150,000 so-called wartime colonists moved into the province from Albania."<sup>151</sup> In his book *Stradanje Srba na Kosovu i Metohiji od 1941. do 1990.* /The Suffering of Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija from 1941 to 1990/, monk Atanasije Jevtić (today a bishop) provided the most complete and systematised information about the ethnic cleansing of Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija.<sup>152</sup> He set out thousands of examples with

<sup>148</sup> [143] Serge Krizman, *Maps of Yugoslavia at War. Massacre of the Innocent Serbian Population Committed in Yugoslavia by the Axis and Its Satellite from April 1941 to August 1942*, Washington D.C., 1943.

<sup>149</sup> [144] Hermann Neubacher, *Sonderauftrag Südost 1940-1945*, Göttingen 1953, p. 116.

<sup>150</sup> [145] Blagoje K. Pavlović, *Albanizacija Kosova i Metohije* /Albanisation of Kosovo and Metohija/, Belgrade 1996, p. 275.

<sup>151</sup> [146] Quoted from B.K. Pavlović, op. cit., p. 274.

<sup>152</sup> [147] Monk Atanasije Jevtić, *Stradanje Srba na Kosovu i Metohiji od 1941. do 1990.* /The Suffering of Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija from 1941 to 1990/, Priština 1990, p. 469.

specific places, dates and the names of the expelled Serb victims. Even though the expulsions did not stop in the 1950s and 1960s, they became massive after 1968. For example, Jevtić cites the incomplete report of the priest from Podujevo, Živojin Trajković (of 8 June 1969) for the period from the war to 1968. According to his report, 633 Serbian households had to move out in this period from the villages around Podujevo. The following were cited as the reasons for Serbs moving out: there were 350 physical attacks by Albanians against Serbs, 21 Serb women were raped, there were 430 instances of Serbs being robbed and two Serbs were killed.<sup>153</sup> The archives of the Holy Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church and those of the Raška-Prizren eparchy are the source of most of the information set out by monk Jevtić. Extensive research of the archival material of party and state organs, security organs and the military in the post-war period is yet to be undertaken with a view to obtaining a comprehensive picture of this unheard-of drama in Europe that happened to part of an ethnic group in its own homeland. According to the results of a poll conducted from 1985 to 1986 by the Population Studies Council of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences' Social Sciences Department, over 85,000 Serbs moved from Kosovo and Metohija to Central Serbia from 1961 to 1981 as a result of the pressures of Greater Albanian chauvinism. Over 20,000 moved out from 1981 to 1987.<sup>154</sup> The ethnic cleansing of Serbian villages and the Albanian move into towns, as part of the Greater Albanian strategy of seizing territory on the basis of ethnicity and property ownership, was particularly evident from 1961 to 1991.<sup>155</sup> We shall just cite some of the most drastic of the many examples of the persecution of Serbs. In 1961, in the village of Petrovce near Kosovska Mitrovica, of 461 residents, 460 (99.78%) were Serb and there wasn't a single Albanian. Twenty years later, in 1981, the village had 837 inhabitants, including 800 Albanians and just 36 Serbs (4.3%). In 1961, in the village of Orno Brdo near Istok, there were 675 inhabitants including 664 Serbs (98.37%) and just 11 Albanians. Twenty years later, only two Serbs remained, while the number of Albanians had increased to 963. In 1961, the village of Raka near Uroševac was entirely populated by Serbs (164 inhabitants), while in 1981, there were only two Serbs and 576 Albanians living there. In 1961, the village of Nova Šumadija near Prizren was wholly populated by Serbs (88 inhabitants), while in 1981 it didn't have a single Serb, and the entire population was Albanian (519 inhabitants). Research shows that from 1961 to 1981, Serbs completely disappeared from 230 villages in Kosovo and Metohija. Over the course of the next decade (1981 to 1991), "all Serbs were expelled from or were coerced to leave 157 villages in 26 municipalities in Kosovo and Metohija."<sup>156</sup>

It seems paradoxical, but Yugoslavia's federal leadership took no measures to protect Serbs in this autonomous province. There is extensive documentation, above all archival, video and tape records about this entire process since it took place recently. The Serbs, unfortunately, have done nothing to publish this enormous amount of material and present it to the European public. On the contrary, the "truth" that it was the Serbs who ethnically cleansed Kosovo and Metohija has spread through

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<sup>153</sup> [148] *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>154</sup> [149] Ruža Petrović and Marina Blagojević, *Seobe Srba i Crnogoraca sa Kosova i Metohije* /Migration of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo and Metohija/, results of a poll taken from 1985 to 1986, Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences, Demographic Collection 2, Belgrade 1989, pp. 1-313.

<sup>155</sup> [150] Branislav Krstić, *Kosovo pred sudom istorije* /Kosovo Before the Court of History/, Belgrade 2000, pp. 111-141.

<sup>156</sup> [151] Mile Nedeljković, *op. cit.*, pp. 223-226.

the world today. In fact, the Serbs are the tragic victims of one of the largest ethnic cleansing campaigns in modern European history.

A leading role in the gradual ethnic cleansing of Kosovo and Metohija after World War II was played by Albanians who settled there from Albania, and by those who were close associates or had participated in the fascist administration – including members of the Italian Fascist Party – during the occupation and the joining of the greater part of these areas to Greater Albania from 1941 to 1944.

### **The Ideological Legacy of Albanian Fascism in Kosovo and Metohija. Albanian Society Which Did Not Undergo Denazification or Confront the Past**

Fadilj Hodža, who spent more than ten years of his life in Albania, until the occupation in 1941, was the leading political figure among the communists of Kosovo and Metohija and the Albanian national minority in Tito's Yugoslavia. For a while Hodža lived in Skadar. He then graduated from a teachers college in Elbasan where he worked as a teacher. Following the fascist occupation of Yugoslavia, he came to Kosovo and Metohija and in April 1941 became a member of the Yugoslav Communist Party's /KPJ/ Regional Committee for Kosovo and Metohija and the Secretary of the KPJ's local committee for Đakovica.<sup>157</sup> In the course of the war, he succeeded in achieving a dramatic military and political career and in October 1942 became the Commander of the People's Liberation Army /NOV/ and Partisan Detachments of Yugoslavia /POJ/. On the basis of a decision by the Supreme Staff of NOV and POJ reached in early September 1944, Hodža was appointed Commander of the Operations Staff and was promoted to the rank of colonel despite his direct responsibility for an armed uprising by around 20,000 members of the pro-fascist organisation Balli Kombetar in December 1944, headed by Šaban Poluža and Mehmet Gradica from Drenica. Hodža was only temporarily relieved as commander of the Operations Staff. Balli Kombetar (the National Union) was formed in late 1939 and advocated the Greater Albanian idea.<sup>158</sup>

Šaban Poluža's uprising was the last attempt by fascist and Nazi forces in Kosovo and Metohija, headed by the Central Committee of the Second Prizren League, to preserve their concept of a Greater Albania which would incorporate Kosovo and Metohija. This concept was realised in April 1941 with the fascist occupation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the establishment of a Greater Albania, the attachment of the greater part of Kosovo and Metohija and a large part of western Macedonia to this entity, newly-created under the auspices of fascist Italy. Only the Kosovska Mitrovica district fell within the German occupation zone.

Following the capitulation of fascist Italy in early September 1943, the "Second Albanian League" met in session on 16 September in Prizren, under the auspices of the German Reich. The League issued a Proclamation glorifying Hitler's Germany and calling on Albanians to "close ranks" and demand that Kosovo and

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<sup>157</sup> [152] Blagoje K. Pavlović, *Albanizacija Kosova i Metohije*, Belgrade 1966, p. 85.

<sup>158</sup> [153] Dr. Đoko Slijepčević, *Srpsko-arbanaški odnosi kroz vekove sa posebnim osvrtom na novije vreme /Serbian-Albanian Relations Throughout the Centuries with a Special Overview of More Recent Times/, /?Himmelstor/ 1983, p. 325; Julian Amery, *Sons of the Eagle. A Study in Guerilla War*, London 1948, pp. 57-58.*

Metohija remain in Greater Albania.<sup>159</sup> Fascist minister and Nazi collaborator Xhafer Deva was the main organiser of the League which had different presidents: Rexhep Mitrovica, Bedri Pejani and, lastly, Xhafer Deva. On 29 March 1944, Bedri Pejani, as the “President of the Second Albanian League in Prizren for the Defence of Kosovo” wrote to Hitler, asking him to approve the formation of a division consisting of 120,000 to 150,000 men to whom the Germans would provide modern weaponry. In a letter addressed from Prizren, Pejani informed Hitler that the Central Committee of the Second Albanian League, “in complete agreement with the government and people” had decided to “implement the militarization of Kosovo and all Albanian areas which thanks to the heroism of the German Army were attached to Albania in 1941. This would ensure the final liberation of the Albanian people on the side of the German Reich in forthcoming battles.” In order for the SS division to be equipped successfully and achieve its military and political goals, Pejani considered that three preconditions needed to be fulfilled: arming the division with modern weaponry and other equipment; attaching “a certain number of /German/ officers and non-commissioned officers as organisers, instructors and commanding officers in certain segments of this army,” and adjusting, “on a strategic basis, Albania’s borders with Montenegro and Serbia.” In addition to remarking that the SS division numbering 120,000 to 150,000 men would incorporate only an “insignificant part” of “men trained for combat in Kosovo”, Pejani particularly pointed to the need of finalising the borders of Greater Albania: “The provisional border with Montenegro and Serbia which was agreed on in 1941 by the German Reich and Italy has placed Kosovo in an unfavourable position not only from a purely strategic point of view but also nationally and historically. With the present borders, it is very difficult to defend Kosovo and Albania from a Serbian-Montenegrin attack, both during this war and after it.”<sup>160</sup>

From correspondence among officers of the German Command of SS units dated 4 May 1944, we learn that the 1<sup>st</sup> Albanian Division was in the process of being formed, that preparations were underway to establish the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division and an Albanian Corps.<sup>161</sup> In June 1944, Adolf Hitler received Xhafer Deva, the ideological leader of the Second Prizren League, in his Main Staff. The Albanian SS units, the Skenderbeg Division and others fought together with the Germans, protecting the withdrawal of the group of “E” armies from the Mediterranean through Greece, Macedonia, Kosovo and Metohija, Raška and further on towards Central Europe. Following the liberation of Kosovo and Metohija in late November 1944 by the People’s Liberation Army and partisan detachments of Yugoslavia, small or large groups belonging to the armed forces of the “Second Prizren League” continued to fight against Yugoslav anti-fascist groups. In conformity with the “plan for defending Kosovo” of October 1944, adopted at the meeting of the leadership of the Second Prizren League headed by Deva and German officers, the entire territory of Kosovo and Metohija was divided into four zones headed by their staffs. In conformity with this plan, in early December 1944, the balist forces numbering 4,000 men attacked Uroševac and were joined by a number of Albanians who had been mobilised in the People’s Liberation Army of Yugoslavia /NOVJ/, headed by the commander in Uroševac. The fighting lasted until 4 December, and the NOVJ 2nd Kosmet Brigade had 30 dead and 40 to

<sup>159</sup> [154] Spasoje Đaković, *Sukobi na Kosovu /Conflicts in Kosovo/*, second expanded edition, Belgrade 1986, p. 181.

<sup>160</sup> [155] *Ibid.*, p. 182.

<sup>161</sup> [156] *Ibid.*, p. 184.

50 wounded men. Some 20 days later, on 23 December, around 800 balists attacked Gnjilane and seized most of the town. The soldiers of the 12th Macedonian Brigade were slaughtered and mutilated. The Deputy Commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion of the 5<sup>th</sup> Kosovo-Metohija Brigade, Milan Čolaković, described the scene: "There were more than 50 bodies strewn in the valley, with heads and limbs severed, skulls perforated by bullets and broken bones."<sup>162</sup>

The large-scale fighting between balist forces and NOVJ units lasted from early December 1944 until late February 1945. Šaban Poluža's and Memed Gradica's combat group in Drenica numbered around 8,000 balists, while Adem Voca's group included around 1,500 to 2,000 men. In the fighting, scores of troops fighting in NOVJ units were killed. Adem Voca's balists succeeded in occupying *Stari Trg* /the old square/ and the Trepča mines. After several days of fighting, especially between 21 and 25 January 1945, Šaban Poluža's forces in Drenica still numbered in early February around 5,000 men and engaged in fierce fighting with NOVJ units. The balist forces pinned 39,000 NOVJ troops in Kosovo and Metohija at a time when heavy fighting was underway with the Germans on the Srem front and in other parts of Yugoslavia. For this reason, on 8 February 1945 the Supreme Commander of the People's Liberation Army and partisan detachments of Yugoslavia, Marshal Tito, ordered the establishment of a military administration in Kosovo and Metohija as an organ of military and state authority. The last clashes between regular units and Šaban Poluža's forces occurred on 21 February 1945 in the village of Trstenik in Drenica. The fighting lasted 24 hours and Poluža and 29 balists were killed. "The fighters of the 4<sup>th</sup> Kosmet Brigade seized two heavy machine-guns, three light machine guns and a launcher." Petar Brajović, 52<sup>nd</sup> Division commander, was seriously wounded at this time.<sup>163</sup> This division, established on 14 February 1945, had by 15 May 1945, 384 men killed in fighting the balists, 300 wounded, 32 dead and 8 men captured . . . .

The new Yugoslav authorities headed by the KPJ and Josip Broz Tito were very well disposed towards the Albanian national minority in Serbia. First of all, they did not call to account the large majority of Albanians who perpetrated crimes against the Serbs from 1941 to 1945 and took part in the ethnic cleansing of Serbs under fascist occupation. Second, the new authorities sanctioned the demographic situation in Kosovo and Metohija created as a result of fascist occupation, that is to say, they did not send back to Albania those Albanians who had settled in Kosovo and Metohija during the period of occupation, and banned what were referred to as Serbs-colonists, but in effect all Serbs expelled from the area during occupation, from returning to Kosovo and Metohija. Third, since the almost the whole of political, judicial and executive authority in Kosovo and Metohija was in the hands of the Albanian national minority, especially after 1966 and the 1974 Constitution, the Albanians used this enormous degree of autonomy to continue the ethnic cleansing of Serbs, to continue discriminating against the Serbs on a daily basis and to accord preferential treatment to Albanians in all spheres of society. In terms of the policy they pursued, the Albanians enjoyed the strong support of the state and party leadership of Tito's Yugoslavia because this suited the leaderships of Croatia and Slovenia in establishing a "balance of forces" in federal Yugoslavia. Even though Kosovo and Metohija was

<sup>162</sup> [157] *Ibid*, Pavle Dželetović Ivanov, *Balistički pokret 1939-1952. Masovnost, saradnja sa italijanskim i nemačkim okupatorom i zlačini nad Srbima* /The Balist Movement 1939-1952. Extent, Cooperation with Italian and German Occupiers and Crimes Against the Serbs/, Belgrade 2000, p. 423.

<sup>163</sup> [158] S. Đaković, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

an autonomous province within the Republic of Serbia, its ties were far stronger with the Republic of Albania than with the remainder of the Republic of Serbia which it was part of. This was an absurd situation, but it was supported by the federal state and party leadership, and the Serbian leaders did not openly oppose the state of affairs out of concern for their own careers.

**The Strong Political, Economic and Cultural Affirmation of the Albanian National Minority. Autonomy in the Service of the Secessionist Movement.**

During this period, Albanian propaganda in Albania but also throughout the world put forward the thesis that the Albanian national minority in Kosovo and Metohija was completely discriminated against. Greater Albanian political and anti-state activity was thereby essentially concealed, with the support of influential figures from the federal state and party leadership. As soon as Kosovo and Metohija were liberated in November 1944, even though World War II was still underway, and even though most of the Albanian minority had been included in the occupier's organs of authority and Nazi military formations, Albanians occupied important positions in the new organs of authority. Here are just some facts: Fadilj Hodža – Commander of the NOV and POJ Operations Staff for Kosovo and Metohija; Mehmed Hodža – President of the Regional National Liberation Council for Kosovo and Metohija; Džafer Vokši, President of the Regional Committee of the United Association of Anti-Fascist Youth for Kosovo and Metohija and Bije Vokši, President of the Regional Committee of the Women's Anti-Fascist Front for Kosovo and Metohija. Fadilj Hodža, Džavid Nimani and Ismet Šaćiri were members of the KPJ's Regional Committee Bureau for Kosovo and Metohija. Of the five regional /OZNA/ People's Protection Committee security organ departments, Albanians headed two departments – Ali Šukrija for Uroševac and Aljuš Gaši for Peć.<sup>164</sup> This was the situation when the new communist leadership took over, and twenty years later the Serbs were completely eliminated from nearly all key functions in the Serbian province.

Fadilj Hodža was undoubtedly the ideologue of the Greater Albanian movement in Kosovo and, as was stated earlier, the main political figure for a period of almost 50 years after the war. Throughout this period, he maintained close secret ties with the Albanian dictator in Tirana, Enver Hoxha, which was known to the highest-ranking officials in Tito's Yugoslavia. In the first half of 1948, during a visit by a delegation of the Yugoslav state security organs, primarily from Kosovo and Metohija, Albania's Minister of the Interior and the Organisational Secretary of the Albanian Communist Party Central Committee Koçi Dzodze showed part of the report sent by Fadilj Hodža to Enver Hoxha in Tirana about the situation in Kosovo and Metohija and Yugoslavia as a whole to Spasoje Đaković, the head of state security for Kosovo and Metohija. Upon his return, Đaković informed the heads of security organs in Yugoslavia. Soon thereafter, however, Koçi Dzodze was arrested in Tirana and summarily executed.<sup>165</sup> Fadilj Hodža's closest associates in Priština were above all Džavid Nimani, Imer Pulja, Ismail Bajra and then Mahmut Bakali, Azem Vlasi and others.

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<sup>164</sup> [159] *Ibid.*, pp. 221-222.

<sup>165</sup> [160] *Ibid.*, pp. 250-253.

In addition to Bakali, Hajredin Hodža, Surja Pupovci, Kurteš Saljiu, Minir Duši, Redžep Ćosja, Derviš Rožaja and Hamdi Sulja were the main advocates of Greater Albanian ideology among Albanian intellectuals at Priština University.

Greater Albanian ideology rapidly infiltrated organs of power, particularly in educational institutions and principally Priština University. This process was strong and intense, especially after 1966, when the Yugoslav Federal Minister of the Interior Aleksandar Ranković was replaced for allegedly tapping Tito's /conversations/ and advocating a "unitary course" but in fact for resisting the accelerated disintegration processes in the Yugoslav federation which threatened to lead to the dissolution of the common state. These tendencies were especially evident at Priština University which quickly grew into an academic institution with large numbers of students, even though the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija received large subsidies from the Federal Fund for Assistance to Underdeveloped Regions. The first faculties in Priština were opened in 1960 and 1961, with help in staff in addition to the wholehearted assistance of the University of Belgrade. The Faculty of Philosophy (which included groups of the future Faculty of Science) and the Faculty of Law and Commerce (a single faculty at the beginning) were founded, followed by the Technical Faculty in the mid-1960s and the Faculty of Medicine in the late 1960s. The University of Priština was officially established at the beginning of 1970.<sup>166</sup> The Faculty of Agriculture, the Faculty of Physical Culture, the Faculty of Art (in Priština) and the Faculty of Mining and Metallurgy in Kosovska Mitrovica were opened later, from 1974 to 1979. The Academic Society of Kosovo and Metohija was founded in Priština in 1975 and after several years evolved into the Kosovo Academy of Arts and Sciences (the fact that a national minority and a small autonomous province had its own Academy of Sciences was unique in Europe). The extent to which Priština University and the entire province received assistance, above all from the Republic of Serbia, is reflected in the number of students in Kosovo and Metohija in comparison to other larger and economically developed republics in the Yugoslav federation, based on information about the number of inhabitants from the 1981 poll, while the figures on the number of students refer to the 1987/1988 academic year.<sup>167</sup>

Republic or Province	Kosovo	Slovenia	BH	Croatia	Serbia Proper	Vojvodina	Macedonia	Montenegro
Population	1,584,000	1,892,000	4,124,000	4,602,000	5,695,000	2,035,000	1,909,000	584,000
No. of inhabitants per student	37,857	27,694	47,364	57,040	109,911	32,462	39,500	7,348

### **The University of Priština and the Albanian Minority Intelligentsia As Advocates of the Greater Albanian Indoctrination. Immigrants from Albania in Public and Social Life.**

In the course of the 1970s and 1980s, the University in Priština became the main centre of Greater Albanian ideology and, at the same time, the main ideological centre of ethnic, religious and cultural hatred and intolerance towards non-Albanians in this part of the province of the Republic of Serbia. This ideology was officially disguised by using communist rhetoric, while actual social processes evolved in an

<sup>166</sup> [161] Dr. Vujadin Milanović, *Univerzitet u Prištini u mreži velikoalbanske strategije* [University of Priština as Part of Greater Albanian Strategy], Belgrade and Priština 1990, p. 23.

<sup>167</sup> [162] *Ibid.*, p. 39.



entirely different direction, that of the day-to-day suppression of Serbs and other non-Albanians in the province. The statements of Mahmut Bakali, President of the Provincial Committee of the League of Communists of Kosovo and Metohija, are an example of this rhetoric. In early June 1972, Bakali said: "Regardless of the classes that ruled here and various occupiers, a sense of community and a feeling of solidarity prevailed in these parts. We, communists raised that sense of community to a higher level and imbued it with a class and revolutionary content."<sup>168</sup>

Among the professors at Priština University, there were a large number of professors – Mark Krasnići (1920), Nedžad Begoli (1923) and Ali Sokolji (1921) to mention only a few – who received stipends from the fascist regime and were educated in Albania and Italy from 1941 to 1945. Krasnići himself said that "during the war [he] studied at the University of Padova," having been granted a stipend by the Ministry of Education of Xhafer Deva's fascist government in Tirana. Xhafer Deva was the founder of the "Second Prizren League" in Prizren and of the notorious SS Division Skenderbeg which perpetrated numerous crimes in the occupied parts of Serbia and Yugoslavia. The example of Nedžad Begoli is characteristic of the personnel policy pursued at Priština University and in Kosovo and Metohija's educational system in general. Begoli first graduated from the classics-programme secondary school in Skadar, took his final examinations in Tirana and continued his schooling in Italy. The report on his selection as Italian language lecturer in 1974 states: "In Italy, upon completion of military school, he continued his studies at the Faculty of Medicine in Rome which he had to discontinue in 1943 because of the war."<sup>169</sup> After 1945 and before he was appointed lecturer for Italian at the University of Priština, Begoli had a successful career – he was the director of the elementary school in Peć, director of the secondary school in Peć, head of public services for the former district of Peć, director of the *Alji Keljendi* teachers college in Peć, director of the Provincial Institute for the Promotion of Schooling in Priština and when he applied for the position of lecturer, he was head of teaching and academic work in the Vice Chancellor's Office of Priština University. In the Vice Chancellor's Office, he was also Secretary of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia local organisation. Ali Sokolji graduated secondary school in Skoplje in 1941 and that same year went to study agriculture in Piza, Italy where he remained until Italy capitulated. Then, as a tested scholarship holder, he continued his studies in Vienna where he remained until the end of World War II. From May 1945, he was a clerk of the District People's Committee in Orahovac and was then sent, at state expense, to study medicine in Belgrade. He then pursued a successful career as a physician and an official in medical institutions and at the Faculty of Medicine. He was also head of the Pulmonary Ward in Priština, and then became Professor of the Medical Faculty and a physician at the Faculty of Medicine Clinical Hospital.

A large number of professors who were born in Albania and moved to Kosovo and Metohija during World War II were also employed at Priština University. They set an example in inciting hatred against the Serbs and other non-Albanians. We shall cite only a few characteristic examples. Fatmir Agoli was born in Tirana in 1932, where he completed a four-year elementary school. During the war he moved to Struga in Macedonia where he continued his schooling and then to Ohrid and, later,

<sup>168</sup> [163] Dr. Đoko Slijepčević, *Srpsko-arbanaški odnosi kroz vekove sa posebnim osvrtom na novije vreme /Serbian-Albanian Relations Throughout the Centuries with a Special Overview of More Recent Times/*, /?Himmelstor/ 1983, second expanded edition, p. 397.

<sup>169</sup> [164] Dr. V. Milanović, op. cit., p. 109.

Belgrade. He held high managerial and party positions in the *Trepča* complex. He was also Chairman of the Business Board of the Bor-Trepča *Jugometal* joint organisation, member of the Provincial Committee of the League of Communists of Kosovo, member of the Executive Board of the Yugoslav Investment Bank in Belgrade and many other institutions. Gazmend Zajmi (born in Kruma in 1936) moved to Prizren, Yugoslavia with his family as soon as Yugoslavia was occupied. His mother Enisa was the sister of Džavid Nimani, one of Kosovo and Metohija's most prominent political figures. When he completed his law studies in Belgrade in 1959, Zajmi became a judge in Prizren and, later, President of the Court in Belgrade. He then moved on to the Faculty of Law in Priština where he gained all the titles. From 1975, he was Vice Chancellor and from 1979 to 1981 Chancellor of the University in Priština.

/map with caption "The Greater Albania Project – from J. Reuter's book *Die Albaner in Jugoslawien*, Munich 1982/.

Galip Dema was born in Homesh in 1919 and lived in Albania until the occupation of Yugoslavia, to which he probably moved right after the collapse of Yugoslavia in April 1941. He completed secondary school in Skadar and graduated from the Faculty of Law in Skoplje in 1957. Dema was the President of the Municipal Court in Debar and a judge at the District Court in Tetovo; in 1963 he became Secretary of the Republican Secretariat for Justice of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia in Skoplje. From 1967, he was a lecturer at Priština University. Agur Sokolji was born in Kuks in northern Albania in 1950. He came to Kosovo and Metohija with his family when he was a child. After completing law studies in Priština, he taught administrative law at the university.

Ali Hadri (Lushnje, 1931), a historian and for a time President of the Association of Yugoslav Historians, Imer Jaka (Tropoja, 1937), Gani Hodža (Kolgecaj, 1933), Fljutra Čelaj (Tirana, 1943), Mehmet Begerca (Lushnja, 1934), Gazmend Šaćiri (Shkodra, 1936), Bećir Ljupči (Elbasan, 1938), Irfan Spahiu (Kolesijan, 1937), Burhan Dida (Shkodra, 1938), Čamilje Jaka (Tropoja, 1941), Refik Ramku (Peshkopeja, 1941), Argon Pustina (Tirana, 1944), Enisa Fehmiu (Tirana, 1944), Afrim Vokši (Tirana, 1930), Gazmend Begoli (Tirana, 1944), Sali Spahiu (Tirana, 1946), Baškim Kabaši (Kuks, 1937), Argon Duši (Tirana, 1939), Redžep Feri (Kuks, 1937), Šićri Nimani (Shkodra, 1941), Ilj Zajmi (Kruma, 1934), Naim Pološka (Kuks, 1928) and many others were especially active among those who emigrated from Albania.<sup>170</sup> Similar examples such as those at the university can be found in all other fields including politics, the economy, the army, the judiciary, elementary and secondary education, the police and elsewhere.

### **The Expulsion of Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija (Acts of Terror and Crimes Against the Serbs)**

The key problem of Kosovo and Metohija in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the continual moving out of Serbs from this part of Serbia and the day-to-day discrimination against them. The intensity of ethnic cleansing grew stronger as Kosovo and Metohija expanded and strengthened its autonomy. For the first time in history, Kosovo and Metohija was defined as a separate autonomous region pursuant to a decision of the Anti-Fascist Assembly of Serbia which adopted, on 3 September

<sup>170</sup> [165] Dr. V. Milanović, op. cit., pp. 106-131.

1945, a law to establish the autonomous region of Kosovo and Metohija in Serbia. That same day, this decision was incorporated into the decision of the interim People's Assembly of Democratic Federative Yugoslavia /DFJ/ and later into the DFJ's Constitution of 31 January 1946 and the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Serbia of 17 January 1947. The first constitution of the new post-war Yugoslavia stipulated that of all the republics, only Serbia "incorporated within itself the autonomous province of Vojvodina and the autonomous region of Kosovo and Metohija" (Article 2). Pursuant to these provisions, the autonomous region was entitled to its statute. The Executive Council of the autonomous region of Kosovo and Metohija adopted, on 29 June 1958, a statute whereby the region was defined as an "autonomous region forming part of the socialist democratic state of the People's Republic of Serbia." In the new Yugoslav constitution adopted in 1963, the term "region" was replaced by "province", even though the province was not an element of the Federation. The constitutional amendments of 1968 defined, for the first time, the province as one of the elements of Yugoslav federalism. That same year, the name "Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija" was changed to the "Autonomous Province of Kosovo."

The problems faced by the Serbian population in Kosovo and Metohija during World War II did not cease when the war came to an end and fascist forces were defeated in the Balkans and Europe. The government in Kosovo and Metohija, primarily in the hands of Albanians, continued in somewhat more subtle form, discriminating against and driving the local Serbian population out. There is vast archival documentation, both in the archives of the Serbian Orthodox Church, and in domestic and foreign archives, about the subject. We are merely citing some examples here to illustrate the depth and complexity of the Kosovo and Metohija issue. In late June 1946, the land belonging to Devič monastery which, as was stated earlier, was heavily damaged during World War II, was divided by the local authorities so that after the land was divided, more land "was given to the Albanians who worked the land during occupation than to Serbs who had always worked that same land."<sup>171</sup> Similar occurrences took place almost every day. In early 1949, the old medieval monastery of Dečani was set on fire. The churches in Orahovac and Uroševac were turned into warehouses, and the new church-mausoleum in Đakovica was destroyed by the authorities in 1950.<sup>172</sup>

The Bishop of Raška and Prizren at the time, Pavle, who is the Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church today, regularly informed the Synod of Bishops about the suffering of the Serbian church and people in Kosovo and Metohija. Over a period of several decades, while he worked in Prizren, the Bishop continually pointed to the problem of the forced moving out of the population, that is to say, the ethnic cleansing of Serbs from this part of Serbia. In a report for 1959, Bishop Pavle states: "There is another problem the consequences of which can be disastrous for us in these parts – the fact that our people are constantly moving away." Pavle cites the example of the village of Ludovići near Devič where there were 17 Serbian houses, the same number as the number of Albanian houses, in the Ottoman period, before 1912, and that the last three Serbian households were now moving away. In Vitimirica near Peć,

<sup>171</sup> [1, 166; beginning at this point for several pages, the footnote numbers in the original text begin again with 1, but the original notes themselves continue from 166] *Zadužbine Kosova – Spomenici i znamenja srpskog naroda* /The Legacy of Kosovo – Monuments and Landmarks of the Serbian People/, Prizren and Belgrade, 1987, p. 796.

<sup>172</sup> [2;167] *Ibid.*, p. 800.

Bishop Pavle states, there wasn't a single Albanian house after World War I and now there are a hundred; in the village of Dobroši where there were also no Albanian houses, there are now 160.<sup>173</sup> In late April 1961, Bishop Pavle repeats: "The constant problem we face is the unrestrained moving away of our inhabitants from more or less the whole territory of the eparchy." In his reports, the bishop cites many examples of violence: all the windows were broken on an unfinished chapel in the village of Koretina near Kosovka Kamenica; all the porcelain images on Orthodox monuments, even that of the monument of Bishop Vladimir, were broken at the cemetery in Prizren. On the properties of the Visoki Dečani and Sveta Trojica monasteries near Prizren, Bishop Pavle writes, the monasteries crops, fruits and vegetables, are destroyed in the most impudent manner: "It's not just children, but also adults, Albanians, who come there as if it were their own property, pick the crops and carry them away. When they are admonished by the nuns or others in the monastery, they talk back impudently, and even want to engage in fights, cursing the Serbs and saying that this does not belong to the Serbs but to the Albanians. In addition to the Synod of Bishops, the Bishop regularly informed the religious commission in Priština about everything that was happening. In his report of 11 May 1962, the bishop of Raška and Prizren reiterates his warning: "This year, too, our (Serbian) population has continued to move away at an even more intense pace . . . Over 200 households have moved way from the Gnjilane governorship; 70 households have moved away from the Vrbovac parish which is small. . . "<sup>174</sup> The bishop relates the views of those moving away – that they fear Albanian reprisals in the event of possible political conflicts, and that "the authorities favour Albanians who are present in large numbers in government organs and who help each other out and make sure that their co-nationals get every legal exemption while the full weight of obligations is imposed upon the Serbs, always in legal form." In his report for 1965-1966, Bishop Pavle again points to similar problems, but the main problem is that of Serbs moving out. A typical problem which occurred on a daily basis in all parts of Kosovo and Metohija was the driving of livestock, owned by Albanians, into Serb-owned crop fields and open threats: "Move out, this is not Serbia!"<sup>175</sup> In his report from 1 April 1967, Bishop Pavle repeats what he said earlier: "The fact that our population is moving away from all parts of Kosovo and Metohija is a constant problem." The alleged culpability of Aleksandar Ranković and the Security Service, set out following the 4<sup>th</sup> Plenum of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia Central Committee, are being ascribed "in these parts to Serbs in general, so that the situation since then has been even more difficult and serious." Even though some economic reasons cannot be entirely rejected, the Bishop writes in his report of 1 April 1968 that "there is organised pressure by certain elements of which a large part viewed plunder, throughout the centuries, as the best form making money, and understood its freedom in no other way but as the possibility to suppress others."<sup>176</sup> Information is then given on attacks on monasteries, churches, cemeteries and believers, the rape of Serbian women and attacks on nuns, attacks on property, monuments of Serbian culture and so forth.

### **The Opening of a Discussion in the League of Communists of Serbia**

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<sup>173</sup> [3;168] *Ibid.*, p. 810.

<sup>174</sup> [4; 169] *Ibid.*, p. 811.

<sup>175</sup> [5;170] *Ibid.*, p. 813.

<sup>176</sup> [6,171] *Ibid.*, p. 815.

**Central Committee on the Moving Out of the Serbs and Greater Albanian Chauvinism (1962). Covering Up the Problem in the Federal Party and State Leadership. Constitutional Changes (1968 to 1974) in the Function of Weakening Serbia and Yugoslavia and Strengthening Greater Albanian Ideology and Ethnic Cleansing in Kosovo and Metohija**

There were reactions from the organs of the party in power at the time – the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. In 1962, a discussion was organised for the first time in the Central Committee /CK/ of the League of Communists /SK/ of Serbia about the problem of Serbs moving out of Kosovo and Metohija and Greater Albanian chauvinism and nationalism. First, a group was formed, consisting of around twenty members of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Serbia and leading party members headed by Dražo Marković, in charge in the Executive Committee for Ideological Work, with the task of establishing the true state of affairs together with the Regional Committee in Kosovo and Metohija. The group visited every municipality in Kosovo and Metohija and upon its return to Belgrade, a meeting of the Commission for Ideological Work and the Commission for National Minorities with the group of leading party members who visited Kosovo and Metohija was held in the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Serbia. On the basis of stenographic notes, an eighty-page analysis was drawn up for the needs of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Serbia which adopted it and submitted it to the Regional Committee with instructions to take the necessary measures.<sup>177</sup> The problem escalated further, especially after 1966, as confirmed by the Greater Albanian demonstrations in Kosovo and Metohija in 1968 and 1981 where demands were made for a “Kosovo Republic” and the joining of Kosovo to Albania. In late 1971, the Chairman of the Commission for Social and Economic Relations of the Provincial Committee of the League of Communists of Kosovo, Jovo Šotra, sent an extensive study entitled “On Some Current Issues of the Political Situation in Kosovo Following the Implementation of the Conclusions of the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the LCY Presidency” to the President of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito, the Executive Bureau of the LCY Presidency and the presidents of central and provincial committees. This study discussed at length Greater Albanian chauvinism and the undermining of the equality of ethnic groups in Kosovo and Metohija. Special attention is drawn to the problem of the enormous increase in the number of Albanians in comparison with other ethnic groups. In the period from 1961 to 1971, the number of Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija increased by 42% and the number of Serbs by only 0.07%, while the number of Turks decreased by 53%.<sup>178</sup> For comparison purposes, in this period the population in Croatia increased by 6.5%, in Slovenia by 7.7%, in Serbia without the provinces by 8.7%, in Vojvodina by 5.1%. Two years later, Šotra was ousted from the Provincial Committee of the League of Communists of Kosovo and Metohija, as was Kadri Reufi, a Turk, who pointed to the problem of the denationalisation of the Turks in Kosovo. Reufi considered that the 1971 census in Kosovo and Metohija was carried out “under irregular conditions” and

<sup>177</sup> [172] Miladin Vilotić, “Svedočanstvo o zbivanjima na Kosovu i Metohiji – razdoblje i godine 1956. i 1966.” /Testimony About Events in Kosovo and Metohija - The Period and Years 1956 and 1966/. Belgrade 2003, pp. 1-19 (manuscript owned by author).

<sup>178</sup> [173] “Report: by J. Šotra in S. Đaković, op. cit., pp. 411-424.

that the adoption of the name "Kosovo" was "the first public expression of irredentism and our first withdrawal."<sup>179</sup>

In the course of 1983, the Bishop of Raška and Prizren, Pavle, visited the President of the Presidency of Kosovo and Metohija, Ševćet Jašari and acquainted him with the problems confronting the Serbs. A delegation of the Synod of Bishops headed by Patriarch German informed the President of the Presidency of the Socialist Republic of Serbia of the same problems. On Good Friday, 16 April 1982, 21 Serbian priests and monks addressed an "Appeal" to the authorities, the Synod and the Assembly of the Serbian Orthodox Church. The Appeal states: "It may be said without any exaggeration that systematic genocide is gradually being perpetrated against the Serbian people in Kosovo! Because, if this were not the case, what do the theses about an 'ethnically clean Kosovo' mean which, regardless of everything, is being implemented without interruption? Or what do the words, often repeated in villages and hamlets, monasteries and churches and even in towns mean: 'What are you waiting for? Move away, this is ours!'"<sup>180</sup>

In late 1985, a petition signed by 2,016 citizens of Kosovo and Metohija with 15 demands (and which was later signed by thousands of other people) was sent to the highest organs of government in Serbia and Metohija. The signatories demanded that all constitutional rights be secured by taking radical measures and that the expulsion of Serbs from their homes be stopped. One of the demands made was that "the names of the perpetrators of genocide against us, the Serbs, in Kosovo and Metohija be made public, regardless of the position they have held in our country." The following is demanded under item 5: "That the hospitality extended to émigrés from Albania who have settled here from 6 April 1941 to the present day be revoked, regardless of whether they were resettled under Mussolini's programme or, later, under that of Enver Hoxha. Contrary to the law, they own real estate on the territory of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, and most of them perpetrate acts of terror against us Serbs. Yugoslavia, unfortunately, does not know what their numbers are, but according to our information, there are over 260,000 of them. Not a single Serb from Albania has emigrated to our country in recent decades even though there are over 30,000 Serbs in Albania. Exposed to the most brutal terror, they simply do not exist as an ethnic group in Albania."<sup>181</sup>

In early 1986, 215 prominent Serbian intellectuals from all professions sent a letter to the Assembly of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia and the Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Serbia, supporting the Petition of the Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija and demanding a radical change in the situation in Kosovo and Metohija. The letter states that in the past 20 years around 200,000 people left Kosovo and Metohija, over 700 settlements were ethnically cleansed and that "departures are continuing with unabated intensity; Kosovo and Metohija are becoming ethnically pure, and aggression is transcending the borders of the Province." The signatories appeal for political common sense on the part of top government organs and draw attention to the threat confronting Serbia, Yugoslavia and peace in the Balkans. "Genocide cannot be stopped by a policy which made it possible in the first place, the policy of the gradual surrender of Kosovo and Metohija to Albania, capitulation without signing capitulation which is conducive to a policy of national surrender. . . . In its wars or liberation, the Serbian people also fought for the

<sup>179</sup> [174] *Ibid.*, pp. 435-438. Interview with Kadri Reufi, *Interview*, 16 March 1984.

<sup>180</sup> [175] *Zadužbine Kosova*, pp. 838-840.

<sup>181</sup> [176] *Ibid.*, pp., 840-841.

Albanians and with their unselfish assistance from 1945 to the present day, provided sufficient evidence that they cared about the freedom, progress and dignity of the Albanian people. We wish to say that we do not wish any evil or injustice to be inflicted upon the Albanian people and we support their democratic rights; in our quest for the equality for the Serbs and other ethnic groups in Kosovo, we also include the Albanians. We distance ourselves from and condemn all injustices ever committed by the Serbs against the Albanian people.” At the end of the letter, the signatories asked that “Albanian aggression in Kosovo and Metohija be stopped through decisive measures, the concern and will of the whole of Yugoslavia, that a firm legal order be established and equal rights be ensured for all citizens, that the internal undermining of the Yugoslav borders be stopped, and that by guaranteeing the safety of citizens and political freedoms confidence be restored and the support of Europe and the world be secured.”<sup>182</sup>

The information about the population increase in Kosovo and Metohija over a decade, from 1961 to 1971, is denied by the allegations of Albanian propaganda that the Albanians in this province were supposedly discriminated against and had to leave. For purposes of illustration, in the given period, the population in Slovenia increased by 7.7%, in Croatia by 6.5%, in Serbia without the provinces by 8.6%, in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina by 5.1% while in Kosovo and Metohija the population grew by 29.1%. The number of Albanians in this province increased from 1961 to 1971 by 42.1%.<sup>183</sup>

The sanctioning of the situation created by fascist occupation during World War II on the basis of the provisions and laws adopted from 1945 to 1947, banning the return of Serb “colonists” marked the beginning of a lengthy process of ethnically cleansing the province in peacetime. The destruction of Serbian churches during World War II continued after the war. In March 1952, for example, the Serbian church in the village of Duganjevo near Uroševac was destroyed, but the most drastic case was the dynamiting and blowing up of the Serbian memorial church in Đakovica on the major Serbian holiday, St. Sava’s Day, in 1949. Various Albanian facilities were erected on the foundations of Serbian churches and cultural monuments if they weren’t completely destroyed. For example, in the village of Ljevoši near Peć, above the famous monastery of the Peć patriarchate, a hunting lodge for the Kosmet SUP /Secretariat of the Interior/ was erected in 1955. Some time later, a motel was built on the foundations of the medieval castle of Serbian emperor Dušan near Prizren, by the Drim River. In the village of Miruša near Mališevo, monk Atanasije Jevtić writes, “the foundations of the church and the old Serbian cemetery were plowed up (1963) and the land became a co-operative field.”<sup>184</sup> Or, among many other examples, there is that of the village of Kravasarije near Mališevo, where a school was erected on the foundations of the Serbian church.

One of the ways of forcibly driving Serbs out of Kosovo and Metohija was to nationalise land “for public needs”; the land was primarily taken from Serbian families. We will mention only a few examples. The Serbian village of Nakarade near Đakovica near the road to Prizren disappeared by virtue of the fact that the land was confiscated and given to the *Erenik* agricultural complex. The new village near Priština with the remnants of a Serbian church and cemetery was flooded in its

<sup>182</sup> [177] *Ibid.*, pp. 841-844.

<sup>183</sup> [178] S. Đaković, *op. cit.*, p. 414.

<sup>184</sup> [179] Monk Atanasije Jevtić, *Stradanje Srba na Kosovu i Metohiji od 1941. do 1990. (The Suffering of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija from 1941 to 1990)*, Priština 1990, p. 32.

entirety in 1965 when the artificial lake at Gračanica was constructed. The stadium of the *Priština* sports club in Priština was erected on nationalised land which had been owned by Serbs.<sup>185</sup>

Bishop Pavle (today Serbian Patriarch Pavle), the bishop of the Raška-Prizren eparchy for many years, continually warned the Synod of Bishops of the Patriarchate of the Serbian Orthodox Church about the constant violence against Orthodox Serbs and the forcible ethnic cleansing of Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija. The number of Serbian parishes continued to decline as the Serb population continued to move away after the war and especially after 1966. Albanian propaganda often repeats that the Serbs held all power in the province, especially in the period up to 1966. The actual state of affairs was, unfortunately, quite different. For example, Bishop Pavle's report for 1961, dated 11 May 1962 and addressed to the Synod of Bishops states: "The moving away of Serbs, both settlers and the indigenous inhabitants from all areas of the eparchy has continued this year as well, at an even more intense pace. Over 200 households have moved out of the Gnjilane governorship: from the Vrbovac parish alone, which is small, over 70 households have moved out. There is an abrupt rise in the number of people moving out from the vicinity of Priština as of last year. After the war, there were 40 Serbian households in Komoran and now there are only 12; there were 48 in Čikatovo and now 22; there were 18 in Donji Zabel and now 4; there were 23 in Veliki Belačevac and now only 3. Eighty-one households have moved out from the Goleš eparchy in the course of the year. This is the main problem in these parts."<sup>186</sup> We find similar figures in all the annual reports of the Bishop of Raška and Prizren. In his report of 1 April 1965, Bishop Pavle states: "In addition to the above-mentioned problems, I have the constant problem which I mentioned in all my earlier reports – the continual moving out of Orthodox Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija: 12 households out of 42 have moved from the village of Belo Polje, and 30 remain. Twenty households out of 43 have moved from the village of Glavnik; 23 remain. Thirteen households out of 27 have moved out of the village of Batlava; 14 remain. Twenty-five households out of 48 have moved out of the village of G. Sibovac; 23 remain. Twenty-three households out of 29 have moved out of the village of Trnovo; 6 remain. Forty households out of 41 have moved from the village of Bradaš; one remains, and so on in all 20 villages of the Podujevo parish. . . No comment is needed."<sup>187</sup> Almost every report by Serbian priests from Kosovo and Metohija during the 1960s and 1970s repeat instances of the forced departure of Serbs, the rape of Serbian women (including attacks on nuns), various forms of humiliating, cursing and insulting priests and residents, attacks on Serbian property, churches and monasteries, the destruction of Serbian cemeteries and other forms of violence. Before dawn on 16 March 1981, Albanian separatists and terrorists set the large dormitory of the Peć patriarchate monastery, the seat of the Serbian Orthodox Church over the centuries, on fire. Thirty nuns, several guests and three monks were sleeping in the dormitory. Large-scale separatist demonstrations began in March that same year, in which the Greater Albanian project was disguised under the slogan "Republic of Kosovo".

Apart from many other crimes and abuses, Serbian churches and monasteries are being registered as mosques or Muslim religious facilities. In his letter of 3 April 1987, the Bishop of Raška and Prizren, Pavle, draws the attention of the Commission for Religion of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo to the fact that a

<sup>185</sup> [180] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>186</sup> [181] A. Jevtić, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

<sup>187</sup> [182] *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.



number of churches have been recorded in the register as mosques: in the Suva Reka municipality, the churches in the villages of Mušutište and Dvorane were recorded as mosques, as were those in the villages of Rečane and Popovljane. Even the church of the Svete Trojice monastery near Mušutište was registered as a mosque (which was completely demolished after June 1999). Churches in the villages of Vitomirica, Siga and Goraždevac were registered as mosques.<sup>188</sup>

Among the many crimes committed against the Serbs in the course of the 1970s and 1980s, including a large number of killings, two cases are particularly drastic: the murder of young Danilo Milinčić outside his house in the village of Samodreža on 2 June 1982, when four Albanians held the Serbian youth while an Albanian émigré, Mujo Ferat, fired a bullet straight into his heart in the presence of the young man's mother, Danica, who tried to shield her son with her body; on 1 May 1985, three masked attackers assaulted Serb Đorđe Martinović from Gnjilane on his field and literally pushed a bottle into his colon.<sup>189</sup> The authorities tried to conceal the crime committed against Đorđe Martinović by making up various "statements by physicians" (one of the most famous Serbian painters of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Mića Popović, a prominent activist for democratic changes over several decades, painted the famous work *Prvi maj 1985*).

A special form of violence was the frequent rape of young Serbian girls, women and nuns. We shall cite some instances: the rape of a ten-year-old girl in the village of Žitinja near Vitina in 1983; the rape of the nun Ana (72) in the Gorioč monastery near Istok; the rape of a twelve-year-old girl (August 1984) in Ljubenić near Peć; the rape of an older woman (54) in Belo Polje near Peć. Among many other rapes of Serbian women, we wish to mention the rape of the prioress of Gračanica monastery, Tatijana (on Assumption Day on 28 August 1988) by an Albanian policeman.<sup>190</sup>

There is vast archival material on the ethnic cleansing on Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija stored in archives in Serbia and Yugoslavia, as well as abroad. The process of ethnic cleansing is especially illustrated by the departure of Serbian intellectuals from Priština. We shall just cite some characteristic figures. In the period of a single decade, from 1971 to 1981, 42 physicians left the Health Centre in Priština. In the same period, nine Serbian professors left the Faculty of Medicine and twenty-one professors and a lecturer the Faculty of Science in Priština. Comparable figures can be given for all other educational, scientific and medical institutions and companies.<sup>191</sup>

The expulsions and numerous forms of violence against the Serbs of Kosovo and Metohija from 1941 to 1990 were fully chronicled by monk Atanasije Jevtić (today a bishop) in his 329-page book entitled *Stradanje Srba na Kosovu i Metohiji od 1941. do 1990. godine*. A group of Serbian priests and monks sent, on 16 April 1982 (on Good Friday), an "Appeal to Protect the Serbian Population and Its Holy Objects in Kosovo" to the highest state organs – the Presidency of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, the Presidency of the Socialist Republic of Serbia, the Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Serbia and the highest body of the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Synod of Bishops (for the Assembly of Bishops).<sup>192</sup> On 24

<sup>188</sup> [183] *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

<sup>189</sup> [184] *Ibid.*, pp. 56-59.

<sup>190</sup> [185] *Ibid.*, pp. 59-61.

<sup>191</sup> [186] S. Đaković, op. cit., pp. 442-443.

<sup>192</sup> [187] *Ibid.*, attachment 1, pp. 399-407.

April 1990, the Bishop of Raška and Prizren, Pavle, Archimandrite Atanasije from the Peć Patriarchate and archpriest Milutin Timotijević from Prizren addressed, on 24 April 1990, the US Congress in Washington, testifying about the terrible drama of the Serbian people in Kosovo and Metohija. In their address to Congress, the Serbian religious dignitaries also said the following: "Today the Serbian people and the Serbian Orthodox Church in Kosovo and Metohija are defending European civilisation, if the world still cares about that civilisation. We note with regret that not a single international organisation which visited Kosovo to review the issue of human rights found it necessary to visit the sacred Serbian religious sites in Kosovo, such as the Patriarchate of Peć, Dečani or Gračanica. These are the deeds of the Serbian and Christian, European and international character of culture which these sacred sites personify and to which they bear testimony.

/map with caption: **Greater Albania**, the final goal of the Albanian terrorists, through occupation of all desired territories. The map in this form was issued by Albanian nationalists.

[http://www.realitymacedonia.org.mk/web/news\\_page.asp?nid=252/](http://www.realitymacedonia.org.mk/web/news_page.asp?nid=252/)

The Serbian people in Kosovo are suffering every day and are subjected to persecution and mistreatment. But as human beings and Christians, we believe that every Albanian in Kosovo who took or takes part in this tyranny and genocide against the Serbian people and its church, culture, history and spirituality in Kosovo is even more unfortunate and tragic. If the ideological and political leaders of Albanian aggression in Kosovo think about the future of their children and their people, then they have to ask themselves what they are teaching their children when they incite them to crimes and acts of brutality against their innocent neighbours who have lived in Kosovo for centuries.

Everything is changing for the better in Eastern Europe and it's only in Kosovo that the madness of a communist creation remains, the victims of which are the entire Serbian people and what is sacred to them. To its own fateful detriment, the Christian West does not perceive this or thinks that it is in its interest not to see it. As a result of this shortsightedness on the part of the West, the Ottoman Empire extended, for at least two centuries, Christian servitude in the Balkans, in the most culturally developed area of Europe, in which the very sources of the world's civilisation are to be found. We did not come here to beg you but to point out the truth to you as representatives of a powerful country of the free world, a truth to which we bear witness with our very robes, with the cross we bear and we stand before you on behalf of the Father and Son and Holy Ghost and the people from whose pure hearts and minds we have spoken every word to you. Thank you for having listened to us."<sup>193</sup> The Serbian Orthodox Church addressed the world again in 2003 with a text entitled "Memorandum on Kosovo and Metohija" which included a long list of destroyed, torched, demolished and looted churches (15 June 1999 to 10 May 2003), a list of Serbs killed in Kosovo and Metohija (June 1991 to 1 December

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<sup>193</sup> [193] *Ibid.*, attachment 8, pp. 444-451.

2001) and a list of Serbs kidnapped in Kosovo and Metohija (13 June 1999 to 1 March 2001).<sup>194</sup>

**International Support for the Terrorism of the Kosovo Liberation Army /KLA/, the final cleansing of Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija and the Joining of this Serbian Province to Greater Albania**

The separatist and terrorist activity of the Albanian minority in part of Serbia – Kosovo and Metohija – during the 1990s was an integral part of more extensive processes which led to the final destruction of the Yugoslav state. Research yet to be conducted will show what the actual plans and who the foreign and domestic players and services were. On the basis of available sources, the prominent Polish historian and professor, Marek Waldenberg wrote an exceptionally well-documented book entitled *Razbicie Jugoslavii. Od separacji Slovenii do wojny kosowskiej* /The Destruction of Yugoslavia – From the Secession of Slovenia to the War in Kosovo/.<sup>195</sup> Nearly half the book is devoted to the problem of Kosovo and Metohija. The very title of the chapter, “Kosovo, 'A Second Albania'”, which describes conditions in this Serbian province following the adoption of the Yugoslav Constitution in 1974, best expresses the essence of the problem in these parts.<sup>196</sup> The Austrian researcher, Dr. Malte Olschewski, provides an unambiguous assessment of the period: “The new Constitution of 1974 made Kosovo a de facto republic. From this point on, Kosovo was just an autonomous province of Serbia on paper. In actuality, the Albanian communist authorities made the decisions. Kosovo had its own constitution and its representatives on the federal level. The difficult years for the Serbs were just beginning.”<sup>197</sup> In theory, the provinces remained “part of Serbia” but the constitutional dualism between the rights of the republics on the one hand and the province with the essential competences of the republic, on the other, blocked Serbia in practice from exercising its authority on this part of its territory.

All objective researchers of events in Yugoslavia agree that the changes in the Serbian Constitution (by way of the 1989 amendments) and in the new Serbian Constitution of 1990 only meant that the autonomy Kosovo had enjoyed until then was restricted but not abolished. The new Constitution of 1990 eliminated the elements of statehood but fully affirmed the decision in the 1963 Constitution that the rights and duties of the provinces are defined in the republican constitution. In the new 1990 Constitution, the provinces are defined as having “territorial autonomy” (Article 6). The southern Serbian province, whose autonomy was not granted in principle to a single ethnic group or national minority was given, in the new Constitution, its earlier name Kosovo and Metohija. “Legislative authority belongs to the National Assembly of Serbia, executive authority to the Government of Serbia (Article 9), and supreme judicial authority to the Supreme Court of Serbia (Article

<sup>194</sup> [189] *Memorandum o Kosovu i Metohiji Svetog Arhijerejskog sinoda Srpske pravoslavne crkve* /Memorandum on Kosovo and Metohija of the Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church/, Belgrade 2003, p. 215.

<sup>195</sup> [190] Marek Waldenberg, *Razbicie Jugoslavii. Od separacji Slovenii do wojny kosowskiej*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe SCHOLAR, Warszawa 2003.

<sup>196</sup> [191] *Ibid.*, pp.272-277.

<sup>197</sup> [192] Malte Olschewski, *Der Krieg um Kosovo. Serbiens neue Salacht am Amseteld*, Nidda Verlag GmbH, 1999. Translated into Serbian under the title *Rat za Kosovo. Novi boj Srbije na Kosovu* /The War for Kosovo. Serbia's New Battle in Kosovo/, translated from the German by Vojislav Despotov, Nidda Verlag – Prometej, p. 143.

102). The Province has a Statute which it adopts with the prior agreement of the National Assembly (Article 110) and has an Assembly and Executive Council (Article 111).”<sup>198</sup>

Encouraged and aided by the disintegration processes in the Yugoslav state and by international circumstances which led to the establishment of a new political constellation of forces in central and south-eastern Europe, the leaders of the Albanian minority’s secessionist movement undertook a boycott of the Serbian state and began to set up a parallel illegal state whose competences extended from education to terrorist units such as the KLA.<sup>199</sup> As a terrorist organisation, the KLA was charged with using all means available to fight for the secession of Kosovo and Metohija so that it could join Albania (the killing of civilians – Serbs, Albanians and other ethnic groups, soldiers and policemen). In the period from January 1998 to 10 June 1999, Albanian terrorists in Kosovo and Metohija killed 1,835 people.<sup>200</sup>

The attempt of the legal authorities of Serbia and Yugoslavia to ensure the functioning of a constitutional system on the territory of the province and neutralise Albanian terrorism, which every state in the world would do and does, was interpreted by the leaders of the western powers and NATO as a “conflict between two sides”. These countries and NATO assumed the role of protectors and mentors of a national minority’s terrorist organisation, whose goal it is to link by force part of a sovereign state (Serbia – Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) to another state (Albania). The entire joint scenario led to the planned NATO military aggression against Serbia and Yugoslavia. The aggression signified support for a classic terrorist movement which demonstrated to the entire world what the complete ethnic cleansing of an ethnic group in part of its country and the utter eradication of all traces of its historical life on that territory looked like. Instead of Count Ciano’s “fortress which would rule the Balkans relentlessly”, the Greater Albania being created by NATO and the major western powers is initiating a long-lasting period of instability in south-eastern Europe. It threatens to transform the region into a zone of violence and trafficking in human beings, weapons and drugs. A bulwark for radical Islam is being created in the heart of south-eastern Europe.

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<sup>198</sup> [193] Branislav Krstić, *Kosovo pred sudom istorije*, pp. 33-35.

<sup>199</sup> [194] Hannes Hofbauer, *Balkankrieg: die Zerstörung Jugoslawiens*, Promedia, Vienna 1999, translated into Serbian as *Balkanski rat. Razaranje Jugoslavije 1991-1999* /The Balkan War. The Destruction of Yugoslavia 1991-1999/, Belgrade 2001, pp. 117-124.

<sup>200</sup> [195] *Žrtve albanskog terorizma na Kosovu i Metohiji. ubijena ili oteta lica od strane šiptarskih terorista i nestala lica (januar 1998-novembar 2002)* /The Victims of Albanian Terrorism in Kosovo and Metohija, Persons Killed or Kidnapped by Albanian Terrorists and Missing Persons/, Belgrade 2001, p. 501.

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**Biography**

- Born on 14 March in Pandurica, Pljevlja municipality, Montenegro.
- Completed elementary school in Pandurica, grammar school in Goražde and Pljevlja, and a degree in modern history at Belgrade University (1972).
- Taught history and sociology at the Economics School in Alibunar and the *Mihailo Pupin* Grammar School in Kovačica (1972-1974).
- Working since 1 June 1974 in the Historical Institute of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts /SANU/.
- Specialist on Serbian political, social and cultural history and Balkan history in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Obtained master's degree and doctorate on the subject of Serbian-Greek relations in the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Has the official title of Academic Fellow (full professor). Has lectured on invitation at the Philosophical Faculty of Novi Sad University (group for international literature).
- Has completed academic study tours in Greece, Russia and Germany. Was a member of the international editorial board of the magazine *Revue d'Europe Centrale*, Strasbourg. Has participated in many international academic seminars in Spain, Austria, Germany, Russia, Bulgaria, Greece, Ukraine, Switzerland and the Czech Republic. From 1994 to 2001 he was Chairman of the International Academic Committee which organised a series of eight international academic annual seminars as part of the "Meeting of Civilisations in the Balkans" project, which was supported by UNESCO: Bosnia and Herzegovina from the Middle Ages to Modern Times; Europe and the Serbs; Islam, the Balkans and the Great Powers (15<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries); Meeting or Clash of Civilisations in the Balkans; Europe and the Eastern Question (1878-1923); National Identity and Sovereignty in Southeast Europe; Europe at the Crossroads – New Walls or the Unification of Europe; Southeast Europe – Political and Cultural Conceptions (17 to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries).
- Participated in the dialogue between Serbian, Croatian and German historians in Freising near Munich (5-9 April 1995), and the meeting in Hanover (24-27 October 1996), which were organised by the German Episcopal Conference from Bonn and included representatives of the European Conference of Churches in Geneva. Participated in the founding session of the *Pro Oriente* Foundation's Commission for South Slavic History in Vienna on 24 and 25 June 1996. Is a member of the Berlin-based Convent for European Philosophy and the History of Ideas (UNESCO is one of the founders).

- Was General Secretary of the Association of Historians of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia from 1982 to 1986. From 1 February 1987 to 15 April 2002 was director of SANU's Historical Institute. Was the editor-in-chief of the Historical Journal and all the Historical Institute's other publications. Directed historical and geographical field research in Kosovo and Metohija, Polimlja and Potarja from 1996 to 2000. Is editor and one of the authors of the published collection of papers entitled *A Response to Noel Malcolm's Book "Kosovo: A Short History"* (2000).
- Since 2001 has been President of the Serbian Literary Cooperative, one of the oldest Serbian cultural institutions, founded in 1892.
- Speaks and writes Russian, Greek and German and has some knowledge of English and Bulgarian.