

The Status of Kosova Debated

The 1967–1974 internal constitutional and political debates in Kosova

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www.kosova.org/al/qytetet/citymap/index.asp



www.commonswiki.org/wiki/File:Yugoslavia_ethnic_map.jpg

ABSTRACT

The 1968-74 period is a very important time in the history of the former Yugoslavia. In addition to ground-breaking political, social, economic and cultural changes, legal, ethnic and constitutional changes were at the forefront of developments in the federation. This thesis examines the currents of political debate among intellectuals, workers, party activists and politicians in Kosova, an autonomous province of Yugoslavia, prior and during this period. It is important to consider such debates, which in many instances penetrated deep into the ideology and political thought of the system and the party, sometimes even questioning the existing system.

Only by considering such developments can one understand why Yugoslavia was perceived as the most liberal society amongst the countries of the communist block, and why such intense debate was allowed in Kosova, a small and not especially important unit of the federation.

This thesis emphasises the role of these debates in the internal and external political perception of Kosova and the Albanian population regarding their constitutional place in the body politic of Yugoslavia; it also explores the impact of these debates on the constitutional change that marked this period.

Using interviews, original archive material of new states that emerged from Yugoslavia, documents and other primary sources, this thesis suggests that Yugoslav communism, despite its internal problems, fostered a relatively free society. Based on the authoritarian regime of Tito, its sole and powerful leader, Yugoslav communism underwent changes in response to an ideological rift with the Soviet Union and a loose association with the Western world, which viewed Yugoslavia as a potential ally against the challenge from

the formidable Eastern Block.

The thesis also suggests that political changes from the 1968-74 period, although not satisfying everyone and especially ethnic-based political demands, worked as a temporary measure that unlocked further political potential. However, it is argued that such changes could have not worked in the long term in view of the substantial number of problems that the communist state never truly resolved.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to venture into the troubled not-so-distant past of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, using it as a case study. The central focus of the dissertation is the status of Kosova, a province of Yugoslavia that underwent many political, structural and constitutional changes since annexation by the Kingdom of Serbia following the Ottoman armies' retreat during the Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913.

The main period of interest for this project is from 1967 until 1974, when Yugoslavia experienced radical change to the internal structure of the federation. This was a time of great political change, first with the now-famous 1966 Plenum of the Communist Party at Brioni Island, followed by the removal of the hardliner and federal security chief Aleksandar Ranković, and then a change of constitution for federal and individual units in 1968. Such a development was a prelude to the 1974 constitution that introduced changes in the form of decentralisation and equalisation for various ethnic groups.

However, the test for such important changes is not merely their entry into the statute book, but the degree to which they were implemented. The specific case of Kosova is a permanent reminder that the province did not enjoy all the promised freedoms, not only because Kosova represented a specific case of history antagonism, but also because in the pan-Slavic nationalism into which that the province was thrown (Yugoslavia was dominated by Slavic nations), Albanians simply did not fit as a community. They were not part of the projected Yugoslav society.

The reason to debate such an issue and period is that Yugoslavia acted as an experimental field where many ethnic groups of Slavic and non-Slavic origins were amalgamated to create a federalised structure. It was supposed to be a positive example for the world

stage of how a dictatorship of the proletariat could create a harmonious coexistence of many ethnic groups. Such a conceptual idea, which chose federalism as a structure, had at its centre ethnic dissemblance and alienation of smaller ethnic groups or those groups that were not involved in the central core of the structure, i.e. Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

Although much had changed for the better under the communist stewardship with the rebranding of Yugoslavia after the end of the Second World War, ethnic groups that were not of the original core were still subjected to harsher and often unfair treatment in the federation. Amongst those groups were the Albanians, an ethnic autochthonous grouping, which despite their contribution to the war effort against the Nazi and Fascist occupations were treated as subjects of a different stratum. Significantly, this thesis proposes to analyse and explain why smaller ethnic groups were maltreated, and why there was no real and suitably powerful objection by the federal and republican political leadership about such behaviour. Was the reason behind the verbal and rhetorical persistence of the Serb political leadership that Kosova was to be treated as an extended part of Serbia, and thus Albanians as subdued subjects, or was the newly formed communist society unable to find a model appropriate for Kosova and the Albanians? Finally, were Albanians obliged to accept what they were given, or was it necessary for them to demand political changes so their status could be equalised with that of the other nations of the union?

Part of the proposed concept is also the argument that Yugoslavia ended up being a state that could survive only through temporary political changes, and thus its existence was permanently in doubt, for it is extremely difficult to create a state that in the long term satisfies everything and everyone.

Consideration of such developments lead to the central argument of this thesis: debates in

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and around Kosova about the political status of the province in the body politic of Serbia and Yugoslavia were concentrated on federalism as a political structure of society and decentralisation as a means to achieve and realise political aims of holding power at individual unit level. Analysing the current state of affairs within the territory that federal Yugoslavia occupied, it becomes apparent that ethnicities, federalism, and devolution may have been the factors that shaped the development of Yugoslavia, shaking the foundations throughout its existence, and for some observers contributing to its ultimate demise. For such factors not only proved critical to the wellbeing of the state and people, but they were also to determine the internal political configuration and constitutional framework that existed in Yugoslavia for several decades

Such an issue can be placed in a broader political field, especially where communist societies and states such as the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and others were concerned, for they too had internal structural problems of an ethnic nature. Nonetheless, the problems of Yugoslavia, in general, and Kosova or the Albanian population in Yugoslavia in particular, are peculiar for a number of reasons.

The hypothesis for this thesis proposes that the debate caused in and around Kosova was not only necessary but also unavoidable. The political developments from the end of the Second World War, at least, had dictated a period of necessary argumentation, of various political, social, ethnic and economic groups that forwarded ideas in the political arena which was subject to frequent change. In other words, the debate about political and constitutional developments in Kosova occurred, because the circumstances in the international and national scene (i.e. Yugoslav) made it necessary. Considering the situation of different ethnic groups in Yugoslavia, a debate on where one particular group

stood was critical, because it was tied to two important factors that shaped the federation: political and constitutional ties, and decentralisation and federalism. These relate to Kosova as a subject of political, historical, social, cultural, geostrategic and economic importance as part of Serbia's body politic; and to Kosova as part of the federal structure through which decentralisation was sought. Hence, the debate, which tended to overlap at provincial, republican, and federal levels, represented more than a period of liberalisation in political expression. In many communist dictatorships of the time, such a debate would have been unthinkable, but in this case it represented an amalgam of constitutional and political actions, coupled with economic and welfare demands that argued the national position of Albanians in Yugoslavia. Of course, this was performed with great caution to avoid alarming the political authorities.

This argument had two sides: the first argued that Kosova and Albanians in Yugoslavia were happy to live in this state as long as political concessions for further decentralisation through extension of federalism could be made; and the second argued for a complete secession of Albanian territories from Yugoslavia and for their political union with the mother country, Albania.

As far as the hypothesis of this thesis is concerned, political debates in any given country are important for the future shaping of its structure. However, when political debates occur in a communist and totalitarian society, composed of many different ethnicities, and especially when one of the ethnicities is directly involved, they become a compelling case study. They represent an interesting field of research because of the difficult frictions and specifics of that particular ethnic group, as well as the interaction with the other ethnic groups that comprise the union.

The primary beneficiaries of this project, therefore, are not only those people interested in the internal structure of Yugoslavia, internal debates and the issues of ethnicities, but also any lay person seeking information about the political regulation and extensions of freedom, democracy, decentralisation and federalism in former Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia as a case study has been of particular interest amongst academics, media, and intellectual and diplomatic circles, since it started to disintegrate with the bloody wars of the 1990s. Many of the most contested issues have already been discussed, though little is known about the internal political debates, especially in and around Kosova during the period from 1967 until 1974. This period generally had other issues of concern, mainly the Brioni plenum of the Communist Party and its ripple effects in the internal politics of Yugoslavia. Therefore, debates about constitutional change in Kosova are of particular importance, for they show firstly that there was an opportunity for citizens and people to add their voice to the political events, and secondly that many people in Kosova and Yugoslavia were pleased to live where they were. Many people truly experienced Yugoslavia as a country of their own, and many argued for change but always inside the existing political framework.

Another factor in this dissertation is that the period before 1967 is generally known for state consolidation following the Second World War. It was also characterised by great economic and political difficulties and the rebellion of Milovan Đilas, a highly respected party and state official who criticised the system for materialism and favouritism. In such a climate, the political debate in and around Kosova, although never far from the agenda since it played a very important part in ethnic debates, became demoted to a less important issue, because a rebellion by the Speaker of the Parliament against the system

he was serving sounded more attractive. Accordingly, this is where the internal political debate truly started, and it is here that Yugoslavia – for the first time since its creation based on KAÇKJ¹ principles – was shaken to its foundations by internal issues that the system did not resolve. The debate about the ethnic groups and their needs and wants in the new Yugoslavia commenced in this period.

It developed further with open street protests in Kosova in late-1968, the political and constitutional clash in the Croatian spring of 1971, and a constitutional overhaul in 1974 that initiated the most important changes in peacetime Yugoslavia.

In addition to the many secondary sources used in this dissertation, primary sources are of considerable importance, and for many of them this represents the first time they have emerged from the archives. The significance of using such documents is that they were written in Albanian, Serbo-Croat Latin, and Serbian Cyrillic script, and through this work they are offered to the wider English language readership for the first time.

Supplementing the archival documents, the author contacted a range of individuals on a one-to-one basis, involving e-mail and telephone interviews, so that their first-hand experiences could be properly recorded and presented.

The secondary sources will be analysed and structured to allow the main argument of the thesis to be properly articulated. The dissertation achieves this objective by using Kosova and the Albanian populations in Yugoslavia as a case study, considering their situation in this particular period of history by using comparative elements, such as the position of

¹ KAÇKJ. Këshilli Antifashist Çlirimtarë Kombëtarë i Jugosllavisë. (The National Anti-fascist Council for Liberation of Yugoslavia)

other ethnic groups in Yugoslavia, large and small, and the position of ethnic minorities in other Communist states, especially in those countries neighbouring Yugoslavia. The research will attempt to describe accurately the interaction between the instrument (nationalism, federalism and decentralization) and the entities being observed.

Accordingly, the empirical research will base its findings on direct and/or indirect observations offered by the collected data.

The main constraints in undertaking such a project include, (as far as available literature is concerned), the biased writing that often portrays one side or the other in a dubious manner. To a reader from the region with knowledge of the realities, these texts are transparent in their aim to mislead with distorted facts and propaganda observations.

Also of relevance is the fact that at the present time Yugoslavia no longer exists as a political entity, and it is difficult to find information in archives of the now-independent states that used to comprise Yugoslavia. This relates not only to bureaucratic constraints, but also to the negative association of Yugoslavia as an oppressor.

Finally, with regard to limitations on this dissertation, people such as former high-party and state officials, who had a negative attitude and exhibited oppressive behaviour towards the people they were suppose to serve, are nowadays not particularly willing to share their past memories, precisely because they fear that their opinions could be misused by those who suffered whilst they were in power.

In summary, the main objectives of this dissertation are to discuss the internal political, constitutional, social, and economic debates in and around Kosova for the period between 1967-1974, to explore the various ideas, beliefs and constraints that existed within this period, and to analyze different political and behavioural attitudes of important political

players and the ways that their opinions were manifested in practice. An additional question is to consider whether Yugoslavia could have survived in the political framework that was established, or, considering all the problems, whether its long-term existence was impossible.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The problem of Yugoslavia has received considerable academic attention, especially since the dismemberment and the bloody wars that followed in that region. Historians, analysts and other academics have sought to provide an explanation for the break-up of the federation that seemed the most open, liberal and libertarian amongst the communist countries of Europe. A general pattern of observations focuses on ethnic nationalism as the central factor that brought down Yugoslavia; other works acknowledge the fact that communism in Yugoslavia went through several stages of development that saw it change its base and interpretation but retain the expected nucleus of 'socialist principle' and 'peoples democracies'. The objective of this literature review is to discuss these points as fundamental factors in creating the correlated subject matter. The idea of ethnic nationalism and the relationship between communism and nationalism prevails in many books about the former Yugoslavia. As an emotional factor, nationalism is identified as the main pillar of study, with varied points on whether communist ideology can supersede national identification, and whether communism produces or overcomes nationalistic attitudes. Alongside such an idea, there is also the belief that communism in Yugoslavia changed often, with some spells of liberal freedom. This is the view in *Kosovo: A Short History* by Noel Malcolm, *The Albanians: A Modern History* by Miranda Vickers, *The National Question in Yugoslavia. Origins, History and Politics* by Ivo Banac, *Identiteti kombëtarë Shqiptarë dhe çështje të tjera* (Albanian National Identity and other matters) by Kristo Frashëri, *The Contested Country. Yugoslav Unity and Communist Revolution 1919-1953* by Aleksa Djilas, *Ko je tražio Republiku Kosovo. 1945 – 1985* by Miloš Mišović etc.

All these works identify nationalism as the main factor of destruction in Yugoslavia, but dwell principally on different ethnic groups and their tendencies. They attempt to provide a definition of nationalism in Yugoslavia, incited or hampered by the different factors that prevailed in society, such as the communist idea of proletarianism, the new 'socialist man' and internationalism. Most of them explore different stages of nationalistic development and the creation of national consciences amongst the nations of Yugoslavia. In particular, Djilas and Banac's books concentrate extensively on the creation of Yugoslavia as a kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, the way that the people perceived such a development, and the political frictions that immediately followed. They contend with the argument that a national affiliation existed prior to creating the communist federation, and that this affiliation never really faded during Yugoslavia's existence. Malcolm's and Vickers's books concentrate more on the Albanian national awakening and development, but they are intertwined with the fact that part of the Albanian nation lived in Yugoslavia. Both of these authors view the federalism debate as crucial in the political and national development in Kosova, and they present the case for an all-Albanian entity in the federation as the building block for, and means of preserving and encouraging, Albanian national identity. In comparison, Frashëri's narrative is that nationalism amongst Albanians was never aggressive or oppressive, but defensive and oriented to strengthen the sense of belonging to one national group, whereas Mišović emphasises the fact that Albanians as a collectivity had a state in Albania, thus their demand for a republican status in Yugoslavia was 'intolerable'. He identifies the Albanian, Serb and Croatian nationalisms as possible dangers to the existence of Yugoslavia on the basis that they all have individual agendas.

These books also identify the fact that a kind of liberalism existed in Yugoslavia, especially in the freedom of expression and movement. Such freedoms were further extended with constitutional changes in 1968 and 1974 that made Yugoslavia a near-confederation in political terms. On this issue, most books comply with the main argument of this thesis: that individual freedom in Yugoslavia was relatively higher than in other communist states (Bataković in *Yugoslavie: Nations, Religions, Idéologies 1904-1980, L'Age d'Homme*, Bilandžić in *Historija SFRJ*, (The History of SFRY), and Neal in *Titoism in Action*). The reforms in Yugoslavia say precisely that communism in Yugoslavia, after winning the struggle with centralist and old conservative powers, increased the liberties of the major nations and allowed some liberties for nationalities and smaller ethnic groups. Kosova is also mentioned as a federal entity, although briefly, by these authors, with some examples in political and other developments in the province, while the context of federalism is viewed as the way the internationalist agenda of the Communist Party could be maintained.

However, not all the consulted books have the same opinion or support such a position. For example, Wes in *Tito and the Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia*, Vukas in *Etničke manjine i međunarodni odnosi* (Ethnic Minorities and International Relations), Shehu and Shehu in *Pastrimet etnike të trojeve shqiptare 1953-1957* (Ethnic Cleansing of Albanian Regions, 1953-1957), and Stambolić in *Rasprave o SR Srbiji* (Debates about SR of Serbia) have a different view, leaning towards a manifestation of internationalism and proletarianism in their works. For example, West argues about the need for political

changes to happen because the time was right, Stambolić and Vukas argue that the Communist League of Yugoslavia had ‘a big heart’ that allowed such developments to take place, while Shehu and Shehu argue that liberalism in Yugoslavia was false, especially where smaller nations were concerned, for they were simply treated as second-class citizens. These authors cited the example of forced Albanian deportation from Yugoslavia after the Second World War, for the purpose of colonising Kosova, as their most convincing historical argument.

Aside from these texts for and against nationalism and liberalism in the former Yugoslavia, there are other divergent viewpoints on the same topic. Some authors (from the thesis bibliography) argue that nationalism was inevitable in Yugoslavia, for the supranational identity never truly took hold for the majority of the people. Others argue that, being a federal structure, Yugoslavia allowed nationalism to exist, since all the federal entities retained their national awareness and consciences all the time, and they had no real need to identify with supranational identities. Other authors argue that personal liberties were relaxed because historically the time for change had arrived, or alternatively that, since the schism with the Soviet Union in 1948, Yugoslavia had no alternative other than to relax the system, because the only other option would have been to return to Stalinism. Šuvar, in *Sociološki Presjek Jugoslavenskog Društva* (Sociological Understanding of Yugoslav Society), Tanner in *Croatia: A Nation Forged in War*, and Schrenk, Ardalan and Tatawy in *Yugoslav Self-Management, Socialism Challenges and Development*, tend to lean towards the alternative viewpoints presented above. Šuvar attributes development of more liberal attitudes to the positive changes that the state and

party officials of Yugoslavia adopted in their own country, while Tanner argues that freedoms existed in different proportions in Yugoslavia. The primary nations tended to be better off in political and economic development, but this was a consequence of the increasing self-management doctrine adopted in the country. With regard to Kosova's experience in federalism, the above-mentioned authors present the case that federalism in Kosova was always shifting, was never equal in status and grandeur, and suffered from a lack of effectiveness, hampered by republican and federal institutions. Such a position leads to debates of whether federalism is the same in liberal democracies as in people's democracies, and it presents various challenges related to the constraints and affinities of a regime that controlled multiethnic complexity such as in Yugoslavia.

The economic debate is supported by different authors, amongst whom Schrenk, Ardalan and Tatawy present the relationship between economic development and economic conditions as a consequence of internal, social, political and ethnic regulation in Yugoslavia; while Ćosić, in *Piščevi Zapisi* (Literary Chronicles) 1951- 1968 and 1969-1980, and Bulatović, in *Kosovo, Ne Dam Te Zaboravu* (Kosovo, we will not forget you) argue that economic development only increased the nationalistic upsurge in Kosova, Croatia and Slovenia, and as such it played a significant role in nationalism.

The overall impact of these books in studies of former Yugoslavia is considerable. They represent a positive factor in understanding interethnic relations in the federal, social, political, cultural and economic constructs, as well as the national and geostrategic positioning of the participants.

In discussing Kosova, every researcher must consider Malcolm's, Vicker's and Frashëri's books for the positive benefits they bring. The first two authors write from a historian's perspective, and accordingly their works are not congested with political and ethnic tendencies. They have both consulted historical documents, and archival authenticities, and their main objectives are to present the Albanian question released from one-sided communist perspectives and nationalist dogma. In the third case, the author, as a distinguished member of the Albanian Academy of Sciences, fulfils his duty – to document history as it really happened. In his work, he proposes some interesting variables that were not easy to conduct in academic terms. When they were published, each of these books stimulated polemics mainly focused on their boldness and truism. Their debates about the national identity of Albanians (and other neighbour nations), communist architecture adopted both in Yugoslavia and Albania, and acknowledging that positive developments occurred in these countries, including the freedom and liberties of post-1968 Yugoslavia, make a valuable contribution to the thesis.

METHODOLOGY

Preparation of this thesis involved extensive research, reading, document-collecting and interviews. It is important to note that it was difficult to find information in the national archives, since in the region of the former Yugoslavia there is still a tendency to view Yugoslavia as the source of all problems (understandable, amongst people who have experienced war) and that it is unnecessary to study this era, because the central focus throughout the region in political and academic debates remains on Euro-Atlantic integration. In addition, archival documents have changed hands, and instead of dealing with one national archive office, researchers must visit or contact all the archives of the seven states that emerged from the former Yugoslavia, in order to complete the mosaic. The national archive of Serbia (www.arhiv.sv.gov.yu) and the archive of Kosova hold most of the documents; hence they are of particular importance. Another source of consultation was the archive of radio 'Free Europe'. This international institution followed the political history and developments in Yugoslavia very closely and has an extensive array of documents on this subject. Newspaper articles and interviews published in Prishtina, Tirana and Belgrade were also of primary importance, as well as one-to-one interviews by the author.

A combination of scientific and historical research methods was utilised. Scientific-method hypothesis is used to make predictions that can be tested by observing the outcome, and it is applied here since the outcome is consistent with the hypothesis, i.e. supports the hypothesis. The historical method is used as it comprises techniques and guidelines by which historians use historical sources and other evidence to research and write history. This thesis deals with substantial historical evidence, and so it applies

concepts that are usually part of formal historical research such as identification of original date, evidence of localization, recognition of authorship and analysis of data. Within this format, exploratory research was conducted in order to structure and identify new problems.

It is recognized that alternative hypotheses may also be consistent with the observations and therefore the thesis is supported by rounds of scientific testing. The aim is that the hypothesis will allow prediction and, within accurate observation of the time, the prediction will be verified.

For various reasons, certain variables were avoided during this research. For instance, extending the research to encompass historical and political developments in other federal units of Yugoslavia (Kosova and Serbia excluded) would have made the thesis congested, and therefore cases of historical importance from other federal units are used sparingly to prove a valuable point. The same point refers to historical developments in communist Albania. Since the Tirana regime was of a different dogmatic interpretation, comparisons of Albanian populace in former Yugoslavia and in Albania are made only when discussing national or general political developments.

Finally, by using the ethnic Albanian populace in Yugoslavia in general, and the Albanian populace in Kosova in particular, as a case study oriented in the period of political, economic, social and constitutional developments of 1967-1974, the author aims to produce new insights into this little-studied period to the general reader (as historical accounts about Yugoslavia mostly concern the period immediately prior to the federation's destruction and the reasons that led to such a development). Historical

developments that occurred with the dawn of the new millennium have made such a study possible, as the mentality imbued with nationalism and communism in the Balkans started to change. Nevertheless, it presented a considerable challenge.

CHAPTER ONE

KOSOVA IN YUGOSLAVIA: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The territory at the centre of this study is that of south-eastern Europe, not far from the Adriatic, Ionian and the Black seas, which is characterised by high mountains, low-level fertile plains, numerous rivers and lakes, and many different nations. The mainly Albanian-dominated region of Kosova² is the central focus. Kosova's borders today cover a region of nearly eleven thousand square kilometres with around two million people. Throughout history, this territory was marred by violent wars. Various powerful empires went through and occupied it, thus changing and determining much of its character and make-up. Due to its striking geographical position, as a crossroads of the major routes that linked southern and central Europe, Asia and beyond, Kosova has had and continues to have considerable regional importance (Krasniqi. M. 1963, p3-4).

Nevertheless, prior to a historic overview, since “modern societies are best understood as particular mixtures of past and present” (Weber M. 2005, p21), it is imperative to connect to the aim of this project. The debates in Yugoslavia and in Kosova about internal political and constitutional arrangements explanations and evaluations about theories of nationalism which is prescribed as one of the driving factors of all major conflicts that stem from the region.

² The name Kosova is used in Albanian language, while the term Kosovo was adopted after constitutional changes in 1968 as a middle ground that would not upset the Serbs who disliked the removal of Metohija from the official use and thus has negative linguistic connotations in Albanian.

Nationalism was always part of the political vocabulary, even during the communist times. Then, it was used as a political and ideological construct with special emphasis on the dangers that it could bring to the federation's existence.

Theoretically, nationalism is a form of universalism when it makes universal claims about how the world should be organized, but it is particularistic with regard to individual nations. The combination of both is characteristic for the ideology, for instance in assertions such as in a nation-state the language of the nation should be the official language, and all citizens should speak it.

The main factor attributed to the existence of nationalism is the existence of nations, which are seen as entities or groups with a long history that can be identified as a point of association for the entire group. Indeed, most nationalists do not believe a nation can be created artificially by geographic or political separations, but are a product of a long and proud ancestry. However, some theories of nationalism imply the reverse order – that the nationalist movements created the sense of national identity and then a political unit corresponding to it, or that an existing state promoted a 'national' identity for itself.

Nationalists see nations as an inclusive categorization of human beings - assigning every individual to one specific nation by using the concept of the political individual.

Nationalism sees most human activity as national in character, action and behaviour.

Nations have national symbols, a national culture, a national music and national literature, national folklore, a national mythology and - in some cases - a national religion, though the latter concept is much debated, as post-modernism and globalization has made the movement of people much easier, so that today no state in the world can claim that all its citizens have only one religion. Membership in a nation is usually

involuntary and determined by birth.

Nationalism has a strong territorial component, with an inclusive categorization of territory corresponding to the categorization of individuals. For each nation, there is a territory that is uniquely associated with it, the national homeland, undivided and exclusive. From this geopolitical claim, nationalism seeks to order the world as a series of nation-states, each based on the national homeland of its respective nation, under the dogma 'the borders of the state should be the borders of the nation'.

In the nationalist view, only a certain group identified by the pillars of nationalism is able to create a joint sense of solidarity among those who are members of that particular ethnic group, excluding and at times directed against those who are not (Smith.

A.D.1991, p21). The struggles of early nationalist movements were often directed against non-national states, specifically multi-ethnic empires such as Austria-Hungary in the case of Croats and Slovenes of the former Yugoslavia, and the Ottoman Empire in the case of Albanians, Montenegrins, Macedonians and Serbs.

Thus, nationalism as a term refers to a doctrine or political movement which holds that a nation usually defined in terms of ethnicity or culture has the right to constitute an independent political community based on a shared history and common destiny.

Therefore, nations are groups united by real and imagined markers such as history, language and tradition, as argued by Benedict Anderson:

Nations are basically a cause of the decline of other imagined communities such as local, regional, or religious, brought by the process of industrialisation which enforces the idea for a broader and more susceptible formation (Anderson B. 1991, p37-39).

Ernest Gellner's work links nationalism to the homogenizing imperatives of industrial society and the reactions of minority cultures to those imperatives. He argues that industrialization needed fixed communities where the forces of the market could be organized in a defined and compact way (Gellner. E. 1983, p 41-5).

Anthony D. Smith, following the Hegelian dialectic of thesis, proposed a synthesis of primordialist and modernist views, known as an ethno-symbolism. According to Smith, the preconditions for the formation of a nation are: a fixed homeland (current or historical), high autonomy within the territory, hostile surroundings that will only enforce the sense of community, sacred centres, memories of glorified battles, common languages and scripts, special customs easily drawn out or identifiable in comparison to others, as well as historical records and thinking. Those preconditions may create a powerful, common mythology. Therefore, the mythic homeland is in reality more important for the national identity than the actual territory occupied by the nation (Smith A. 1986. p17-39). In the 1987 edition of the Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought, nationalism is described as: Nation as the basis for governing people. People of the nation are members of historically and culturally distinct groups. The frontiers of states and of nations should coincide with one another to achieve uniformity (Miller. D. et al. 1987 eds). Therefore, "national identity is not a substance, but a cluster of tendencies neither fixed nor alterable at will and periodically redefined" (Bhikhu. P.1995. p255-68). In other words, national belonging has a lot to do with a host of beliefs and values that any given community holds close and dear, which may be altered according to the intervention of the time. The state derives political legitimacy from its status as homeland of the ethnic group and from its function to protect the national group and facilitate its cultural and social life.

Very often, such attributes to the rights of the state, and the right of the nation in that state, become misinterpreted, which consequently triggers hardship and terror for communities that do not fit the concept of the nation and happen to be geographically, historically, confessionally, or ethnically different, and thus on the receiving end of troubles. And it is precisely because of nationalism that in the twentieth century the death toll caused by murderous actions of regimes, resulting not only from bombing technology but also through deliberate targeting of entire peoples as enemies, reached more than twenty million people (Markusen. E. and Kopf. D. 1995. p27-34).

Unfortunately, such a situation is also the case in this study. Following the end of the Second World War, Kosova had become the news-producing region for violation of human rights and street riots in relatively peaceful and calm Yugoslavia. The historian Theodore Hsi-en Chen³ has argued that in the fight to stave off nationalistic tendencies, which in their states were present in various shapes and forms, the authorities launched a campaign to create homogenous Communist Yugoslavism, the so-called 'new socialist man'. This dogmatised creation was used for party policies and actions.

With the apparent knowledge of Tito, Aleksandar Ranković, soon after he had become the federal minister of the interior, managed to impose a brutal regime during the years between 1948 and 1966, which is generally referred to by all the countries of former Yugoslavia as 'the Ranković era'. The importance of studying such a period is based on several pragmatic, historical, geostrategic and academic factors: first of all, to examine,

³ 'The New Socialist Man'. Theodore Hsi-en Chen. *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Feb., 1969), pp. 88-95. The University of Chicago Press

evaluate and comprehend the complex political structure that was put in place by the communists following the end of the Second World War; secondly to explain and evaluate the position of various nations that were to compose federal Yugoslavia; and thirdly, to see whether the much-proclaimed equality of the people existed in reality. Did the system accommodate all the political, cultural, economic, linguistic and national demands that were made? If so, to what extent were such demands met, or if not, why did they not happen? Were they impossible to achieve, or did the cynicism of internationalist propaganda undermine them?

From spring 1997 until spring 1999, this region experienced a bloody violent war between the ethnic Albanian population and Serb and Montenegrin military and security forces who were determined to keep the territory in their possession even through use of force. Subsequently referred to as the last major war of the twentieth century, the war in Kosova does not have a clear date of commencement *per se*, but the root cause of the conflict can be traced to the emergence of Kosova as a separate entity from the other Albanian regions and its inclusion in Yugoslavia. If history is able to understand the world (Goldstein S.J. 2003, p36), the root of the problem is often called historical.

Historically, Kosova was the epicentre of the Dardania kingdom during the Illyrian era. The border changed considerably during the twentieth century, but the Kosova of today was always a component part of Kosova, thus the direct historic connection. During the seventh and fifth centuries AD, the region faced a wave of migration from Slavic tribes coming from the north of Europe (Wilkie J. 1995 p 17-34). Then it fell under the Roman Empire and became part of the Eastern Empire after the split of 395, producing the greatest reformer of the judiciary system in the ancient world, the Emperor Justinian.

Soon after, the region succumbed to the Ottoman forces during their drive to conquer Europe. This period is one of the most significant for not-so-distant history, for as the Romans did when they conquered the Mediterranean, forcing Christianity onto the mainly benevolent pagan people, the Seljuk empire also forced conversion to Islam either through sword or through heavy taxes. The region remained part of the Sublime Port for over five centuries. Kosova as well as the entire Balkan Peninsula managed to escape Turkish domination following a strengthening of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires and a keener interest in the region by Great Britain and France, as other global superpowers in the resolution of the Eastern Question. The Albanians made a first attempt for Albanian autonomy in 1878, when representatives from the town of Prizren sent a memorandum to the great powers, but their demands were ignored (Glenny M 2001, p 174-195). It is exactly this point in Albanian history that inspired complete independence for the country, as well as freedom from occupiers in political activity in Kosova even during the communist era and beyond.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the Ottoman Empire was in crisis, caused by the archaic prevailing order. Hence, all the nations under its yoke initiated organised uprisings for independence. By 1912-1913, when the first and second Balkan wars started, the Ottoman Empire had been reduced to merely a strip of land in continental Europe surrounding the city of Istanbul. By then, the revolt-stricken Kosova was conquered along with Macedonia by Serbia (Mazower M 2000, p 37-99).

After the 1914 events in Sarajevo, where Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated, the ever-growing tensions between the Dual Empire with its ally Germany on one side, and Serbia and its ally Russia on the other, erupted on a catastrophic scale that became

the Great War. This war ended the existence of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Russian Empire, where the Bolsheviks become the domineering force in the country after the civil war. Bearing in mind the outcome of the war, and the victorious position in which Serbia emerged, combined with its territorial expansion into Kosova and Macedonia, the Slovene and Croat intelligentsia were openly in support of a federation of Croatia with Serbia and Slovenia (John Lampe. 2006. p31). Such a union was achieved on 1 December 1918, when the kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was declared in a territory that not so long ago had been part of two different superpowers, with its main aim to consider and care for the needs of its three prime nations as the name suggested. The kingdom merged all three Croat regions, a long-time dream of Croat patriots, and it abolished the small principality of Montenegro by merging its territory into the new regional framework. Politically, this framework created a classic example of a two-tier system whereby the principal actors of the state were the three nations named in the title of the state, while various other nations were suppressed. Albanians in the new kingdom of twelve million inhabitants numbered a population of over five hundred thousand people (Islami H. 1996, p, 51-3), and, as had happened some five centuries before, they were once more becoming part of another kingdom against their will. From 1929, the state changed its name to Yugoslavia, but regarded the rump Albania - recognised as an independent state during 1913 - as an unnecessary entity that deprived it of territory in the much-coveted southern Adriatic (Vickers. M. 1995. p93).

After various problems that Yugoslavia faced, including the assassination of the king in 1934 and a four-year occupation by the Axis powers, the Federal Peoples Republic of Yugoslavia was declared on 29 November 1945. Its main principle was a constitutional

model similar to that of the Soviet Union (with a federation of many peoples at its core, and dictatorship of the proletariat as the leading political doctrine). This however posed a military and ideological challenge (Burwell G.F and Daalder I.H. 1999, p179), for it advocated an ideological process of uniting in a state many historical antagonisms. The federation was divided into six constitutional republics equal to each other, but with the Serbs in a superior position by the virtue of being the largest nation. Since Serbs represented viable communities in most of the federation's entities, the long-time dream of 'all Serbs in one state' was achieved: even though they were not all in Serbia, they were in a federation that Serbia dominated. However, political representation at the federal level, albeit ideologically based, resulted in uneven support for south Slav unity, and a bad omen for political stability in the Balkans (Cohen. L. 1995. p12).

The federation recognised Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro as separate equal members for the first time. However, there was palpable dissatisfaction amongst many ethnic, political and social groups, because all these areas were claimed as part of a motherland of neighbouring regions.⁴ The constitution also made provisions for Vojvodina to become a province of Serbia, while within the political framework of Serbia Kosova was given the status of a region, the lowest political organisation before a municipality, in complete contrast to the two historical promises made by the communists

⁴ The highest level of dissatisfaction was amongst Serbs who claimed all three regions as part of their historic land. On Bosnia, they argued that the Serb motherland extends beyond the Drina river, the natural border invoked by the Austro-Hungarian Empire. According to the same idea, Montenegro was also part of the Serbian nationhood, while Macedonia represented the southern part of Serbia, with the archbishopric of Ohrid as part of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Croats argued for extension of Croatia deeper into Herzegovina, while Albanians - after they had realized that a single united Albanian state was out of the question - were at least hoping for an Albanian united region in Yugoslavia, the so-called little Albania as Shaban Polluzha (a partisan commander) called it.

for self-determination. The first such promise was made at the fourth party congress in 1928 in Dresden (Germany), and the second was made at the 1940 Communist Party plenum in Zagreb (Borba' 14 January 1969)⁵ – “The delegates agreed that Kosova should join Albania after the war had ended” (Vickers. M.1995. p153).

Actually, the issue of the national question was a perpetual abrasion for the communist regime, as none of the nations was satisfied with its position. Grievances ranged from economic underdevelopment to territorial, ethnic and political annihilation. Nevertheless, the issue of the national question was regulated (it was claimed) by the basic principles of Marxism and self-management:

The national question for the people of Yugoslavia is one of secondary relevance. The primary factor for our perpetual struggle in the road towards developing true socialism is freedom of the proletariat as the driving force of international Marxism. The nations and nationalities are socio political factors that represent the basis of formation of Yugoslavia, who in any given territory possess and enjoy cultural, economic, political and social rights guaranteed by the laws of the country.

In this context, the rights of nationalities are such that they represent the affirmation of cultural, social and linguistic freedom as guaranteed by the laws of the SPRY, republics

⁵ Vreme velikih izazova. Mi smo znali o Zagrebsku rezuluciju. Xhevdet Pula član Narodne Skupštine Republike Srbija nagoveštava reforme u saveznom uređaju. (Time of great challenges. We knew about the Zagreb resolution. Xhevdet Pula, member of Serbian Peoples Assembly, advocates reforms in federal construct).

or the autonomous provinces where they live (Tito J.B. 1984, p 97-114 book I). In other words, the Marxist ideology is the basis of the political activity, where nations find themselves somewhat reduced in their importance by the internationalism that self-management professes. Nationalities⁶ (i.e. ethnic minorities) are groups of citizens whose cultural and social problems are recognised not as a constructed ethnic group, but as a formal citizens union. The individuality of nations was to be preserved in the federation, but there was to be a high degree of communication and solidarity among the nations of Yugoslavia, combined with a primary loyalty to Yugoslavia and a sense of belonging to one community. Yugoslavism was to be something higher than the ‘old national consciences’, representing a changed form from the old national affiliations (Djilas. A.1991, p179-180). Regarding this issue, Fadil Hoxha, a partisan and the former communist leader of Kosova, argued that during the Peoples Liberation War partisan and communist leaders had justified the union of Kosova with Albania, since the majority of the population in the region was Albanian.⁷ This shows that even at the height of the war, debates about the future status of Kosova had begun in earnest.

The 1946 constitution defined Kosova as “a socio-political and territorial entity, formed in respect of the will of the people of Kosova, who through their political representatives, chose to live in a union which ensures an equal treatment for the nations and nationalities”. However, the borders of Kosova were drawn up with no regard for ethnic

⁶ The concept of nationalities used in the constitutional framework of the federation treated every national group which already had a state i.e. Albanians, Bulgarians, Hungarians, Italians and Slovaks as a nationality.

⁷ Fadil Hoxha jep pershtypjet e tij. Klubi i Intelektualve të Gjakovës “URA” 16 Nëntor 1994. (Personal impressions by Fadil Hoxha. A meeting at “URA” city of Gjakova club of intellectuals). 16 Nov 1994.

elements. To the Albanian majority, such actions would have looked tragic, considering that many nationalistic and partisan forces at that time were in favour of a union with Albania. A conference of communist and nationalistic forces was organised at the town of Bujan in the Albanian Alps on 1 and 2 January 1944, where the delegates (including Serb and Montenegrin) reiterated such a desire.⁸ The new Kosova border did not include all other regions dominated by a majority Albanian population, but instead they were divided between the surrounding federal units. The eastern part of Kosova, the region of Presheva valley⁹ with over 85% Albanian population, was adjoined to Serbia, as it was the strategic point through which the Salonika to Munich railway passes. The western part of Macedonia¹⁰, also with an overwhelming Albanian population amounting to 100% in many regions, was not included. This was the case with the ethnic Albanian alpine and Adriatic towns in the present-day state of Montenegro.¹¹ However, the regions of Zubin Potok and Leposavić on the south face of Mount Kopaonik, which were dominated by Serbs, were adjoined to Kosova with a sinister idea: to change the ethnic composition of Kosova. In fact, Serbs in these regions thought until 1974 that Kosova was unified to Serbia, because that was how it felt to them (Doucette S & Thaqi H. 2004 p 44).

⁸ Serbia ka njohur të drejtën e Shqiptarëve për vetvendosje. Konferenca e Bujanit dhe ndikimi i sajë. (Serbia recognised the right of Albanians for self determination. The Bujan conference and her effects) <http://ngarkovideo.com/media/document/137.doc>.

⁹ <http://www.presheva.com/histori>. Roli i trevës së Preshevës, Bujanocit dhe Medvegjës në lëvizjen shqiptare. (The role of the Presheva, Bujanoc and Medvegja region in the Albanian national movement)

¹⁰ 100% të popullates janë Shqipëtarë. Zonat Shqipëtare të Maqedonisë perendimore pas Luftës së dytë Botërore. (100% of the population is Albanians. Albanian regions of western Macedonia after the Second World War). Archive of research in Albanian geo-history. Tetova University. Macedonia. www.unite.edu.mk

¹¹ Ulqini the people and history. <http://www.ulqini.de/shqip.htm>.

However, such grievances were not exclusive to Kosova. Serbia and Croatia also argued for their own ethnic borders, but Tito and his circle of friends would not consider such demands. Using the justification that internal borders of the member units were only administrative, and since the state was based on the logic of international proletarianism, ethnic borders were not acceptable.

From a nationalist point of view, the three 'losers' of the new 'socialist' Yugoslavia were Serbia, Croatia and the Albanians. In addition to the three republics of Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia of the former monarchist Yugoslavia, Titoism conglomerated Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro, which belonged to Serbia. The two provinces of Kosovo (Albanian) and Vojvodina (with a strong Hungarian minority) acquired autonomy. Croatia lost Bosnia-Herzegovina, which it had annexed since 1941, as well as a part of the southern Adriatic littoral that was adjoined to Montenegro. The Albanians did not achieve their dream of creating a national state for all Albanians.

The constitution offered a revolutionary commitment for complete nationalisation of the economy, and it used the concept of redistributive justice derived from a philosophical principle, which aims to allocate resources to members of the community and adjudicate conflicting claims (Knowels D. 2001, p51). Direct extension of state regulations left Kosova in constitutional terms as a region with few competences in executive and legislative power. Such attributes were exclusive to the Serbian parliament, the institution that by decree had created the region of Kosova and Metohija, and to the federal

parliament to whom the regional institutions were bound, for at this point in time Yugoslavia was very centralised. Kosova's incorporation into the new federal Yugoslavia was accompanied by a siege of violence and organised military intervention. The conditions on the ground were more or less the same when Kosovo was forced into the Serbian kingdom in 1912, into the kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1918, and, more recently, into the federal union of Serbia and Montenegro in 1992.

From a relatively weak formation composed of volunteers and a few regular army officers, the fortunes of the Yugoslav Communists during the Second World War changed when in 1943 the British Premier, Winston Churchill, proposed that the allied forces should supply arms to local patriots fighting the Nazis (Pelling. H. 1974. p506). This occurred after the belligerent forces had decided that supporting the royal government troops inside Yugoslavia, which were notorious for their treatment of enemies and civilians (Crnobrnja. M. 1994. p66) was no longer viable. This made the communists the most powerful force in Yugoslavia. Nonetheless, they feared nationalistic elements, but there was never an effective challenge to the political and economic domination of the ruling party (Thomas.R.1999.p25).

At the beginning of their rise to power, the communist authorities faced popular discontent caused by brutality, the violent nature of the regime and nationalisation. It was a characteristic of the post-war government in Yugoslavia that it was very hard to distinguish whether they were the occupiers or the liberators, because tens of thousands of people that in one way or another had collaborated with the previous regimes were subjugated to violent barbarity. Countless numbers of Croat ustaša, Serb četniks and other national movement supporters left never to return, their properties were confiscated,

and families were subjected to appalling treatment, which often meant hangings and shootings. The Royal Family was prevented from returning to the country, and the king was declared *persona non grata*.

At the beginning, the campaign in Kosova had been directed against few Albanians, but it soon degenerated into the prosecution of many. Between 29 November 1944 and end of May 1945, over thirty thousand Yugoslav troops marched into Kosova to ‘pacify’ the region, which was heaving from a popular revolt against the military directorate (Vickers. M. 1995. p161). The communists looked rather similar to their predecessors in the way they combined repression, violence and assimilation in the name of the state (Mazower. M. 2000. p138). This kind of reaction has its definition in academic terms. Eric Gordy refers to it as ‘nationalist authoritarianism’, comprising a “specific set of circumstances in which an authoritarian regime seeks to justify its confirmation in power by means of nationalistic feelings of parts of the populace so it can secure its future” (Gordy. E 1999, p8). In the Gjilan municipality alone, 7845 Albanians were eliminated; in the region of Drenicë, 4820 were murdered in a short space of time (arhiv.sv.gov.yu).¹²

Confiscation of property for public usage was a feature of the new system. Regardless of the owners’ opposition, large areas of fertile ground were seized to make way for ‘socialist programs of development’. Since the occupying forces belonged to these nations, the Hungarian, German and Italian regions in Vojvodina and the Adriatic littoral

¹² Refer to: Beograd (Državna Arhiva. . tajno. Generalni raport 1 (1 - 6 1945), ostali dokumenti (K. D. kratko 93 (19-64, K - 25) (Belgrade. The state archive, secret General raport. Other documents)

were particular targets. The irony is that, while major landowners were being removed in other parts of Yugoslavia, major landowners were being created in Kosova through confiscation of land and re-disposition for non-Albanian colonisers that were being sent to the province (Judah. T. 1997. p174). One of the harshest laws promulgated by the new communist regime to impact on the population in Yugoslavia was the plan for compulsory delivery quotas (*otkup*), which ordered the forceful collection of grain, maize, barley and serials from peasants. Following the gross mismanagement of agrarian policy immediately after the war, the government, using the threat of violence and imprisonment, collected grain to distribute in the regions where mismanagement was at its worst (Ćirković.S. 2004. p277). Although the same action was introduced in many parts of Yugoslavia, in Kosova the campaign also had political and ethnic connotations, since most of the officials in charge of the seizure were either Serb or Montenegrin by ethnicity. In view of the complete disregard for the needs of large Albanian families whose food was being confiscated, a famine of large proportions hit the region in the winter of 1947-48. Statistical information about such events is unfortunately very scarce for several reasons. However, it is estimated that over twelve thousand people, mainly in vulnerable age groups, died during that period in the region of Dukagjini in the western plateau of Kosova alone (www.arhiv.sv.gov.yu).¹³

At this point in time, using all the force they possessed against the nationalistic, liberally

¹³ Nezgode u Metohijskoj regiji. Načelnik Opštine Peć u poseti regionalnih organa vlasti u Prištini. (Troubles in Metohija region. Mayor of Peja visits the regional government in Prishtina. 1-4. 32. 14.06.1950)

mindful and progressive groups, the communists organised many trials, some of which were based on fictitious allegations, across Kosova. Large numbers of people perished through hanging and public executions, many simply because they wished to incorporate Kosova into Albania (Kola. P 2003, p317). In one such case at the Pejë district court, thirty-eight people were tried. These included Professor Marije Shllaku and Professor Gjergj Camaj, alongside fifteen others, all of whom were hanged in public, while others received long-term sentences. This was where the debate about Kosova and Albanians in the new Yugoslavia truly began. The journalist and poet Ramiz Këlmendi¹⁴, one of those sentenced at the age of fifteen, recalls how the district prosecutor and a former partisan Ali Shukriu called for the death sentence in a purely Stalinist practice which made citizens irrelevant to the prevailing idea of the party: In the minds of these dangerous individuals lurks a destructive force... a force that aims to overthrow the people's governance and create a capitalist state that will suck the blood of our citizens. An idea so dangerous which if achieved will see Kosova, much of Montenegro and Macedonia united in an all-Albanian state.

In her defence, according to Këlmendi, Marije Shllaku exclaimed: The people of Kosova are part of the Albanian political and spiritual body. They are Albanians, and the most natural thing for them to do, is to enter into the state with the rest of their nation...Freedom and self-determination were the values promised all the time during the war by partisans and Communists alike...It is immoral to eat one's words.

¹⁴ Një kafe me Labin. Interviste me Ramiz Këlmendin. ("A coffee with Labi" show. Interview with Ramiz Këlmendi) TV channel 21. Prishtina.

Powerless to change the decision of the court, she professes that her and their sentencing “will not vanquish the issue of Albanian unity, for to all Albanians their heart beats about Albania, but on the contrary it will make people think deeply about what kind of freedom they have been given if they are to remain in Yugoslavia”. In fact, such an idea was widely propagated during the war all over Kosova. In a pamphlet published by Kosova’s Regional Communist Committee in May 1943, which subsequently became an official directive for the communist cells of Kosova, the ‘peoples governance’ expressed the new political approach on the issue of the national question. It stated that self-determination was “not only a right for Albanians of Kosova, but also a universal right that will be rigorously respected”. The document also claimed that “At the present time we must all fight the common enemy¹⁵ (the Nazi occupation) but in times of peace, all will rejoice to the individual and national freedom after the liberation”.¹⁶ Needless to say, such ideas were an important factor in the debates that took place afterwards in Kosova. They served as a tool of enticement to disillusioned Albanians who were still wary of communists. One such political development was the nationalist uprising of former communists who felt betrayed by the Yugoslav Communists and their incorporation of Kosova and other Albanian lands in Yugoslavia. The troubles exploded into a full-scale war, and Shaban Polluzha, one of the most prominent former commander of a partisan brigade, lead the disillusioned fighters who had believed in the communist dogma for a national state. At a

¹⁵ Kumtesë nga Profesor Muharrem Dezhgiu. Mbi dimensionin politik të Fadil Hoxhës gjatë Luftës së Dytë Botërore. Gjakovë 21 Prill 2006. (Paper by Professor Muharrem Dezhgiu. About the political dimension of Fadil Hoxha during the Second World War. Gjakove 21 April 2006).

meeting in central Kosova in 1946, alongside three former political commissars of partisan brigades and a few other military commanders, he conveyed to the men “the news that we have feared... we have been betrayed. The communists want Kosova for themselves, they don’t want Albania, they only want Kosova as part of Yugoslavia ... Our fight then shows to have been in vain, but we will not throw down our guns until Kosova is free”. Polluzha pours scorn on the rest of the Albanian Communist and partisan leadership for having “sunk the true calling of our nation in the hour of need”. Such reckless behaviour by the Albanian Communists, Polluzha claimed, “has only one sinister motive: grabbing power after the war”.¹⁷

The National Democrats, the first Albanian opposition party in Kosova created during the time of the German occupation, were of the same opinion. As a political group, they argued “that the place for the occupying Nazis was Germany, and not Balkans”, hence their call to arms for their members and supporters. Their greatest concern was that “the political body of the Albanian nation is being truncated only for the wishes of a few”. The central national council of the party adopted a resolution that urged for “freedom of choice to all nations who fight the Rome, Berlin, Tokyo axis. Self-determination, to all nations about the political system they want to live, considering that in amicable fashion the political system should be chosen by popular referenda”. In the light of the December

¹⁶ Arkivi i Historisë i Kosovës. A-VIII-316. (The history archive of Kosova. Document A-VIII-316)

¹⁷ Ne luftuam për bashkim, liri e drejtësi. Interviste me Çun Xhevatit ish luftetar i Shaban Pulluzhes. (We fought for union, liberty and justice. Interview by Çun Xhevati a former soldier of Shaban Polluzha.) Newspaper “Fakti” Shkup (Skopje) 12. 06.2005

1943 Teheran conference, the official agenda of which ignored the Albanian lands, the party calls for “all peace-loving nations not to undermine the war effort of the Albanians, and not to step on the blood of their best sons and daughters who are martyring themselves every day for the universal freedom and defeat of the Nazi doom”.

Finally, the declaration calls for “the union of all Albanians in one state, as a measure that will forever solve the high-pitched relations of the Balkan nations and the great powers”.¹⁸ Dr Ali Sokoli, the party’s international affairs *person de charge*, produced the first meticulous strategy for the resolution of the national questions in the Balkans. In this document, he argues for “a joint war-effort against the Nazi and Fascist occupation of all peoples of the Balkans”. The question of national borders, he claims, will be solved as soon as the rays of freedom arrive, and in the spirit of newly acquired liberation, the nations of the Balkans will draw natural borders of their states with peaceful intentions. Natural borders will mean a region belonging to the state that the majority of that population are as a prelude to long lasting peace in liberal democracies of the future.¹⁹

The communist authorities, feared political and ideological implications, and hastily annihilated such a daring challenge. The National Democratic Party was extinguished in 1949. During a meeting of the central committee; the UDB arrested and charged all 45 members for “destructive political activity against the people’s government”.²⁰

¹⁸ Rexhep Avdullahu. Vepimtaria politike e Partise Nacional Demokratike të Kosovës. (Rexhep Avdullahu. Paper on the political activity of the Albanian National Democratic Party of Kosova. 12 May 2004. Prishtina.)

¹⁹ Ibid. p21-4.

²⁰ Ibid. p29-35

On the other side, the communists were adamant that joining Yugoslavia was the best possible option, because “economic and social conditions of our predominantly agrarian society will improve with lightning speed, and educational and cultural emancipation will proceed with great leaps forward. We plan many good things for our desperate, forgotten, and abandoned peasant... all we need is collaboration.” So argued Mehmet Hoxha, the Serbian government minister of education, thus indicating that plans were being drawn by the state, to buy the silence of the people.²¹ Sinan Hasani²² states that “we have often been given guarantees that the people’s governance will further our cause, and Albanians in Yugoslavia will go from strength to strength in education, agriculture, welfare, social and domestic provisions, economy and culture” (Hasani S. 1989, p 57-9). Ali Shukriu’s account at the sentencing of Professor Shllaku is very similar. He maintains that “only Yugoslavia can bring about the much-needed peace, freedom and discipline in these regions,”²³ as if the national state of Albanians that was sought could somehow not achieve the needs of its people.

With regard to the reaction of Albanians outside political Kosova, the Dibra, Struga and Shkupi regions were voicing their concerns about “not only remaining out of Albania, but also remaining out of the Albanian republic in Yugoslavia”. For “Albanians of the

²¹ Mehmet Hoxha. Qeveria e Serbisë ka plane të mëdha për Kosmetin. (Rilindja 14 October 1949) (Mehmet Hoxha. The government of Serbia has great plans for Kosmet)

²² Sinan Hasani was elected as the Kosovar member of the Yugoslav presidency in 1984 with his term ending in 1989. He also served as head of the rotating presidency during 1986-1987 term

²³ Një kafe me Labin. Interviste me Ramiz Këlmendin. (“A coffee with Labi” show Interview with Ramiz

southern regions of the Sharr Mountain have never belonged to Macedonia... If we are to remain part of Macedonia, aren't we extending the life of the Bulgarian²⁴ occupation?"²⁵

However, something more sinister was at stake in Kosova. "Yugoslav Communists gave Kosova to Serbia, to compensate her for not including all Serb lands in Serbia, and for winning the Serb acceptance for the new political order" (Magaš B. 1993, p34).

On 10 July 1945, a meeting of 43 partisan commanders and former brigade commissars, of whom seventeen were Albanians, the rest being Serbs and Montenegrins, voted at the city of Prizren on the union of Kosova with Serbia (Kola P.2003 p63). From then until 1968, when the constitutional changes were made to the political status of Kosova, Serbs and Montenegrins dominated the province in all walks of life. As Siniša Stanković, the President of the People's Assembly of Serbia, remarked, the province was considered "a mechanism primarily set up to help the existence of Serb and Montenegrin factors in the province".²⁶ Kosova never became an equal member in Serbia or Yugoslavia until the 1974 constitution, because the range of competences that Kosova lacked, and Vojvodina possessed, defied common sense (Garde P,1992, p237). For instance, during the second legislature 1950-54, the Regional Peoples Assembly of Kosova and Metohija had only 36 Albanian members in the 124 seat assembly, and five out of seven members, including

Këlmendi) TV channel 21. Prishtina

²⁴ Bulgaria during the Second World War had extended her international borders to include Macedonia, and some of the Kosova region including the strategic Kaçanik gorge and the industrial city of Gjilan.

²⁵ Ne luftuam për bashkim, liri e drejtesi. Interviste me Çun Xhevatit ish luftetar i Shaban Pulluzhes. (We fought for union, liberty and justice. Interview by Çun Xhevati with a former soldier of Shaban Pulluzha.) Newspaper "Fakti" Shkup (Skopje) 12. 06.2005

²⁶ Regija je sada stabilna i ne sme da ide u pogrešnom putu. Drug Siniša Stanković raspravlja oko Kosmetso pitanje. Borba 16 January 1955.(The region is now stable and cannot go the wrong way.

the chairman, in the regional executive council were either Serb or Montenegrin, even though under communism the people's representatives were supposedly to remain loyal to the party ideology, not ethnic identity.

Another problem of a political nature existed in the capitals of Albania and Yugoslavia, eclipsing Kosova even further in the military and security forces. The idea of an all-encompassing Balkan federation was very attractive to communist groups of Albania after the war. The Albanian Communist Party was firmly set against 'Greater Albania'. (Hadri A. 2003, p 52.). Their leader, Enver Hoxha, saw himself through such a political entity accessing a much wider international platform, by becoming part of Yugoslavia and most probably the deputy president of a strong communist state (Plasari A and Malltezi L 1996 p 121-5). Hoxha wanted to be as close as possible to Tito, with whom he believed he had developed a strong bond through letters of correspondence and personal meetings. Tito on the other hand was of the opinion that Hoxha was a shabby peasant inclined to folly (arhiv.sv.gov.yu).²⁷ The paranoid Hoxha also wanted to maintain close relations with the victorious Soviet Union, though the fear of Albanian Communists from Kosova challenging his authority plagued him. Coming from a southern Albania, he feared that groups from the north of Albania including Kosova would be encouraged by the federal regime. There were signs that the former commander of the Yugoslav ninth offensive brigade, Fadil Hoxha (born in western Kosova with no relation to Enver Hoxha), was winning representation into the most important Yugoslav.

Comrade Sinisa Stankovic debates about Kosmet)

To the Yugoslav Communists, the idea of a Balkan federation was relatively appealing, not only because of the obvious ideological internationalism, but also due to territorial extension. Such a country would have been able to control the mouth of the Adriatic gulf at the Otranto canal, where the Ionian and the Adriatic seas are separated, and the tip of the eastern Adriatic at Trieste. Therefore, by adding Albania to their territory, the Yugoslav Communists thought that they could encircle the Apennine peninsula, thus preventing future aggression.

Apart from Albania, the Yugoslav Communists invited Bulgaria and Greece to join the federation. The politics of ethnic elements aside (i.e. the similar Slavic background of Bulgarians), the Yugoslavs wanted to include Bulgaria in the federation, because its territory would have facilitated an overall geographical dominance in the Balkan Peninsula. Bulgaria would guarantee access to the Black Sea with geo-strategic proximity to Asia and the Soviet Union, and therefore create every precondition for Yugoslavia to become a regional superpower. However, Joseph Stalin, although assured on a number of occasions that the new federation would be along the same ideological lines as the USSR, disliked the idea of another strong, multi-national federation in south-eastern Europe. Apart from wanting to avoid upsetting the USA and the UK with such a creation that would have reduced their sphere of influence in the region, Stalin was also concerned that such a union could become an international power base and challenge his dominance (Evans D. 2005, p34-6). Yugoslavia's refusal to grant special privileges to USSR also played a role as this would have eventually led to the complete economic and political

²⁷ Tito posle sastanka sa Enverom Hodjom. 13.12.1948. 45/31bx. (Tito after meeting Enver Hoxha)

subordination of Yugoslavia. (Heppel. M and Singleton. F.B. 1966, p192).

The territorial issue was also important. Many in Yugoslavia were demanding that Bulgaria seized the region of Pirin gained during the Balkan Wars, so it could join the newly created Peoples Republic of Macedonia and discontinue demands based on the actual number of the Bulgarian populace to make the Bulgarian language a parallel official state language to Serbo-Croat.

Smaller nations such as Croats or Slovenes also feared possible alliances between Serbs and Bulgarians in the federation, since they were both orthodox nations, had a Cyrillic script, and even though there was a lot of animosity from the Balkan wars, they were part of the Turkish Empire which meant they held common values. This contrasted with the Croats and Slovenes, who were mainly catholic nations and had been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and thus had different mentalities (Ziga W. 1997, p 127).

Greece was in a more difficult position at this time, in terms of being invited to the federation. The reasons included the raging civil war and the strong interest in that country shown by the British Prime Minister Churchill, who had argued at the Teheran conference that Greece should fall under western influence.

The failure of a Balkanic Yugoslavia, marred by problems of ideological nature between Tirana and Belgrade, initiated a crisis. This was precipitated by the mobilisation of several units of the regular Yugoslav army waiting for orders to invade Albania in 1948. Later in the year, Stalin intervened and called the actions of the federal government in Belgrade “in complete discord with external policies, and of a non-Marxist nature”. The

soviet Politburo also accused the Yugoslav authorities of having “betrayed socialism” and “leaning towards bourgeois nationalism” (Pollo S & Puto A. 1981. p263). This was the point when the great schism between Moscow and Belgrade began, with Yugoslavia expelled from Comecon and later Comintern. Simultaneously, Albania also broke what had been very close bonds with Yugoslavia, in complete disregard for the Albanians living there, who were never consulted about their future by Tirana or Belgrade. From then on, until the fall of communism in 1992, Tirana strictly followed Stalinism.

The break-down of relations between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union was manifested in Kosova with the closure of fortress-like borders between Albania and Yugoslavia, plus the termination of all political, economic, and cultural relations, and a campaign to disgrace and humiliate Albania’s communist elite who in turn were doing exactly the same whenever an opportunity arose to discredit Yugoslav communists.

The schism with Moscow opened the doors for an immense campaign of purges in Yugoslavia, with a widespread hunt for cominformists (i.e. pro-Soviet elements). Enver Hoxha’s open criticism directed at Belgrade did not help matters. From 1949 until the final break-up of Yugoslavia, accusations were made continuously against Albanians for being ‘agents of Tirana’. Such an accusation guaranteed long prison sentences to whoever had the bad luck to be labelled as such. From the Yugoslav standpoint, the threat was not so much what Albania did as a state, but what such a state represented to Albanians of Yugoslavia (Biberaj E 1990, p112).

Due to the fact that Kosova was a region with a non-Slavic majority, the security services treated the province with additional suspicion. Derrick Bell’s ethical perspective calls

such a state a culture of hypocrisy (equality of all was promised but not observed) with legalised damaging practices (the state was ready to use its utmost power only so the 'enemies of the state' could be found) (Bell D 2003, p19). Instead of helping them, after it had abandoned the people and their cause, the Tirana regime only worsened the life of Albanians in Yugoslavia with provocative actions.

The 1952 congress of the Albanian Communist Party approved a resolution which declared that "the country's main danger stemmed from Yugoslav Communism" (Logoreci A. 1977. p109). Now Yugoslav security had reasons to believe that Tirana was meddling in Yugoslavia's affairs.

At this time in Kosova, the partisan revenge that continued relentlessly into the 1950s carried out bloody purges of all perspectives, often on imaginary enemies, in order to consolidate power (Stephen. G. 1993. p 358). The notorious, powerful and ubiquitous security police, the *Uprava državne bezbednosti* (UDB), began all over Kosova to demand arms in a well-coordinated campaign, which in reality meant night raids and assassinations, even involving religious leaders. After a spate of violent activities that happened during 1955 martial law, in 'a classical case of totalitarian justice' (Kushner B 2004, p22) with particularly flimsy evidence, a group of Shiite religious leaders were tried in the city of Prizren in southern Kosova in 1956. Alongside them in the dock was a group of high-ranking party officials, including Njazi Maloku, the first-ever Albanian secretary of the Kosova Regional Communist Party. In fact, Maloku was similar to Marije Shllaku as a pioneer in debating the position of Albanians in Kosova. At a meeting of the Regional Central Committee of the Communist Party in late-1954,

Maloku questioned Serb domination of UDB in Kosova and urged recruitment of other nationalities to the organisation, since “Kosova and Metohija was a region of all nations and ethnicities in it”. He also called for “economic development to be distributed according to the needs of the people not the wishes of the party”, and he urged a spread of medical services into rural areas. In arguing his position, Maloku also exclaimed that “the situation in education is not desirable, we can count the number of Albanian secondary schools on fingers, while primary schools have not spread to many corners of the region” (Rilindja 16 October. 1954).²⁸

At the trial, the Shiite leader of the Prizren shrine called accusations against him “a deviation from God’s truth” and argued that “tending one’s flock in its own language and using prayers from Qerbela²⁹ did not challenge the state”. He went on to conclude that “a situation like this is only remembered during the time of the first Serbia”³⁰ and that “we did not expect a treatment like this from partisans, many of whom we ourselves have fed and helped in their hour of need, and alongside whom we have fought” (Rilindja 12 November.1956).³¹ In practice, a social numbness caused by the utter disbelief of those who were enlisted as partisans, or helped them directly or indirectly during the war, persisted after the wave of terror and brutality that was unleashed in Kosova. Such a situation was a consequence of the prevailing idea amongst Albanians that their war

²⁸ Shoku Njazi Maloku spjeron çështjet prekëse të politikës mes anetarëve të partisë. (Comrade Njazi Maloku explains the sensitive political issues to the party members)

²⁹ ‘Qerbela’ is the title of the poem by Albanian national poet Naim Frasheri, himself a Shiite where he praises the battle of Kerbela where sects of Islam were initiated.

³⁰ Reference to the brutality of the Serbian forces upon the annexation of Kosova in 1912.

³¹ Nga proqesi gjyqësorë në rastin Njazi Maloku dhe të tjerët. (From the trial of Njazi Maloku and others)

contribution was of no importance, since many accusations had been fabricated against them. The speech given at the Prizren district court by the Shiite leader stipulates just such a position. In relation to the accusations, the sentences ranged from fifteen years for high-ranking officials to three years for ordinary peasants.

Kosova was a target of violence for the security services, because the UDB was constantly suspicious of the non-Slavonic population, believing that the current political order could be preserved if such elements were to distance themselves from their mother countries. This climate was further precipitated because many Albanians in Yugoslavia were genuinely unhappy with the existing political, social, cultural and economic situation.³² There was also the interference from the conservative forces, especially the Serbian Orthodox Church, which maintained the general line towards Kosova, which views the region as a part of historic Serbia, and thus only Serbian and Montenegrin elements should be advanced.

Unfortunately, these events were not exclusive to Kosova. A relentless campaign of persecution and police terror was also taking place against other non-Slavic minorities in Yugoslavia, in particular against the Italian, German and Hungarian communities that lived in Istria, Slavonia and Panonia, which had no form of political autonomy. They were thrown into the ideological melting pot after the Second World War. Many were alarmed because their lands and properties were being systematically confiscated; plus

³² Asllan Pushka. Situata pas luftes ishte e ndere. Bujku 14 Tetor 1995. (Asllan Pushka Historical clonicle. Situation after the war was grave. "Bujku" 14 October 1995)

prominent intellectual, community and religious leaders were being harassed and subjected to violence. The maxim of the Titoist regime was that to build an 'ethnically Yugoslav' country, the 'republics' should practise ethnic cleansing. In 1945 in Slovenia and Istria, thousands of Italians were victims of this policy, and Italian bodies were disposed of in dolines (*foibe*) (*infoibati*, to speak Italian). Tens of thousands had to leave their houses before 1954, the date of the regulation of the conflict about Trieste. In Vojvodina, the army 'purified' ethnically. More than 400,000 Germans were expelled from their lands and finally from Yugoslavia, although there were German partisans (Thälmann brigade) in Tito's army. By a hair's breadth the Hungarians did undergo the same fate. (Bataković D. 1994, p51-69).

The regime also subjected the Slavs to the actions of the security apparatus. Although a Croat himself, Tito did not prevent the head of the Catholic Church in Croatia, Archbishop Stepinac, from being sentenced. All over Yugoslavia, former collaborators of the occupying regimes were suffering in prisons. During 1956 alone, in the central Serbian region of Šumadija, "over one hundred people were sentenced to seventy-five years combined, for organising a meeting of commemoration for the twentieth anniversary of the death of the king Aleksandar Karađorđević".³³ The arrests and trials were hastily organized, for in Serbia there was still considerable admiration and support for the former royal dynasty. The majority of non-communist groups had a rough time

³³ Прогом страха од Карађорђевића у Шумадију. Зоран Жебић. Свеска о историју краљевине Србије. р38-59. Цетиње 2002. (Progom of fear from the Karadjordjevic's in Sumadija. Zoran Zebic. Notebook on the history of the Serbian kingdom. Cetinje. Montenegro)

from the 'people's government'. As former US President Richard Nixon observed, Tito thought that the leadership could not step back from its responsibilities, and that leading and governing people should be seen as a destiny on its own (Kissinger. H.1995. p704). Nonetheless, the problem of mistreatment of ethnic minorities was also hindering other communist states in the Balkans. In Romania, for example, forced assimilation policies were pursued on the Transylvanian Hungarian minority, especially after 1952, as the Communist Party adopted a more nationalist tendency and a self-styled communism. Bulgarian campaigns against the country's Turkish minority forced thousands to flee in 1950 and 1968, while in the early 1970s Muslim villagers were forced publicly to abandon their Turkish or Islamic names for names with Bulgarian endings (Mazower. M. 2000. p138), while Soviet policies regarding gulags, political dissidents and members of ethnic minorities are part of global folklore of how distressing assimilations could be. In parallel with this aggressive policy, there were some relative successes on the ground. The process of recovery from the war had begun, with great improvements not only in social capital, housing, hospitals, schools and transport, but also clearly in industrial development. Infant mortality rates had been reduced by providing better and quicker access to newly built hospitals, and a plan of general popular vaccination had reduced infectious illnesses such as mumps, rubella, poliomyelitis, tuberculosis, and measles, combined with better nourishment for people.

At the federal level, Yugoslavia was a 'work front'. Relatively small towns were facing unprecedented developments and becoming large, urbanised centres. The capital cities of the federal units were increasing by between twelve to twenty-five percent more people each decade, due to growing economic opportunities, better education, and closer access

to jobs and services. Hundreds and thousands of miles of asphalt, and hundreds of miles of railway line were laid, and ports and airports were built, introducing an edge of westernised capitalist development to the country. Telecommunications networking was provided in many areas outside the major urban centres for the first time, with Belgrade progressing from only 1500 in 1937 to over 86000 domestic phone numbers installed by 1960 (www.posta.co.yu). Yugoslavia was becoming a forward-looking, modernised country, very different from the one that Lady Edith Durham had witnessed in her visit to Serbia. While passing Šumadija in 1906, she wrote:

I thank the Lord for coming to a dwelling of people. After three days of travelling on a, through a muddy road and dense forests we finally reached a hamlet... The presence of people rejuvenates my spirit.” (Durham. E.1908. Vol 8. Number 1. www.jstor.org)³⁴

Increasing economic productivity and industrial output had played a major role in policymaking in Yugoslavia. As Edvard Kardelj remarked during the 1957 joint meeting of the world’s communist parties and states held in Moscow, “Unlike some others here, we don’t want conflict” (Chang J & Halliday J p 2005. 428).

The economic recovery was also gathering pace in Kosova. Exploitation of mineral riches, service industries and urban planning had formed the focus of economic development. Within fifteen years, the number of people employed in these sectors had quadrupled. To cater for high demand, several new mines were opened, producing natural

³⁴ Reviewed Works: Some Tribal Laws, Origins, and Customs of the Balkans. by M. Edith Durham

riches and a corresponding strengthening of the economic capacity of the region. Within ten years, following its study for the first major development plan launched in 1951, the Trepça complex, one of the biggest enterprises in Yugoslavia had opened four major mines and a foundry whose mineral product accounted for seventy percent of Yugoslavia's mineral wealth.³⁵

Other service-providing enterprises began to spring up in the major cities of Kosova, but the focus of economic activity remained limited to mining and textiles, services, administration and housing. The reason for this selective economic development was that the policymakers in Belgrade had oriented their funding towards those particular sectors needing developed in Serbia.

Due to its vast concentration of lignite, a power plant was built not far from Prishtina in 1962, and for a time – although power cuts in Prishtina were routine – it satisfied all the demand for electricity in Kosova and parts of southern Serbia and north-western Macedonia (Motes. M. 1998, p53).

In an interview with the author, the economist Riza Sapunxhiu³⁶ argued that the selective development in the province was a consequence of Serbia's development plans. In effect, Serbia developed in Kosova only those sectors that it needed for economic recovery, although they were not priorities in Kosova. Nonetheless, such developments were welcome in the province, for they were the only ones that took place.

Funding was also oriented towards developing agriculture, trade and transport. There

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³⁵ The Trepça mining complex: How Kosovo's spoils were distributed. By Paul Stuart. 28 June 2002 <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2002/jun2002/trep-j28.shtml>.

³⁶ Riza Sapunxhiu, a former prime minister of Kosova, and a member of the collective federal presidency.

were also improvements in the social sphere. A number of secondary schools in the urbanised centres teaching exclusively in Serbo-Croat were opened in Kosova, whereas in rural areas primary education was organised in short-term courses and resulted in the acquisition of very basic skills. During the school year 1950-51, there were sixty-seven primary schools in Kosova that only taught two years. A further course that provided two more years of education was established in nineteen such schools, mainly in the urbanised centres.³⁷ By 1950, there were 357 classes that taught lessons only in Serbo-Croat, and 279 mixed or Albanian-only classes in the cities (Malcolm N. 1998. p318).

Meanwhile, in ideological terms, after the somewhat successful Soviet rapprochement with the Khrushchev visit to Belgrade in 1955, Yugoslavia adopted a ‘softly-softly’ approach to communism, characterised by several factors different from other Eastern Block regimes. The Yugoslav Communists adopted Lenin’s dictum that Marxism was not a finished and inviolable body of doctrine, and consequently considerable civic freedom flourished. For example, not many people behind the Iron Curtain could claim that they had the freedom of movement in and out of their own country as did Yugoslavia. This factor, along with political persecution and high unemployment, form the main factors leading to so many ‘Gastarbeiter’ from Yugoslavia arriving in Western Europe. Over 40% of Croats, nearly 40% of Albanians from Yugoslavia, and over 21% of Serbs live

The author interviewed him via e-mail on 11 September 2007.

³⁷ Shkollat fillore në Kosovë e Metohi. Fletorja zyrtare e regjionit. Prishtinë 1951. (Primary schools in Kosova and Metohija. The official book of the region. 1951.)

outside their mother countries mainly in western states (www.osce.org).³⁸

Public information and communication also made giant leaps forward. A regional radio station (something that had never existed before), with mixed slots for Serbian and Albanian language programs, was launched in 1946. However, most of the material it transmitted supported communist indoctrination, as was the case all over the communist states. With a small number of staff and considerably dependent on help from Serb and Yugoslav journalists and technicians, an Albanian language daily newspaper, *Rilindja* (Renaissance), started circulation in February 1945, alongside a publishing house established in the region's capital, primarily catering for school textbooks and authors of indoctrinated propaganda.

On the constitutional terrain, Kosova obtained its regional assembly in 1946, as well as a severely limited regional executive committee. The Communist Party of Kosova (KCP), though created in 1941, was formally recognised as a branch of the mother Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY) in 1948. However, the authority of the KCP was limited as it remained completely integrated into the Communist Party of Serbia and the CPY. Its primary task was to facilitate communist activities in the region. Nevertheless, the authority of the KCP was due to individual dominance of its members in high state and security services, economic, and cultural enterprises as well as other sectors of public life. In fact, as a membership policy, the KCP had sanctioned that any person in a leading

³⁸ Refer to the: OSCE report on the New Century transition in the region of former Yugoslavia . December 2004. Vienna

position in political or economic life had to become a member of the party. So rigorous was this directive that, in 1972, the eleven-member chairmanship of the KCP branch in the city of Gjakovë, was composed of seven managers of the major city enterprises, two secondary-school headmasters, the director of the regional hospital, and the director of the city's bus station.³⁹ But, despite developments, the feeling of dependency on Serbia still remained a major source of dissatisfaction in Kosova. (Repishti. S. 1986.p255).

Following tensions with Moscow, Tito positioned Yugoslavia in 'the third way'. This referred to a policy of international neutrality with the help of Indonesia's President Sukarno, India's Prime Minister Nehru, and Egypt's President Naser, the principal signatories of the Organization of Non-Aligned Countries in 1955. With no military or economic muscle, the Non-Aligned movement was a union that suited countries emerging from colonial rule. It brought together some of the most fearsome modern-day dictators/tyrants of the world, who saw the Soviet Union as the domineering big brother and the Western World as not to be associated with for it demanded human rights standards. In domestic policy, the organization helped Tito's vanity, it made him look important on the world stage, and it helped him to consolidate his authority over party and state. The organization's membership also helped Yugoslavia develop economically, for it created new jobs and helped the arms trade. Overall, non-alignment was a useful policy in avoiding commitment to either side in Europe and in gaining prestige and diplomatic support from the Third World. (Rubinstein A.Z 1970, p8).

³⁹ Kryesia e Lidhjes së Komunistëve të Kosovës dega në Gjakovë. 1972. Arkiva e Partisë. (The

Communist activities were also concentrated in the slogan *vëllazërim bashkimi* (brotherhood and unity), the leitmotif of Yugoslav Communism, which was designed to propagate and supposedly cement many ethnicities of Yugoslavia living in concord with each other. Such a wartime slogan was not intended to counter fratricidal war and disunity. It symbolized the policy of pan-Yugoslav solidarity, cooperation among the nations, Yugoslav integration and ultimately the creation of a Yugoslav national consciousness (Đaković S. 1984. p,164). To some, such an idea might seem a fallacy, for it portrayed loving and caring for everything that lived and existed within the borders of Yugoslavia, as one would love oneself. The *vëllazërim bashkimi* verbs had become a customary coin in propagating internationalism and solidarity amongst the nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia. However, brotherhood and unity was never truly forged in Yugoslavia. Slovenes and Croats looked down on Bosnian and Macedonian peasants who had travelled to their republics, either as volunteers or to find a job, as the French looked down upon Algerians, or Germans at Turks (Brkič. C. A. 2005. p 290). Albanians, meanwhile, “were that class of citizens who were there to be used only to carry the heavy loads, as workers who will embellish the gardens of the Ušće neighbourhood⁴⁰, and as human agents ready to give blood when needed” (Bulatović Lj. 1999, p 63-4). Undeterred by either federal or constitutive members of Yugoslavia, the government in Belgrade reactivated the policy of forced Albanian migration by an international treaty signed with Turkey on 28 February 1953. According to the points of the treaty, the Yugoslav Government was to pay substantial amounts of money to the Turkish executive

chairmanship of the Kosova Communist Party branch in Gjakove. 1972. The party archives)

just to accept the Albanians. The federal government did not consider investing that money in Kosova to improve the lives of its citizens.

Albanians in Turkey were to have no ethnic or national right, and they were eligible for state and linguistic assimilation. In an unprecedented action, the federal government and party had responded to the Serbian demands to ‘pacify the region’ with a treaty that had pure political, ethnic and geostrategic ramifications. By removing large parts of the Albanian population from Kosova, plans for intensification of Serb and Montenegrin settlements could go ahead. Many Albanian families were enlisted for expulsion because during the post-war census they had been registered as Turks, i.e. those who practise Islam, not properly grasping the concept of nationality. In Turkey, they were abused and their civil liberties violated, and they were even used at the beginning of their settlement as a buffer line between the Turks and the Kurds.⁴¹

Expatriation of Albanians, 1952-1965

Year	No. of persons	Year	No. of persons
1952	37000	1959	32000
1953	17300	1960	27980
1954	17500	1961	31910
1955	51000	1962	15910
1956	54000	1963	25720
1957	57710	1964	21530
1958	41300	1965	19821

Shehu F & Shehu S. Pastrimet etnike të trojeve shqiptare 1953-1957 (Ethnic Cleansing of Albanian Regions, 1953-1957), Prishtina, 1994, p. 24.

⁴⁰ An affluent area of Belgrade.

⁴¹ Expulsions of Albanians and colonisation of Kosova. The Institute of History , Prishtina

Due to land confiscation and repression, more than 235000 Albanians of Yugoslavia were forced to vacate their lands between 1954 and 1966 (Vickers. M. p180-8. 1995; see also *Vjesnik u srijedu, Zagreb, 7/VI/1971*).

Brutality and the reign of terror were unabated especially if they were directed against the so-called cells of irredentism and nationalism. During 1956, for example, over sixty thousand Albanians were tortured and terrorised by the UDB and the police (Ramet. S. 2002. p313). The erudite Albanian writer and historian, Rexhep Qosja, summarised such a desperate situation for many Albanians in Yugoslavia in one sentence: “Albanian peasants were beaten up by Serb and Montenegrin police whether they said good morning sir, or whether they didn’t, often only because they were Albanians.” Following an appraisal of their security policy for the 1949-59 period in Kosova, even the federal authorities accepted that in dealing with Kosova they had used a heavier hand than was necessary (Crampton. R.J. 2002. p115).

Yugoslavia, “a country that emphasised learned socialism as common social, economic, territorial and political union of the working people and the root of all state and social structure” (Tuđman F 1960. p 195), had created a system whereby constitutionally the form of state organisation that existed in Kosova was primarily designed to accommodate the needs of the Serb population (Šuvar, S, 1970. p71). Thanks to a mixture of deliberate state (i.e. Serbian republic) policy of Albanian exclusion, and a low level of educated people in specialised fields, the state and party administration remained almost exclusive to the minority ethnic groups of the province. The Serbian and Montenegrin populace, which according to the 1953 census formed only 23% of population in Kosova, were in

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over 75% of the cases leaders of the administrative, economic and political offices. For example, in the Istog municipality in north-eastern Kosova in 1968, only 24 of 119 people employed to work at the local council were Albanian, despite the fact that Montenegrins and Serbs in the commune comprised only 13.7% of the population.⁴²

The common descent of any ethnicity larger than a clan or a lineage inhabiting a small area such as Serbs is largely mythical (Guibernau. M & Hutchinson. J. 2001. p208). Based on this idea, they kept a tight-fisted control over Kosova. Due to such imbalance, to the ordinary Albanians, the autonomous institutions seemed alien and non inclusive resulting in harsh poverty. The squalid conditions especially in rural areas, were the same as they had been during the time of the Ottomans. Even by 1968, there were only 417 physicians for nearly one and a quarter million people (Motes. M. 1998, p35). People were dying regularly from minor infections long eradicated elsewhere. Life expectancy in Albanian regions of Yugoslavia was disproportionate by over twenty years of a difference. For example, during 1967 the regional hospital at Pejë registered two thousand and thirty cases of malaria in a region with over one hundred thousand people, while the entire province of Vojvodina for the same year registered only four such cases (Pushkolli F. 1980, p 136). The infant mortality rates and deaths of mothers in labour remained alarmingly high. The public health services in the 1961 Yugoslav statistical records show a disparity within the health provisions. For example, the Croat peninsula of Istria, with a population of about one hundred thousand people, had five general

⁴² Kuvendi Komunal i Istogut. Raporti vjetore i punes 1968, p23. (Istog municipality annual report)

hospitals, including a major specialised centre at the region's capital Pula. In comparison, Kosova by this time had a population of well over one million, but with only four hospitals in the largest cities of the region. None of them had a record of specialised wards apart from general surgery units and midwife run gynaecology wards (www.arhiv.sv.gov.yu).⁴³ In fact, only after the creation of the medical faculty at Prishtina University in 1975 was the first and only specialised medical centre opened.

Despite the relaxed measures in the sixties, there was still a general dissatisfaction with the air of complacency that had swamped political quarters. Therefore, Yugoslavia could not stem the tide of protest in Europe of the late sixties, which heralded new, more radical and much-needed changes in all fields. These changes and the preconditions that led to them are a theme of debate in the next chapter.

⁴³ Izveštaj zdravstvenog sistema naše domovine, p15 (Report about the health system of our homeland).

December 1969

CHAPTER TWO

YUGOSLAVIA SEEN FROM KOSOVA, AND KOSOVA SEEN FROM SERBIA AND YUGOSLAVIA

The period between 1966 and 1968 proved to be important for political reform in Yugoslavia. Prompted by a chain of political, social, economic and ethnically inspired events, and with Tito's tacit approval, they were implemented as urgent and necessary accommodations. The motives behind such impulsive reforms were the relative economic success that Yugoslavia had achieved and the associated need for further devolution, not only from the federal structure to the individual units, but also from individual units to the local authorities. During this period, Tito incited an era of constructive ethnic collaboration and independence from foreign interventions.

In Kosova, demands for greater autonomy (even a republic if possible) could not have been ignored for much longer. These demands represented the embodiment of self-determination and equality amongst the nations. They were aimed at addressing the problems of economic development in the province and the free use of national symbols of Albanians as the largest ethnicity. However, such a nationalistic demand had the power to provoke friction in the common state, and thus it was ignored until it surfaced in the form of violent demonstrations.

In terms of local politics, the collectivisation implemented in nearly all the arable land of Kosova had proved a disaster because of mismanagement and human failure. The

average income in Kosova was five times smaller than in Slovenia. By 1960, the economy of the northern republic had achieved the same level of economic development as Italy, while economic development in Kosova remained at a level similar to Thailand, a Third World country. Archaic modes of life still existed in Kosova, such as the sturdy Balkan pony, water buffalo and donkeys pulling carts, lopsided mud-plastered walls of brick and straw...with one room homes, wrecked by poverty (Motes M. 1998. p116). This crisis was caused by over-investment in non-profitable industries. Building factories in towns with an adequate labour force, but no raw materials, and wage rises without concomitant increases in production seriously hampered development. The decrease in agricultural products caused by a hastily forced collectivization, while demand for such products was in reality going up, and an increase on imports based on short-term credits increased popular dissatisfaction. This was paralleled by unfavourable international loans and short-term loans taken between 1965-7 with excruciating interest.⁴⁴ Due to such problems, the five-year economic plan was shelved by 1962, for it achieved nothing that improved the life of ordinary citizens.⁴⁵ This was matched by a lack of companies, enterprise, and all-round economic activities. By the 1960s, Yugoslavia had consumed more than \$2 billion worth of non-payable western aid, but with little impact on the economy. In comparison, Slovenia (in Koper) and Montenegro (in Tivat) had developed their own ports to promote self-sufficiency, but the existing ports in Croatia were easily handling all of Yugoslavia's sea trade (Bennett. C. 1995. pp59 & 75).

⁴⁴ For the purpose of rail transport development, the World Bank in March 1966 loaned to Yugoslavia \$19.4 million with a five-year term and 12.8% interest. (Savezno Izvršno Veće. Stanje finansijskih prihoda The Federal Executive Council. Situation of financial incomings. 1965-6. pb41.pc42.pd43. Beograd 1967.)

In a study by 'Riinvest', Prishtina's institute for development research, before the end of 1960s the Yugoslav economy is assessed to have been at "a point of almost stagnation with Kosova, Montenegro, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and southern regions of Serbia in a blockade of economic profits".⁴⁶ The study suggests that unequal development in the federation was caused by political centralisation that oriented investments and economic capability towards the north for personal, practical and political reasons. One reason was localism, because both Tito and Kardelj were from the northern republics, where they travelled the most. Practical reasons were more concerned with Slovenia and Croatia being geographically closer to Italy and Austria, whose markets provided a window to western markets, since Yugoslavia had now encouraged trade. Finally, political reasons included possible political troubles that could emerge from the northern republics with potentially severe consequences. In Serbia meanwhile, an unprecedented level of development had commenced in Belgrade and a few other major industrial cities, which created the impression amongst Serbs that their own republic was developing significantly.

In Kosova, the rigid manifestation of self-management brought other problems. These included high level of unemployment and administrative and fiscal incompetence, combined with a low level of education and the policy of leaving highly skilled workers unemployed if they had a 'suspicious biography' that made them untrustworthy.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Izveštaj Saveznog Izveršnog veća. (Report by the Federal Executive Council).12.10.1966. p 55-7.

⁴⁶ www.riinvestinstitute.org. Gjendja ekonomike në Republikën Socialiste Federative të Jugosllavisë gjat dekadës 1961 – 1971, p 17-32. (The economic situation in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1961-71 decade)

⁴⁷ The concept of 'suspicious biography' was applied in all cases when the state and party officials had reason to believe that the person applying for employment, or someone from their immediate family, had in

In fact, the only thing that made Kosova notable was the blood spilled on its soil.

(Campbell. G. 2000, p148).

In such an atmosphere, voices were raised concerning the ongoing problems, but they were weak due to the fear of a reaction by security services. In 1958, Adem Demaçi, an energetic Albanian student, spoke against the regime, for which he was persecuted. In that year, he was subjected to the first of a series of imprisonments whereby he spent nearly twenty-nine years behind bars, most of the time on the notorious prison island of Goli Otok. Demaçi was the leader of an underground group that challenged the regime's official ideology, as well as policies towards nationalities, that derived right and wrong from the party's definitions (Getty & Naumov 2000. p503). In Kosova, he enlisted some three hundred members onto his group (Malcolm N. 1998. p322). Early in his life, he published a short novel called 'Serpents of Blood', which quickly became popular and consequently was banned by the state.⁴⁸ This gave Demaçi a platform from which he could speak authoritatively as a member of the intellectual elite on behalf of the oppressed people. And speak he did, calling for a republic of all Albanians in Yugoslavia, equal status for the Albanian language and national flag, economic development, and curbing the terror against Albanians. In his underground activity, he and his followers printed and distributed propaganda pamphlets and organised secret activities.⁴⁹ However,

any way worked against the state. In Kosova, this meant any kind of pro-national Albanian activity and had dire consequences.

⁴⁸ Serpents of Blood is the novel where Demaçi idyllically portrays life in the countryside of Kosova. At the centre of the novel is a forbidden love story. Two teenagers meet accidentally in a field while their cattle are grazing. She however is promised to someone else, while he falls in love with her immediately. In the novel, Demaçi paints a picture of real economic desperation amongst extended Albanian families. He also condones the old archaic mentality that organised life in Kosova.

⁴⁹ Adem Demaçi. Kërkesat tona ishin deshirat e popullit. në "Njëzet e tetë vjet - as i gjallë, as i vdekur"

his views were not very relevant for two reasons: first, because he did not have nationwide support, as his views were muted by official propaganda; and secondly because many Albanians were by this point growing to like communism and federation, and perceived Tito as “somebody who has done more for us in a short period of time, than anybody did since history began” (Borba 16 October 1963).⁵⁰

The pre-1968 position of Kosova in general and that of Albanians in particular was considered by many as ‘the period of greatest deformation’ (www.rferl.org).⁵¹ This view was held not only by those who distanced themselves politically, but even by individuals ranked amongst the highest officials, such as Fadil Hoxha. His reaction reflects a sense of dissatisfaction and anger that was observed all over Kosova. As late as 1970, Kosova was still a vastly rural society, characterised by stagnation of the industrial sector and with very few financial resources actually reaching where they were needed. Only seven localities were developed enough to be called cities, while other municipalities were simply large villages. Cultural development was barely noticeable due to the lack of educational infrastructure. Ordinary people were still working in primitive manual conditions, mainly in forestry and agriculture, preoccupied with concerns about producing enough food to last the year. The striking disparity in the province’s economic

(intevistoi M. Hanzhek), “Lumi”, Lubjanë, 1990. (Our demands were the will of the people. In “Twenty eight years neither dead nor alive” Lubiana Slovenia).

⁵⁰ Zemljoradnici i seljaci u Pomoravlju zahvaljuju drugu Tita. (Farmers and peasants of Pomoravlje thank comrade Tito)

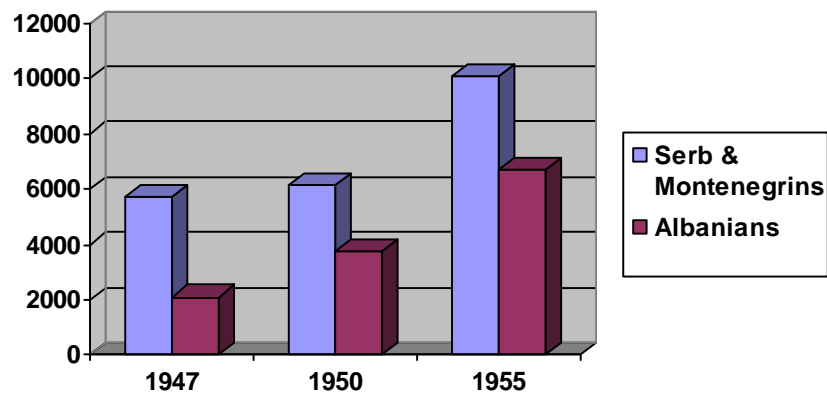
⁵¹ Refer to Fadil Hoxha’s speech held on 21 April 1981 called: “Yugoslavia is a world example of the successful solution of nationality issue”. (The speech was made as a response to demands from official Tirana to further the rights of Albanian nationality soon after 1981 demonstrations).

levels compared with the rest of Yugoslavia has been one of the main reasons why many young and intellectual Kosovars were disillusioned with the prevailing political and economic system (www.rferl.org).⁵²

The Communist party in Kosova was also experiencing difficulties. Its non-Serb membership was low, recruiting new members into the party, even though presented as an imperative after the 1955 plenum of the Kosova League of Communists, had not proved successful since many Albanians viewed the party as a new tool of oppression.

Membership of the Communist Party of Kosova by ethnicity

1947	1950	1952
Serb & Montenegrin 5704	Serb & Montenegrin 6114	Serb & Montenegrin 10028
Albanian 2039	Albanian 3751	Albanian 6652



⁵² Mbledhja e Keshillit te puntoreve te fakulteteve te Prishtines 11Dhjetore 1968. (Meeting of the workers council of Prishtina faculties. 11. 12.1968)

The Serbian-dominated UDB was causing havoc amongst people. Whenever the party needed to avoid embarrassment from a looming scandal, ‘enemy groups’ within the population were always found as scapegoats. Although it was not a complete totalitarian state like the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia nevertheless had more political prisoners per capita than the USSR (Crampton. R.J. 2002).

The Secret Service had over one million files on Croats alone, which meant that over a quarter of the population were seen as suspicious (Tanner M 1997. p189), and “even saints were not left unstained by communism” (Qosja R. 2005. p134).

As colonists, the Serb and Montenegrin population of Kosova began to grow rapidly. They were given large portions of arable land in order to make it possible to stay permanently where they were sent. Through a state-managed plan called “The colonisation of the southern Serbian region”, which was masterminded by the Agrarian minister, Vasa Čubrilović, they were placed there officially as economic emigrants, but soon gained the rights to land previously owned by the indigenous population. In 1945, with a desire ‘to retain the cradle of Serbdom’, 1054 Serb and Montenegrin families applied to go to Kosova, where they would receive up to 5 hectares of land belonging to Albanian farmers⁵³ (Obradović. M, 1987, p. 249-250). Those who did not volunteer for such a program were sent to Kosova supposedly because their homes in their native villages had been destroyed during the war. Such arguments made no sense ethically, because people who have had their property destroyed generally do not seek to take over

⁵³ Fadil Hoxha described a situation whereby almost every morning while going to work he read examples of Albanian forced land confiscation. The only thing he could do was to tear up the newspaper. Meeting with the “URA” association. 14 October 1996.

somebody else's livelihood, least of all hundreds of miles away.

Arriving from arid or swamp-infested parts of Yugoslavia, such as Lika, Kordun, Semberija Herzegovina, central Serbia and mountainous Montenegro, they had to adapt to a new environment, new culture and an alien language, which Albanian was to them. The Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC) reacted with haste to accommodate the Serb and Montenegrin population by beginning in earnest to build churches in places of new settlements. This is in line with the mythical belief of the Serbian populace, encouraged by the SOC, that Kosovo was the cradle of the Serbian nation.⁵⁴ Thus in villages where more than forty Serb and Montenegrin families (Montenegrins being under the ecumenical order of the SOC) had settled, a new church or chapel was erected by the SOC. Six such churches were built after 1953 within a 47-kilometre radius of the Morava region of eastern Kosova; no new Islamic mosques or Catholic churches were built to cater for the Albanians in this region during the same period.⁵⁵

Myth is generally attributed to play a major role in the creation of ethnic and national identities. It is the most influential heritage point of a group of people who construct their collectivity around common historical events, signs, norms, dates or insignia, religion or language. It is the factor that binds groups together in a past that they consider glorious (Hudson K. 1981:1). Myth is a defective understanding of scientific causes, but because man finds it necessary to explain phenomena, theories are put forward in the absence of scientific knowledge (Rogerson, J.W.1984. p 62-71).

⁵⁴ The 'Great Serbia' Ideology.

⁵⁵ The Provincial Peoples Council. Annual report 1965, refer to the part about: Serb and Montenegrin citizens continue to strengthen the socialist society of Kosova and Metohija

The new colonists regarded the native Albanians with mistrust (Lalaj A. 2000. p144). This reaction was a consequence of instrumentalisation by Belgrade politicians, who played the Gordian knot of nationality in Kosova. In fact, the Serbs still harboured the idea that whoever solved the Serbian question ‘would achieve an everlasting deed for the nation. As enemies of Serbdom, Albanians were worse than Turks (Hadri A. 2003, p311). As a policy of republican and provincial governments, to help their long-term settlement in Kosova, authorities prioritised the needs of the Serbian and Montenegrin population⁵⁶ over those of Albanians.⁵⁷ In 1964, the colonists who had found employment in the city of Prishtina and the towns of Fushë Kosovë, Lipjan, Podujevë and Obiliq represented 93.7% of applicants. The number of Albanians finding work varied from only 16% in Podujevë to 43% in Prishtina the capital city of the province.⁵⁸ Membership of the YLC, a precondition for anybody wishing to work in the public sector, accounted for the large number of non-Albanians working in Kosova’s public sector, as well as educational policies. Most secondary schools in Kosova taught only Serbo-Croat, and since many Albanians did not speak the language, this meant unemployment.

⁵⁶ Such is the case of (Montenegrin by nationality) Momčilo Pavičević. He was given a choice to work as a manager of a textile industry or as a manager in a juice processing plant in the city of Gjakovë in western Kosova, but decided instead to take a manager’s job in the chromium processing plant ‘Devë’, because he explained that he liked the rural location of the factory setting. Arkiva e minieres së kromit Deva. Mbledhja e këshillit të punëtorve dhe e drejtorisë. Prill 1985. (Archive of the chromium mine Deva. Meeting of the workers council and the directorate. April 1985)

⁵⁷ The Serb populated village of Graçanicë in the jurisdiction of Prishtina commune had a primary and secondary school from 1950, and in 1956 had an asphalted road that linked it with the capital. By 1963, it had telephone connections and underground sanitation. At the same time, the nearby village of Hajvali, with four times more inhabitants but all of them Albanians, never had a secondary school, sanitation or telephone line until 2002. (Archives of the Prishtina commune pp1950, 1956, 1963.)

⁵⁸ Këshilli Populluer Krahinuer. Raporti vjetuer i punes. (The Provincial Peoples Council. Annual report

Although over twenty years had passed since the Second World War, by 1966 there were only 49 secondary schools in Kosova (Jeta e Re. 1977. Issue 4) and more than half of the curriculum was devoted to Yugoslav history and literature⁵⁹ (Rilindja 23 November 1968). Albanian history was observed as an undesirable subject and “the ultimate sin that can lead to disturbing ideas” (Përparimi. 1967. Number 11-12, p1269).

Meanwhile, on the political front, there were always people who believed that the Party would use the Marxist argument that national tensions would disappear when the economic grounds for them were eliminated. However, such a concept appeared utopian, for the real situation proved otherwise. In fact, the Croatian high official, Vladimir Bakarić, warned of the dangers of nationalism in spring 1966. He said that “nationalism will become the country’s number one issue if the battle for reform is not won soon” (Rusinow. D. 1977. p245).

Such a warning echoed feelings that already prevailed in political circles, that the “centre of resistance against reforms was in Serbia, and that nationalistic showings in that republic were developing for some time” (Komunisti. 5 March. 1966). Therefore, the source of discontent was the issue tied inextricably with political order. If Kosova was equal, as the constitutional arrangements made it look, and if the nationalities were equal, why then was the territory not a republic?

1965, refer to the part titled: Great strides are made to find jobs for the people).

⁵⁹ The issue here is with ‘over emphasizing’ the history of Albanians as an ethnic minority in Yugoslavia (or any other minorities for that matter), because it would have been unimaginable to prevent Serb, Croat, or Slovene history for example from being emphasised, since they were nations, and their political entities

Alongside the national issue, there were calls for further liberalisation. During the 1960s, the federal executive council amidst intense political debate approved a proposal for a special fund to help the underdeveloped regions. This was to alleviate poverty and realise “the true meaning of Yugoslavia” (Rilindja 16 June 1967). The debate was between two interest groups, those who were eager to receive funds, and those who were unwilling to provide funds. As always, the federal centre thought that such a fund was about “the necessary methods of achieving an equal Yugoslavia, where all her citizens would feel socially, politically, culturally, and economically equal” (Borba. 11 April 1966).⁶⁰ As Ymer Pula put it, the debate was also “about showing to every citizen and peasant of our country that the hand of the state is there and it will be felt... It is about strengthening the bond between nations and nationalities, and it is a perfect example of fully exercising brotherhood and unity”. (Rilindja. 23 September 1966).⁶¹

On the other hand, opponents of the fund argued that “the federal institutions can aid the development of federal units, but not finance it” (www.arhiv.sv.gov.yu⁶²), and that “vested money should remain in the vested interest of the each federal unit” (Ibid⁶³).

Nevertheless, more pragmatic voices were heard. The Slovenian member of the Yugoslav assembly, Vinko Hafner, aware of the economic backwardness in the southern regions, complained about: a two-tier system. It cannot be allowed because we live in a socialist

represented a vital cog in the existence of the federation.

⁶⁰ Veliki razvojni projekat da se rastvori. (A great developmental project to come to life)

⁶¹ Nga fjalimi i shokut Ymer Pula para Komitetit Krahinuer. (From the speech by comrade Ymer Pula before the provincial council. 23 September 1966)

⁶² Rudolf Zajc. Addressing the Parliament of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia. 12 April 1965.

state...We are not America where in New York some eat with the golden spoon, while in Chicago some die of hunger...Development of each federal unit is a duty, and as such it should be supported. (Borba.14.04. 1963⁶⁴).

Here it is worth noting Serbia's precarious position. The republic on one hand was a contributor to the fund, whilst on the other it was also a benefactor. Being a benefactor was a positive step for the Serb government. Apart from having to deal with large problems of developing the southern part of Serbia, sometimes the republic had to subsidise the badly performing enterprises in Kosova. Serbia was also often placed in a difficult position when asked to help with the economic recovery of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro, where the Serbian populace constituted about 38% in the former and in the latter case about 27% of the population. With the development fund, the burden was to fall upon all four developed regions (Đaković S. 1984, p53).

Despite contradictions, the fund was approved. Its primary aim was to help economic activity in Kosova, Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina, representing the least-developed units of the federation. This action by the federal institutions undoubtedly shows a better awareness of the situation. Four other considerably more developed regions of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia and Vojvodina were to contribute 1.85% of their gross domestic product annually to the fund. This shows that despite the many arguments about vast amounts of money going from north to south that was not really the

⁶³ Laszlo Horg, Vojvodina's Provincial secretary for investments and infrastructure. 27 April 1965

case. In the period between 1945 and 1990, Kosova received roughly 3% of the annual federal investment funds from the federal authorities (Verli. M. 2007. p307-8).

However, the opposition made Croatia and Slovenia look as if they were resisting the development of other less fortunate regions. This, along with the problem of national question, made Croats the first nation to voice concerns about the internal structure of the party and the state. By 1967, they were urging more meaningful decentralisation and democratisation not just in state power but in political authority too. Such demands were seen from two conflicting perspectives. The first current argued that giving in to such demands would only weaken the state, which in time would present a problem with dire consequences for the system. The second current, from the party membership (not only supporters from Croatia, but also a handful of other liberal-minded individuals in other regional capitals including Belgrade and Prishtina), argued that further decentralisation of power would loosen the difficult situation that the country faced. The latter group was more in tune with reality, for in Yugoslavia lack of investment, mismanagement of the economy, and high levels of corruption had produced an 8% annual increase in the index for the cost of living by the end of 1968 compared to the previous year.⁶⁵ The balance of payments grew to \$434 million during the same year, and the number of unemployed leaving the country for jobs abroad increased to 22% of the total work force (Rusinow. D 1977. p251). In Kosova, for example, annual accounts on earning per head of population

⁶⁴ Vinko Hafner Uticaj federacije treba da se oseti. (The effect of the federation must be felt)

⁶⁵ Dragoslav Avramović. Suštinski govor o ekonomskom i monetarnom sistemu bivše SFRJ. "Ekonomski Institut" Belgrade February. 1996. (Dragoslav Avramovic. General debate on economic and monetary system of the former SFRY. The Economy Institute. Belgrade)

were only a third of the average earnings in Serbia (Lalaj A 2000, p315).

The stagnant federal administration was in charge of the turnover and capital taxes, as well as large bank investment funds, and that meant a real paralysis of the state funds since these banks did not want to issue money for appropriate use (www.szp.org.yu).⁶⁶

To resolve the deadlock, the central committee of the Yugoslav Communist party called the party plenum on 26 February 1966, followed by another one on 11 March, since the previous one had not managed to reach conclusions. The stagnant position continued, but Tito decided to break the deadlock. He called the fourth plenum at the holiday retreat island of Brioni on the Adriatic coast. All the delegates were ready to meet Tito, as the ‘Sun King was summoning his barons to his court’ (Rusinow. D. 1977, p259). The result was cautious reforms and dismissal of Ranković. He had allegedly ordered the bugging of homes and offices of high communist officials including even Tito.⁶⁷ In better times, Ranković had been a professional revolutionary apparatchik, held in high esteem not only by Tito but also by other Yugoslav leaders because of his workers background. He was

⁶⁶ Economic decisions were no longer to be made according to political criteria by party bureaucrats, but according to market criteria, and Tito himself openly dismissed ‘propaganda work’, the mainstay of many party workers, and stressed instead the need for technical knowledge and ‘detailed understanding’ of economics and management. (Speech at fifth plenum of LCY CC, Borba, October 6, 1966, p. 2.)

⁶⁷ In one of his memoirs Edvard Kardelj the Slovene deputy to Tito had recalled an occasion when Tito, Ranković and himself were strolling freely on the Belgrade’s Terazije Boulevard. Not long ago the Montenegrin dissident Milovan Djilas had published a scathing attack in a foreign newspaper on the “culture of wealth gathering and materialism” of wives of the high ranking party officials. Trying to give a meaning as to why Djilas had provoked such a situation, Tito talked about what they should do to render the situation for the better. While he was expressing his political positions, Ranković warns him: let’s not talk about this here please. Kardelj explained that both Tito and he himself gained the impression that even the streets were bugged. (files.osa.ceu.hu/holdings/300/8/3/text/86-3-147.shtml.

even seen as the natural replacement for Tito. In his policy implementation, Ranković had fallen into the ‘ethical trap’ of the revolution, because he was unable to determine for how long and to what extent ‘revolutionary violence’ should be used.

Ranković’s departure was a consequence not only of the bugging scandal, but also of his position at the forefront of the group that persisted in centralisation. They argued that, “if power rests in the hands of few, then problems are more manageable because decision for any action is possible faster”.

Such claims represented a serious hurdle for the decentralising forces, who were finally convinced that change must occur if the state and party were to start moving again. In the Yugoslav political dogma, the ‘key concept’ was used, which determined the distribution of certain positions by ethnic identity according to the proportion of each group in the individual unit’s population. A demand for further centralisation was a direct threat to smaller nations of the federation that feared the spread of Serbian hegemony.

Kosova also had its arguments. Ranković’s removal had ended what Slobodan Stanković calls ‘the Stalinist behaviour’⁶⁸ illustrated in his dealings with Albanians, whom he treated in the same cruel manner that Stalin did some of the national minorities in the Soviet Union. His dismissal finally ended the massive wave of Albanian deportations to Turkey (Islami H.1990, p159-64).

With Tito's support, reformists in the Yugoslav party leadership began a radical

⁶⁸ Aleksandar Ranković-Political Profile of A Yugoslav "Stalinist" by Slobodan Stanković Open Society archives. (<http://files.osa.ceu.hu/holdings/300/8/3/text/86-3-147.shtml>)

restructuring of the Yugoslav political and economic system. At the micro level, the 1965 reform was a direct attack on party bureaucrats in enterprises, as well as those in local administrative positions (Borba, October 6, 1966).⁶⁹ The reforms also involved a loosening of party control over society, including some tolerance towards more open expression of national sentiment. Political reform came in the shape of a radical restructuring of party relations at the local level, with the goal of undermining the position of the conservative party bureaucrats by bringing rank-and- file party members into the decision-making, dismantling the institutional bases of bureaucratic power at the local level, including the local and regional party organizations.⁷⁰

At the macro level, reform decentralized the federation. Almost all decision-making was given to the republics. This allowed the leadership to bypass the conservatives who dominated the central bureaucracy and to rely instead upon the republic-level leaders and central committees, composed of younger reformists.

For these dogmatic and ideological reasons, many groups of dissatisfied communists felt that true Marxism was becoming defunct in Yugoslavia, hence a period of relative instability followed, manifested with open demonstrations.

The first of those occurred during 1963, when new amendments were added to the federal constitution. The changes of that year expanded the concept of self-management beyond

⁶⁹ Nova strategija razvoja utiče na razvoj društva u celini. (New development strategy, contributes in the development of the entire society)

⁷⁰ Keshilli Ekzekutiv Krahinuer 25/12/1966. Dosja vjetore e punes. (The provincial executive council. Annual dossier. 25.12.1966.)

the economic sphere into social activity.⁷¹ This was achieved by creating local councils for education and culture, social welfare, public health and political administration. The composition of the Federal Assembly was altered, simultaneously holding office in the party and government was outlawed (except for Tito), and government tenure was limited and dispersed accordingly by the introduction of a regular rotation system.

The constitutional status of Kosova was upgraded from a region to a province, which was more than simple geographical symbolism. However, Kosova remained authoritatively part of the Republic of Serbia (Wilson. D. 1979, p24). This significant step was politically and constitutionally important for Yugoslavia, Serbia and Kosova. First of all, Yugoslavia was made a political unit organised with republican and provincial statuses where Kosova (not in reality, but at least on paper) was equal with Vojvodina, thus dismantling the existing three-tier system of republics, province and region. To Serbia, Kosova's upgrade represented a higher political form and one that required greater autonomy and decentralisation. For Kosova, it was important not only to be made equal with Vojvodina, but also because many believed that this paved the road for the next natural step of Kosova becoming a republic (Rilindja 19.03.1964).⁷²

Demands by conservative forces were strong. They believed that 'too much too soon' was happening, even though the political status of Kosova was reduced to its bare minimum (Wolff S. 2006, p63). From the perspective of political developments, such actions were achieved by separating Kosova and Vojvodina almost entirely from the

⁷¹ Economic self-management had been introduced during the 1950s as a counter-offensive to Soviet economic planning, by which the workers of the enterprises were allegedly given a say in the running of their company.

⁷² Pa barazi ska vetvendosje. (Without equality there is no self determination)

political framework of Yugoslavia, pushing them towards Serbia with only superficial association to the federation. The only true federal institution in Yugoslavia with which Kosova and Vojvodina were equal was the CPY. These changes “brought Kosova to virtually a near-colonial dependency, ruled, neglected and exploited by Serbia” (Rusinow . D. 1980. p13).

Regarding these changes, Radosin Rajović argues that: “decentralisation was the word, despite strong objections from conservative forces...the experiment that opted to make Yugoslavia more flexible was only to include republics of the federation... Kosova nonetheless got her bit of the constitutional change... for the first time it was to be called a province” (Rajović R. 1985 p 71-6).

Between 1964 and 1967, the federal assembly reduced the role of the state in economic management and created the legislative foundation of market socialism. Reform also included external trade measures: Yugoslavia devalued its currency, obtained foreign loans, and joined the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. The period immediately following this set of reforms brought stagnation: rising unemployment, price increases, illiquidity, and increases in income disparity. Many Yugoslav workers sought employment by emigrating to Western Europe. Leaders in Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia and elsewhere scrambled to stave off efforts to close unprofitable enterprises in their areas. Political elites at all levels enjoyed perks of the system, for it allowed them access to stylish new apartments, better jobs, vacation sites and other major benefits (Cohen. L. 1989. p15). On a few occasions, as was the case with Xhavit Nimani, a member of Kosova’s CC of the communist party, voices were raised about “the interesting models of living provided by some of the comrades of the party” (Rilindja 19

June 1965).⁷³ This justifies Slavenka Drakulić's concept of feudal communism, used in her book *Café Europa. Life after Communism*. She argues that the leading class of the communist elite at central and local level created nearly aristocratic living conditions for themselves and their families, while the rest of the people, namely the working class, lived below minimum standards. Such a phenomenon very much resembled the bourgeois that the communists were supposed to fight, hence the name feudal communism.

At the beginning of 1968, attention moved back to foreign policy. Student unrest subsided, and Yugoslav-Soviet relations again sagged after the Warsaw Pact invaded Czechoslovakia in August. Tito had travelled to Prague before the invasion to lend support to Alexander Dubcek's program of 'socialism with a human face'. The Yugoslavs warned that they would resist a Soviet invasion, and Tito established a civil defence organization capable of mobilizing the country in such an event.

In Kosova, meanwhile, the provincial executive council at the end of 1966 had produced its annual report about the performance of the state and the economy. "Temporality is an organ of sight" (Sartre J.P 1943, p228). The document talks about things that had not been done and that should be done. With a subdued tone, the council provides a catalogue of failures, misjudgements, errors and difficulties that the province was facing. It was the first time that a general agreement existed amongst all the members of the council on

⁷³ Shoku Xhavit Nimani ngriti disa shqetesime politike e praktike. (Comrade Xhavit Nimani raises some political and practical concerns)

slow development.⁷⁴ Even more significantly, it was the first auto-critique of those state organs. Consequently, during his first visit to Kosova in March 1967, Tito criticised the mismanagement of the economy, welfare and social provisions and ethnic and community relations. His long speech, addressed to the deputies of the provisional assembly, started with the words, “What we see on the ground and what we hear from personal accounts, one cannot talk about equal rights in Kosova” (West. R. 1994. p342). His words were directed against over-representation of the Serb and Montenegrin minorities in most of the institutions of Kosova. While addressing a rally at the ‘Brotherhood and Unity’ square in Prishtina, Tito expressed the party line about the need to eliminate ethnic prejudices by saying: “It is a mistake to speak of national minorities... We in Yugoslavia must give an example, and that is not impossible... Majorities and minorities no, but workers and equal citizens”. (Komunisti. April 1967).⁷⁵ These remarks by the most important political authority in Yugoslavia, also the final arbiter, signalled changes towards a better situation in Kosova, as long as people were ready and willing to follow the party line.

Herbert Marcuse famously called on all fellow Marxist theorists “to place the art of politics at the service of social change”. Although, arguably many leaders were no longer followers of the Marxist cause, since the system of socialist self-management had strayed from the Communist Manifesto; if the principle ‘for the benefit of social change’ had been applied in Yugoslavia in general and in Kosova in particular at that time, things

⁷⁴ Keshilli Ekzekutiv Krahinuer 25/12/1966. Dosja vjetore e punes. (The provincial executive council. Annual dossier. 25.12.1966.)

⁷⁵ Shoku Tito ju drejtohet punëtorëve. (Comrade Tito addresses the workers).

would have moved towards a real positivism. Nevertheless, in a Machiavellian maxim ‘when reforms against repression begin, repression itself becomes less tolerable, for then people can see what the all-inclusive liberty really is’, so change was needed and it had to happen if not by political means, then by the way of demonstrations.

By 1968, the Albanian population in Kosova and western Macedonia (Albanians in Macedonia received worse treatment at the hands of Skopje authorities than Albanians in Kosova) (Glenny M 1996, p261), rose up in demonstrations. They protested against slow reforms aimed at them: “since the old conservatives had been removed, no real improvement was happening on the ground, at least for Albanians”.⁷⁶

But not only Albanians felt that way. Students from Belgrade University demonstrated against ‘materialistic tendencies of the regime’. Students from Skopje, Sarajevo and Zagreb universities soon joined them, using different methods in the process of affluence (North R.C. 1990, p31). Protests were now a problem for more than one federal unit.

In Kosova, students protested with demands different from those of their colleagues in other Universities of Yugoslavia. Their demands included a further loosening of the security activities that were encroaching freedom and liberalization of education in the Albanian language. The centre of political organisation was the Belgrade University

⁷⁶ Interview with Simon Kuzhnini. In order to bring an original account about such demonstrations ,the author of this project interviewed on 8 March 2007 Mr Simon Kuzhnini, who along with his brother Mikel, their friend Gjergj Camaj and half a dozen other students were the main organisers of demonstrations in the city of Prizren, as well as the personal account given to the Prishtina daily newspaper “Kosova Sot” on 1,2, 3, 4. & 5 December 2003 by Selatin Novosela, one of the organisers of demonstrations in Kosova’s capital Prishtina.

branch in Prishtina and higher schools of Kosova, where students and other activists prepared plans for action. Their conceptual approach to the problems in Kosova and other Albanian regions in Yugoslavia (by 1965, the Macedonian authorities had desecrated the Tetova city graveyard by building a road through it) (Pettifer. J.1999. p138) was manifested by pragmatic demands, which would guarantee the most basic human rights. They advocated free use of the Albanian national flag that was banned in Yugoslavia, Albanian self-determination, equal status in the federation, a supreme court for Kosova, Albanian as an official language in Yugoslavia, opening a university in Albanian language, the right to return to their homeland, and removal of the offensive noun Šiptari⁷⁷ used to refer to Albanians in the federal constitution. (Rilindja 19/11/1968).⁷⁸ In Prishtina, over eight thousand people joined the group of students who had started the peaceful march from the university campus to the provincial party headquarters (Zëri i Kosovës. 1988, p8).⁷⁹ In a short article that appeared on 30 November, and a longer one on 2 December 1968, the newspaper *Rilindja* reported that, “demonstrations in the streets of Kosova were organised by students, high school pupils and workers who chanted for political, social and economic improvement in the province”. The nationalistic protests in Prishtina were organised on 27 November 1968 to coincide with the 28 November national day of Albania and the 25th anniversary of the Jajce declaration. Apart from the capital, demonstrations were also held in Ferizaj, Gjiilan, Podujevë, Prizren and Pejë, while attempts blocked by the police before they happened

⁷⁷ The noun Šiptari was widely used as a name for Albanians in Yugoslavia. It is a mutilation of the Albanian language word Shqipëtar and is used with offensive dialectic similar to the word ‘Negro’

⁷⁸ Demonstrata politike në rrugët e Prishtinës. (Political demonstrations in the streets of Prishtina)

⁷⁹ Populli iu përgjigj thirrjeve studentore. (The people replied to students calling)

were reported in Gjakovë, Vuçitern, and Suharekë, amongst others. Similar demonstrations were organised in the city of Tetovë in Macedonia. Apart from exposing the Albanian national banner, demands for the union of all Albanian regions with Kosova in Yugoslavia were the loudest, which of course was particularly problematic, as it raised concern about a possible spillover of unrest into Macedonia.

Reaction by the security services was brutal, as predicted. Veli Deva, the head of the Provincial Communist Party, ordered “energetic steps against those who had dared to incite wrong-doing and national hatred” (*Rilindja*, 28 November 1968).⁸⁰

Professor Mark Krasniqi, the former chairman of Kosova’s Academy of Science and Arts, recalls that “because of the ferocity of police reaction and activity in the streets of Prishtina, there were profound fears that a massive catastrophe could take place” (*Zëri*, 26 January 1991).⁸¹ Such fears materialised on 30 November, when *Rilindja* reported “in yesterday’s protests, Murat Mehmeti, a teenager, was killed by a close-range bullet fired by the cordon of police in Prishtina’s Josip Broz Tito Street”.

Demonstrators were arrested and sentenced to years of imprisonment. According to *Tanjug*, the Yugoslav news agency, by 14 February 1969, 327 protestors were jailed in Prishtina, Podujevë and Prizren communes. Both Kuzhnini and Novosella (see footnote 79) suffered such fates. In fact, Novosella recalls that, within a few weeks of being transferred to serve his term at the Niš prison, he met over one hundred mainly young students that had participated in protests. Furthermore, since the state never published any official account of how many people were sentenced, and considering that some trials

⁸⁰ Nga mbledhja e jashtzakonshme e Komitetit Qendrorë të Lidjjes së Komunistëve të Kosovës. (Insert

continued for months, he assumes that there were many other young Albanians in other Yugoslav jails just as they were in Niš prison (Kosova Sot. 5 December 2003).⁸²

Demonstrations were labelled by officials as “dangerous, nationalistic and secessionist”.

They were lead by the National Forum, an underground nationalistic organisation of lecturers, intellectuals and progressive students wanting to further the national question of Albanians in Yugoslavia. The foreboding of the Albanian flag in Yugoslavia was the spark that triggered the events. This, along with the issues of the language, economic development, and security forces were the main demands by protestors.

The greatest achievement was the use during the demonstrations of the Albanian national flag without the star that Albania used. To them, this represented a spiritual national link.

With the slogan, “Under you I was born, under you I was reared, and with you I shall die”, the small groups of lecturers, students and high school pupils were soon joined by ordinary passers-by who even kissed the flag with emotion.⁸³

Inspiration for such actions was drawn from the 10 June 1878 meeting of the Prizren League, when demands of a similar nature by Albanian intellectuals of the time were presented to the world powers and the Sublime Port. These demands were of course of a nationalistic tendency, as they epitomised everything that the term ‘nationalism’ encompasses, i.e. the attitude that the members of a nation have when they care about their national identity and the actions that the members of a nation take when seeking to

from the extraordinary meeting of Kosova’s CC of the CP)

⁸¹ Kisha frikë për jeten e studentëve të mi. (I feared for the lives of my students)

⁸² 35 vjetori i demonstratave të vitit 1968. (35th anniversary of the 1968 demonstrations)

⁸³ Interview with Simon Kuzhnini.

achieve (or sustain) self-determination.

In fact, the protestors' actions raised questions about whether self-determination must be understood as having full statehood with complete authority over domestic and international affairs, or something less.

In viewing the situation created after the protests, it is easy to see that the Yugoslav authorities were very apprehensive about a possible involvement of the Soviet Army in redirecting their communism. Nonetheless, one cannot fail to notice that accusations addressed to some of the protesters, that they might have been manipulated by the Soviets, hold no strength, because none of the protestors (even those in older age groups) had ever visited the USSR. They were living in a part of Yugoslavia which to any foreigner looked abandoned and hopeless even in economic development, let alone in political matters. If the Soviets would have wanted to incite the situation, they would probably have started with the most obvious cases where dissatisfaction was present, not Kosova, which was the smallest and least-developed region of Yugoslavia. However, some of the demonstrators had aroused suspicion when calling for the establishment of 'true Marxism', which they believed was practiced in Albania.

Although the demonstrations that swept Kosova during 1968 failed to ensure the campaigners' demands for republican status, they nonetheless played a vital part in alerting the federal authorities to the seriousness of the situation, and this was followed by symbolic but psychologically important constitutional concessions. During his visit to the province in 1967, Tito was certainly made aware of the grievances of Albanians. With

his famous phrase at the Brotherhood and Unity square in Prishtina, “it is not right to have a situation like this...equality is guaranteed by the constitution and as such it should be implemented entirely”, he raised the hopes of Albanians for a consideration of their plight after a general trend of decentralisation had started. However, in hindsight Tito made such a speech simply so he could please the gathered crowd. He also bore a grudge against the Albanians, who in his judgment, by demonstrating openly on the streets, had nearly brought a full-on military and politic Soviet invasion of Yugoslavia, and had blackened his good name on the international stage, where he had boasted on many occasions that the national issue of the Yugoslav people was entirely resolved. In assessing the protests, and their importance, it is easy to notice that the number of people who took part in them is not so substantial; in fact, relative to the number of the population⁸⁴, the number of protesters appears rather small. But the significance is the fact that, for the first time in communist Yugoslavia, the surreal propaganda that everyone had a beautiful life, where rights and freedoms of all no matter what social stratum or nationality they belonged to, was deformed. The protests also showed that not everyone agreed with the official line of state and party.

The following political remarks, in line with the main argument of this thesis, show conclusively that debate in Yugoslavia was fairly uncensored and even encouraged. In response to demonstrations, the fairly liberal-minded Marko Nikezić, president of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Serbia, declared that recent leniency

⁸⁴Prishtina by 1970 had registered over 150,000 or Prizren over 74,000 people

had increased the appetite of Albanian nationalists (Borba. 2 December. 1968).⁸⁵

To this situation, the highest political authority in the country added his voice. Reacting to the slogans for Albanian unification, Tito declared, “the objective of the demonstrators was to threaten and endanger Yugoslavia’s territorial integrity” (Rilindja. 13 June. 1969).⁸⁶ Such an outburst by Tito was an overreaction, considering the fact that there were at most twenty thousand protestors in the streets of Kosova, which meant that only about 2.7% of the population in the province had rebelled, thus the number of protestors was not detrimental. Also considering the powerful security service and army that he had built, those unarmed people in the streets of Kosova did not present any serious threat. From trans-border interest, such protests were a powerful awakening for the ideological concept of self-management, for the vast majority of the protestors were openly advocating a different brand of communism, one based on universal values of the international proletariat that Lenin professed, Stalin invoked, and Enver Hoxha lamented in Albania - the so-called true Marxism Leninism.

For the first time, the citizens of Yugoslavia were witnessing something that they had been led to believe could never have happened. The state and party propaganda had tried to convince people that the ‘federal society’ had no quarrels, no problems or open questions, and that everything was smooth and well under brotherhood and unity. Yet, these demonstrations held in Kosova, which seemed irrelevant to many people in other parts of Yugoslavia, were small but very daring. They directly challenged the political

⁸⁵ Situation In Kosovo Remains Tense And Complex. Radio Free Europe. Background Report /232

establishment and proved that something very different was going on, something that people were talking about in private but were not yet ready to express openly. They all knew that Yugoslavia as a system was stagnating and had no other choice but to change in political and constitutional terms.

Using the expansion of the provinces' autonomy (Rilindja 27 August 1968⁸⁷) and following the Brioni plenum conclusions, various groups began to organize discussion meetings across Yugoslavia. Noticing the changing climate, such meetings were to become very important for those who were hoping to air their views about the changes to the political order. Meetings in Croatia and Slovenia, for example, had almost one common theme: they argued for further financial decentralization of the federation. Debates in Vojvodina centred on the issue of maize, sunflower and sugar cane production, since the province was considered the breadbasket of Yugoslavia. In Montenegro, economic development of the impoverished north and extension of tourist packages were amongst the issues discussed. In Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia, the discussion was about domination or subordination of various ethnic groups, coupled with economic demands, particularly in Macedonia, where arguments were aired about increasing the production of electricity threefold to gain independence from Serbia's and Kosova's power plants (Borba. 14 September 1968).⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Praxis. Belgrade . April Issue. 1969

⁸⁷ Zyrtarët Serb e Kosovarë shqyrtojnë problemet në Kosovë. (Serbian and Kosovar officials examine Kosovo's problems)

⁸⁸ Pelisterski komunisti zalažu se za više nadležnosti u proizvodnje struje (The Pelister communists argue for more competences in electricity production.)

After debating delicate issues in other federal units, Kosova also organized such meetings. The first was held on 18 and 20 August 1968 in the city of Gjakovë. Incredibly daring demands voiced there were echoed in meetings organised subsequently in other towns of Kosova such as Pejë, Gjiilan, Podujevë, Lipjan, Glllogovc, Prizren, Mitrovicë e Titos, Viti and Deçan. The participants embraced the need “that the federal constitution should by law guarantee the right for self-determination for Albanians as it had done for other nations of Yugoslavia” (Radio Belgrade. 17 July 1968).⁸⁹

Demands by ordinary citizens, local activists of the Communist Party, the Socialist League of the Working People, the Law and Economy chambers of Kosova, as well as delegates to the provincial, republican and federal governments were: for Kosova to be a fully fledged federal unit, i.e. a republic; that the core law in the province should no longer be the provincial status but the constitution of Kosova; that the use of national symbols in Kosova should not only be free, but should be official and transparent for all constituent ethnic groups; that Kosova should have its supreme court and other necessary courts at provincial level to deal with internal legal matters; that equality of languages should be sanctioned by law and present discriminatory practices towards the Albanian language should cease to exist; that by law all the citizens who had left Yugoslavia before and after the Second World War should have the right to return;⁹⁰ that the security service

⁸⁹ The highschool teacher Anton Marku addresses the meeting at Prizren house of culture. Quoted in ‘Rilindja’ a day later.

⁹⁰ Before and after the Second World War , with encouragement and harassment from the state, a considerable number of the Albanian population in Yugoslavia had left their birthplaces and emigrated to Turkey and Albania. Unlike members of other nationalities, Albanians had no right to return to their home country. A federal law passed in 1956 prohibited the return of people who had left under the assumption

should be made accessible to all the nationalities in order to stop selective persecutions of Albanians; that economic development and urbanisation should be organised so that the majority of the people could benefit; and that the health service should be extended beyond the city and town centres (Rilindja. 19 August 1968).⁹¹

Serbs also organised meetings of their own where they discussed such sensitive issues. At a meeting held in Zubin Potok, where Serbs were a majority, they called for regionalisation of Serbia with Kosmet as one of the component regions, for a brand new draft of the constitution of Serbia, and even for reconsideration of Kosova's political framework in Serbia (Jedinstvo 1 September 1968).⁹² Serbs described participants of meetings held in Albanian-dominated cities of Kosova as 'nationalists', 'chauvinists', 'Albanofiles', and agents of the fifth column (Politika 22 September 1968 & Rilindja 24 September.1968). A few went even further by threatening 'severe disciplinary actions' (Rilindja. 17 Septembar 1968).⁹³ On this issue, Raif Dizdarević⁹⁴ argues that: The remnants of conservative bureaucratic and nationalistic forces in Serbia have never

that such an action would upset relations with Turkey.

⁹¹ Pa vetëvendosje ska barabarësi. (Without self determination there is no equality)

⁹² Drug Veljko Pandurović o reacionarne glasove poslednjih dana u Kosmetu. (Comrade Veljko Pandurović on reactionary voices hurled in Kosmet)

⁹³ Të mbajnë gojen ose të denohen. (Be careful or face prison)

⁹⁴ Raif Dizdarević is a Yugoslav politician of Bosniak ethnicity. During World War II he participated in the armed resistance as a Partisan. After the war, as a member of the Communist Party and collaborator of Josip Broz Tito, he was elevated into high political functions; diplomat, serving on embassies in Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union and Bulgaria, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chairman of Federal Assembly, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia and in 1988 – 1989 session Chairman of the Collective Presidency of Yugoslavia

accepted the policy of full equality of Albanians and a stronger position of the provinces in the federation. Part of the Serbian leadership, has always had a unitaristic tendency for a centralised Serbia. Thus in fact the autonomy of Kosova and Vojvodina was understood formally rather than factually by them. (www. rferl.org)⁹⁵

However, such voices were rebuked by Kosova's officials, supported by Tito who, after dismissing Ranković, was certain that Serbian nationalists had been weakened, particularly since even in Serbia some people wanted decentralisation. In this context, Fadil Hoxha warned that “we will not allow anyone to destroy what we have built so far. Those who have chosen destructive missions are nothing but bureaucrats and chauvinists”. Hoxha argued that the expected constitutional changes were “for the development of the interests of the Serbs, Montenegrins, Turks, Roma etc”.

Hoxha also raises a difficult problem in the region that of introducing bi-lingual usage in administration, education, culture and so forth. Aside from technical complexities of this policy, there was overt and covert opposition to it mainly from Serbs and Montenegrins. Hoxha concludes that “Language is what makes an individual, and a nation, and as such it must be respected, and perspective must be cultivated through revolutionary socialist patriotism, but we must avoid glorification and illusions” (www.rferl.org).⁹⁶

The Communist Party had no official line on the use of the Albanian language, and

⁹⁵ Refer to the interview ‘Velika prevara’ by Raif Dizdarević.

http://www2.slobodnaevropa.org/svjedoci/html/Raif_Dizdarevic.html

⁹⁶ Refer to Fadil Hoxha's speech: Internationalism is the most powerful weapon against chauvinism and nationalism. 18.05.1981.

everything related to it was encompassed in the rights of the minorities. The Albanian language never held a primary position or exposure in Kosova, and it was always used in the context of Albanian nationality as a whole.⁹⁷

Meanwhile, Miško Sekulović, Chairman of the Commission of the Regional Committee for ideological problems in culture, education and science, claimed that:

Up to the Brioni Plenum, the cultural policy for various nationality groups in this region suffered greatly under the harmful influences of etatism and bureaucratism. Their by-products, integration and great-Serbian chauvinism, have negatively affected the Albanian and Turkish cultures. Albanian language and culture must be advanced and respected, not tolerated as some are suggesting.⁹⁸

The issues put forward for discussion during this period are of a very complicated nature, but the fact that they were presented in a new manner was a positive development that pertained to other problems of the province.

However, not everyone was of the same opinion. In a lengthy editorial published by the journal *Praxis*, Velimir Rančić, a Kosovan Serb head teacher of a secondary school in Eastern Kosova, and a member of the provincial assembly, markedly asserts what he calls, “the open instrumentalisation of society in the province. Serbs are asked to stay as

⁹⁷ Ecejaket e gjuhes Shqipe. (The developments of the Albanian language. Novelist Anton Pashku . Bouletine of the “Migjeni” Society. Ljubljana . March edition 1992

⁹⁸ Plenumi I 12të i Lidhjes së Komunisteve të Kosovë e Metohisë shqyrton qështjet rreth kulturës. (The 12th Plenum of the Kosova-Metohia League of Communists deals with the Issue of "Culture". Rilindja. Prishtina 20.11.1967.)

passers by in the great surge of Albanisation, and observe our Negros outreaching us”⁹⁹”

It is very interesting to notice that such declarations were ignored by the regime, which turned them latterly into a kind of dissident stance against Yugoslav communism and live ammunition for conservative and nationalist sentiment.

The party session of the Serbian LC, held in May 1968, directly dealt with the issues concerning Kosova, further decentralisation of the federation, and Serbia’s position within the common state. Some of the members of the session “actively tried to create rather than respond to threats to Serbs, by purposefully provoking tensions along ethnic lines” (The Washington Post. 24 August 1992, p1).

As in most cases, there were two groups with different points of view. They argued about how far decentralisation must occur in Kosova and how much authority Serbia should command from Yugoslavia. During the prolonged session, many delegates “expressed their fears of observing Kosmet move towards consolidation of ethnic Albanian identity”. Power, they argued, “is resting in the hands of dangerous individuals who, hiding behind the claim that Kosmet doesn’t have a republican authority, are venturing to forge a society where Albanians are the dominant factor” (Ćosić D 2000, p 134-137).

However, conservative and orthodox thinkers were in the minority, because many delegates felt the need for devolution. The minutes of the session show in the archival material that more rational voices argued, “that decentralisation must happen, because it

⁹⁹ ‘Praxis’. Belgrade . April Issue. 1969

will benefit the whole country”. Đurica Jojkić, the prime minister of Serbia, argued for: decentralisation as a means of achieving, economic, social, political and ethnic equality...Some of the comrades here argued for decentralisation towards municipalities, which is good enough, but Kosmet and Vojvodina must have some kind of political framework whereby the social, economic and cultural rights of the nations and nationalities there can be materialised. I do not see the need as to why the Serbian assembly must be consulted when a new rural road is about to be asphalted in Kosova or Banat, let them deal with such small trivia (www.arhiv.sv.gov.yu).¹⁰⁰

A speech by Prvoslav Knežević, a former partisan of the famous Kozara battle¹⁰¹ and a deputy to the federal assembly from Serbia, was of similar nature. He argued that, “based on the values of our joint struggle for liberation...we should all share the same rights and freedoms...Kosmet is no exception” (www.arhiv.sv.gov.yu).¹⁰² The Albanian representative, physicist Gani Efendia, argued that, “It is time for change. No civilised society can function if it lives in the past. Kosmet must enjoy the same rights as the Yugoslav constitution guarantees” (www.arhiv.sv.gov.yu).¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Drug Đurica Jojkić o domaćim zbivanjima. (Comrade Đurica Jojkić discusses internal developments)

PcT 117-8-9

¹⁰¹ The Battle of Kozara was fought in 1942 on and around the mountain of Kozara in north-western Bosnia. It was an important battle of the Yugoslav partisan resistance movement in World War II. It later became an integral part of Yugoslav post-war mythology, which celebrated the courage and martyrdom of outnumbered and outgunned partisans and civilians.

¹⁰² Ljudi ujedinjeni oko centralizacije se ne predaju lako. (Those united around centralisation don't give up easily) PcT. 1-16.17-20. 30.05.1968.

¹⁰³ Drug Gani Efendija pervenstveno predstavlja Kosmetske probleme. Comrade (Gani Efendija primarily represents the problems of Kosmet). PcT. 39-44-50. 30.05.1968.

As a reaction to such meetings and with feedback taken from them, the provincial authorities formed a fifteen-member council to deal with proposals for the federal constitution. It was led by Fadil Hoxha, the chairman of the Provincial Parliament, and a member of the federal Central Committee. The committee presented the final draft on 25 September 1968, where the first demand directed to the federal authorities was that the new constitution of Yugoslavia, “should express openly the historical genesis of Kosova’s autonomy” (Rilindja 27 September 1968).¹⁰⁴ The proposals presented Kosova as a political, social and territorial community, a historic reality, which according to its national basis, had been confirmed as a political entity during the Anti-fascist National Liberation War.¹⁰⁵ In terms of internal organisation, the committee argued for a greater role by Kosova in the development of economic, foreign, defence and security policies.¹⁰⁶ Rrezak Shala, Kosova’s prosecutor general, even questioned, “was Kosova created to cater for the needs of all nationalities or the minority population for whom the provincial administration was originally created?” (Rilindja 8 November 1968).¹⁰⁷

This air of optimism was cut short at a meeting with the highest authorities from Kosova, at Karadordevo¹⁰⁸, Tito conclusively declared that a republic would not solve problems

¹⁰⁴ Fadil Hoxha. *Jemi në shtëpinë tone*. (We are at our home) Prishtinë 1986. p160

¹⁰⁵ Xhafer Vokshi. *Disa kujtime nga bashkëpunimi me Fadil Hoxhen*. (Xhafer Vokshi. Few memories from collaboration with Fadil Hoxha.) Quoted in (Fadil Hoxha një jetë në shërbim të atdheut {Fadil Hoxha a life dedicated to fatherland} compiled by The Society of Kosova’s Veterans of the National Liberation War. Prishtina 2007)

¹⁰⁶ Fadil Hoxha’s political writings

¹⁰⁷ *Konstatimet nga mbledhja e Lidhjes së Komunistëve të Kosovës*. (Conclusions from the meeting of the Communist League of Kosova)

¹⁰⁸ Karadordevo, a village in Vojvodina that Tito used as an office and retreat. Famous for colonies of goose and wild moose that Tito made a sport shooting.

for Kosova (Rilindja. 4 November 1968).¹⁰⁹ It was a bitter pill for the Albanian political elite. Nonetheless, it was a premeditated move by Tito considering that, if Kosova had equal status with Serbia, the dissatisfaction amongst Serbs would have been enormous. Besides, Tito and Kardelj deemed the current political framework to be working well in the distribution of power.¹¹⁰

Furthermore, creating another republic in the federation would have required a constitutional overhaul, and it would have prompted a negative reaction by the Albanians in other parts of Yugoslavia, who were only in the border regions of Kosova and considered themselves a natural extension of Albanian northern territories.

A massive problem here was that border redefinition was not exclusive to Kosova. Other federal units had parts of their nations outside their borders. In addition, what would have been the reaction of the other federal units after another region was made equal to them, since the increase of one group's security is at the same time perceived as a threat by other actors? (Wolf S. 2006, p76). And finally, in Vojvodina, would they also call for their province to become a republic?

Tito presented himself as the fearless leader¹¹¹ and "sided with Serb national interests in

¹⁰⁹ Shoku Tito paraqiti çendrimet e veta. (Comrade Tito presented his standings)

¹¹⁰ Tito and Kardelj believed that the existence of six centres and two semi-centres of power with the ultimate centre resting at the federal level was a progressive way of arranging the federal structure, because none of the units could outdo one another, at least when two thirds of the votes needed for fundamental political changes were concerned.. Muhamed Kešetović. Kontrarevolucija na Kosovu pokušaj i sprječavanje: Politčki esej p9-11. (Counterrevolution in Kosova ways to prevent it.). (Beograd , 1984)

¹¹¹ During a state visit to the Federal Republic of Germany in 1974, Tito caused much controversy with an answer given at Bonn International Airport. His visit coincided with the finals of the European football championship to be organised in Yugoslavia that year. Two years before, West Germany had won the

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the rows about economy, tourism and Kosova” (Tanner.M. 1997, p188). He favoured a Kosova within Serbia for political reasons, since he needed support from the Serbs on consolidating his authority, thus he ‘gifted them Kosova’.¹¹²

There is no evidence to suggest that Tito acted against Kosova’s interest because he was a Slav. However, it remains unexplained that even if he had acted in concordance with the Albanian wishes for republican status, why did he fear that Kosova, geographically the smallest unit of the federation, and economically the weakest, would become a factor in the internal politics of Yugoslavia?

Regarding such an idea, David Lake and Donald Rothchild argue that the “fundamental causes of ethnic friction/conflict are strategic interactions between and within groups themselves” (Lake D.A. & Rothchild D. 1998, p8). If they fail, then the fear factor takes hold and distrust plagues the political process. Nevertheless, there is also another school of thought, which argues that, “only a true and proper functioning national union can make a viable multinational union” (Maximilian H.1995, 41-2). With hindsight, Maximilian’s idea is very intriguing. One can only fantasize about a Yugoslavia where all nations lived in their own units, without significant minorities in them, and equal to one another. In such a case, would the terrible wars of the 1990s have ever happened, and would the destruction of Yugoslavia have ever occurred?

World Cup and was one of the favorites for the tournament. Tito was asked by journalists if Yugoslavia were to play in the final against Germany will they win the game and consequently the whole tournament? Tito replied “sure we can win against Germany, we defeated them in the war, we can also defeat them on the pitch”. (Tito’s home page. <http://www.titoville.com/speeches-mp3.html>)

¹¹² Vladimir Gligorov: at “A Tribune of political and ethnic activism in Yugoslavia ” Skopje . 16.12.2006

After that meeting with Tito, the Kosova officials immediately changed their tune to coincide with the words of their mentor. Speaking at the provincial parliament, Fadil Hoxha declared, “at this moment we are not oriented for a republic, the current political framework of the province is functioning appropriately”. In an almost prophetic remark while stipulating the official stand of the KCP for further devolution within the autonomous status, Hoxha exclaimed that “when political changes next happen, we will raise the debate: since autonomous provinces are entities which develop accordingly as other republics do”. Hoxha subsequently modified his opinion to follow the popular tide: “we were not imposed on Serbia ...we are associated with Serbia for the benefit of both nations. Provinces can’t be isolated from the process of political change for they too are territorial entities created during the National Antifascist Liberation War”.¹¹³

The belief amongst high-ranking communist officials was that problems about the union should not come from Kosova, and that the province, because of its complex mixture of politics, history and culture, should not be exposed to anything traumatic, which Serb and Albanian nationalists could do easily. (Ibid)

Taken from this perspective, nothing can explain the cold shoulder given to such demands by a people who after all were part of Yugoslavia and who had taken the courage to protest exactly because of the unfair treatment, The level of devolution that Kosova registered with 1968-9 changes was superficial, considering for example the fact that Slovaks or Russians of Vojvodina were allowed to use their national banner (Vukas

¹¹³ Professor Fatmir Fehmiu, p 65, in Fadil Hoxha compelations.

B. 1978, p 31), even though their number was far smaller than Albanians. However, if the 1968-69 constitutional changes had been as comprehensive as those of 1974, then criticising Tito would have been a sin. Such changes were far-reaching and wide, even though they did not bring Kosova the status of a republic.

Indeed, all the party leaderships, including the Serbian, enthusiastically supported this decentralization. By the summer of 1971, there was also discussion of decentralizing the party, a topic that was addressed at a party meeting in November 1971 (Bilandžić D. 1979, p427). If undertaken, the effect would have been to institutionalize reformism in each republic, remove all power from the conservatives who dominated the centre, and reduce the possibility of a conservative comeback.

The goal of the reforms had been in part to broaden the legitimacy of the communist party by building a base amongst the wider population.¹¹⁴ This meant, however, that conservatives were faced with leaders who could mobilize the population in support of irreversible radical changes in the structure of power.

Facing considerable political frictions, Tito decided to approve some concessions. The most important for Albanians was the free use of the Albanian flag and bilingual equality in the province. A handful of judicial and legislative rights, which alongside the existing powers gave the provincial courts a wide array of activity, were also promulgated, and both autonomous provinces gained direct representation in all five chambers of the federal assembly.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Konstatimet nga mbledhja e Lidhjes së Komunistë të Komunës së Ferizajit. (Conclusions from the meeting of the Ferizaj League of Communists). UR/F 31A. Archive of Kosova.

¹¹⁵ Chambers entitled: the Federal chamber for economics, the federal chamber for education and culture, 103

The autonomous provinces were now defined in constitutional and legal terms as socio-political communities.¹¹⁶ Kosova was given greater priority in the distribution of central economic funds, though the results of such acts were uneven, because of a tendency to concentrate economic activity in large towns. Kosova was also given the right to create its own central bank with limited power, since fiscal policy, money and interest rates were exclusive to the People's Bank of Yugoslavia.

The Supreme Court of Kosova was established with limited competences.

In 1970, a law ordered amalgamation of the faculties that Belgrade University had opened in Prishtina and created a bilingual (Serb and Albanian) University of Kosova.¹¹⁷

In a further psychological concession, the name of the province was changed simply to Kosova, removing *Metohija*¹¹⁸, a pejorative name for Albanians, from official use. In a similar category, the belittling and disparaging term *Šiptari*, which was also used offensively, was removed in favour of a more politically and grammatically correct Albanian, which after all was in use internationally.

The federal and provincial institutions were encouraged to take further steps to promote

the federal chamber for social and health policy and the federal chamber for socio-political issues, were divided so they could solve better problems of the each dedicated field.

¹¹⁶ Such term was also used to define the federation and six republics but never before the provinces.

¹¹⁷ The Yugoslav educational system had built in various cities all over the federation some college-type two-year-long schools, where a student could attend an undergraduate degree after finishing high school. Along with the University of Prishtina, seven such institutions were opened in the major cities of the province.

¹¹⁸ The term *Metohija* comes from the Greek word *metoh*, meaning church. *Metohija* implies that the land of that region is in the hands of the Serbian Orthodox Church and thus is offensive to Albanians. The name *Metohija* does not cover the entire Dukagjini plateau in the western Kosova, but only a small proportion of land in between the Deçan monastery and Serbian patriarkana at the city of Pejë.

the use of the Albanian language in public institutions, and publishing Albanian books and materials was to be increased, not only for academic use.

Along with the Serbo-Croatian Prishtina newspaper *Jedinstvo*, the only Albanian daily in Yugoslavia, *Rilindja*, was extended from eight to twelve pages a day.¹¹⁹ In the educational sphere, at the beginning of 1970-71 school year, Albanian-only secondary schools were allowed for the first time, and the school curriculum was revised in Kosova by the 'Committee of advisors in charge of education', which made teaching the Albanian language in all primary and secondary schools a norm. Literary and historical developments of the language and the nation were also included. Past periods of history, including the Albanian national renaissance movement¹²⁰, were now part of the curriculum. Albanian folklore started to become commercially available.¹²¹

Although all these prerogatives appear grandiose, they were not nearly enough to bring equality for Kosova in the federation. The political process that had started in 1945 had already accommodated the demands of other nations of Yugoslavia which, by the time

¹¹⁹ That allowed the newspaper (within the limited ideological scope) to tackle sharp problems which Kosova was facing, and promote various regional, cultural or national developments.

¹²⁰ The Albanian national renaissance movement began with the first book printed in the Albanian language, by Monsignor Gjon Buzuku in 1555, and ended at the beginning of the 20th century with literary realism. This period is the most important epoch of the national history, national culture and emancipation.

¹²¹ Kosova was also included in the 1970 general spatial and urbanisation planning of Yugoslavia, which meant that for the first time aerial photographs of urban and rural centres were to document the spread of population in the province. The small academic unit for research into the history and language of the Albanian people in Prishtina, the Albanological institute, shut down in 1950 after a brief stint of existence for allegedly being 'a nest of inflammatory and nationalistic ideas' was reopened at the end of 1968 (Meir. V. 1999. p131).

Albanians were calling for a republic, were calling for a confederation.

Precisely because there was only superficial constitutional change, and none of the federal units was satisfied with the 1968-9 amendments, the 1974 constitution occurred. Arguments about how far devolution should progress formed the main debates of that period. The content of such debates are the main themes of the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

CONSTITUTIONAL DEBATES AND REACTIONS IN AND ABOUT KOSOVA FROM 1968 TO 1974

The 1968 demonstrations epilogue in Kosova requires practical and careful consideration. In Yugoslavia, there was investment and development, but still not enough to satisfy the needs of all ordinary citizens.

Communism as a regime did not necessarily like free liberal thinking, which is effectively regulated by a political conception of justice (Rawls. J. 1996. p16), therefore only the official state and party line was discussed. There was considerable speculation with notions such as freedom, brotherhood and equality, but they were never applied in their true meaning as Marxist theorists explained them (Nikolov. N. 2004, p12). Hence, one must consider all these issues when debating the internal arguments in any given Communist society, not only Kosova or Yugoslavia.

Communists were not even realists. Realism is to insist that despite difficulties there must be something that needs to be done (Gellner. E. 1959. p180). The reason for this is that, by 1970, Yugoslavia was being suffocated by growing bureaucratisation of the economic system because of the fragmentation of the economy into many thousands of self-management units, each supported by its own brokers and technocrats. As a political, economic, and social order, self-management released some of the human potential in energies and initiatives (Lydall. H. 1989. p239), but it also slowly created a whole army of dependent workers. By the end of 1970, there were over two million self-management bureaucrats (Lane. A. 2004. p145), with a concentration of power and authority in the

hands of the few who ruled over their republics and provinces as their personal fiefdoms (Pavković .A.2000, p70).

Prior and especially after 1968, the subjects for whom the system was created – the working people – became ever more sceptical spectators in everything that was happening around them (Thompson. M. 1992. p38).

Despite an air of liberalism, investments in economy, and development in agro-industry, education, culture and infrastructure, Kosova was still a backward underdeveloped region, with the Albanian factor ‘facing negative treatment’ (www.rferl.org).¹²² Speaking in an interview for the Belgrade *Vreme* newspaper about his attitude and determination in persisting with political demands towards the Serbian and Yugoslav federal authorities, Adem Demaçi described the historic struggle of Albanians under Serbia and argued that “Albanians wanted nothing more than to be a free and self-ruled people within the federation”.¹²³ However, the wretched situation was not only happening because of their ethnic repression, it was also due to the fact that the communist ideology betrayed Albanians in Yugoslavia.

They were thrust into the amalgamated Yugoslavia, and since the beginning of communism in their region, they had been treated as second-class citizens, i.e. a nationality. Their disapproval of communism lacked substance and organic factorisation. Dissidents like Demaçi argued for the overhaul of communism and a return to true

¹²² Situation in Kosovo Remains Tense and Complex. Radio “Free Europe”. 232 Background report on Yugoslavia . (<http://files.osa.ceu.hu/holdings/300/8/3/text/85-2-18.shtml>)

¹²³ Refer to this web page: http://www.vreme.com/arhiva_html/442/4.html

Marxism and Leninism, which meant that Albanian national demands became diminished in the eyes of political activists and ordinary citizens. These groups also failed to establish a true and meaningful connection with any dissident groups in other parts of Yugoslavia, which would have given them much stronger political muscle.

However, “national equalisation and cohesion have harmed a lot of negative nationalistic tendencies by forcing interests of their own ethnic groups onto other ethnic groups” (Šuvar S.1970, p154). A remark like that, where Albanians were treated as second-class citizens, fits perfectly not only with the time since Serbia annexed Kosova, but also the time prior and after the 1968 demonstrations, when martial law was declared in the province, which mirrored a classic military occupation: 30000 troops were deployed from federal units. To many people they looked foreign; not only for the different languages they spoke, but also for the brute force they exercised. They were more than both the Italian and German occupators had ever managed to send to Kosova. According to witness accounts, nearly 1000 civilians were killed (Vickers. M.1995. p205).

In so doing, the security forces wanted to show that no provocation would be tolerated, and that despite Ranković’s dismissal, they were powerful as ever. In a shivering idea, they also wanted “to teach irredentists and separatists a good lesson to remember for a long time” (Rajović R.1985, p 114).

The constitutional amendments of 1969 were only designed to calm the situation and to bring popular euphoria into a position where it could be controlled by the state security. At face value, such changes were ridiculous. Italian and German regimes had allowed the

Albanian language and flag, even though they were occupators, whilst Yugoslavia, a country that Albanians had fought to liberate, suppressed such demands with violence. What followed manifested itself gruesomely with the political dissatisfaction of the Croatian Spring¹²⁴ and internal political turbulences. Again, the high authorities were responsible, because “It lies in the nature of things that the beginnings are slight but, unless great care is taken, the rates of inconvenience will multiply rapidly and finally reach a point that no one could foresee”. (F. Guiciardini. Ca 1538).¹²⁵

Of particular importance was the establishment of the first collective presidency for Yugoslavia in 1971. In addition to providing direct representation for both provinces in the highest political body in the country, this act made Serbia the most powerful unit in Yugoslavia by giving her three votes – its own, and those of Kosova and Vojvodina (Doucette. S. & Thaqi. H. 2004. p133). However, most of the votes in this body were ideological, inclined to follow Tito’s agenda.

Although provincial institutions chose political representatives from both provinces, they were nearly always obedient to Belgrade, for “power is the ability to make sure that a second actor will do that which in other circumstances he would have not done, or to make sure that the same actor will not do that which otherwise they would have done” (Dahl R. 1970, p12). Alternatively, in line with Kristo Frashëri’s argument, the chosen individuals were members of the group that liked what was offered to them by the

¹²⁴ One official history of the events written in the 1970s described the main sin of the Croatian leadership not specifically as ‘nationalist excesses’, but rather as the fact that they were seeking to base their legitimacy on support from the wider population rather than in party ideology.

¹²⁵ Quoted by F.A. Hayek in “The Constitution of Liberty”

government - even if it meant serving someone else's needs and wants.

The Yugoslav People's Army (YPA), one of the most important pillars of the state, symbol of unity and factor in legitimising the regime, there to maintain the political order and keep Yugoslavia from disintegrating (Gow. J. 1992. p26-62), was also affected by these changes. An order was promulgated to locate the military away from the inner cities. There was a constant stream of complaints from the people who lived near the military barracks, stating that conscripts did not respect local traditions and were misbehaving especially while drunk.

In generally terms, the 1968 protests were not entirely in vein. They brought some relative changes, and they were manifested at international level. After the occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Warsaw Pact, a period of normalisation of relations with the Soviet Union followed. It began in 1969 with the Soviet premier visiting Yugoslavia, and a follow-up visit to Moscow by his Yugoslav counterpart in June 1970.

By August of 1970, diplomatic relations with the Holy Sea were established, after the bitter split following the imprisonment of the Croat catholic archbishop in 1946. In September that year, President Richard Nixon of the USA visited Yugoslavia.

This quasi liberalism encouraged debate in Kosova and Yugoslavia, particularly about internal relations, and especially between Prishtina and Belgrade. Debates between provincial politicians, and Kosova representatives in Serbian or Yugoslav institutions, were about objectives. The provincial politicians wanted betterment. Others were keen to

agree with whatever they were told, thus pleasing their officers, and they never really bothered with the demands of their constituents, except to safeguard their employment. Many such cases of servilism occurred across Eastern Europe. The prevailing axiom of the system was that “once you become somebody, keep silent about things around you (i.e. things that go wrong) and you will have your superiors tap your shoulder”.

Outside Kosova, the official state policy kept a close eye on internal provincial relations. The Serbian institutions were always first to react to whatever movement was happening in the province. The federal institutions on the other hand, were slower to react. They did not want to be involved with problems of federal entities, because they always hoped things would settle down, before the need to intervene could arise, thus creating a situation where the regime fixed and moved anything, including punishment, according to its needs (Qosja R. 2005. p56).

Another group worth mentioning is the ever-growing intellectual elite of Kosova, who dared (and consequently paid for it) to question the official policy framework.

The Writers League of Kosova was forced to abandon two meetings during May 1968, because some of the members persisted in adopting a resolution for greater political powers to the cultural stream (Rilindja 27 May 1968).¹²⁶ As a result, the chairman of the League, academic Esad Mekuli, explained the meetings by calling them a “manifestation of unhappiness that exists amongst the members who advocate furthering national rights

¹²⁶ Dy mbledhje të pa mbarueme. (Two meetings unfinished)

for the Albanian nationality”. In elaborating his argument, he explained that:

The true values of the National Liberation War guarantee that every nation and nationality should be the economic, social and political factor in running their units and institutions...In Kosova, Albanians are yet to become political factors”.¹²⁷

There were of course political demands in other federal units for extension of freedom of expression, freedom of movement and so forth, which were partially met by the federal authorities. However, the Serbian politicians were particularly involved with the assessment of the post-demonstrations situation in Kosova. They even held a special plenum of the Serbian Communist League.

Marko Nikezić, the chairman of the Central Committee of the Serbian Communist Party, responded to the question of how the situation in Kosova was to be resolved. “He intended to pursue vigorously the battle against the conservative standpoints which were stirred up by the recent nationalist demonstrations”. He rejected outright various voices in Serbian and Yugoslav authorities, which maintained that events in Kosova had been a result of a rapid democratisation and decentralisation in the province, thus requiring a

¹²⁷ The Archives of Kosova have an array of statements and reactions by various intellectuals of the time. Here are a couple. Roughly with a similar mindset to Mekuli was also the composer Gjergj Kaqinari. He was criticised for nationalistic overtones and huge extracts from Albanian folklore for ‘Balada e Kosovës’, his first Albanian opera in Yugoslavia. Obviously dissatisfied, he commented: “I sit and think if I was a Serb, Croat, or Macedonian, would I have been appraised or aggrandieed...If we were in a different political structure as a region, then people would have seen the opera for what it is, a musical achievement and a splendid performance, and not through the glasses of ethnic or political reaction”. The linguist and folklorist Anton Çetta, at a meeting of intellectuals in Prizren, recalls “Albanians in Yugoslavia helped liberate not only Kosova, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania, but our valorous partisan brigades have fought even in Triglav, Una, Banat, Istria, Slavonia and Herzegovina. Since new Yugoslavia was built on the principles of that joint war for liberation, Albanians deserve equal status in the federation. XC4A. 131. 14.05.1969.

return to the old order and the policy represented by Ranković (Meir. V.1999, p29).

Serb nationalists argued that “borders of present day Serbia are neither national nor historic borders of the Serbian nation...they are inappropriate, arbitrary and untenable” (Đurić. M. 1971. p 230-3). Nikezić, however, was adamant that the political and party standpoint set by the Brioni Plenum should continue on its prescribed course.¹²⁸

The Serbian republican reaction was also addressed by a number of other high Party functionaries, who provided equally interesting contributions. Latinka Perović, member of the Central Committee of Serbian Communists, linked the recent events in the province to the current uneasy international situation:

The political damage resulting from the latest events in Kosovo and Metohia must be evaluated in the international context. The country’s foreign adversaries, (i.e. USSR) who always try to exploit and manipulate tensions in Yugoslavia, have welcomed these events. Such situations offer them opportunities to increase their activities in the internal affairs of our country...Following the Czechoslovak events, it has been stressed more than once that the threat to the security of the country is not only a military threat to our frontiers, but that our enemies aim at attacking and destroying our system from within. I need not remind you that lately a political "theory" has been launched, which claims that because of the nationalities issue, Yugoslavia is threatened with disintegration and destruction through a weakening of its internal cohesion. (www.rferl.org)¹²⁹

¹²⁸ The Brioni Plenum adopted a resolution where they concluded that marked changes were needed for intensification of political reform. Amongst many conclusions, one called for further democratization and decentralization in Serbia and Kosova.

¹²⁹ Deputy Latinka Perović on national and international threats to Yugoslavia. Refer to the article titled: Other Speakers Interpretations. Deputies discussing internal configuration of the country.

Not everybody was of the same opinion. Zvezdan Stojičić, deputy justice minister and member the Serbian parliament, objected to “the frustrating protracted leniency and extensive Albanisation of the province of Kosova and Metohija” and asked for a political, constitutional and legal overview of the provinces’ new status, which to him meant “preventing the creation of a little Albania inside Serbia”¹³⁰ (www.arhiv.sv.gov.yu).¹³¹

The reaction by the Serbian mayor of Prishtina, Jovan Pečanović, also a member of the provincial central committee, was along the same lines. At a meeting of the city’s assembly, he asked for the revision of the post-Brioni policy, erupting “What do Albanians want, haven’t they not got enough?” (Rilindja. 30 March 1969).¹³²

Generally, many in Serbia objected to manifestations of freedom and equality for nationalities, “because such happenings were having discriminatory effects for Serbs and

¹³⁰ For the purpose of this research, the author has chosen another two reactions by the members of the Serbian Parliament. First, Cica Mrkonjić, a Marxist teacher and a member of the Parliament’s commission for legal and constitutional affairs, rebuffed the demonstrators by calling them “the dirt of unpolished pockets of Yugoslavia’s progressive socialism” and warned that “if we are to give in to their anti - constitutional, secessionist, and nationalistic demands, then Serbia is being nothing but chopped down”. Consequently, she proposed that the Serbian assembly should write and promulgate the new statuses for both of the provinces, “where historical, ethnic, demographic and genealogical position should be taken into consideration”. And second, Predrag Strugar former minister of the Serbian government and a former ambassador who had been ordered to return to the country after his radical opinions expressed at an international conference in Tripoli Lebanon. On this occasion, he predictably claims “Albanians, even if we don’t want to, are moving up every day. Look at them. A few years ago, they did not know how to read and many of them today are doctors of science graduating from the best Universities in Yugoslavia. I am surprised that no one has noticed this. If they educate themselves, they would want political rights equal with Serbs, and who knows even a ‘Greater Albania’ within Yugoslavia. (www.arhiv.sv.gov.yu. Cica Mrkonjić i Predrag Strugar u skupštinskoj raspravi. (Cica Mrkonjic and Predrag Strugar debating in the Parliemnt. PL/A14.C1.2.3.4.).

¹³¹ Zvezdan Stojičić debating the future legal arrangements in the Socialist Peoples Republic of Serbia . Iz rada Serbijske Narodne Skupštine. BL 44/1. 12 November 1969.

¹³² Debate të nxehta në Kuvendin Komunal. (Hot debates at the municipal assembly)

Montenegrians in the province” (Kešetović. M. 1984. p46).

The 1968 constitutional arrangements, issued for both of the autonomous provinces, as well as other federal units during spring and summer of 1969, were the focal point of the internal political debate within Kosova.

Here is worth noting, as the main argument of this thesis proposes, that although constrained by the political environment, debate nonetheless existed in Kosova.

With a very keen eye, high officials of Kosova observed and implemented the extension of the autonomy of the province. They were adamant and quick to point out that any possible political implication of the status of the province would benefit the strengthening of the federal union (Rilindja. 27 August 1968).¹³³

However the debate amongst the political elite tended to be ideological. Almost the entire leadership of Kosova’s institutions and party rejected Albanian nationalism, which had suddenly erupted, although a wave of nationalist affiliation was also noticed during 1967 in Serbia and Croatia. Meanwhile, the liberals were gaining terrain as counter-forces to nationalism. Calling liberalism ‘a destructive force against the state system’, high officials were reacting more out of surprise, since a lot of them had really started to believe that society was experiencing comprehensive progress.

Veli Deva, the chairman of the Provincial League of Communists, switching his discourse to adjust it to the dominant ideology (Prunier G. 1995. p247), exclaimed that

¹³³ Shoku Veli Deva i drejtohet plenumit të dytë të Komitetit Qendror të Lidhjes së Komunisteve të Serbisë në Beograd . (Comrade Veli Deva addresses the second plenum of Serbia’s Central Committee of the Communist League.)

the situation created after the Brioni Plenum, and after the 1968-69 constitutional arrangements, resembles a “national awakening with many progressive elements”. According to Deva, “only Yugoslavia was able to promulgate and support changes that are of vital importance for Albanians and their needs in the federation”. Notwithstanding the official position of the party and state, he called the demonstrators “an uneducated bunch who lack teachings in the breath of socialist self-management and...don’t appreciate the values of brotherhood and unity”. Deva, however, made the distinction that developments in the province during the past two years had been felt only in the social field and had not been equalled by a similar process in economic development. By this, Deva invokes that Kosova’s leadership had accomplished its internal tasks and that it was important now for the country to give greater economic attention to the province, and not to the political changes the demonstrators had wanted.

On the question of ‘unhealthy nationalist positions in the province’, which came into being as a political concept during the December 1968 emergency plenum of Kosova’s CP, Deva, from the perspective of a communist provincial leader, blamed both Albanian and Serbian extremist positions. The ‘Albanian chauvinists’ were criticized for considering everything that had taken place during the post-war period in the province as ‘defamation’ against the Albanian nationality group. The representatives of ‘great-Serbian chauvinism’ were criticized for maintaining that ‘nothing bad’ had happened in Kosova since liberation. According to Deva, anti-constitutional and anti-reform elements

received their greatest support from Serbian chauvinism throughout the world¹³⁴, and among the strong and widespread anti-Brioni and anti-self-management reactionary forces outside the province. He urged a form of social control that would act as a critical element in constructing symbolic frameworks to operate at societal, organisational and personal levels (Kramer R.C.1992. p217).

Nonetheless, all this was happening in a wider context of debate within the CPY. There were different lines of division, such as those between communists and nationalists, and liberal versus conservative and revolutionary hardliners. Their arguments were directed towards the strong political lines that the party defended but with markedly considerable differences according to their ideological interpretations. Therefore, this period of plausible internal, and some might say democratic, debate was not restricted to Kosova.

In the context of criticism of the post-demonstrations period, Veli Deva engaged in some idiomatic and translucent self-appraisal by stating that it is to (and for) the merit of the Provincial Committee of the League of Communists that they succeeded in preventing deeper national division in the province. He also warned, “that demonstrations might have a stagnating effect on further affirmation of nationality rights in the province, because federal and republican institutions will think twice before extending devolution. The process of devolution that had started will stumble in the hands of centralists”

¹³⁴ Veli Deva here was reacting to an article in Belgrade’s daily Borba 12 December 1968 which reported for several conventions held by the Serbian diaspora in support of a centralized state.

(Rilindja 10 December 1969).¹³⁵ The more distinct the nationality issues became within the ranks of the League of Communists, continued Deva, the greater the polarization of the positions of nationalist elements became. This led to the containment of anti-socialist activities, confining the occurrence of still graver political actions. In an effort to stave off the blame that inevitably was up and coming for the Kosova communists, Deva concluded that it was precisely the erosion of the influence of these elements that had led to the desperate demonstrations of November 27. Such demonstrations, according to him, were “directly affected by propaganda from Albania, manifestations that had occurred in a multinational environment, and in a socially and economically underdeveloped area, where the rural element is predominant and where the ideological influence from the working class and other progressive elements of our society is small (Ibid).

Such remarks by Deva made the demonstrators look outdated, backward, and at times even primitive and of rural roots. During his interview with the author, Simon Kuzhnini described remarks by Deva, who after all was suppose to represent the will of the people, as appalling, anti-Albanian and suffering from the self-centred phenomenon.

This is a ‘technique of neutralisation’ applied by Deva. It implies an awareness of infringing a rule, i.e. using offensive and abusive language towards the demonstrators, that the actor at some level accepts as legitimate, i.e. the protestors to accept his claims as correct (Sykes G & Matza. D. 1957. p664-670).

In general terms, his account can be understood as a promotion of a continuous line of

¹³⁵ Shoku Veli Deva i drejtohet plenumit të dytë të Komitetit Qendrorë të Lidhjes së Komunisteve të Serbisë në Beograd . (Comrade Veli Deva addresses the second plenum of Serbia’s Central Committee of the Communist League.)

thought that was seeking to secure as many political and constitutional gains for the province as possible. However, due to the risky situation he was in, Deva did not want to upset his political republican and federal mentors; bearing in mind that he could very easily be labelled as a nationalist and a reactionary neo–Stalinist, hence he was treading on a very thin ideological line.

Reactions from Albanian officials were more or less the same, exemplifying the situation, blaming the demonstrators and praising the communist leadership and ideology for ‘surviving the crisis’. Ali Shukriu’s account was of just such a tone, imbued in anti-nationalistic rhetoric. At that time, he was a member of the Yugoslav Federal Executive Council and known as a hardliner. He examined the characteristics of the demonstrations from a strictly ideological angle, putting the blame for nationalist-inspired disturbances on the intellectuals. According to him, through their non-participation in the recent excesses, the best support for the province's leadership came from the small working class of the region, which comprised seventeen to eighteen percent of the social composition of the League of Communists. Shukriu had the following to say about this social stratum: “The intelligentsia¹³⁶ which is presently growing too fast is of peasant origin. This social element possesses all the petty-bourgeois characteristics in particular

¹³⁶ Some of the new Albanian academics had questioned the part-time rapid educational system that guaranteed degrees of various professions to former partisans and communists that were now in leading positions of the party and the state. Shukriu’s degree in law was a product of such system of education, which he obtained within the course of one year and only attending evening classes twice a week, hence the personal vengeance. (Shkollat partizane s’na duhen tani. Partisan Schools are not needed any longer. Debate at the Intellectual forum. Prishtina 12.02.1968. Kosova archive. Pp20-1968. 35/71.

with regard to the nationality issue and socialist relations”, thus not only making the demonstrators part of feudalism, an eradicated social order which “communism had defeated”, but also insulting them with connotations of regionalism and provincialism. “We must square accounts with the representatives of this group. Investigation of the people who took part in demonstrations has shown that they represent those with whom we have always had problems on the nationality issue”. He adds, Such groups come from a predominantly peasant environment with a conservative and religious mentality toward the question of socialist relations. Hundreds of these people with a complete lack of working class background are represented in the League and are employed by the militia, in commerce, collective farms, education and so forth.

To remedy this picture, Shukriu proposes a long-term policy of greater concentration on the economic development of Kosova and speedy incorporation of a larger number of direct producers in the social activities of the province.¹³⁷

In this debate, the prevailing idea of urban versus rural was a position identified by the high political officials. Such an idea is very far-fetched, since both of these individuals were in high party and state positions, which meant that they could change the situation for the better if they wanted to. Their argument also had another bearing. If such an idea had been accepted, then the demonstrations would have looked more or less like chanting

¹³⁷ See RFE Research Report, "Inflammatory Albanian Editorial Precedes Nationalist Demonstrations in Prishtina", 29 November 1968.

by a mob, which would have decreased their political significance. To further such an aim, Deva openly criticised the Yugoslav press in general “for misinforming the public and for fostering a sort of specific anti-socialist line which threatens the internal political order of the country”, thus showing that in a Yugoslav-wide platform, debate was encouraged even in the media, which after all were censored, for they had to adhere to the official state propaganda and ideology.

Very much the same answer was given by Tito to the Bosnian daily newspaper *Oslobođenje*. He agreed that problems had arisen since the demonstrations in Kosova and acknowledged that the general prevailing situation in the province was “problematic”, but he thought that the situation was not bad”. He criticised the provincial leadership for not seeing it coming, but concluded that “everyone concerned must engage in self-criticism”. Discussing what was to happen next, Tito thought that “some constitutional amendments are necessary, but what we have planned to grant Kosovo is nothing more than what we think is just and right” (Tito J.B. 1984, p93-5, book IV).

Petar Kostić, Secretary of the LCK PC Presidium, claimed that the results achieved up to that point warranted modest optimism, observing that "dissatisfaction remains, and the results of the political campaign launched against nationalist deviations and irredentism in the province are not very high". In his account of the measures taken, he reported that: 534 party members have been expelled, while an even greater number has been dropped for inactivity. At Prishtina University alone, 364 party members have been expelled. To date, 260 students have been expelled from middle, higher, and high schools, and from

the university. They have also lost their scholarships and credit status. At the same time, about 210 teachers have been dismissed from their positions in the province.”¹³⁸

This attack would come to haunt the communist officials in Kosova for “history has internal logic and moral significance” (Soloviev.V.S. 2000, p101). In 1981, when the episode of “Kosova Spring” happened, a number of the organisers and demonstrators were affected directly or indirectly by the actions that Kostić described earlier.

Furthermore, through such actions aimed at reducing the influence of educated people on the masses, the official stance of the Communist Party proved that only those who were willing to act according to the ideological teachings would progress further. This also raises the question of whether the Communist Party was ready for a well-educated, forward-looking Albanian intelligentsia in Kosova, or would such an elite have formed a political, ideological, individual and ethnic threat. If it was otherwise, the development of intelligentsia surely was to be encouraged.

Justifying the reaction of the security services against demonstrators in a prolonged campaign “of eradication of all hostile elements”¹³⁹, Bahri Oruçi, President of the Executive Council of the Province of Kosovo, said; “In the last few days increasing hostile propaganda is evident. The enemy responds to all our efforts with a counter-effort,

¹³⁸ See RFE Research report, "Inflammatory Albanian Editorial Precedes Nationalist Demonstrations in Prishtina," 29 November 1968.

¹³⁹ Such was the case with Movement for Kosova Republic who were imprisoned by police for advocating that a superficial constitutional change has happened, and the will of the people has been kicked aside.

the security service is very slow in discovering such hostile activity".¹⁴⁰ Oruçi here directly blames the protestors for upsetting the present situation, while indirectly blaming the security service, who appear to have been caught off guard by the protestors.

For the first time, he acknowledged that the Committee for the Liberation of Kosovo, an opposition group, was operating in Llap, and that they had led the hostile activity.¹⁴¹ In a frank admission about the popular support for such a group, he explained that "many of the 1,000 students in Podujevë still defend the hostile standpoints and demonstrations of 1968 and regard the organisers of such illegal groups as heroes". (Ibid)

Oruçi said that in some villages in central and western Kosova the enemy is "active underground, while in others it acts openly" (Ibid).

Both these cases show a certain measure of desperation from the party and state officials. Support for the nationalistic activity had come as a surprise to them, and they appear to have forgotten that, ideologically, communism had not taken root amongst the masses. Since a considerable number of the population were still uneducated, they continued to foster the tradition of folk and mythological figures that had defended the Albanian nation, some of them fresh from the open clashes with the Yugoslav partisans in the aftermath of the Second World War.

Fadil Hoxha followed more or less the same line which came to be the official party and state explanation for the situation, when, speaking in a session of the YCL of the

¹⁴⁰ See RFE Research report, "Inflammatory Albanian Editorial Precedes Nationalist Demonstrations in Prishtina", 29 November 1968.

'Trepça' mining complex, he said: The problems in the province are rooted deeply in the mentality and beliefs of the people. Unfortunately, I am aware that in your collective the number of Albanian members of the YLC is no more than 27%. This is a problem because there is an incorrect attitude held by Albanians about the Communist party, for they still associate the party with many Serb and Montenegrin politicians in the province. It is our duty to explain this and help those who don't know about the benefits of party membership, and our duty does not end here amongst the miners, but it must be extended to farmers, soldiers and especially students who can be prone to deviations. The country has a real and true perspective, but to this some choke up, those who do so are our enemies. He concluded: We must convince everyone that we will not allow anybody to destroy that what we have built so far, because those who have chosen destructive missions are nothing else but bourgeois bureaucrats and chauvinists. We have built our life during the periods of greatest deformations, and now we must not wither away but built the socialist society with greater enthusiasm.¹⁴²

Such a description was true to a degree. The Committee for the Liberation of Kosovo that had helped in organising the 1968 protests was not entirely eliminated, although its leader, Adem Demaçi, and a few other collaborators were subject to confinement.

In an interview for the Tirana daily *Shekulli*, while describing his personal bleak fate as the destiny of Albanians in former Yugoslavia, Demaçi argued that political and propagandistic activity still continued by his group, and his imprisonment only increased

¹⁴¹ The region of Llap named after the River Lap in north eastern Kosova

the resolve of other members to carry out their activities. He claimed that there was no valid counter-argument that the CP could present against their arguments, “for all our demands, merely mirrored the true situation on the ground”.¹⁴³

However, some members of the Kosova provincial assembly had declared otherwise, and they provided an opposition. They claimed that “demonstrators did not take to the streets only so the student problems of accommodation and poor canteen service could be discussed at the state and party level, they took to the streets so that political tendencies shown by the protesters were heard”. Shani Sadiku, for example, stated that “before blaming the students, wouldn’t we be better off investigating their modest claims?” At the same time, Rukije Mavriqi, from the women’s association, voiced concerns about “the impact on the internal structure of the state, the opposition shown to the system, and the reaction shown to the opposition by the system” (Rilindja. 1 April 1969).¹⁴⁴

Meanwhile, in a typical communist format, the intellectual elite of Kosova were arguing prolifically that nothing but change could settle the present crisis. *Bona fide*, Professor Gazmend Zajmi, argued that alongside the improvement of political status for Kosova, there was a need to improve the position of the Albanian language in the province and beyond, as “this issue is not treated with much of an interest because equality of

¹⁴² Fadil Hoxha’s political works. p 71-75

¹⁴³ ‘Shekulli’. Adem Demaçi Mandela i Kosovës. (Adem Demaçi Kosova’s Mandela) 12.02.2001.

¹⁴⁴ Këtu kemi mosperuthje. (There is inconsistency)

languages brings about equality of nationalities” (Përparimi. 1971.Nr 7. p559).¹⁴⁵

Dr Rasim Ademi, from Kosova’s chamber of advocates, welcomed new constitutional developments and called them “a step towards achieving and strengthening the bonds with the federal institutions”, while Kosova’s chief justice Ramadan Vraniçi, argued from the legal point of view that “Kosova must be an equal and separate federal entity. The adopted *semper edem modus* must not block the much-needed developments. This is an imperative of our time” (Mišović. M. 1987. p 155).

Regarding this argument¹⁴⁶, the distinguished Albanian academic and historian, Professor Ali Hadri, wrote that, looking at this objectively, Kosova was the most underdeveloped region of Yugoslavia. In truth, Serbs viewed the province as some sort of colony, and not only in the old royal Yugoslavia. Under the discriminatory economic and cultural policy, normal life in Kosova had been suffocated for many years. The liberation had brought considerable advantages, but such advantages did not extend as far as they should to bring equality with other federal units (Hadri. A. 2003. p320-2).

¹⁴⁵ Pozita e gjuhëve në Krahinën Autonome të Kosovës në periudhën 1945-1970. (Position of the languages in the Autonomous Province of Kosova between 1945 and 1970)

¹⁴⁶ A very interesting reaction (from the available literature anyway) regarding the demands for further political autonomy in Kosova, came from Lorenc Antoni, one of the best composers in Yugoslavia, and a member of ‘Yugoslavia’s Society of Composers’. At a meeting of the society held in Novi Sad, he replied to the allegations that generally Albanian music in Yugoslavia, including classical, modern pop and rock genres, was drawing inspiration from the old folk and country music. “True, we love our folk and country music,” he said, “it is like quenching the summer’s thirst from a crystal clear, ice-cold well. At least our music makes us equal in this society for which we have given our best men and women in the liberation. Udruženje kompozitora Jugoslavije. Sastanak u Novi Sad (The society of composers of Yugoslavia) 14.5 1969. Copy available in the archives of Kosova.

Considering such reactions to the political demands made by protesters and their leaders, they appear essentially economic, and nationalistic. Supporters of a republican status for Kosova saw the solution to their national question through the attainment of their own republican entity/state, perhaps even in the present provincial borders “against a statist Serbian movement” (Krstić B. 2004, p159) that refused such changes outright. However, the position of an ethnic minority or a nationality did not fulfil all their demands or dreams, since ethnic minorities/nationalities are groups of people who, because of their physical, cultural, ethnic, religious, linguistic, and territorial specifics, are subject to collective discrimination by the majority of that given territory (Wirth L 1945, p347).

Reviewing these debates, one can observe a tough stance against the demonstrations, manifested by Kosovan politicians, as well as a questioning of whether protests were the best way to achieve more autonomy for Kosova.

The federal and Serbian authorities were also involved. Constitutional changes and the amendments of 1968-69 were an orchestrated manoeuvring to show “the positive face of Yugoslav socialism which reacts whenever necessary to further socialist self-management’ (Tito J.B. 1984, p109, book IV).

Evoking “fears for problems of sovereignty and indoctrination by alien factors”¹⁴⁷, Tito became directly involved. After hosting Pierre Werner, the Prime minister of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, at his presidential palace in Dedinje, he commented *ex officio*:

¹⁴⁷ Small Croat and Serbian nationalist cells abroad, working as propaganda against Tito’s politics in

Sovereign states hold dear the rights of non-interference in their internal affairs of state by other factors or organisations”. Tito went further to condone the reaction by his guest¹⁴⁸ of the violation of human rights in Yugoslavia, when he said: Nobody knows better the political situation of its state than the people of that state. Kosovo was mentioned many times by prime minister, but in the eyes of the people of Yugoslavia, is not the most important issue, we have other battles to fight, and other wars to win, with economical and political development of our country (www.arhiv.sv.gov.yu).¹⁴⁹

Tito commented on the issue of demonstrations in Kosova and gave his personal account about the protestors’ demands. In an act of pure ‘cognitive dissonance’ – a condition where one is aware of the incompatibility between what one is doing and the kind of person one assumes oneself to be (Hinton. 1996 p818-831) – Tito ventured to explain the prevailing state of affairs. While celebrating the 25th anniversary of new Yugoslavia in the town of Jajce¹⁵⁰, Tito tried, while comparing them with similar protests in other European countries, to present the demonstrations as the usual disorder caused by rowdy students, which should not be dramatized and must not be given the front page (Rilindja. 1 December. 1968).¹⁵¹ His reaction could have been justified, especially since the

Yugoslavia, had blown up a plane over Sweden, and killed a Yugoslav ambassador overseas.

¹⁴⁸ The Luxembourg Prime Minister was also speaking on behalf of the European Community.

¹⁴⁹ Document no 2/31.35/07. Minutes of the joint press conference at the Dedinje residence by Tito and Pierre Werner. 19 May 1969.

¹⁵⁰ Jajce town where the consolidating session of new Yugoslav government was held for the first time in 1943. Many foreign dignitaries and journalists had gathered for the occasion.

¹⁵¹ Të rinjët gjëjnë mynyra të ndryshme argetimi. (The young find various ways of entertainment)

international situation was becoming radicalised by the day, but he avoided the nationalistic demands of the students for greater autonomy in Kosova, opting for only a few superficial concessions.

Later, while strongly condemning such acts, Tito said that the objective of the demonstrators was to threaten and endanger Yugoslavia's territorial integrity (Rilindja, 13 June 1969).¹⁵² He was most probably reacting to the very left-wing rhetoric echoed during the demonstrations, which in some circles in Belgrade were even called Enverism.¹⁵³ Consequently, such words made demonstrations the talk of all Yugoslavia and resulted in speculation and conspiracy theories about possible involvement of Albania's or even the USSR's secret services in their organisation. Such accusations were groundless, no doubt. All the demonstrations had been organised by student and underground Albanian nationalistic groups that acted in Kosova and, as documented above, the Committee for National Liberation of Kosova. Forty years later, no one from the organisers, even though they live in a system where freedom of speech is guaranteed, has come forward as a witness of such involvement. And forty years later, neither the Albanian secret service, nor anybody from the former Soviet KGB, has come forward to document such involvement.

In view of the powerful and omnipotent security service in Yugoslavia, which was still heavily dominated by the Serb and Montenegrin elements in the province, it is very hard to imagine that anybody from Albania could have slipped the net and placed themselves in such danger by organising popular protests in Kosova. Even in an official communiqué

¹⁵² Fjalimi shokut Tito në kongresin e IX të LKJ-së. (Speech by comrade Tito at the 9th YCL congress)

released by the government of the Peoples Republic of Albania, official Tirana refutes with austerity any suggestion that it was involved and asks: “Why is Yugoslavia unable to provide any official proof or even the slightest shred of evidence for Albania’s so-called involvement? All they do is conjure up and fire speculative propaganda”.¹⁵⁴

In fact, such a conclusion is very possible, for at that time Albania had descended into a political crisis caused by the rift with China. After it had gained a place at the United Nations under a proposal sponsored by Tirana, China had soon terminated almost all relations with Albania and withdrew the status of preferential economic, military and cultural partner given to Albania.

Edvard Kardelj, one of the closest confidants of Tito, argued: The 1968-69 and 1971 amendments to the federal constitution brought changes to the political system, but those changes were noticed in only a few fields, thus comprehensive changes did not materialise due to various shortcomings. The implementation of those changes from the very beginning faced difficulties that couldn’t be overcome at that stage in the state’s development, for various political and regional reasons (Rilindja 3 April. 1973).¹⁵⁵

Kardelj is arguing that when the provinces were debated, he supported further

¹⁵³ Reference to Albania’s leader Enver Hoxha and his harsh dogmatic Stalinism

¹⁵⁴ Revista. “Nëntori”, Tiranë N/8 1969 , f.17-29. (The eighth edition of Periodical “November”)

¹⁵⁵ Speech by Edvard Kardelj at the 9th Plenum of the Central Committee of YCL.(quoted by Ana Lalaj. 2000, p91)

decentralisation and liberalisation of the system. However, centralisation forces of the old school were against this step, as well as some in Serbia's conservative circles who did not like extension of provincial autonomies, fearing they would erode Serbia's authority and lose political territory. In other words, to safeguard Serbia's collective political emotions, they would not be swayed in a destructive and disorderly direction (Scheff. T. 1994, p17).

The Yugoslav Prime minister of the time, Mika Špiljak, commented that “such changes were not only a demonstration to international factors how far the people's democracy in Yugoslavia has gone, but they also show that the federal state in its aim to consolidate people's power is willing to extend decentralisation, so everyone can benefit”.¹⁵⁶

Ivan Stambolić, who in spring 1968 began his rise to power in Serbia as soon as the demonstrations happened, argued that “implicated and indoctrinated Albanian youths in Kosova, who were hoping to be living in the fairytale land that Radio Tirana painted Albania to be, are the problem”. He added that the national security of Serbia was put into question, “and the common federal state founded on the values of partisan struggle for liberation was in doubt”.¹⁵⁷ He further stated that “the situation in society cannot be unsatisfactory, while members of the YCP are satisfied” (Stambolić I. 1988 p21), thus

¹⁵⁶ Interview by Mika Špiljak. Radio Belgrade 20 April 1969. Cited by Radio Prishtina two days latter. (Published in “Bujku” Prishtina. 16/04 1995)

¹⁵⁷ Изнад свега равноправни допринос интелигенције у политици. Друг Иван Стамболић у Осечини. “Politika” Belgrade 12.02.1969. (Above all an equal contribution of intelligentsia in politics. Comrade Slobodan Kercun in Osecina)

articulating Slavenka Drakulić's argument that some communist officials were living an aristocratic lifestyle while the rest of the population were not that well off.

No doubt encouraged by nationalistic feelings and considerable hardship, people who protested on the streets of Kosova's towns were exactly the group that in Kristo Frashëri's argument lived under communism but did not agree with what they were told and given. Something which inadvertently cements Professor Frashëri's argument is that such a group were in the minority under communism, and that two other groups – those who enjoyed the privileges of power, and those who stayed silent and did nothing – were the largest groups in any given communist state.

The constitutional changes of 1968-69 did not produce the desired outcomes, but they had their own logic, and since they were applied all over Yugoslavia, one cannot assume that they were triggered only by demonstrations on the streets of Kosova. They brought a loosening of the political strings, especially in the accommodation of nationalities. They appeared positive and substantial, but the overdue need for more constitutional changes made them look hollow and superficial. The situation in Kosova was used to fire up not just the obvious Albanian nationalism, but also the great Serbian nationalism too. By reducing their problematic group history towards Kosova into a single episode in history (Wolff S. 2006, p79), i.e. linked to the 1389 medieval battle¹⁵⁸, the Serbs indiscriminately

¹⁵⁸ The 28 June 1389 battle of Fushë Kosovës (Plain of Blackbirds) was fought between the Ottoman forces led by Sultan Murad and an allied army of Balkan nobles including Serb, Albanian, Bosnian, Greek, Wallachian and Bulgarian princes, led by the Serbian Prince Lazar, who commanded the army because he

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provided a basis for friction in the future.

Other nationalist movements in Yugoslavia exploited the situation in Kosova as well. The Slovenes and Croats used Kosova to convey their fear that they could lose their position in the federation because of the dwindling numbers in their population. The other, smaller nationalities also tried to toe the Albanians and obtain for themselves what they had achieved in political or constitutional terms, even though they did not enjoy the political recognition that the provincial status offered Kosova (www.rferl.org).¹⁵⁹

By 1974, the Yugoslav authorities had revised the constitution entirely. The state was declared more or less a confederation of semi-independent quasi-states, though *quod erat demonstrandum*. They used Lenin's theoretical approach that "to curb all ethnic disparities, a core of socialist production with a democratic organisation of the party and state structure is needed" (Lenin V.I. 1958, p251). With the intention of deepening the self-management structures and holding strongly to the classical Marxist belief that

happened to be the oldest amongst the princes on the day, thus was respected by others for his age. There are few reliable contemporary records of the battle and this has been compounded by the religious and nationalistic significance the battle has been given by the Serbs. The battle has been eulogised in ballad and verse over the centuries, commemorated as St Vitus' Day, and this goes some way to explain the political significance of the area today. Ironically the decisive battle of the Ottoman invasion occurred some years earlier on the banks of the River Maritsa on 26 September 1371. The Serbian army was heavily defeated and many nobles accepted Ottoman vassalage. According to Ottoman historians, these included Prince Lazar making the 1389 campaign, to Ottoman eyes, one of justified retribution. Serbian historians claim that Vuk Branković (Lazar's son in law) abandoned the field at a critical moment during the battle, exposing Lazar's flank, leading to his capture. Later he was beheaded along with other Serbian leaders. Sultan Murad also died in or after the battle. For the medieval world, the battle signalled the might of the Ottoman Empire that was to dominate the Balkans for centuries to come. Kosovo also expresses the extremes of Serbian culture with fortitude and bravery - but also chauvinism and intolerance that has manifested itself in brutality. The battlefield is situated near Prishtina in modern Kosova. The Kosova plain lies at an altitude of 1300 to 1500 feet and is 9 miles wide and 52 miles long. It was an important crossroads in medieval times on the trade routes north-south (Belgrade to the Aegean) and east-west (Danube plain to the Adriatic ports)

¹⁵⁹ Refer to the Interview by Raif Dizdarević

problems of a national and ethnical nature will no longer exist when economic problems are resolved, the Yugoslav authorities embarked on a period of reluctant change, reluctant because such changes were part of a political process initiated by the party or state officials and intended to lead towards a withering away of the state.

Despite tourists from Europe and trade relations with Mediterranean and Persian Gulf countries, the economy was stagnating, international debts were accumulating, and the level of exports was still lower than imports. By 1971, Yugoslavia owed more than \$2.6 billion, while the level of foreign trade was only able to cover 58.7% of this debt (www.nbs.yu).¹⁶⁰ To this burden was added Tito's desire to help financially countries of the Non-Aligned Organisation who for their part were doing their bit to entrench corruption.¹⁶¹ Between 1965 and 1970, the Federal Executive Council paid \$512 million in aid to newly emerging postcolonial independent states (www.nbs.yu).¹⁶²

The state comprises an ensemble of institutions, which do not necessarily share a single set of interests, objectives and goals (Jessop. B.1982), thus republican and provincial

¹⁶⁰ Narodna Banka Jugoslavije. Glasnik federalne trgovine. (The Peoples Bank of Yugoslavia. Paper on federal trade) Dec 1971.

¹⁶¹ When financial aid worth \$10 million that Yugoslavia dedicated in the 1971 budget for Mauritania, Guinea, and the Central African Republic was issued, the Yugoslav embassy in Lagos reported that no schools were built with that money but instead, in influential parts of those nations' capitals, luxurious mansions were erected and occupied by members of the political elite and their families (Delo Ljubljana. 16.08. 1973).

¹⁶² Prihod za organizacijo Pokreta nesvrstanih država. (Contributions to the states of the non aligned movement) Dec 1971.

apparatuses gained substantially with the new constitution in their drive towards decentralisation, but they lacked commensurate economic powers. In Kosova, despite the reforms following the 1968-69 and 1971 amendments, the feeling of dependency on Serbia remained a major source of friction (Repishti. S. 1986. p255).

During 1968-69 and 1971 constitutional provisions, the Communist League maintained the leading position in the political structure. Considering that the party was in essence the state, the LCY generated goals, and altered, changed, and intermingled policies (Adamson.L. 1987/8 p320-329). By 1968, Yugoslavia was a country of eight constitutive units, seven neighbouring countries all with various agendas, six almost-independent republics, five nation-like nationalities, four official languages, three subdued religions, two used alphabets and one political party. Satisfying all of these was nearly impossible.

The politics of conflict resolution in Yugoslavia was characterized by the maxim 'jail the troublemakers, but grant their non-disintegrative demands' (Ramet. S. 1992. p192).

Consequently, for example, during the seventies a number of showcase trials were held across Kosova. The federal security service announced that it had infiltrated nine student groups that had begun to operate underground activity. Seven of these groups were made up of citizens from Kosova and two were made up of Albanian citizens from Macedonia.¹⁶³ They were all given lengthy prison sentences. Tanjug reported that between 1974 and 1980, 618 Albanians, most of whom students, were accused of separatist plots, and over a hundred of them received one hundred and sixty three years

¹⁶³ The aftermath of 1968 student demonstrations. . p 21-5. Kosova Council for Defence of Human Rights

and nine months of gaol combined. It is always the case; the stronger party decides what is right according to its needs (Plato. 1955, p13).

In this period, it is worth noting a drive by Serbs and Montenegrins to migrate from Kosova. Most of them left the province because of the fear of political factorisation of the Albanian element. During 1969-72, over two thousands Serbs and Montenegrins emigrated from Kosova (Bulatović Lj 1999, p 104-7).

In the economic sphere, most of the investment money was going towards expenditure on social capital for schools, hospitals medical centres, but infrastructure was absent in both rural and urbanised areas. Funds for less-developed regions were welcome in Kosova, but problematic for other federal units, and Slovenia and Croatia in particular, as contributors to such funds, often opposed them with resentment. Dragutin Haramija, Croatian Prime Minister, declared: “the hard-earned cash of our hardworking proletarians must be directed to improve the lives of citizens of our socialist republic. Only then should the remaining money go to the southern regions”.¹⁶⁴ Danilo Škocjan, deputy minister of infrastructure and urban planning in Slovenia, was of the same opinion. At a meeting in the municipality of Ptuj, showing considerable lack of solidarity, he exclaimed: “hand on heart, that money should stay and develop Slovenia further. Don’t know the reason as to why we must push forward the economy of one region, if the people of that region are not willing to work as hard as we Slovenes do”. He however resigned himself to the fact that, as a law adopted by the federal institutions, it applied

and Liberties. 2002 publication

also to Slovenia, when he concluded: “instead of encouraging more capital investments, we help the underdeveloped...this is life in a federal state”.¹⁶⁵ This was a potentially explosive thought, which, if articulated by politicians in another region, especially Albania, would have caused havoc in Yugoslav politics. However, Škocjan’s declaration was lost in the mundane politics of Slovenia and the wider federal debate on contributions to such a fund.

ENTITY	URBAN INVESTMENT	RURAL INVESTMENT	FLDR ¹⁶⁶
Slovenia	39.74% of GDP	47.52% of GDP	None
Croatia	39.11%	44.23%	None
Serbia	32.07%	51.99%	11.7%
Vojvodina	31.12%	57.04%	None
Bosnia and Herzegovina	21.94%	40.71%	23.75%
Macedonia	29.91%	37.21%	19.02%
Montenegro	29.27%	32.19%	18.39%
Kosova	29.04%	30.55%	18.32%

*The table above shows financial contribution from FLDR to budgets of federal entities.*¹⁶⁷

The autonomy that Kosova gained first of all revoked the 1963 political humiliation, whereby dependency on Serbia had made provincial institutions but a décor in the

¹⁶⁴Radio Rijeka. Drug Haramija u posjeti sjevernom Jadranu. 14.October 1971. (Quoted by Korošič M. 1983. p 85-6)

¹⁶⁵ Komunisti Ptuja razmotre društvene delatnosti opštine. (The Ptuj communists debate social activity of the commune) Tanjug. 12.04.1972

¹⁶⁶ FLDR Fund for least developed regions.

¹⁶⁷ Statistički godišnjak Jugoslavije. 1972. Beograd p 273-4-5.

political establishment. However, as part of the usual Yugoslav political game, such changes were nowhere near the political and constitutional demands of the demonstrators, illegal groups, or the intellectual circles. The importance of such actions is that they were the first that openly expressed dissatisfaction with the internal structure and arrangements of Yugoslavia. Moreover, this was not a small issue.

From 1969 onwards, following relative liberalism after the Brioni meeting, the 1968 demonstrations in various capitals of Yugoslavia, and with the demonstrations in Kosova and the 1971 political movement in Croatia, the federal state was moving towards resolving the existing political and economical impasse. A substantiated assessment of the situation was performed with a complete revisiting of the political structure of the state, which happened in 1974. Such changes are the focal point of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE APPROVAL OF THE 1974 CONSTITUTION AND ITS AFTERMATH

In the history of Yugoslavia, February 1974 was the month that heralded and formatted a new style of life (Klein N. 2000. p23). Affected by political, economic, social and ethnic demands, the Yugoslav leadership adopted one of the lengthiest, almost teleological constitutions in any country to date that sanctioned and regulated the organisation of life in Yugoslavia with workers councils at its core (Schuman M. 2004. p34-35). Although it did not go as far as Rousseau would have wanted, when he proposed that “people being subject to the laws ought to be their authors” (Dent N. 2005, p371), and although it has been criticised as “crippling the institutional and material power of the federal government” (Gowan P. 1999. p89-90¹⁶⁸), the constitution nonetheless promoted the indissoluble friendship among nations, and respect for national cultures and people’s dignity. It aimed to create ‘homo yugoslavicus’, a new social and international community cemented by the same economic interests, ideology and political goals, with the core concept that people should look towards the union more than they do towards their individual entities.

Such a concept derives from fairly mixed ethnicities and common ancestors of major nations of the federation that descended from diverse smaller ethnic groupings, which have intermarried with their neighbours (Guibernau M & Hutchinson J. 2001. p208).

¹⁶⁸ Gowan. P. The NATO Powers and the Balkan Tragedy. *New Left Review* I/234, March-April 1999.

The constitution “assured the continuation of the dictatorship of the proletariat by putting selected individuals from labour units at the core of power-sharing and constructing a system of proposed and selected members as the cornerstone of socialist democracy” (Wilson D. 1979, p215-6). The internal structure of the federation was also amended in order to accommodate many of the political demands that federal units were advocating: “The six constituent republics entered into a contract in the common structure that really loosened the ties of federal government” (West R. 1994. 295-9). Kosova and Vojvodina became almost equal members of the federation, with but a few privileges left to Serbia. The only constitutional vestige that the provinces lacked, but that the republics had, was the right to secession which remained guaranteed only to the nations of Yugoslavia. Tito opposed Kosova becoming a republic. He thought that “the federal structure could be in danger if one nationality is to be elevated to the status of a nation, because this will present problems of deciding where Albanians actually are a nation, i.e. in Kosova or Albania. He also feared other smaller nationalities would demand national recognition too” (Radio Prishtina. 16 November 1974).¹⁶⁹ With such a declaration, Tito put the one and a half million Albanians in Yugoslavia on an equal footing with about 1290 Çerkez minority, considering that the autonomy of Kosova was not exclusive to the Albanian population, and that the autonomy did not include the entire Albanian population in Yugoslavia. This example shows that Yugoslavia internally acted selectively when ‘nations’ were concerned, but comparably with ‘nationalities’, perhaps as a

¹⁶⁹ Deklarat e shokut Tito dhënë revistes ‘Pobjeda’ të Titogradit. (A declaration by comrade Tito to the Titograd daily ‘Podjeda’). (Quoted in Sinan Hasani 1989 p44)

demonstration of the silent brand of pan-Slavic nationalism. Many nationalities in Yugoslavia were of non-Slavic origin (Albanians, Hungarians, Italians, Germans, Roma), therefore their treatment was obscured when the defence of Slavic nations was at stake.

The rights of nationalities were further expanded, which “in practice meant important changes for ordinary people”. The nationalities were to be represented more in the institutions of the state and party, although the Serbs were proportionally in a higher percentage than other nationalities (Glenny M 1996, p13). The educational and cultural profiles of the minorities were to be increased, with further investment in such fields, and more people from minorities were to be allowed into the security and defence forces.

This meant that from employing only seventeen in 1966, the number of Albanian officers in the YPA increased to 291 by 1978¹⁷⁰ (Komunisti 2 April 1979).¹⁷¹

For the first time, the annual budget of Kosova had a lump sum of money dedicated to education and culture, which made a considerable difference to these spheres, as projects in those areas were previously only randomly financed.

The provincial government, assembly and party were now stronger in decision-making. Only areas that remained in Tito’s prerogative, i.e. defence, international affairs, the pension system and judiciary were outside their domain.

¹⁷⁰ However, it was 1983 before the first Albanian in Yugoslavia was appointed as a general of the army. His title remained in the lower echelons, since he was a three-star general, not a four-star, which represented the highest-ranking military order.

¹⁷¹ Ndryshimet e kushtetutës do të pasqyrojnë të drejtat e kombësive. (Constitutional changes will mirror the rights of nationalities)

Apart from Albanian, other languages gained state approval in Kosova. Turkish became an official language in Kosova, although the Turkish minority were very nominal in the province, representing only 12244 people according to the 1971 census.¹⁷² Apart from the free use of their national flag, the Turks in Kosova also gained a daily newspaper¹⁷³, a folkloristic national ensemble, a daily TV program, and a sizable fund for Turkish emancipation from the provincial ministries of culture, education, and interior.

The Roma minority was the first ever to have a TV show in Europe in their language, prepared and shown by Prishtina RTV station. They also gained political representation guaranteed by the constitution.¹⁷⁴ Considerable efforts were also made to lift them from penurious economic condition.

Commenting on such changes at a meeting with a group of students from Titograd University, Marshal Tito said:

'This is a true triumph of socialism and self-governance. This is a real triumph of the working class. This is a magnificent triumph of nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia ... you the young of our country will reap the benefits of the new constitution the most'. (Pobjeda 29 June 1974)¹⁷⁵

Most of Kosova politicians were enthusiastic too, since “for the first time in history the people of Kosova had their own government, their constitution and their language at all

¹⁷² Ndryshimet demografike të popullsisë së Kosovës në periudhën 1948-2006. Enti i Statistikës së Kosovës. Shkurt 2008.p7. (Demographic changes in population in Kosova during the 1948-2006 period. Kosova's Statistics Institute. February 2008

¹⁷³ 'Tan' (Dawn) was the only daily newspaper in the world published outside Turkey until 1986.

¹⁷⁴ In 1979, work was started on compilation of a Roma Latin alphabet, since the existing scripts varied considerably, due to borrowing heavily from the languages where the Roma population lived.

¹⁷⁵ Za noviju i zdravstvenu Jugoslaviju. Drug Tito prima studente Crnogorskog Univerziteta. (For newer and healthier Yugoslavia. Comrade Tito meets students of Montenegro University)

levels of the state” (Horvat B. 1989, p175). The chairman of Kosova’s presidency, Veli Deva, called the new constitution “a masterpiece of ingenuity” (Rilindja 7 June 1974),¹⁷⁶ while the Turkish minority representative in the Kosova assembly, Harun Nevzat, exclaimed that “the new constitution sets workers at the forefront of political activity by making equal all who speak different languages” (Rilindja 8 November 1978).¹⁷⁷ The reason why Kosova’s political leadership was so joyful about the document is that it went a long way to improve life for the better. The energetic complacency and enthusiasm was best summarised in a directive to county and district courts made by Kosova’s provincial assembly.¹⁷⁸ The document reads:

*‘The Communist League of Yugoslavia, and the state, republican and provincial organs, are forwarding to the people this outstanding and flawless document which from now on and for the rest of time will properly and accordingly regulate relations between the party, the state, the working masses and the people, with utmost regard for each and every, social, cultural, political, ethnic, and economic group. The document provides unshaken belief in the rule of the Communist League and its practising ideals, unmistakably and poignantly showing to the people that the state and the party are people and workers alike’.*¹⁷⁹

Certainly much of discussion was true, for after 1974 Yugoslavia could breathe more easily. All this considering that, since the 1968 protests, many officials were thinking that “it was a case of either reform or communist orthodoxy.” (Pryce Jones D. 2001. p76).

¹⁷⁶ Shoku Veli Deva mes komunisteve te Mitrovices se Titos. (Comrade Veli Deva amongst the Communists of Tito’s Mitrovica municipality)

¹⁷⁷ Reagime pas kushtetutes se re. (Reactions after the new constitution)

¹⁷⁸ The document was drafted by the commission for justice, law, constitutional affairs and petitions.

¹⁷⁹ Komisioni për drejtesi, ligj, qështjet kushtetuese dhe ankesa i Kuvendit Krahinorë. Vlersimi për kushtetuten e re. (The commission for justice, law, constitutional affairs and petitions of Kosova’s provincial assembly. Valuations of the new constitution) 16.10.1974. p 36 section b.

The decentralised economic competences were being used to great advantage all over the federation, especially in the northern republics. Economic development was seen as a factor of further national affirmation.¹⁸⁰

A positive attitude by international sports bodies choosing Yugoslavia to host major events helped these developments, as well as contributing to “national character and an out-of-proportion status to economic and political clout” (Horne J, Tomlinson A & Whannel G, 1999, p 195 – 197).¹⁸¹ Such developments were very welcome by the regime, since sport has been used both as a resource and as an arena for political action (Coakley J & Duning E. 2000. p213), and it can promote nation-building and an international image (Alison L eds. 1993.p97).

In the border between the two northern republics, Yugoslavia built a nuclear power station, something that put the country in an elite block of nuclear capabilities club.¹⁸²

The economic growth allowed the public sector to increase the number of employed, thus helping to reduce unemployment and make a modest contribution to the semi-middle

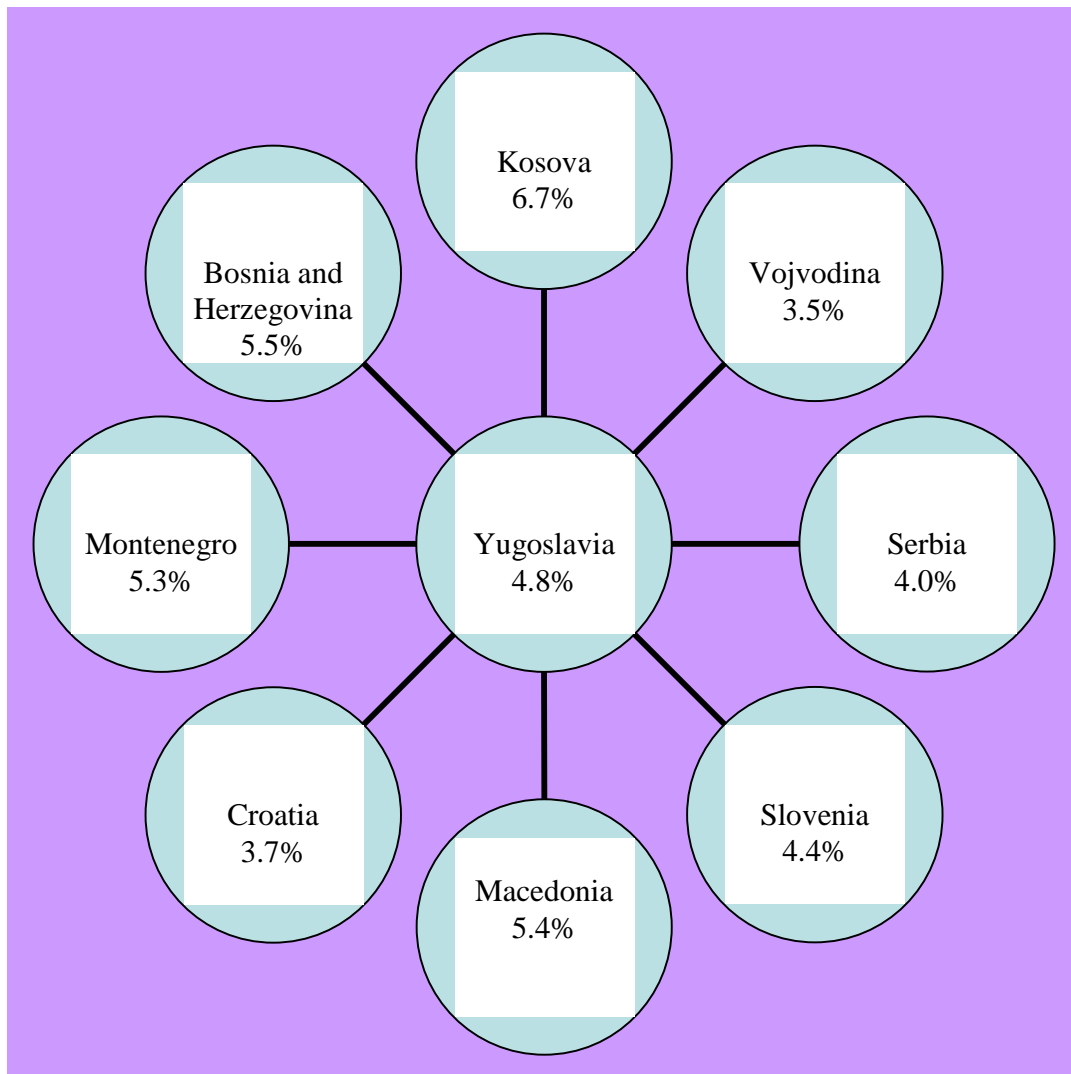
¹⁸⁰ Professor Esat Stavileci. PhD Zhvillimi kushtetues i krahinave autonome. (Constitutional development of the autonomous provinces. Përparimi. Prishtinë 1969. Nr 1 p15.

¹⁸¹ They were a European football championship (for which the ‘Marakana’ stadium in Belgrade was renovated to be one of the largest in Europe), a basketball championship, and several global individual events such as world boxing, table tennis and rowing championships. During 1979, the Mediterranean games were organised in the Dalmatian city of Split, Zagreb hosted the world student games and the jewel on the crown in 1987, and the winter Olympics were held in Sarajevo in 1984.

¹⁸² Yugoslavia never did produce a nuclear bomb or nuclear warheads.

class of Yugoslavia as the table below shows:

Annual growth in social sector employment for the 1971-75 period



Schrenk M Ardalan C & Tatawy E A N. 1979, p100.

Kosova recorded more economic growth than any other federal entity. The constitution of 1974 opened the doors for a greater release of the political and security grip on the people, which consequently allowed greater economic development. In fact, Kosova did not get republican status, but an extended autonomy for the province in the true meaning

of the word (Clinton B 2005, p850).

Following the creation of the fund for less-developed regions, the province gained considerable economic clout and, for the first time, Kosova donated funds in the summer of 1963.¹⁸³ By 1970, Kosova was also contributing to the fund for international developments, and by 1978 funds from the province were helping less-developed countries of the third world, with a contribution of 1.6% of provincial GDP.¹⁸⁴

During 1976 after granting the Albanian language status, from 67 that existed the number of secondary schools in Kosova increased to 133, for the first time including specialised branches such as medicine, economy and legal practice (Jeta e Re 1977).¹⁸⁵ In 1974, the first gymnasium with official school curricula outside Croatia was opened¹⁸⁶ in the historic town of Janjevë.¹⁸⁷

In 1970, after a Hungarian language department was opened at university level in Vojvodina, where medicine and other sciences were taught (Parenti M. 2000, p187), and after much wrangling at the federal level about arguments for and against, the bilingual University of Kosova was opened, which changed the perception and attitudes that existed about Kosova. The number of students was high, and they were achieving a good

¹⁸³ Following a large earthquake that hit northern Greece and Macedonia in the morning of July 26.

¹⁸⁴ Keshilli Ekzekutiv Krahinor. Doracak i punes 1978. (The provincial executive council. Annual report 1978. Prishtina.

¹⁸⁵ Issue 4 page 9.

¹⁸⁶ The Yugoslav educational system was composed of eight years of primary education, and four years secondary education, with universities and high schools providing higher education.

¹⁸⁷ The town of Janjevë in central Kosova, where a small Croatian population lived, was the centre of such a political experiment. The gymnasium was called by the name of the distinguished Croat novelist Miroslav Krleža. (Hoxha H 1984. p97-8)

success rate.¹⁸⁸ The University became the third largest university in Yugoslavia in terms of student numbers, a proportion of them foreign.¹⁸⁹

In April 1975, the University of Prishtina issued the first ever honorary doctorate to Tito. The province also attained the Academy of Science and Arts, the main centre for research of Albanians in Yugoslavia.

A radio and a TV station 'RTP' was opened in Prishtina, with shows in Serbo-Croat, Turkish and Albanian languages, with the latter taking over 65% of the broadcasting. This institution became the cell of cultural and educational activity, although the city of Novi Sad for example spent more in one year on its cultural budget than Kosova had to spend as a whole (Lalaj A 2000, p286). Kosova also got the people's provincial chorus, the people's provincial theatre¹⁹⁰, and 'Kosovafilm', the movie production and distribution company that created a number of prize-winning projects.¹⁹¹

By 1980¹⁹², for the first time in Yugoslavia, the Bible was translated into Albanian.¹⁹³ By

¹⁸⁸ After the first decade of work, this university issued 190 doctorates of sciences and over eleven thousand bachelor's degrees. (Lalaj A. 2000. p267)

¹⁸⁹ In 1980, 314 applications (152 of them from Greece and Cyprus, 82 from Palestine, Israel and Jordan and 15 applications each from Malta, Democratic Republic of Germany, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Italy) were registered from foreign nationals to study at Prishtina University with many of them applying especially to the medical, engineering and economics faculties. The number of students from other regions of Yugoslavia was not available (although there were a few), because all students were called Yugoslavs according to their statehood and not by their nationality. *Universiteti i Prishtinës (University of Prishtina publications) 1970 – 1980. Prishtinë 1980, p71*

¹⁹⁰ These two institutions existed before, but at an amateur level.

¹⁹¹ The 'Kosovafilm' movies 'Proka' 1982 and 'Guards of the mist' 1987 won the Grand Prix at the Pula film festival in Croatia, with the latter also winning the Venice film festival in 1988. *Kosovafilmi të arriturat e produktionit filmik. (Handbook: Achievements of film production) Prishtinë 1988*

¹⁹² Kosova also got 'Jeta e Re' and 'Shkëndia', two periodicals dedicated to culture that helped affirmation of new linguists, writers and scientists, as well as, the monthly magazine 'Pioneri' dedicated to school children. (The author published his first poem in 'Pioneri' in 1984)

In 1975, the province organised the world championship in handball for men under the age of 21, and the newly refurbished sports hall Boro dhe Ramizi. Prishtina jointly with Skopje hosted the European boxing championship a year later.

The provincial capital also got an airport, albeit a small one that was more of a military training ground. Its

1982, the Qur'an was also translated in Prishtina¹⁹⁴, thus showing some tolerance by the atheist regime towards religion.

The province also attracted investments in transport improvements. The rail network was first developed in 1874¹⁹⁵, and it had not progressed much since then, but by 1978 the international line between Salonika and Munich led through Kosova.

In financial terms, wages were increasing, while credits were issued by the companies for individual needs. Because these credits were issued for terms of 3-10 and 25 years, many did return very small amounts of money, for the dinar often devalued. It was through such benefits that many new privately owned properties appeared in cities. The estimates of the federal ministry of finance showed a growing trend of borrowing. For example, 273.7 million dinars were loaned for a 10-year return period in 1965, but by 1976 the figure had risen to 1.95 billion dinars.¹⁹⁶

In internal structure, the fourteen communes that existed in Kosova in 1968 had increased

inaugural civil flight was made in 1975, when Tito visited Kosova. Civil flights in lines with Belgrade twice a week were by 1980 further extended to weekly flights with Zagreb and Sarajevo.

¹⁹³ Copies of translated versions by the Albanian diaspora in USA, and translated versions published between 1830 and 1890 in the town of Shkodër northern Albania were in use in catholic, protestant and cryptic churches until then.

¹⁹⁴ The Qur'an was translated in Prishtina from a Serbo-Croat version, published by the Islamic meshihat in Sarajevo since 1954.

¹⁹⁵ www.kosovarailway.com

¹⁹⁶ Jugoslovenski Institut za fiskalnu politiku i kredite. The Yugoslav institute for fiscal policy. Belgrade 1980. 17a, 17b, 17c.

to twenty-five by 1980.¹⁹⁷

In political terms, the provincial assembly secured more competences, and the executive council was strengthened, even in the field of justice and security, including the official provincial organisation of territorial defence forces. The supreme court of Kosova, as well as the central bank received limited but fairly reasonable duties, decentralised where matters of regional importance in their fields were concerned. A general air of positive opinion began to flow amongst the masses (Hoxha H. 1984, p 83-6).

This manifests what John Allcock calls the "accommodation of political definitions, in the course of social reality and social transformation (Allcock J. 2000. p170). That is, political ideology had started to find a way of popularising itself, after the economic power of the people started improving. Communist units of republics and provinces began to function increasingly independently from the centre because of the devolution of power (Lane A. 2004, p143), and communist parties increased their memberships considerably, especially after 1974.¹⁹⁸ This proved that decentralisation was the way forward, and even in a communist society devolved power was the main principle with which local and regional problems could be addressed. Henceforth, this was a victory for liberal forces that had a great deal at stake if devolution were to falter. Such forces were

¹⁹⁷ Sekretariati Krahinore i informatave. (Provincial secretariat of information.) 12 December 1982

¹⁹⁸ For example, while in the commune of Obiliq in 1970 there were just over 1070 members of the Communist party, by 1975 the number increased to over 3400 members, which is a remarkable number considering the fact that the municipality at that time did not have more than 21000 inhabitants.

then in a position to criticise centralists who were set against decentralisation and to minimise their strength in decision-making for the time being.

Finally, the army was further strengthened in its power, so it had become not only one of the most powerful in Europe, but it had become “a state within a state”, in view of the number of people that served and were employed at the YPA and the amount of financial contributions it was receiving.

Aside from the political elite in Yugoslavia, the people were also enjoying new changes. In a petition posted to Tito and signed by 357 citizens, workers and intellectuals of Nova Varoš, a city in southern Serbia, the Marshall was “praised for his aptness, prudence and realism and is wholeheartedly thanked for achieving the supreme internal political organisation in the country”. A similar correspondence was received from workers of the pharmaceutical collective ‘Farmakos’ Prizren in Kosova. In their telegram, they “bow to Tito for giving the nations and nationalities of Kosova the chance to truly better their future” (Komunisti, 14 October 1974).¹⁹⁹

An overview of the general situation in Yugoslavia shows that the state and party apparatus had not relinquished their powers. Despite devolution there was no doubt about who held the reigns of power (Sibler L & Little A 1996, p28). Things that were deemed excessive, such as overemphasis in national folklore and tradition that did not have

¹⁹⁹ Populli i ngazëllyer faleminderon shokun Tito. (The joyful people thank comrade Tito)

common life as its base, were also harassed, because as always for communists, the history of the partisan struggle even if it was small and not important was exaggerated and swelled artificially (Evans D. 2005, p158).

The situation was moving fast and nationalism, the one problem that the political authorities feared but had not directed, was raising its head. In its name, the Yugoslav ambassador to Australia was assassinated, and an airplane full of Yugoslav seasonal workers was blown up over Sweden, probably by the Croat nationalist diaspora. In Kosova, the group led by Adem Demaçi²⁰⁰ was helped by another small ideological group which moved its activity to the Federal Republic of Germany from fear of prosecution. Led by Jusuf Gërvalla, a novelist, literary critic and journalist of *Rilindja*, the group advocated equal status for Albanians in Yugoslavia. They argued that:

*'With the 1974 constitution, the national question of Albanians was far from being resolved because, not only did Kosova not get a republic, but also the borders of the province were not moved to include all Albanians in Yugoslavia and thus create a strong political unit of all Albanians in Yugoslavia'.*²⁰¹

Gërvalla's activity was cut short when, in January 1981, he was assassinated, together with his younger brother Bardhosh and their close friend Kadri Zeka, probably by the Yugoslav security (Lalaj. A 2000, p340).

The nationalistic forces in Kosova, were dealt four major blows after 1974. The first was

²⁰⁰ Adem Demaçi, after spending 15 years in jail, was jailed for the third time in 1975.

²⁰¹ Hysen Gërvalla brother of Jusuf. In memoriam. Documentary program by Albanian TV station RTSH. 18 January 2002.

concerned with the 1974 constitution. It was true that the document had not elevated Kosova to a republic, but the competences that were given, and how much the province was connected to federal institutions, provided an alluring sense of equality. Secondly, an issue inextricably tied to the first is that the number of communist supporters in the province was increasing, especially amongst the majority Albanian population, and they were not willing to risk the newly acclaimed status.²⁰² Thirdly, the political activists and underground opposition groups were unearthed and incarcerated, so their activity was virtually paralysed. And finally, though never supportive of claims for Kosova to merge with Albania, official Tirana completely erased these hopes when Enver Hoxha, Albania's state and party leader, said at a meeting in Tropojë²⁰³ in 1975, "Albania does not harbour any territorial pretensions towards Yugoslavia" (Lalaj A. 2000, p345).

Nonetheless the constitution had its enemies. The academics were arousing the public with claims about rights of their nations, as well as diverse political, military, informational, economic, social, ethnic and ecological factors (Bucklet M & Cummings S 2001, p 238). As early as 1975, the Serbian presidency organised a working body with the aim to re-examine the implementation of the highest law of the state. However, the new constitution had not really had time to be proven in practice, and this body did not

²⁰² On 3 April 2007, Azem Vllasi a former president of Kosova's presidency in an interview given to RTK (Kosova Public broadcasting company) admitted that he asked students of 1981 demonstrations who had called upon him to join the protests since he was then the chairman of Yugoslavia's Communist youth organisation, "What more do you want, one of you is even smoking "Kent" (an expensive brand of tobacco).

²⁰³ Tropojë, a border town in northern Albania, only five miles away from Kosova.

find much support in the other republics and only limited support in Serbia. Nevertheless, the conclusions of that working body were composed in a special publication called 'The Blue Book' during 1977 (Bogdanović D. 1985, p242). Amongst other things, The Blue Book attacked the 'severity of influence and power' that both provinces had gained, and it called for removal of the direct constitutional links that the provinces had with the federation. It also called for placing both provinces under the full jurisdiction of Serbia, reducing their autonomies to a minimum and reviewing the position that non-Serb ethnicities had gained in the provinces, i.e. the reduction of their influence and power. With offensive but diplomatic language aiming not to infuriate heads of state and party, the document also called "for Serbia to be leading with financial and economic resources of the provinces and for return of the provinces into the hands of the Serbian people". The Blue Book also called "for decentralisation of power of republics, and a deciding voice in matters of foreign currency that tourism was bringing". The document ended with the always popular call, "to strengthen further the position of the Yugoslav People's Army as the guarantor of stability and peace in the region". Although it was originally meant for internal use in Serbia, because of its strong inflammatory language the document was never published (Malcolm N. 1998, p340), but it remained an internal document of Serbian policymaking. However, parts of it were leaked to the press and it did not all go to waste, for the Serb Academy of Science and Arts in 1986 produced 'The Memorandum', a document widely counted and judged as "the platform to ruin Yugoslavia" (BHTV. 14 April 2001).²⁰⁴

²⁰⁴ SANU Memorandum platforma srušenja Jugoslavije. Intervju sa Ejupom Ganičem.

Mihajlo Marković and Dobrica Ćosić, two distinguished academics of political thought in Serbia, helped the debate. The former organised ‘The Free University’, a talking shop, in private flats, while the latter was “against minorities becoming nations through powers they were attributed”, and maintained that “Slovenes and Croats were stopping reform in Yugoslavia for they were nationalistically oriented” (Judah T. 2000, p157).

Soon after 1974, enthusiasm had withered away, and problems of day-to-day life resurfaced. Prishtina University was producing “a small army of intellectuals”, but many of them had no job prospects, as economic development in Kosova was oriented towards heavy industry (Malcolm N. 1998, p339). Another problem was that with unemployment increasing,²⁰⁵ “the number of those hunting for a first-time job was the highest” (Berković E.1986, p65). The gap between balances of payment ranged from 29% to 53% of earnings for professional and semi-professional workers (Korošić M.1983, p476).²⁰⁶

Problems started after Tito’s death, when people begun to feel apprehensive about the future. Aware of his age, and various comments, while visiting the Serbian city of Negotin in 1978, Tito in a wholehearted expression of the Yugoslavist agenda cried:

²⁰⁵ While in 1963 Yugoslavia registered 230000 unemployed, in 1981 there were over 972000 unemployed or 13% of the workforce, one of the highest rates in Europe. (Berković E.1986 ,p66). Berković also explains while offering such statistics that the number of the unemployed might have been much higher, but the Yugoslav employment services did not count those people who owned their own farms and lead a relatively poor life. Their family members of the working age were also not counted, and since the rural regions predominated on the spatial map of Yugoslavia, such cases were in abundance.

²⁰⁶ In a working lifespan of forty years, this would have made a difference of 6.4 million dinar or a three-bedroom flat in a city centre, a luxurious foreign car, and enough spare cash for cultural and entertainment activities including money to be able to furnish the flat every 20 months with new furniture.

'We have spilt an ocean of blood for brotherhood and unity in this country, and we shall not allow anyone to destroy it from within... We were all one people, that's how it was, and I think it must stay today and forever'.²⁰⁷

This poetic, belligerent, interminable, unimpeded, expedient, intransigent statement, which reveals great awareness of internal dissent, was perhaps Tito's frankest gesture, marked by a display of deep sincerity about the problems of nationality, "ones that everyone knew in their heart of hearts were going to bring down Yugoslavia after Tito had gone".²⁰⁸ This question, which never truly went away during Tito's time, shows that political debates were not only based on hearsay, but were rooted in the work mentality in Yugoslavia. Never has there been such an open admission from the leader of the state, for example in the USSR, about the future of the country. Tito's heartfelt remarks present a clear picture of the relative debate that existed in Yugoslavia, because he uttered such emotional sentences as a reaction to the debate that existed all over the country.

There was considerable talk about issues related to cultural development in Kosova. High natality amongst Albanians was described as 'natural nationalism'.²⁰⁹ By 1980, the average natality rate amongst Albanians was 6.7 children per couple²¹⁰, but the rate in undeveloped and urban semi-developed regions was 4.2 children less for every couple compared with a decade ago. Nonetheless, the issue of birth rates amongst Albanians

²⁰⁷ Tito's home page. <http://www.titoville.com/speeches-mp3.html>

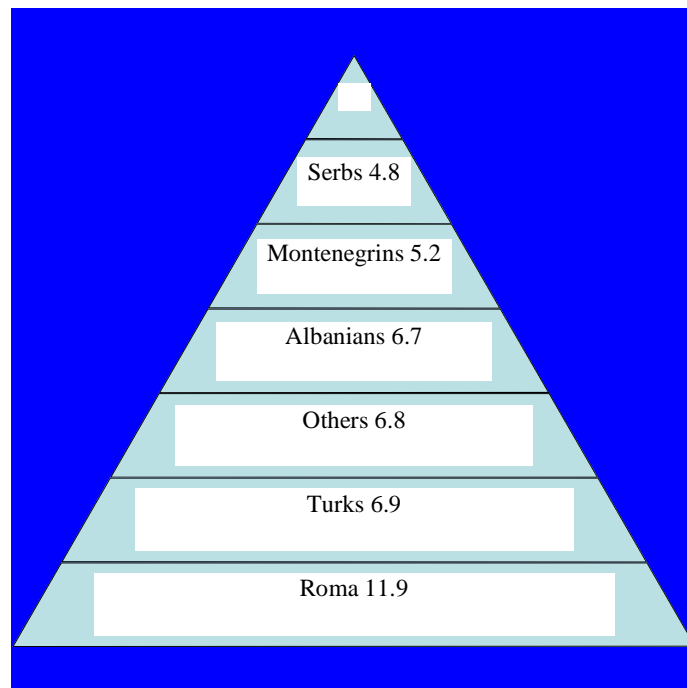
²⁰⁸ Kaplan R. 'Ground Zero' New Republic 2 August 1993.

²⁰⁹ The idea of natural nationalism was first used in 1978 in Belgrade. It is supposedly a political instrument by the Albanians who by naturally increasing their birth rate increase their political preponderance.

²¹⁰ Statistički godišnjak Jugoslavije. Federal statistics annual dossier. 1982.

soon became a political hot potato of biased speculation, though the purveyors of such questions never asked for better family planning – which was non-existent – or why the number of educated rural women was so low, or why one of the most basic rights of humans (i.e. the right to have a family of their own) was irresponsibly questioned when Albanians were concerned, but exuberantly promoted in the case of the Serb and Montenegrin populations in Kosova.

The Percentage of Natality by Nationality in Kosova per Couple ²¹¹



The women of Yugoslavia, despite having witnessed a near-complete change in their lives, were still the most unemployed, the least politically represented, and always

²¹¹ Enti statistikorë i Kosovës. Regjistri i popullsisë për vitin 1981 në Krahinen Socialiste Autonome të Kosovës. p22-4. (The statistics directorate of Kosova. 1981 population census for the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosova.)

underpaid in comparison to men (Ramet S. 1999, p95).

Due to such a situation, Ivan Stambolić, Serbia's prime minister, warned in 1977 that "Serb national feelings have increased, while amongst Albanians they already exist" (Stambolić I. 1988, p26). Branko Horvat was of the same opinion, blaming "feudal masters in shape of local political oligarchs" for the stagnant situation in the province (Horvat B ,1989 p185). Because of the undemocratic, elitist, and clientelist political system, the state was unable to confront the political and social crisis which resulted from then onwards (Thoumi. F. 1999, p131).

In spring 1981, students of Prishtina University again conducted demonstrations of an economic, cultural, and political character influenced by nationalistic feelings, this time assisted by dissatisfied workers and intellectuals. Most probably fearing the power vacuum left by Tito's death, and feeling the heat from the ensuing economic and political crisis, the demonstrations in the streets of Prishtina, which this time round were much larger than those of 1968, were signalling the bleaker days for Yugoslavia

To summarise this chapter, the 1974 constitution brought political changes. They were a contributor to the prevailing mood of political liberalism and the tendency towards further decentralisation. In other words, Yugoslavia was initiating the decline of the state (Neal F.W. 1958, p19). Despite their opposition, the constitutive units of the federation seemed satisfied with the highest state document, for it guaranteed a sense of individuality. For the Albanians in Kosova, the 1974 constitution came as a surprise.

Many political figures had not anticipated a change in the political terrain that would put

Kosova on an almost equal footing with other republics.

However, broader political changes were deemed impossible for several reasons. First, eroding the power of the state further would have been “a dangerous incentive for unilateral actions of self-determination by composing units” (Bataković D. 1994. p 79).

Secondly, the economic crisis of the 1970s provided some room to manoeuvre.

Weakening the federal structure through devolution would have placed economic stability into question. Thirdly, Tito’s advanced age was a problem. Many political players were often trying to envisage a Yugoslavia without Tito, and asking what would happen to Yugoslav solidarity, how strong were the ties and bonds of the union under brotherhood and unity, and *Quo Vadis Yugoslavia?* (Allcock. J. B. 2000, p 411).

Expectations by republics that they would become true nation-states were not met. For example, as a province, Kosova had thwarted Serbia’s expectations of political aggrandisement, much as Serbia had stood in the way of Kosova’s political objectives.

Therefore, for all these reasons, the re-examination of political and constitutional achievements started once again soon after 1974. Various colliding groups such as separatists, secessionists, nationalists, centralists, liberals, the army and the veteran organisations, began to question how much room there was for self-appraisal. Who ended up satisfied and happy with such changes? Why were they finding discrepancies and disparities between what they wanted (in some cases even verbally promised) and what they received by law? Such political friction soon erupted to the surface, and it shook Yugoslavia to its core.

CONCLUSION

Despite the fact that from 1945 onwards, Yugoslavia was a communist society, and regardless of the propositions that in autocratic regimes freedom of speech is censored, this thesis has proved otherwise. A relative measure of freedom existed Yugoslavia albeit coerced and ideologically imbued. Such freedom was observed by academic, intellectual and workers' circles soon after the 1948 break-up of relations with the USSR as the political mentor of the new world order. The movement from statist, political and economic system, into self-management that prioritised workers and their needs made Yugoslavia interesting, firstly because many observers had predicted its slide into capitalism, and secondly because of its persistent survival from capitalism or Stalinism. However, by advocating workers' issues, other problems emerged, specifically those concerned with the ethnic composition of the state, constitutional antagonisms, and devolution of power. Such problems were centred on issues of delegated power to the federal units, devolution of power to such units, and the position of nations and nationalities in those units. The case of the Albanian population is a particularly important one, for they represented an autochthon people who, despite the fact that they lived in a compact territory, were divided between four federal units. This issue, and the political demand that Albanians should have a republic inside Yugoslavia, after the union of Kosova with Albania was disallowed, are the points that brought the most friction in relations between Albanians and the Serbian and federal authorities. Therefore debate waged all over the Albanian regions of Yugoslavia, and the desire for the expression of political will can be observed from 1946, with the trial of Professor Marije Shllaku and

her companions, the 1954 trial of high-party officials of Kosova, and the decade of the 1960s, known as a period of relaxed communism. Characteristically, it was the political and economic crisis in Yugoslavia that led to adoption of bold reforms. In many ways, they cut through the indecisiveness of the past in favour of freer economic relations. By running ahead of other communist countries, Yugoslavia became the symbol of the 'liberal' trend in dealing with problems they all faced, including the Soviet Union. From 1965 onwards, Yugoslavia was immersed in a long battle for decentralisation, market economy, material incentives, participating in the world economic institutions, trade redirection, and a changing or even a declining role of the party, as opposed to centralism, strict party control and the bureaucratism of the Old Guard.

In Kosova, this period is manifested with debates about the status of the province and the national question. Vladimir Bakarić said that "Yugoslavia had two main problems – the economic reform and the nationalities question. If the first could not be solved, the second would immediately become problem number one" (Borba 06/03/1966).²¹² So the problem of nationalities in Yugoslavia, undoubtedly one of the most intricate in Europe, was bound to bring political crisis.

After the cutting of ties with Stalin, Yugoslavia began to develop its own political and economic institutions, and differences based on nationality began to grow within the party and agencies of government, especially those with economic connotations. This shows that there never was a true identification with Yugoslav nationality which for many was very different from their separate national and regional identities. Tito's

²¹² Osetljivo i opasno. (Tender and dangerous)

communists could not change the situation merely by proclaiming socialism (Bromke A and Rakowska Harmstone T. 1972, p 191), even though socialism appealed to many as a child of enlightenment. As an ideology, it sought to fashion a new just and prosperous society, based on a Marxist eclectic mix of morality and materialism, but in Yugoslavia the relations between nations were not based on durable foundations. They depended most of all on the monolithic CPY holding monopoly of power.

In Kosova, groups of students, workers and intellectuals alike even protested against the system at a time when in other student campuses of Yugoslavia demonstrations were making headlines, more so due to the comprehensive international threat following the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia. However, the prevailing era of positive optimism manifested in constitutional amendments of 1968-'69, which elevated Kosova's autonomy higher than ever before, to culminate in the 1974 constitution that had styled Yugoslavia as a semi-confederation of fairly independent nations - 'nation states' - with Kosova gaining near-political autonomy from Serbia.

The study of constitutional debate shows that people are a factor of change even in the worst of conditions. It shows that political changes were promulgated to save the existing political framework, to help the main political demands for internal and external factorisation, to adapt to the ever-growing needs of institutions, the party and the people, and to differentiate from political processes in other countries of the same dogma. The constitutional process also points to the flaws of previous constitutions, and the recognition that they had to change, even though at the time of their approval they were strong and pedantic in nature; it exemplifies the factorisation of decentralisation as achieving direct political representation and affiliation of the people with the state.

The problem of constitutional amendments was interpreted accordingly in each of the political units. The issue of national relevance always played a significant part in such discussions that linked constitutional changes to internal factors, national frictions and economic and political decentralisation, thus illustrating that the great conundrum of nationalism, i.e. “ethnic nation understands an ethnic society supposed to be politically organised in a nation state and exclusively identified by it” (Krejčí, J & Velímský V. 1981, p 35) was not defeated. By and large, the national tendencies were powerful in all federal units, and they showed relative preponderance in action.

The role of the party in the decentralised, self-managing society still remained a problem. The party, which was increasingly becoming a group of national communist parties, was often in a precarious position when trying to assert itself from the centre. For the most part, the communists wanted to retain the monopoly of political power that the system guaranteed, but the creation of other institutions to serve the system such as the workers' councils, the complex federal arrangements, and the relationship between party and the government only increased the battle for power. This and the scramble for prestige by the new class deepened the gap between doctrine and reality, and made it so difficult to implement the most logically conceived reforms in practice. This prompted John C. Campbell to ask whether what was happening in Yugoslavia was a socialisation of the Balkans or the Balkanisation of socialism (Jelavić B 1963, p 396).

Amongst all these issues is the illustrated idea which began to be voiced with octogenarian Tito's increasingly frail health, when more developed and industrialised federal units in the north began to question the need to help less-performing federal units of the south through the fund for undeveloped regions, something that touched the very

existence of Yugoslavia. This gave rise to the troubled politics of the late-1980s, when in Slovenia for example the burden of funding underdeveloped regions was only cementing their argument for secession, whereas in Kosova the economic benefits from remaining in Yugoslavia were in steep decline, since they had fallen to 26% of the Yugoslav average. There is also a scholarly debate related to this idea which argues that the failure of interwar Yugoslavism during King Aleksandar's dictatorship, where the joint state was a typical construct of the Serbian kingdom that never truly dismantled to become a Yugoslav kingdom, left a distinct impact on the politics of Tito and the Yugoslav Communists during the post-war period. This was mirrored in various forms on the issues of dominance by Serbia in the federation, or the equality of other entities and nations in the union with Serbia. This interesting idea begs the question that if Yugoslavism had continued to exist as an increasing number of people wanted (indicated by population censuses, where those calling themselves Yugoslavs were on the increase), how far would Yugoslavia's destruction in the 1990s have gone?

Another issue is the peculiar internal relations that existed vis-à-vis Belgrade and Prishtina. Serbia tended to view Kosova as an integral and inseparable area with the political status of a province, but there primarily to accommodate the needs and demands of the Serbian and Montenegrin population present, as well as the majority Albanian population and other minorities. The Albanians on the other hand viewed Kosova as the only home they had, hence their arguments for complete secession from Serbia. This issue produced a number of debates in Kosova and Serbia about how far these political units should be tied to each other. However, neither of the fringe arguments won the day, which leaves a lot of disparities in the issue of autonomy, for the issue of what kind of

autonomy did not satisfy Albanian political demands, and Serbian controlling tendencies. These issues are linked to the wider implications of Kosova as a case study, beginning with the historical preconditioning of the country, the political, social, economic and constitutional development and related issues linked with nationalism, decentralisation, federalism and communism. Kosova as a case study brings forth most of these questions, but all with different representation, since the politics of Kosova was very different from traditional conventional politics in Yugoslavia or Europe. The difference occurred because nationalistic tendencies shaped the politics of Kosova, they played an integral part in the debate about federalism, and decentralisation, and they were concomitant factors in the wider understanding of the general situation. The issues of who was the main political subject in Kosova (the Serbs in minority, but empowered by Serbia, or the Albanians in majority), how far did factorisation extend, was there relative freedom or subdued freedom in comparison with other entities in the federation, was Kosova the centre of the Albanian universe in Yugoslavia, were the rights of Albanians (and other nationalities in Yugoslavia) deliberately violated due to the non-Slavic origin of the Albanians (which would explain the fact that most of the federal units saw Kosova as trouble) or to historic antagonisms between the two nations (which would explain the uneasy relationship between Albanians and Serbs in the federation), all pertained to the wider political life in Kosova. Other arguments along the same lines relate to the issue of nationality as a factor of devolution, for all the constitutional amendments were attempts to solve the national problem as the primary factor of possible dissatisfaction. In so doing, the economic issues of Yugoslavia were sometimes ignored. These were, however, inseparably linked. By giving in to the demands for economic factorisation (the concept

of self-management was above all an economic dogmatic construct), the constitutional amendments inevitably raised both the ethnicity and the economic questions, but also the problem of Yugoslavia as a whole. The primary impacts were on the issues of the economic clout of Kosova as a provincial political organisation, and the political clout of Kosova and the Albanians as a political entity, as well as other nationalities, given that the 1981 census showed 27 different nationalities in Yugoslavia and only six of them had a federal unit dedicated to them.

Finally, important implications in the findings about Kosova include the fact that Yugoslavia was regulated as a country with ethnic minorities scattered all over the federal units. Only Slovenia had a smaller and less significant problem of that nature. This issue made the concept of solving the minorities' problems very tricky, for some of the federal units were demanding greater rights for their compatriots in other federal units, but they were not always willing to act accordingly in solving the problems of nationalities that existed in their own republics. The case of Serbia asking for equal treatment of Serbs in Kosova, Croatia and Macedonia is the most evocative. The Belgrade government however never showed any interest in solving the issues of Albanian, Croat or Macedonian populations in the Peoples Republic of Serbia. The umpteen numbers of original sources from the Serbo-Croat and Albanian languages in this thesis have made an invaluable contribution and illustrated precisely the main argument, that debate in Communist Yugoslavia not only existed but was to a considerable subjective degree tolerated and incited. They have proved that Kosovan Communist leaders themselves were part of such debates, for they often articulated popular demands of their constituents at federal level and became the locomotive which

moved things further, though not to the desired outcome.

Nevertheless, Yugoslavia was a case of many issues, and only a few of them have been discussed properly at length. It was for many a cunning experiment that took place at the right time (a neutral political body that adopted communism but did not close the doors to capitalism), hence its existence.

And lastly, the Yugoslav case is important if we are to consider the future of the region and the common collaboration and integration into the joint European institutions. For now, after Yugoslavia has dismembered, seven new independent states have emerged all of whom have very peculiar problems, where the nationality issue is one of the strongest. However, they all strive for prosperity and better ethnic relations. It will be very interesting to observe whether various ethnic minorities within these states, who are in most cases part of the nation from a neighbouring state, will be used as a bridge for better relations or as a cause for further drama and conflict. Therefore, the challenges for Kosovo and the rest of the region are to reduce high levels of poverty and unemployment, to manage political instability and the risk of conflict, to develop more effective and accountable government, and to realise the opportunity of joining the European Union as an umbrella group that offers political, economic, and social stability.

In the last passage of his novel, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, its author Alexander Dumas confides thatall we can do is wait and hope for the best.

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