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THE EXODUS OF LETNICA - CROATIAN REFUGEES FROM KOSOVO IN WESTERN SLAVONIA

A Chronicle

SUMMARY

This is primarily an ethnographic account of events that led to the almost complete exodus of Letnica, a small Croatian enclave in Kosovo. In 1992, during author's fieldwork there, the population of Letnica and the surrounding villages fled to Croatia, mainly due to existential fear and insecurity caused by the war in Croatia, and locally fueled by threats from armed Serbian extremists. This exodus is described against the background of similar events in the Vojvodina. The chronicle includes the history of their resettlement in Western Slavonia, in five mainly Serbian villages that were ravaged during the war (1991) and have been deserted by their original inhabitants. The author focuses on the difficulties these refugees have encountered in adapting to their new situation, and attempts - on the basis of these first-hand ethnographic data - to formulate some general questions for future research.