

Štěpánek, Václav

Yugoslavia – Serbia – Kosovo : Kosovo in 20th century

In: Štěpánek, Václav. *Jugoslávie - Srbsko - Kosovo : kosovská otázka ve 20. století*. Vyd. 1. Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 2011, pp. 440-451

ISBN 9788021054769

Stable URL (handle): <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/124191>

Access Date: 19. 02. 2024

Version: 20220831

Terms of use: Digital Library of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University provides access to digitized documents strictly for personal use, unless otherwise specified.

Yugoslavia – Serbia – Kosovo

Kosovo in 20th century

Kosovo issue represents a comprehensive complex of problems and issues, ensuing from troubles involving the coexistence of provincial Albanian majority and Serbian minority, residing at relatively small common territory situated in the middle of Balkans. Said complications are implied by the fact, that both ethnics herein are divided also by religion. Furthermore, both mythologized their relationship against the inherent territory. For Serbians it represents a center of their medieval state. This is featured with numerous monuments, historical site of Kosovo Field Battle, the literary interpretation of which became a state-constructive mythological buttress of their identity over centuries. For Albanians, Kosovo is the cradle of their national revival, a place, where their state-constructive concepts arose in 1878. Conflict of the above concepts, the age of which overcame 100 years, became acute in last decades as much as it is felt to be an international problem, endangering the whole European safety.

That is why hundreds of works were written on Kosovo issue in last two decades. However, not all topics were discussed up till now. Submitted work has been focused to elucidate one of rarely touched topics – to give a convincing description, how the League of Communists, governing in Yugoslavia since 1945 to 1990, endeavored to resolve the Kosovo issue.

Nevertheless, this paper describing the Kosovo issue covers the overall 20th century. Wherever it may be necessary, we strive to disclose deeper roots of some phenomena, or in cases, where an interpretation of certain development trends may remain unclear without elucidating their historical past. However, this paper affects also processes exceeding the framework of 20th century towards the past.

It sketches the events of Kosovo and Metohija issue within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia between the WWI and WWII in relative details, since there might be found phenomena both forming the opinion of Communists as for the Kosovo issue, and determining the success of their enforcement.

Great part of the work is focused to the advance, development, and functioning of Kosovo autonomy “zooming” the effort of Communist Government and Administration to redevelop economic, ethnical, and “statism” type problems, as inherited from the past. Hereat, presenting the events is based on detailed research of archival repositories. Such research is felt to be missing in Czech historiography, papers of western historiography provenience usually lack the repository base of Communist Yugoslavia at all, pertinently are ignoring it. In doing so, collection of Central Committee documents of the League of Communists of Serbia [1966–1981] belonged for the author to the most significant archival repositories hereof.

Access to archival documents enabled to draw on the atmosphere of plodding meetings of communist panels, turbulent turning point discussions, and plots and oppressions, without which we can not imagine the industry of top communist authorities. Paper notices efforts of the communist leaders focused to emancipating and integrating the Albanian residents, as well as trials to industrialize the region. Work adverts to failures, resulted from this effort, seeking

causes, which has led to it. It is also analyzing the reasons for increasing problems within inter-ethnic relationships in the region, which started to influence political climate in the overall Yugoslavia in second half of 70th, and at the beginning of 80th. Huge analysis investigates the last trial of Communist Party of Yugoslavia to intervene effectively into still deepening inter-ethnic and economic issues in Kosovo. Said was compiled as so called *Political Platform of the League of the Communists of Yugoslavia* (SKJ) after the flare-up of Albanian disaffectedness, taking part in 1981. Thus, incompetence of Communist leaders to enforce the conclusions of said document opened the way to the victory of nationalistic concepts.

However, these concepts appeared as hidden already in previous period. Of course, nationalistic principles are specified in details within the work. Including their incidence in the form of reciprocal invidious and chauvinistic hysteria in the second half of 80th. Said fact, at the end converted into one of factors for dissolution of Yugoslavia. Analysis of processes, connected with accession of Slobodan Milošević to power in Serbia, together with his effort to obstruct the autonomy of Kosovo (and Vojvodina), during which he mobilized masses of Serbian people unprecedentedly at the series of meetings, called populist „anti-bureaucratic revolution“. Its consequences - revoking the Kosovo autonomy, repression of Milošević regime, Albanian boycott of official institutions as well as declaration of shadow Albanian Republic at Kosovo, brought conclusion to paper interpretation.

Explication works go on chronologically. However, flowing of action is interrupted with chapters showing Kosovo day-to-day life, as well as drawing attention to principles of ethnic domination, being applied in province upon utilization of ideological methods, enabled by communist system.

Historical framework of the work is limited with 1912, when the province, after five centuries of being a part of the Ottoman Empire, entered into Serbian and Montenegro Kingdom. After the end of the WWI it enters the newly established state - Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (since 1929 Yugoslavia). Kosovo and Metohija never established a separate geographic - political unit in the history, nor within the new state. Its territory has been divided into several districts, so called „banovinas“. Slavonic population of Kosovo and Metohija was a considerable minority within the province. Its number decreased after exodus at the end of 17th and first half of 18th centuries, and after huge migrations taking place after the Congress of Berlin (1878). Most of population here were warlike Albanian Muslims, who resented the modification of state of affairs. Among others, since just before the war won the autonomy within Ottoman Empire, which unified provinces settled by Albanians into one unit. Their resistance against a new state Albanian population showed thru so called „kachak“ (bandit guerrillas) insurgency, being pacified upon huge death toll on both sides as far as in 1924.

Prewar state integration concept for Kosovo and Metohija did not take into account the Albanian minority very much. Interests of Albanian landlords were promoted by the „Xhemijet“ political party at the beginning, but it was abolished in 1925. New Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes strived to modify the ethnical situation of the territory, unfavorable from their point of view, resolved thru colonization of Slavonic, predominantly Serbian agricultural people. Agrarian reform represented an integral part of it. However, said colonization was not successful very much, and it stirred up very bad blood. Videlicet, it often

modified the property rights of Albanian settlers. Considering the collective eviction of Albanian population to Turkey was an integral part of integration effort. In 1938 Yugoslavian government came into convention with Turkey on immigration of thousands Muslim families, however, this plan was not performed finally. Publication shows details, similarly like opinions of some prepotent Serbian intellectuals as for the process of colonization and eviction. Interwar concept of Kosovo and Metohija integration, even due to the fact that it has been done mostly by the state administration, concentrated in the province in Serbian "hands", was marked to be "Great Serbian" one, in communist opinions already.

Results of the callous integration efforts were negated thru the WWII. Italian occupation administration, which acquired under their control most of Kosovo and Metohija territory, satisfied the ambition of Albanian society as for fulfilling awakening ideas and appended the province to Albania. In newly established Great Albania the occupation authorities awarded the population with rights, being denied to them by last establishment: possibility of national self-determination, usage of national symbols, local autonomy, schools with home language education, and others. Majority of population considered it to be a considerable improvement in their situation, and that is why, in practice almost none resistance took place in this province. As a revenge for previous wrong of the Yugoslavian establishment most of Serbian colonists were evicted after the fall of Yugoslavia taken place in April 1941, partially even slaughtered!

The only resistance exception in Kosovo and Metohija represented the communist one. Publication describes it in details, similarly like the origin of Communist Party (later Party of Labor after 1948) in adjacent Albania and its anti-fascist uprising, in which Kosovo communists took part. However, the League of Communists of Yugoslavia had a small base only in the province, where two dozens only represented ethnic Albanians. Finally, several small guerilla detachments were established in the province. Thus, first in the history Kosovo and Metohija were considered to be unified geopolitical entirety at the conference of communist resistance of Kosovo and Metohija, taking place in village of Bunjaj in December 1943! Majority of members in newly established provincial committee tended to postwar appending the province to Albania. This contingency was considered even by certain top position members of the Communists Party of Yugoslavia, the national liberation army of which deliberated the province in November 1944. Even in this case a revolt against new power was produced, having the center in hilly region of Drenica. Upon heavy death toll the insurrections were suppressed with the help of two brigades of communist army from adjacent Albania just in May 1945.

Furthermore, publication herein shows the reasons, why in Yugoslavian Communists Party prevailed the opinion as for the necessity to keep the province as an integral part of Yugoslavia. Inherent role played also ideas of Yugoslav communist leader Josip Broz Tito. These concerned the establishment of Balkan Communist Federation, involving Albania and Bulgaria, as well. In communist Yugoslavia the Kosovo and Metohija acquired for the first time fixed border demarcation. Autonomous status has been granted to them within the framework of Serbian People Republic. This was declared on August 10, 1945. Standing of the autonomy has been guaranteed also by new Yugoslavian federative constitution. Communists Party of Yugoslavia, driven by sincere endeavor to release ethnical friction and suppressing the chauvinism, established the new state, based on the ideology of Yugoslavian nations brotherhood and unity. Within the framework

of this project Communists Party of Yugoslavia strived to resolve long-term problems as for the Kosovo, and to gain for it “hearts and brains” of Kosovo and Metohija Albanians, who has never considered Yugoslavian state to be their own.

Publication draws attention to the fact, that communists acquired an oppressive heritage as for Kosovo. From the point of view of economy the province was quite undeveloped. Albanian population, 90% of which was illiterate, in addition was caught into the net of patriarchal, tribal type society. This situation for a long time period did not enable equal rights and representation for women within the society.

Publication herein segregates several periods focused to the development of communist stance in resolving the Kosovo issue.

1. Since 1944 to 1956. This period is featured with normalization of the post-war circumstances. Effort of the communist establishment in raising the province resulted rather in the sphere of edification, to work against the illiteracy. However, the whole autonomy was “enchained” by Yugoslavian secret services (UDB) at that time. Secret services (UDB) governed here without any restriction even local communist party organizations had quite subordinate standing points against them. However, the mistrust towards Albanian ethnic, resulting in police supervision of the province, did not stem in national reasons only, but also reflected ideological aspects. Albanian population was, also due to the insurrection taking place in 1945 springtime, considered, to behave as a political reaction. Within Communist Yugoslavia participation in anti-fascist resistance represented the main criterion for state reliability and became a key for achieving leading positions. Nevertheless, few Albanians only were capable to prove it. This situation was deteriorated by the fact that after the split between Yugoslavian president Tito and Soviet leader Stalin in 1948, also communist leader of adjacent Albania - Enver Hoxha, passed over into the anti-Yugoslavian camp. Albania and Yugoslavia were, since this time, ideological enemies within the breakup of communist system in Yugoslavia. Yugoslavian communist theoreticians compiled model of so called autonomous socialism, incumbent on step-by-step circumstance liberation and in the sphere of economy, especially as for limiting the interventions of state into management of industrial enterprises. On the contrary, in Albania governed a rigid Stalinistic establishment. That is why Kosovo became a “breeding-ground” for ideological diversion from neighboring Albania.

Furthermore, based on detailed analyses of archival documents, the publication herein presents the most flagrant cases, showing deformations in activities being run by secret services (UDB).

Among them belonged especially so called Prizren pleading, aimed to the top Kosovo Albanian communist functionaries, and especially crackdown focused to outrageous disarmament taking place at the turn of 1955-1956. Said has been later understood to be the worst example of infringement of human rights, that took place in Kosovo by the period of socialist Yugoslavia. Numerous publications in connection with personal torts taking place in Kosovo describe also forced eviction of the Albanian ethnic to Turkey. However archival research did not affirm extraordinary ethnic displacements.

2. 1956-1966. Exerting pressure by state secret services (UDB) is dying away during this period, it is not obstructing at that time. Since 1956 the LCY paid increased attention also to the development of Kosovo economy. Financial grants were aimed to the province; special fund was established at the level of

Yugoslavian Federation, promoting underdeveloped provinces in 1961. Kosovo made use of bigger and bigger loan, step-by-step. Communists endeavored to integrate Kosovo Albanians into the system and any and all its power institutions. Proportional representation of Kosovo Albanians was considered to be the main criterion of the integration (reflecting the ethnic composition of provincial population) for all positions of political and economic life. Rigorous ethnic proportional shares were allocated to any and all positions, which were not allowed to be exceeded. Considerable increase in Albanian senior executives might be found in political representation. However, this effort faced to limits of Albanian education, at least at the early beginnings, its strict application resulted even in insensitiveness against Slavonic minority within this province. Publication pays considerable attention, based on archival data, to explanation of Albanian educational system and scholarship for this period, showing Kosovo demographic data, industrialization, retarded agriculture - still employing the biggest part of provincial population. Demographic explosion of Albanian ethnic becomes a great problem of that period.

3. 1966-1974. Turning point in the relations between Yugoslavian communists against Albanian ethnic was so called Brioni Plenum of the LCY Central Committee, where secret service activities were criticized. In fact, subject matter represented the ideological battle between two communist concepts - dogmatic, represented by A. Ranković, and "liberal" one, represented by E. Kardelj. Publication carefully describes the course of said Plenum and its results for Kosovo. Victory of the second concept opened way to decentralization of the state, and also resulted in increase in powers for autonomous provinces. After the Brioni Plenum, Yugoslavian and Serbian communist party leaders made decision to resolve long-term problematic common life of both Kosovo Albanian and Serbian ethnics, thru compromises and maximum emancipation of Albanian community with Yugoslavian state-constructive nations. Post-Brioni period enabled Albanian communists to take over the power within the province and opened for them the way towards the highest rank party and government functions/positions.

During negotiations covering the further decentralization of the country Kosovo leaders strived to win status of republic for the province. However, they faced not only to understandable unwillingness of Serbian representatives, but also to veto of the "Supreme Yugoslavian Arbiter" - J. B. Tito. Autonomy acquired huge powers thru new constitution in 1974. Autonomous province becomes constitutional element of Yugoslavian federalism. However, status of republic remains a fiction only. That is why behaving of Albanian officials is governed in next years by the motto "*formally autonomy, in practice the republic*".

University has been established in Kosovo during this period, Albanian language usage was equalized. Albanian minority acquired the right to display their national symbols. After moderate warming of the relationships with Albania in 1968; even dozens of university teachers from neighboring country lectured at the University of Kosovo! However, unsuccessful negotiations concerning upgrading the Kosovo status resulted in first blaze of Albanian dissatisfaction. This was expressed thru demonstrations at the end of November 1968. Effort to promote Kosovo to republic, which would, if possible, involve overall Yugoslavian Albanian population, became the main motto of dissident Albanian groups, especially as for strengthening young Albanian intelligentsia. Then Serbian communistic liberal leaders strived to resolve said situation without increased repression.

4. 1974-1987. This period is called “golden Kosovo era”. Similar level of autonomy and positive discrimination granted to Albanian minority did not exist within contemporary Europe. All the power was given to the hands of Albanian Communistic establishment. Billions from the state budget were flowing to Kosovo, and from budgets of more developed Yugoslavian republics, as well. These were distributed by Kosovo leaders. They were not obliged to submit accounts covering their utilization. That is why huge sums of capital investments went to direct consumption or just were spent for building Kosovo state symbols. However, the productivity of Kosovo economy was extremely low, in spite the fact, that number of enterprises grew continuously. Economic development of the province also faced to population explosion of Albanian residents. Although Kosovo developed the fastest, if compared with all Yugoslav republics, unemployment was growing. Thus number of new job opportunities grew slower than number of adolescent work capable population. Number of Albanian population doubled during less than three decades! Among unemployed people grew the number of graduates, being educated by the University of Priština. During ten years of its duration it became third biggest university center in Yugoslavia. Thus, huge number of young unemployed intelligentsia increased both social pressure, and inter-ethnic tense.

As for politics, this period is featured with the effort exerted by Serbian leaders to reverse excessive Kosovo autonomy, since Kosovo leaders started to ignore the existence of Socialist Republic of Serbia as an institution, representing connection link between provincial autonomy and federation. So called Blue Book, being compiled by a part of Serbian leaders, where they used to advocate the necessity to limit too wide autonomous rights, was withdrawn by Serbian leaders themselves at the end. Their institutional effort concerning the reversal of state of affairs was unsuccessful.

Demographic explosion of Albanian population started to establish inter-ethnic problems in that time. Reports on Albanian population duress aimed to both Serbian and Montenegro peasants, focused to their eviction from the province, was petering out the highest rank communist officials just since 50th. However, appropriate attention was not paid to them; or it was reasoned to be an economic migration. Later on, after the “philippic” of Serbian writer Dobrica Ćosić presented at the meeting of CC of the League of Communists of Serbia (SKS) in 1968, who criticized the duress exerted to Slavonic population in the province unreservedly. Such news used to be marked as an expression of Great Serbian nationalism, opposing to the efforts in equality of Albanian nation rights. Attention to this unfavorable phenomenon was paid just after next explosion of Albanian dissatisfaction occurring in 1981.

Demonstrations, taking place since March 11, 1981 as a student protest against poor infrastructure of the University of Priština, overgrown in subsequent weeks into a deep-going conflict, which in its consequences impaired fundamentals of Yugoslavian federation. Demonstrations were considered by communist leaders to be a counter-revolution. However, subject matter concerned predominantly an explosion of Albanian dissatisfaction with the Kosovo status. Frequent demonstrators’ battle cries were nationalistic and chauvinistic, but also ideological moments had been appearing. Scilicet, a part of Albanian society has been under the influence of Albanian propaganda inspired with radically egalitarian, nationalistic communistic model of this neighboring state. At the end, the demonstrations were suppressed bloodily and hundreds of participants

were sentenced to long-term confinements. Serbian opposition movements have protested against severe punishments at that time. After extinguishment of demonstration movements, next worsening in inter-ethnic relationships took place within the region.

Leaders of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, after deep analyses, compiled the above mentioned *Platform* for subsequent development of Kosovo. Typical Marxist doctrine prevailed in it, showing that ethnic and nationality problems would have been resolved by means of economic tools. Should the subject matter concern the economy only, Kosovo would sooner or later achieve the level, corresponding with mass capital investment inflow from the entire country. Yugoslavian communists underestimated something, what was hardly reckonable from the point of view of economy: nationalism and general feelings of dissatisfaction, against which any arguments had been weak. Platform considered the birth control, lowering the capital investments into non-manufacturing sectors, public control for required financial resources inflowing to Kosovo from the *Fund of Federation*, proposed lowering in the number of students, as well as restructurization of educational institutions. However, it took place under circumstances, when Kosovo became more and more Albanian, and where the overwhelming majority of political officials were Albanians. Said had been considered to be direct attack to Albanians! After it, as a consequence hereof, the economic and political discussion has started, focused to causation and consequences of the crisis to be modified in inter-ethnic issue, where Albanians stood at one side, while Slavs (Serbians) on the other.

Communists underestimated the force of nationalism, for which they anticipated, that it were both in decline and almost dead. They turned blind eyes concerning the occurrence of nationalism before April 1981, while just after the situation at Kosovo quieted down a little bit, they turned it blind henceforth. They did not take into account the fact, that manifestations of so called irredentism, nationalism and chauvinism with Kosovo Albanians, were unavoidable phenomenon of "*national romantic revival*" for awakening nation and it's young intelligentsia, which they were not capable to "hurdle" from the point of view of evolution itself. Otherwise, strengthening utterances of Serbian nationalism represented resentment type of protective behaving, resulting from aggressiveness of revolutionary Albanian nationalism. Marxist doctrine was not allowed to take into account "intangible" feelings as for inherent inequality and inequality of rights, which had been taking place in Kosovo. Subject matter concerned especially the willingness to cover the status of republic, which would have been granting equal rights, if compared with other Yugoslavian nations. Some of that nations, videlicet, even though smaller ones, had their republics already.

Furthermore, in Yugoslavia after 1981 was missing sufficient decisiveness to boost virtually the principles accepted in above Platform, and to check effectively their performance. As soon as the emergent fulmination expired, Kosovo issues were not discussed. Furthermore, political representations of other republics did not understand Kosovo issue to be also their own one, and in principle were not interested in it.

Thus, with powerless standing by of the Serbian republic and Yugoslavian leaders the Kosovo issues undertook both Serbian and Albanian nationalists belonging to the entire political spectrum. Their opinions, affected with a deep resentment, were conceived, as ensues from the publication herein, not later than since a half of sixties. Considerable part of Albanian population never had other "confessions".

Rather defamative defeatism was featuring Serbian nationalist doctrines of that time, being expressed in more and more aggressive medial rhetoric, evoking even Albanian hysteria. Serbian nationalism considered establishment of autonomy, not as a need of achieving minority rights in political existence within a new state, as it had been emphasized by the LCY, but as the intent of communist oligarchy to conserve Serbia, the largest and most populous part of new Socialist Yugoslavia, in subordinated political and economic rank, if compared with other Yugoslavian republics. Kosovo myth played a considerable role in empowering the Serbian invidious feelings, as well. Its visualization at that time in Kosovo used to bring for Serbian anti-communist opposition a sophisticated political propaganda. Kosovo myth was newly applied also by autocephalous Serbian Orthodox Church, emancipating step-by-step since the beginning of 80th from the ghetto, into which it had been repelled by communist regime. Thus, in its conception, the Serbian national efforts achieved transcendental features.

Albanian nationalism was advocated in theory especially thru ultra-left ideas of all sorts of illegal groups, which were influenced by Enver Hoxha's regime. But intellectual centers at Faculty of Philosophy (Arts) of the University of Priština, in Institute of Albanology, and several other institutions, expressed also opinions less "brought to boil". However, in practice especially "rural", unorganized nationalism survived. Said was manifested with the effort in ethnical subjugation of as big territory as possible, and ethnical cleansing of as much villages as possible. This was executed using the oppression against non-Albanian population. But, in this practice, Albanian intellectual elite most likely did not participate, in spite of fact, that together with communist leaders, they did not criticized it, as well.

For both nationalistic Parties hereof, the other nation represented an enemy only, and not potential Partner; and not to say „roommate in common house.“ However, their acting was rather more or less declarative, until a man appeared at the political scene, who promised quick and decisive solutions (and unilateral, of course), which may be achieved *“institutionally or uninstitutionally, statutorily or unstatutorily; in the street or in the cabinet, being populist or elitist, using arguments or not...”* - Slobodan Milošević.

Up till 1987, within the time when Slobodan Milošević campaign against excessive independence of autonomies within so called "anti-bureaucratic revolution" started, power situation in Kosovo remained unchanged. Serbian effort to obstruct autonomies partially within the framework of possibilities provided by the system was unsuccessful. Similarly unsuccessful was also struggle of Serbian communist establishment, lead by Ivan Stambolić, against strengthening brunt of opposition alternative, represented by liberal thinkers on one side, while by nationalist, so called critical intelligentsia, on the other side. Said was successful in gradual pulling down numerous myths, representing foundations of Yugoslavian postwar ideology. Critical intelligentsia, gathered especially in Serbian Writer's Association, was successful in gaining gradual control of certain media, in which they published their opinions as for the evolution in Kosovo of that time. Thanks to this fact, news covering an increasing number in complains of Serbian minority concerning growing discrimination by Albanian majority during the whole half of 80th. Serbians used to draw attention to the adverse approach of local bureaucracy, which privileged Albanian nationals conspicuously. They spoke still more loudly that Albanians were expelling them from numerous villages, destroying them crops, were pelting with Serbian women and children, were

striving to establish huge enclaves settled by Albanian ethnic only. That is why opposition movement of Kosovo Serbians started to be established in Kosovo, as well. They wanted to draw attention to their problems thru petitions and marches to Belgrade. Prepotent members of Serbian opposition, led by writer Dobrica Ćosić, became its ideological consultants.

Thus, since the half of 80th of 20th century the political life in Yugoslavian Federation evolved under permanent pressure of the Kosovo issue. Considerable part of the last but one Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (taking part in June 1986) has been devoted to Kosovo, as well. However, successors of Tito were powerless. They were impossible to offer any other solution, except of that, being compiled in their Platform, dated 1981.

5. 1987-1997. Changes took place in Kosovo in this period, which would stigmatize Kosovo process irreversibly, predicting this way its way to independence. At its beginnings, these are connected with leader power contest for Slobodan Milošević in Yugoslavia, and of obstructing Kosovo and Vojvodina autonomy. The whole period was featured with extreme Serbian and Albanian nationalisms. Milošević acquired power thanks to his political backer Ivan Stambolić; however, the influence of which he got rid in September 1987 already. Just Kosovo fetched him up to the absolute power. During the session of communists taking place in Kosovo Polje, where he came in the position of chairman of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Serbia, about 15 thousand Serbians dissatisfied with their situation gathered in front of the building and clashes with police took place. At that time Milošević appeals to gathered people declaring later well-known sentence: *"Nobody is allowed to beat you"*. Said brought him great popularity among Kosovo Serbians. Subsequent 13 hours long discussion with Kosovo Serbians had drawn him to opinion, that Kosovo issue must be resolved quickly and definitely.

That is why to consolidate his power position; he attempted to remove communistic oligarchies in autonomous regions thru Serbian residents, mobilized by means of meetings. Just Kosovo Serbians played considerable role in organizing these meetings. His attack was focused first against influential and popular Albanian communist leaders. It was led by young constructive politician Azem Vllasi. In Priština, further demonstrations exploded after leaking the information about their prepared "sidetracking" from power in November 1988. After actual putting Vllasi out in January of next year, demonstrations resulted first in known occupational strike of miners, taking place in mines of Trepča, in February 1989, which later overgrew into the general strike. Acceptance of amendments to the Serbian Constitution in March 1989, which de facto almost abolished political autonomy of Kosovo, resulted in Kosovo in five-day long bloody clashes, featured with three dozens of dead.

Several hundred thousands people gathered at Gazimestan to remember 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo in June 1989. Thru his speech S. Milošević definitely reinforced his power position. His winged words that *"six hundred years after we are fighting again, even though unarmed fighting, neither armed one is not excluded"*, ushered in future processes unambiguously.

However, at that time the dissolution of Yugoslavia has been ready to start any minute and different players played here applying the "Kosovo card". Meetings on mass scale, focused to support Albanians of Kosovo, has been organized e.g. by Slovenian opposition. As the reaction, there took place a series of turbulent nationalistic meetings in Belgrade and at other places in Serbia.

SUMMARY

Further bloody demonstrations in Priština took place in January 1990. At that time pluralistic establishment formed in the whole former Yugoslavia already. Several political parties arose in Kosovo, as well. Democratic League of Kosovo, established in December 1989, quickly achieved the dominating position. Its chairman became literary historian and writer Dr. Ibrahim Rugova. Under the thumb of turbulent development in other parts of Yugoslavia, this party strived to utilize the situation and to achieve Kosovo divulsion from Serbia. That is why on July 2, 1990 the MPs of dissolved Parliament of Kosovo accepting the declaration, in which they proclaimed Kosovo to be *sui juris* Republic within the framework of the S.F.R.Y. Of course, this decision was not accepted by anybody. Otherwise, thru new Serbian Constitution approved on 28.09.1990, Kosovo lost even remains of autonomy, being allocated under new and old name Kosovo and Metohija, as a special territorial part of Serbia. Albanians did not sacrifice it starting general boycott of Serbian institutions.

In spite of fact, that in this period Kosovo represented the most hazardous region of the entire Yugoslavia and it seemed, that bloody fire of divulsion would explode just here, it did not occurred. Nevertheless, after disintegration of Slovenia and Croatia, who left the federation, Albanians has organized a secret plebiscite, in which most of electors pronounced in favor of Kosovo independence. During illegal assembly of the members of Kosovo Parliament on 19.10.1991 a decision was approved as for establishment of sovereign and independent Republic of Kosovo, ousted of all obligations against Serbia and Yugoslavia. But, the European Community, to which the government of so called Republic of Kosovo turned asking the recognition, logically left the note unanswered. Despite this fact, in May 1992 leaders of Kosovo revolt organized illegal Parliamentary and Presidential Elections, in which I. Rugova was elected to become president, and dominating position acquired his DLK. Afterwards, the Albanian community, upon impulse of Rugova and under the thumb of bloody events taking place at the North of former Yugoslavia, at that time approved the way of non-violent, passive resistance. With respect to the situation taking place in Croatia and Bosnia, neither Belgrade establishment intervened against the representatives of Albanian revolt. Situation during subsequent five years evoked famous "calm before the storm". In fact, there was established some tolerated shadow Republic of Kosovo featured with shadow institutions, education, and health services.

Certain expectancy has been put into Kosovo crisis by Serbian-American Prime Minister Mr. Milan Panić, who acted shortly (in second half of 1992) as head of Serbian government. He has met Mr. Rugova several times advocating reinstatement of Kosovo autonomy as well as calling free elections. Nevertheless Albanians refused this possibility and continued boycott of Serbian institutions, i.e. also elections that took place in December 1992. Full-valued return into Serbian political system was unimaginable for them already. In case of coalition co-operating with Mr. Panić and other opposition blocks, they was able to contribute to defeat of the party led by S. Milošević, and this way to overall change in Serbian politics of that day. This did not take place, Mr. Panić lost and his withdrawal from the post of premier minister for "residual Yugoslavia" (federation of Serbia and Monte Negro, called Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) it meant the final curtain on tattered hopes as for positive evolution in Kosovo.

* * *

Unambiguous response does not exist, whether it was possible that the cause of Kosovo could go on in communist Yugoslavia otherwise. In some moments of final duration of Yugoslavia, concededly yes. Well-timed interruption of radical methods advocated by Slobodan Milošević and his establishment, it should concededly prevent from the worst excesses, and most likely would prevent bloody demonstrations, too. However, the hunger of Kosovo Albanians to establish their own Republic this eventuality would not stop, naturally. Kosovo, however, even in 80th remained the weakest link of Yugoslavian socialism. Not only due to the fact, that despite all the massive economic aid, Kosovo was still featured with unflattering epithet of the least developed region of Yugoslavia with huge unemployment. Said resulted from unequal struggle between creating new working opportunities, and aging of very plentiful generations of Albanian residents capable of work, having their origin in demographic explosion taking place in 50th - 70th years of 20th century. In spite of all effort, which Yugoslavia and "mother republic" Serbia made in this sphere, they did not do and was impossible to do enough, to remove feelings of dissatisfaction with Kosovo Albanians. Among the most important motives there was also a desire for status of national republic, which obtained even smaller Yugoslavian ethnics if compared with Kosovo Albanians. These feelings were used to bear radical separatist, nationalistic, and invidious tendencies.

These feelings, however, could not disappear in case of implementation the Kosovo Albanian dream and raising autonomy to the status of republic. Republic, even though approved by Yugoslavian leaders and Serbian ones with clenched teeth, should they was capable to broke public opinion (which is unlikely itself), would not involve all Albanian residents of Yugoslavia, anyway. Heritage of the Great-Albania Idea, compiled at the end of 70th of 19th century, as involved in Kosovo Albanians national romantic „constructive“ movement at the end of 70th and 80th, also increasing ethnical chauvinism, should require if not integration of all „Albanian countries“, therefore at least enlargement of the republic to the whole Albanian ethnical territory in Yugoslavia. It is hard to imagine, how from similar national romantic Macedonian and Montenegrin state corpus could be extracted pieces of territory and allocated to new Republic of Kosovo. Sooner or later would occur, like with other Yugoslavian nations, a will of complete independence. Crying for Kosovo Albanian independence should not be suppressed either by arguing with unambiguous advantage of uniform and comprehensive economic area of the Yugoslavian federation and/or certain future confederation. Green power and economic prosperity were low, if compared with the will of independence at the beginning of 90th of 20th century, even with the most developed countries of the Yugoslavian federation. And Kosovo Albanians, unlike others, e.g. Slovenes, had nothing to lose. Furthermore, neither in periods, when the government over Kosovo was wholly in their hands, Kosovo Albanians never fully integrated into Yugoslavian state. They always considered it to be a foreign country, living here as foreigners, and being considered to be foreigners.

Their determination to achieve this, what in their opinion meant fair solution of the Kosovo issue they proved in 90th, when boycott of official institutions of the F. R. Y. resulted in fact, that most of them lost optionally work, numerous occurred at the rat poverty, with considerable limit in education and culture. Part of more radical Kosovo Albanians later did not hesitate to start armed struggle, even though its result, at least at the beginning, seemed foredoom.

SUMMARY

Numerous liberal thinkers, not only from Yugoslavia, found communistic failure in solving the Kosovo especially considering fact, that Yugoslav federal and national elites were not willing and capable to accept, as an ingenious way for overcoming the model of ethnical domination, valid in Kosovo for centuries already, the conspectus of human rights and civil liberties. Inter-ethnic friction, in their opinion, could be removed thru establishing of democracy. We do not assume that it could be possible. First, such alternative should be hardly possible under the substance of communist power and government of a single party, second, in countries, where democratic values represent a pillar for dozen years already, on which a state may be anchored, nationalist movement with their willing to remove pretended and/or actual injustices, upon establishment of their own state said was not abolished (Basque Country, Corsica, etc.). Liberal and democratic values in Kosovo, with respect to its specific evolution, in addition, were never anchored and do not represent a prevailing way of political mind, up till now. There is no reason to assume, that it could be different, if Kosovo had achieved its dreamed-of republic. Movement of Kosovo Albanians in favor of republic was not democratic one, despite the fact, that it was presented to the global public since 90th. They never considered, it is to be a republic of all citizens, not only the ethnic state.

Nationalistic opinions affected with deep invidiousness, was not a novelty in Kosovo. At the territory of Serbia and Kosovo it was alive for the whole twentieth century, and with a heft of population it was never different. Otherwise, the whole Yugoslavia considered Kosovo Albanians to be a second rank citizens and it is patently obvious, that autarkic society of Kosovo at that time, when it was allowed, turned to revanchism. Distrust, prejudice and national romanticism has led a big part of both Serbian and Albanian national elites to cultivating mutual ethnic hate, in foundations of which was put the ideology of *Blut und Boden*. Hate, enriched with fact, that almost everybody in Kosovo could feel to be a sufferer anyway; everybody was allowed to complain something - poverty, corruption, unemployment, inequality of rights, national oppression, etc. Result of all the above was and is a segmentation of the society and parallelism of a life in Kosovo.

Communist Yugoslavia was not able, during the whole period of its duration, to dismantle ethnic nationalism and to replace it with the principle of a civil state such a way, that it would become a state of any and all its citizens actually, not of nations. Yugoslavian nations, subjected to promises of lucid future just since 70th, were dreaming up historically abandoned national programs and myths. Certain Spring of Nations was revived, something like second National Revival, however, taking place under quite different economic conditions if compared with 18th century. Thanks to its aggressiveness and exclusiveness it disabled peaceful and democratic resolving of Yugoslavian crisis, the catalyzer of which became just Kosovo at the beginning of 80th, representing some prolegomena of thunderous events, which were convulsing Yugoslavia and resulted in its bloody disintegration. Subsequently, its epilog took place also in Kosovo at the end of 20th century.

Translated by Petr Wagner