

Articles for the book
CONFLICT IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA: AN ENCYCLOPEDIA

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BUKOSHI, BUJAR

Bujar Bukoshi is a leading **Kosovo Albanian** political figure. Born in 1947 in Suhareka / Suva Reka (Kosovo), Bukoshi studied medicine in Belgrade and Berlin. As a specialist in urology, he worked for a number of years as associate professor of surgery at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Prishtina. In October 1991 was elected to the post of prime minister of the self-proclaimed Republic of Kosovo. He leads his government from exile in Germany.

CUBRILOVIC, VASO (1897-1990)

A **Bosnian Serb** scholar and political figure. Vaso Cubrilovic was born in Bosanska Gradiška. As a student, he participated in the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand of **Austria-Hungary** in Sarajevo in 1914 - the event that precipitated the World War I. Between the two wars, he was professor at the Faculty of Arts in Belgrade and a leading member of the **Serbian Academy** of Sciences and Arts. It was for the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts that Cubrilovic prepared a number of politically influential memoranda particularly in favour of the “**ethnic cleansing**” of national minorities, such as the **Albanians** in **Kosovo** and the Germans in the **Vojvodina**. Among these documents are *Iseljavanje Arnauta* (“The Expulsion of the Albanians”), presented in Belgrade on 7 March 1937, and *Manjinski problem u novoj Jugoslaviji* (“The Minority Problem in the New Yugoslavia”), presented in Belgrade on 3 November 1944. Cubrilovic held several ministerial portfolios in the Yugoslav government after World War II. Of his major publications, mention must be made of the monograph *Istorija politicke misle u Srbiji XIX veka* (History of Political Thought in Serbia in the 19th Century), published in Belgrade in 1958.

DEMAÇI, ADEM

Adem Demaçi (born 1936) is a **Kosovo Albanian** prose writer, former political prisoner, and human rights activist. He is author of the controversial novel *Gjarpijt e gjakut* (“The Snakes of Blood”), Prishtina 1958, on the theme of vendetta. He was held for 28 years, between 1958 and 1990, as a political prisoner of the Belgrade regime, and he was considered at the time one of Yugoslavia’s most prominent political dissidents. Since his release from prison on 28 April 1990, he has been active in the field of human rights and is currently head of the *Committee for the Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms* in Prishtina. In 1991, Adem Demaçi was awarded the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought by the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France.

DEMOCRATIC LEAGUE OF KOSOVO

As the leading political party of the **Albanian** community in **Kosovo**, the Democratic League of Kosovo (*Lidhja Demokratike e Kosovës* - LDK) was formed in December 1989 after the dissolution of the one-party **League of Communists of Yugoslavia**, and soon received wide support among the Albanians in Kosovo. Other parties were also founded. Under **Ibrahim Rugova**, the LDK won the majority in the Kosovo elections of 24 May 1992 (boycotted by the Serb minority and ignored by the

Belgrade authorities), in which a total of 24 political parties and groups took part. Although the elected four-party parliament has not yet been able to meet, the LDK is regarded as the legal political representative of the majority Albanian community in Kosovo. The LDK has branch offices abroad (including Britain, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden and the United States) to co-ordinate its political activities.

KAÇANIK, CONSTITUTION OF

In a reaction to the new Serbian constitution of 1989 which did away with the autonomy of **Kosovo** for all practical purposes, the **Albanian** side (i.e. the Albanian members of the Kosovo parliament) proclaimed the existence of the “Republic of Kosovo” on 2 July 1990. Three days later, the parliament of **Serbia** declared the parliament of Kosovo to be illegal and threatened reprisals against parliamentarians in the capital, **Prishtina**. For this reason, Kosovo parliamentarians met on 7 September 1990 in the town of Kaçanik, 35 miles south of Prishtina, and in an impromptu session promulgated the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo,. This constitution was confirmed in a Kosovo-wide referendum on 26 to 30 September 1991 by a majority vote of 87.5 percent. The republic was proclaimed but has not yet been internationally recognized.

KOSOVO

Kosovo, also known as Kosova, is a region in the southern Balkans bordering on **Albania, Macedonia, Serbia** proper and **Montenegro**. Its capital is Prishtina (Alb. *Prishtinë* / Serbochr. *Priština*). Kosovo has a territory of 10,887 square kilometers and an estimated population of about 2,000,000. There are no reliable statistics as to the ethnic groups populating Kosovo, but it is generally accepted that **Albanian** speakers make up 85-90% of the population, with Serbian speakers accounting for most of the rest (there are also small minorities of Turkish, Romani and Cirkassian speakers). After the collapse of the **Ottoman Empire** on the eve of the First World War, Kosovo, which has been inhabited by Serbs and Albanians for centuries, was conquered by Serb forces. The inclusion of Kosovo into the new “Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes” left almost half the Albanian population in the Balkans outside their Albanian homeland, but helped ensure the survival of Serbian culture in the “holy lands” of what was once known as Old Serbia. The Kosovo Albanians did not fare any better under their Serb rulers than they had under the Ottoman sultans. Denied all linguistic, cultural and educational rights, they were forced to play the role of simple peasant farmers in a country which the south Slavs considered their exclusive property. Albanian-language schools remained as unlawful as they had been under the Turks, and even the possession of Albanian-language books was dangerous for the few people in Kosovo who could read at the time.

“**Ethnic cleansing**” was a keystone of Serbian policy towards Kosovo from the very start. In the 1920s and 1930s, indeed up to 1960, hundreds of thousands of Albanians were forcibly expelled from their homeland, mostly to Turkey, under the absurd pretext that they were Turks, and Serbian colonists were more than willing to occupy and settle the newly vacated farmlands. Characteristic of the attitude taken by the Serbian authorities before the World War II was a memorandum presented to the Belgrade government on 7 March 1937 by noted Serbian historian **Vaso Cubrilovic** on the expulsion of the Albanians. As a consequence, Albanian loyalties to the royalist Yugoslav state were divided when Axis powers occupied Kosovo in 1941 and reunited the province with Albania, giving Kosovo Albanians schools and cultural facilities in their own language for the first time.

In early 1945, Kosovo was formally returned to Yugoslavia after **Tito**

persuaded communist leaders in Albania to give up the principle of self-determination, a “Marxist solution”, for the region. Tito realized he would never receive Serbian support for a referendum on self-determination. On its reincorporation into Tito’s Yugoslavia, Kosovo was nonetheless declared an Autonomous Region within the Republic of Serbia, not as an integral part of Serbia.

The extreme political divergence between Yugoslavia and Albania which had erupted in 1948 made it evident to Kosovo Albanians that they could not look to the Albanian capital of Tirana for anything more than moral support in the areas of culture and education. The Albanian **language** had finally been proclaimed one of the official languages of Kosovo, but the linguistic and educational rights that were theoretically enjoyed by the Albanian population in Kosovo long remained more abstract than concrete. Tito’s would-be successor, vice-president **Aleksandar Rankovic**, made active use of the secret police to repress and terrorize the Albanian population, whom he despised, in favour of a “**Greater Serbia**”, until his fall from grace at the **Brioni** Plenum in July 1966.

The improvement of Yugoslav-Albanian relations in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and the establishment of full diplomatic ties between the two countries in February 1971 brought about a political thaw for the Kosovo Albanians. In 1968, they won the right to fly their national flag and in November 1969 the bilingual University of Prishtina was opened, facilitating higher education in Albanian for the first time. Full cultural autonomy was first achieved after much delay under the Yugoslav constitution of 1974, though only in Kosovo itself, not for the large Albanian community in Macedonia.

The spirit of Yugoslav unity and brotherhood, and the semblance of autonomy and freedom which the Albanians enjoyed throughout the seventies were brought to an abrupt end in 1981. The popular demand for republic status and equality with the other peoples of the Yugoslav federation (a demand supported by the vast majority of the population of Kosovo), was met with tanks and automatic rifles.

The suppression of the uprising of March/April 1981 signalled the end of peaceful co-existence in Kosovo and, at the same time, the beginning of the demise of Yugoslavia. Throughout the 1980s, the political and economic situation in the province deteriorated and, as a result, inter-communal relations took a drastic turn for the worse - a harbinger of what was to come for all of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. The mass rallies of 1989 held by Serb ultra-nationalists, under the leadership of **Slobodan Milosevic**, to commemorate the six hundredth anniversary of the **Battle of Kosovo**, and the open Serbian military invasion of Kosovo in the summer of 1990, brought the province to the verge of civil war. The elected parliament and government of Kosovo were deposed, and the Albanian **media** were stifled; *Rilindja*, the only Albanian-language daily newspaper, was banned, and all Albanian-language radio and television broadcasting was shut down. Since then, “emergency legislation” has facilitated the direct takeover of all Kosovo industry and the firing not only of Albanian management but of all employees of Albanian nationality - literally hundreds of thousands of workers. In the autumn of 1991 teaching at the University of Prishtina was suspended, with the exception of courses reserved for the Serb minority, and all Albanian professors were expelled. Albanian-language elementary and secondary schools have been closed down, too. Nowhere in Europe, with the exception of Bosnia and Hercegovina, have human rights been so flagrantly and so systematically violated as in Kosovo.

The new Serbian constitution of 1989 did away with the autonomy of Kosovo for all practical purposes. The Albanian side proclaimed the Republic of Kosovo on 2 July 1990. Three days later, the Parliament of Serbia declared the Parliament of

Kosovo to be illegal and threatened reprisals against parliamentarians in Prishtina. In an impromptu session held in Kaçanik on 7 September 1990, the “illegal” Parliament of Kosovo promulgated the Constitution. In a referendum held later that month, 87.5 percent of the population voted for Kosovo as an independent and sovereign state. The republic was proclaimed but has never been internationally recognized.

Since that time, Kosovo has been on the verge of civil war. Recognition of the tragedy of Bosnia is the only thing that has kept the two communities from total disaster. The ruling Serbian minority continues to view Kosovo as an integral part of Serbia and ignores all claims of the Albanian majority for equal rights and national self-determination. The Albanians, for their part, who suffer from continuous human rights violations by the Serbian police, military and legal system, have created a parallel state of their own in Kosovo under the auspices of a Kosovo government in exile. Alternative public institutions (schools, university, medical facilities, social assistance, tax system) have been put into place and function in a rudimentary manner.

By 1997, however, most Albanian political leaders in Kosovo and much of the population realized that the **Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK)** politics of passive resistance to Serb rule had achieved virtually nothing after seven years of heavy-handed occupation. The demands of the Kosovo Albanians were simply being ignored by Belgrade and by the international community. Increasing frustration resulted in an increasing desire for more active forms of resistance. Among such alternatives has been the rise of an embryonic group calling itself the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA, or *Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës - UÇK*), which began isolated attacks on Serbian officials and on police and military installations, in particular around Skenderaj / Srbica in the Drenica region. By the end of 1997, the Serbian authorities had lost military control over the whole of the Drenica region, at least during the nighttime. The economic, political and social collapse of the Republic of Albania in March 1997, during which all the country's military arsenals were plundered and huge amounts of weaponry dispersed among the population, resulted not only in increasing instability for the region as a whole, but also in a clandestine trade in arms. Paramilitary groups such as the KLA were now, for the first time, in a position to extend operations in order, in their view, to defend the population from Serb attacks. The situation boiled over in March 1998 when a Serb military offensive in the Drenica region led to the brutal slaying of dozens of Albanians, including women and children.

The only positive element of the current crisis is that the international community has finally taken note of the oppression of the Kosovo Albanians and of the urgency of the situation. It remains to be seen whether the rest of the world will be any better at coming to terms with Kosovo than it was at dealing with Bosnia.

References: Elsie, Robert. *Kosovo: in the Heart of the Powder Keg*, Boulder CO, East European Monographs, 1997; Malcolm, Noel, *Kosovo: a Short History*, London: Macmillan, 1998; Vickers, Miranda, *Between Serb and Albanian: a History of Kosovo*, London: Hurst 1998.

KRASNIQI, MARK

Mark Krasniqi was born in 1920 at Gllaviçica / Glavicica (Kosovo) and graduated from high school in Prizren in 1941. From 1941 to 1943 he studied literature at the University of Padua (Italy) and from 1946 to 1950 studied geography and ethnography at the University of Belgrade. From 1947 to 1949, he was also responsible for Albanian-language programmes on Radio Belgrade. Having graduated in 1950, he worked from 1951 to 1961 for the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts as assistant professor and later as a full professor. After finishing his doctorate at the

University of Ljubljana in 1960, he returned to Kosovo where he taught at the University of Prishtina from 1961 to 1981 when he was expelled in the wake of the March/April uprising. Over the years Mark Krasniqi had served as dean of the faculty of law and economics, as head of the Academy of Sciences and Art of Kosovo, and as head of the Kosovo Writer's Union (1970). His expulsion from the University in 1981 caused him to become increasingly involved in party politics in Kosovo where, as head of the Albanian Christian Democratic Party of Kosovo, he is now a leading figure of public and political life. Mark Krasniqi is also the author of works of literature, studies in ethnography and lucid political essays on the Kosovo question.

QOSJA, REXHEP

Rexhep Qosja (born 1936) is a Kosovo **Albanian** scholar, writer, and literary critic and a leading political figure in **Kosovo**. He studied Albanian language and literature in **Prishtina** and Belgrade and is now a member of the Kosovo Academy of Sciences and Art. He is the author of many works on Albanian literature and on the present political situation. Among these are: *Dialogje me shkrimtarët* (Dialogues with Writers), Prishtina 1968; *Panteoni i rralluar* (A Rarified Pantheon), Prishtina 1973; *Morfologjia e një fushate* (The Morphology of a Campaign), Prishtina 1980; *Historia e letërsisë shqipe, Romantizmi* (History of Albanian Literature, Romanticism), Prishtina, 3 vol., 1984-1986; *Populli i ndaluar* (The Banned People), Prishtina 1990; *Strategjia e bashkimit shqiptar* (The Strategy of Albanian Unification), Prishtina 1992; and *Çështja shqiptare, Historia dhe politika* (The Albanian Question, History and Politics), Prishtina 1994, which has been translated into French and is currently being published in English. His novel *Vdekja më vjen prej syve të tillë* (Death Comes with Such Eyes), Prishtina 1974, has also been translated into French and German. As a public figure in Kosovo, Rexhep Qosja has become somewhat of a father figure of the nation. In the political spectrum, he is considered the proponent of a course more active than that of the **Democratic League of Kosovo** (LDK) under **Ibrahim Rugova** in its opposition to the Belgrade regime.

RUGOVA, IBRAHIM

In the multiparty parliamentary elections of 24 May 1992 (boycotted by the Serb minority and ignored by the Belgrade authorities), Ibrahim Rugova was elected with 97 percent of the votes as president of the self-proclaimed Republic of **Kosovo**. He was born on 2 December 1944 in Cerrca near Istog / Istok (Kosovo). His father and grandfather were executed by the Communists on 10 January 1945. Rugova finished his undergraduate studies of Albanian language and literature at the University of Prishtina in 1971. From 1976 to 1977 he studied at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes in Paris under the internationally eminent French writer and literary critic Roland Barthes. It was in the late 1960s that Rugova began writing and specializing in literary criticism. In 1972, he worked as a research scholar and professor of literature at the Albanological Institute in Prishtina where he was responsible for the academic periodical *Gjurime Albanologjike* (Albanological Research). Among his major publications are: *Vepra e Bogdanit 1675-1685* (The Works of Bogdani, 1675-1685), Prishtina 1982; *Kahe dhe premisa të kritikës letrare shqiptare 1504-1983* (Directions and Premises of Albanian Literary Criticism, 1504-1983), Prishtina 1986; and *Refuzimi estetik* (Aesthetic Rejection), Prishtina 1987.

On 23 December 1989, Ibrahim Rugova was elected as chairman of the **Democratic League of Kosovo** (*Lidhja Demokratike e Kosovës*), the political party called into being to defend the rights of the **Albanian** community in Kosovo. His views, his policy of passive resistance and his particular approach to maintaining

peace and calm in an explosive region have been well put forward in the French-language volume *La question du Kosovo, Entretiens avec Marie-Françoise Allain et Xavier Galmiche* (The Kosovo Question, Conversations with Marie-Françoise Allain and Xavier Galmiche), Paris 1994. Ibrahim Rugova lives miraculously in **Prishtina**.

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