



Shkëlzen Gashi

The History of Kosovo

in the history textbooks of
Kosovo, Albania, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia



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Publisher:

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Author:

Shkëlzen Gashi

Proof reader:

Gazmend Bërlajolli

Consultants:

Albana Rexhepaj

Arbër Vokrri

Armanda Hysa

Translated by:

Elizabeth Gowing

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INTRODUCTION

This analysis considers the representation of the history of Kosovo - from ancient times to today - in the textbooks of the primary schools and high schools of Kosovo, Albania, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. The textbooks used to compile this report are those of the publishing houses Libri Shkollor (Prishtina), Albas (Tirana), Zavod za Udžbenike (Belgrade), the Unit for textbooks and learning materials (Podgorica) and Prosvetno Dello and Tabernakul (Skopje).

The history textbooks of these five countries, approved by their respective ministries of education, served as the main sources for the report. The descriptions in these historiographical texts are compared, and their similarities and differences identified. International authors such as Noel Malcolm, Oliver Schmitt, Peter Bartl, and Stephen Schwartz, who have covered the developments and events in Kosovo in a range of periods, are juxtaposed with relevant information.

The report deals with the most important periods of Kosovo's history, drawing attention to the discrepancies between the historical accounts in question, as well as to the respective falsifications of each party. In an indirect way the report also reveals what kind of relations with their neighbours the governments of each of the countries is suggesting to the younger generation who are being educated with these textbooks. The report aims to reveal, in a way that is as clear and evidence-based as possible, the basis for the often competing claims between the peoples who come up against one another in Kosovo, and for this reason it is being published in Albanian, Serbian and English.

This report is aimed at the authors of school history textbooks from Kosovo, Albania, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia and then to the representatives of the respective ministries of education who give permission for the textbooks' publication, but also to policymakers and to primary and high school history teachers themselves. It will also be useful for anyone who is interested in the issues dealt with here.

Finally I want to thank all those who have contributed to this report in different ways and at different times. Most importantly, the donors: the Embassy of the Netherlands and particularly Ambassador Robert Bosch, the Embassy of Switzerland and the Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (KFOS) and particularly Luan Shllaku. Heartfelt thanks also to the Georg Eckert Institute in Germany and particularly to Claudia Lichnofsky for their support during my two four-week stays with them. Likewise a wholehearted thankyou to the publisher of this report, the Alter Habitus Institute and especially Eli Gashi.

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1. THE ORIGINS OF THE ALBANIANS

In the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania, Albanians are acknowledged almost indisputably as having Illyrian heritage, and this chapter thus investigates the following specific questions: how are the Illyrians described? What space is dedicated to them? And what to their wars? What are the reasons given for these wars and their consequences? How is their assimilation or Romanisation presented? And lastly, what was the co-operation of the Illyrians with their neighbours?

History textbooks in Kosovo say that the Pelasgians were the oldest people in the Balkans, while the Illyrians were their descendants and the 'Pelasgian language was very similar to the Illyrian tongue and Illyrian derived from it, while the traditions and customs of the Pelasgians were very similar to those of the Illyrians'. However, no supporting arguments are given. According to these textbooks, the Illyrians are called the ancestors of the Albanians, and assertions such as the following are made for this: 'the Illyrians had special customs, similar to those of the Albanians of today', 'Illyrian hospitality can be compared to the hospitality offered to guests by the Albanians of today', 'the Illyrian form of dress is similar to Albanian dress today' because 'Illyrians wore on their head a woollen cap just as Albanians of the mountains wear the white *plis* today'. The claim that 'the Illyrian language was very similar to today's Albanian' is substantiated by saying that Albanian has 'many words from Illyrian which are still used today, such as the names Gent, Teuta, Agron, Bardhyl...'. The final claim is that 'in the territory of Illyria many cities were founded, and their remains are still found in all ethnic Albanian lands and beyond.'

The Illyrians are thus presented as the indisputable ancestors of the Albanians and as an indigenous population within Balkan lands, once inhabited by them across almost all the territory of the former Yugoslavia. This is probably to give an idea of the continuity on this land of Albanians, unlike the Slavs and specifically the Serbs, who came here significantly later.

In relation to the specific questions set out at the beginning of this chapter, among the historical incidents from this period which are discussed in the Kosovan textbooks we can identify these features:

- Many units on the Illyrians mainly lavish enthusiastic praise: 'the Illyrians were loyal and bold warriors', 'the Illyrians were known as valued and enthusiastic workers', 'notable soldiers, kings and intellectuals emerged from the Illyrian schools', the assessments *pa mbulesw* go further: 'the Greek settlers who were established in Illyrian territory found an advanced culture which they had not met before and they learned much from the Illyrians, especially in agriculture, animal husbandry and crafts, which were very developed' and even that 'there

were many books in the Illyrian language, but they were not preserved for us today because of wars and other forms of destruction’.

- Wars take up the most space and in their treatment, the Illyrians were exalted as ‘never having been vanquished by Roman conquerors’; ‘they fought continually for freedom’, ‘when their uprisings were savagely suppressed, they rose up once again against their foreign rulers’; the cause of the wars was always the aspirations of Roman, Greek and Macedonian enemies to take control of Illyrian territory, while the Illyrians’ slaughter occurred because their defensive wars were local in character, although no explanation is given for why they were thus;
- The Romanisation of the Illyrians is categorically denied; ‘even though they were conquered, the Illyrians managed to preserve their language, culture, traditions and customs’; and even though Romanisation and Hellenisation are denied, it is claimed that some of the Roman, Greek and Macedonian emperors had Illyrian ancestry; the Roman emperor Constantine the Great; the Byzantine emperor Justinian and Alexander the Great, the son of Illyrian Olympos
- For the misfortunes which occurred to the Illyrians, the fault is attributed to their Roman, Greek and Macedonian ‘enemies’ and no collaboration is identified between them and the Illyrians.

One of the Kosovan text books even includes a special unit titled ‘My homeland in ancient times – Dardania’ which attempts to define a Kosovan identity even in ancient times. Dardania, it says here, spread across the modern territory of Kosovo and surrounding areas, including the cities of Niš and Skopje. Dardania is presented as one of the most powerful states of the time, not only among the Illyrian kings, but also beyond. Furthermore, it is claimed that Dardania had a powerful army and that a speciality of Dardanian warriors was that they would fling themselves together into the attack and likewise withdraw together, without leaving the wounded in enemy hands. It also mentions how the Romans compared the Dardanians with the kuçedra which regenerates after any of its heads is cut off¹.

The history textbooks of Albania, unlike those of Kosovo, mention that there are two main theories about the origins of the Illyrians: the first that the Illyrians were indigenous and descendants of the Pelasgians; the second that they were a mixture of local people with incomers. According to these textbooks, discoveries and studies support the first theory, which is the one set out in the Kosovan textbooks, that the Illyrians were the descendants of the

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 1 Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 5*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 8-21; Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 6*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 24, 70-98 and 105; Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 10*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 26-59.

Pelasgians and the ancestors of the Albanians. In support of this theory, these textbooks claim that ‘Albanian is a continuation of Illyrian and many words today are inherited Illyrian words, such as names of people, rivers, mountains, tribes and so on’. Unlike the Kosovan textbooks, these textbooks nevertheless accept that these words are found written with the Greek or Latin alphabet and that so far no document written in Illyrian zotwrohet, and even say that it is still not known whether the Illyrians did write in their own language. The idea of Illyrian-Albanian continuity is justified thus, ‘the Illyrians, like the Albanians, were sociable and hospitable’ and ‘Albanians inherited elements from Illyrian culture: for example, polyphonic songs are from Illyrian times.’

Viewed in the light of the questions posed at the start of this chapter, the textbooks of Albania show these features:

- Many learning units lavish praise on the Illyrians: ‘they were brave and skilled warriors, trained and well-armed and accomplished sailors’; ‘the Illyrian kings did not have unlimited power like the kings of Egypt; they made decisions together with the council of elders, while their workers were chosen by the representatives of the cities’; ‘they had a society organised on the basis of laws, which applied even to the Illyrian kings’; and it is even said that ‘the Illyrians were the first to use metal in Europe and European peoples learned from them about how to work the soil’; or that ‘many experts have considered the Illyrians to have been a civilised people with high values, who had achieved a high level of civilisation, as evidenced by archaeological finds and Graeco-Roman written sources’;
- Wars take up the most space and the Illyrians are exalted because ‘they did not submit to Roman rule’; it is said that ‘uprisings were put down, but they never gave up’. Although it is not denied that Greek and Roman trading vessels were often plundered by the Illyrians, or that the Romans called the Illyrian rebels ‘robbers’, nevertheless, the Illyrian-Roman wars are always presented as caused by the Romans’ dislike of the independent policy of the Illyrians, which encroached on Roman interests, without giving explanation for what this policy was and what interests were affected. The causes of the wars with the Macedonians are said to be the constant hegemonist tendencies of the Macedonians. The slaughter of the Illyrians was a consequence of Roman intrigues aimed at dividing them. There is mention of the miseries, destruction, pillage, kidnapping, confiscation and burning of property inflicted by the Romans; of the flourishing cities reduced to villages; the best lands which were claimed as property of the Roman state; about the many Roman settlers established among the cities; and about the cities which earned the right to retain their autonomy for internal affairs but not to be considered allies.

- The question of Romanisation is brought out because there are experts who claim that the Illyrians were assimilated because they adopted Latin, and Roman beliefs, lifestyle and political organisation, but it is added that many experts offer scientific arguments for the Roman culture having had an impact only in the north of Illyrian territory where there was no tradition as a state, but not in the south where this tradition as a state existed; Latin became the official language but the Illyrian language, whose legacy is Albanian, did not disappear and was not replaced; the continuity of Illyrian is supported in the use of Illyrian names for places, rivers and people. Although the Romanisation of the Illyrians is denied, as in the Kosovan textbooks, it can be seen that during this period many key figures of the Roman administration or army were of Illyrian origin.
- Unlike in the Kosovan textbooks, not every misfortune which befell the Illyrians is attributed to their 'enemies' – the Romans, Greeks and Macedonians - and thus as well as describing the conflicts, the Albanian textbooks also set out the many forms of collaboration and alliance between the Illyrians and the Romans, Greeks and Macedonians. The victories of the Illyrians in their wars with the Macedonians are mentioned, but so are the Illyrian defeats, and cases are even mentioned when the Romans launched military campaigns against the Illyrians because of the Illyrians' alliance with the Macedonians, or when the Dardanians offered help to the Macedonians attacked by the Celts, as well as cases when the Dardanians destroyed Macedonian territory, taking 20 000 prisoners. Meanwhile, on the question of Illyrian-Roman alliance, mention is made of the participation of the Dardanians in the anti-Macedonian alliance which was led by the Romans, the capitulation of the Illyrian kings to the demands of the Romans, the subjugation of the Illyrians by the Romans thanks to the divisions they had managed to create among the Illyrians, and so on²

The history textbooks of Serbia do not mention the ancestry of the Albanians, although they mention the Illyrians as one of the peoples who lived in ancient times on the Adriatic coast and within the Balkan peninsula.

These textbooks have the following features:

- Very little space is given to the Illyrians, and it is dominated by negative stereotypes: 'the Illyrians were called barbarians by the Hellenes and

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 2 Boçi, Sonila. *Historia 4*. Tirana: Botime Shkollore Albas, 2013, pages 39-44; Treska, Tomi and Menduh Dërguti. *Historia 6*. Tirana: Botime Shkollore Albas, 2013, pages 25-26; Dërguti, Menduh, Sonila Boçi and Ledia Dushku. *Historia 9*. Tirana: Botime Shkollore Albas, 2013, pages 9-18; and Dërguti, Menduh, Ferit Duka, Ledia Dushku and Sonila Boçi. *Historia e shqiptarëve 12*. Tirana: Botime Shkollore Albas, 2013, pages 19-42.

the Romans'; 'the Illyrians often plunder Roman trading vessels'; 'the Illyrians ransacked Hellenic cities'; 'the task of the Roman legions was to defend the borders of the empire from the attacks of wild barbarians', and so on;

- Wars assume the place of observation of the Illyrians and they are attributed to the increase of the Illyrians' marauding attacks on Roman trading vessels or conflicts between the Illyrians and the Greek settlers on the Adriatic, which stimulated Roman intervention;
- Romanisation spread with the subjugation of the Illyrians across the Balkan peninsula where, as well as the shift to the Romans' language, culture and traditions, another significant change occurred which accelerated the development of the economy and culture – the Romans built a number of cities, roads and mines in the Balkans; likewise Greek culture spread through the Greek colonies on the Adriatic coasts which impacted on the economic and social development of the Illyrians;
- On Illyrian-Roman collaboration the only example give is how the Illyrian king Baton, together with his retinue, gave himself up to the Roman general Tiberius, who later became emperor, on condition that he would be kept alive.³

The Serbian textbooks also mention the Roman emperors who gifted the lands of today's Serbia, among whom is Constantine the Great, of whom it is said that he was from Niš, without specifying further the tribe or ethnic group he belonged to, or anything else about this emperor. Likewise, when talking about the tribes who lived in antiquity in the territory of Serbia, it is mentioned that the Dardanians lived in Kosovo.

The history textbooks of Montenegro mention the Illyrians as the first known inhabitants of Montenegro, who are supposed to have come to the Balkans in the time of great migrations of the Indo-European peoples. In these textbooks, the Illyrians are not presented as the ancestors of the Albanians, and nor is Illyrian presented as the precursor to Albanian. Here 'the ancestry of the Albanians from the Illyrians' doesn't even feature as one of the hypotheses about the antecedents of the Albanians. The Albanians are mentioned only from the medieval period onwards and it is said that 'their ancestry is from the indigenous peoples of the Balkan peninsula, a small number of whom were Romanised' without specifying further who these indigenous peoples were, although it is said that the centre of Albanian territory was 'the Arbanon mountains around the city of Kruja, from which comes the name of this people – Arbën'.

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3 Smirnov-Brkiq, Aleksandra. *Historia 5*. Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2011, pages 148-51; Mihaljčić, Rade. *Istoria 6*. Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2011, page 42; Katić, Tatjana and Dušan Ilijin. *Istorija za I razred gimnazije*. Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2013, pages 184-87.

In these textbooks, unlike those of Kosovo and Albania, but similar in some ways to the Serbian textbooks, the features are:

- There are very few learning units on the Illyrians and as a consequence there is very little space for the Illyrian wars; there is no praise for the Illyrians, and there is even mention of the Roman humiliation of the Illyrians, e.g. sending the Illyrian king to Rome as a trophy of their triumph over them;
- The causes of the wars are Illyrian attacks and pillaging of Roman vessels and Greek settlements; in the wars the Illyrians suffered complete slaughter, but no reason is given for their destruction;
- The Romanisation of the Illyrians is not denied: Latin, as the language of administration and culture, was spread not only by the Romans but also by the Illyrians returning to their homes after long military service;
- The ‘enemies’ of the Illyrians – the Romans, Greeks and Macedonians – are not stigmatised and there is even mention of the collaboration between the Illyrians and the Greeks, which led to the spread of Greek influence among the Illyrians; there is also mention of the agreements between the Illyrians and the Romans and between the Illyrians and the Macedonians.⁴

The history textbooks of Macedonia present the Illyrians as the ancient inhabitants of the Balkans, but do not say whether they are the Albanians’ forebears. The ancestry of the Albanians is not dealt with at all in these textbooks.

The Illyrians and their era tend to be portrayed in the Macedonian textbooks as follows:

- The Illyrians were tall, powerful and good soldiers who ‘loved freedom above all else’; ‘they never allowed their soldiers to fall into the hands of the enemy’; ‘they were always ready to sacrifice their life in defence of those near to them’;
- The Illyrians were divided, and often fought among themselves and with their neighbours, and they never managed to unite entirely in political and cultural terms, except that when they were threatened from outside, they organised themselves in ways that were more like tribal alliances than the organisation of a state;

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 4 Kasumović, Millada and Goran Marković. *Historia 6*. Podgorica: Textbooks and Educational Resources Division, 2006, page 19 and 86-89; Vukčević, Sllavko and Millada Kasumović and Goran Marković. *Historia 1*. Podgorica: Textbooks and Educational Resources Division, 2006, pages 23-4 and 149-152; Popović, Radovan and Dragan Miranović and Dragoje Gjokiq. *Historia 2*. Podgorica: Textbooks and Educational Resources Division, 2006, page 100.

- The Illyrians created a culture on the model of neighbouring peoples, with great influence from the Macedonian and Greek cultures through the Hellenic settlers, while the Illyrians who lived further in the interior remained faithful to old traditions and habits; the Illyrians had a similar language to the Hellenes, Macedonians and Thracians, but had no writing of their own so their language was not preserved;
- The Illyrians were the ones who caused the wars with the Romans as they attacked and plundered Roman trading vessels and Hellenic colonies on the sea and the islands, the interior settlements, valleys, animals, unfortified villages and so on; in these wars the Illyrians were permanently defeated;
- The Illyrians accepted Roman culture, language, religion and lifestyle and were incorporated in Roman society, even giving some emperors to the empire;
- The Illyrians had conflicts with the Macedonians, but also alliances.⁵

The exception here is the textbook titled *History 1 – secondary school education*, by five authors - of whom two are Albanian - where it is said that the Illyrians are the direct descendants of the Pelasgians. But even in this chapter, as in other textbooks in Macedonia, it does not say that the Albanians are the descendants of the Illyrians. In the learning units dedicated to the Illyrians in this textbook it is suggested that students should prepare a lecture on the Illyrians and do further research on their life, and literature which is recommended for this includes the books, *The History of the Albanian People* by the Albanian Academy of Science and *The Illyrians* by Aleksandar Stipčević. In these two books, and especially in *The History of the Albanian People*, the Albanians' descent from the Illyrians features as an undeniable theory.

The chapter, 'Albania in the early medieval period (Fifth to eleventh centuries)' of this book includes information on Albanians' ancestry. It says here that in the absence of source documents, some historians think that the Illyrians were Romanised or Hellenised and later assimilated by the Slavs, and others think that the Albanians came to this area together with the Slavs, while a third group believe that the Albanians are the descendants of the Illyrians and indigenous peoples. In support of the third theory, of Illyrian-Albanian continuity, the main argument given is the archaeological findings in many Albanian areas

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5 Mlladenovski, Simo. *Historia 5*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2004, pages 63-65; Axhievski, Kosta and Darinka Petreska, Violeta Ačkoska, Naum Dimoski and Vanço Gjorgjiev. *Historia 5*. Skopje: Tabernakul, 2005, pages 48-53 and 88-9; Pavllovski, Gjorgji and Dime Maxhovski and Jovo Ratković. *Historia 1 për gjimnazin e reformuar*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2002, page 39; Boshkoski, Millan and Gjorgji Isajllovski, Miroslav Boshković, Jordan Illoski, Vllado Vellkoski, Simeon Naumovski. *Historia 1 për arsimin e mesëm profesional*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2006, page 40.

and the linguistic findings that testify to Albanian as a continuation of an old Illyrian dialect.

The other characteristic of this book is that as well as describing the Illyrian-Roman and Illyrian-Macedonian conflicts, it also gives information on the Illyrian-Roman and Illyrian-Macedonian alliances. More importantly, the book also shows the conflict between the Illyrian, Dardanian and Ardian kings, even mentioning the differences between the Illyrian leaders, some of whom supported Roman policy and others of whom supported Macedonian policy. The reasons for the slaughter of the Illyrians by the Romans were internal conflicts, the treachery of key people within the kingdom, poor military preparation, economic weakness and so on.⁶

Summary

From a comparison of the presentation of the ancestry of the Albanians in the history textbooks of Kosovo, Albania, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia, two groups can be distinguished: in one group are the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania and in the other those of Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia.

The features in common between the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania are dominated by the theory of Illyrian-Albanian continuity but also include the number of units dedicated to the Illyrians. The majority of these are about wars. The Illyrians are glorified, and lavished with enthusiastic praise and endless compliments, especially in the Kosovan textbooks. There is no mention of conflict between the Illyrian tribes. The cause of the wars is always the continual hegemonist tendencies of the Roman, Greek and Macedonian enemies wanting to control Illyrian territory, and specifically their concern for the Illyrians' independent policy which encroached on their interests, without giving explanations for what this policy was and which interests were affected. Meanwhile, the reason for the Illyrians' misfortunes was the local character of their defensive wars (although no clarification is given for why they were thus) or the intrigues of the Romans to divide them. Likewise only crimes committed by their Roman, Greek and Macedonian enemies are mentioned, and not the crimes of the Illyrians against Roman trading vessels and Greek settlements. There is no mention made at all of economic or cultural development. Meanwhile, the Illyrians' 'enemies' are stigmatised while the collaboration with them or assimilation - and specifically the Romanisation of the Illyrians - is not included, particularly in the Kosovan textbooks, even though it is shown that during this period many key figures of the Roman administration or army were Illyrian in origin.

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⁶ Boshkoski, Millan and Nebi Dervishi, Safet Neziri, Dime Maxhovski and Sasho Nikolloški. *Historia 1 - arsimi gjimnazor*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2009, pages 50-64, 111-2 and 158-9

On the other hand, the common features of the textbooks of Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia are that they hardly deal at all with the ancestry of the Albanians and that they do not consider them to be the descendants of the Illyrians, and they allocate fewer learning units to the Illyrians, where the dominant theme is of wars, and a negative stereotyping of the Illyrians. Here the reasons given for the wars are the increase of marauding attacks by the Illyrians against the Romans and Greeks. Likewise, they mention only the crimes committed by the Illyrians against Roman trading vessels and Greek settlements, and the development of the economy and culture, but not of the crimes of the Romans, Greeks and Macedonians against the Illyrians. Meanwhile, the Illyrians' 'enemies' are not only not stigmatised, but a description is given of their collaboration with the Illyrians and of assimilation, specifically the Romanisation of the Illyrians.

Since this chapter aims to deal with the origins of the Albanians, we are entirely focused on the categorical position of the Kosovan textbooks – which is, to a certain extent, also that of the textbooks of Albania – that 'the Albanians are the descendants of the Illyrians' while the Albanians of Kosovo are the descendants of the Illyrian tribe of the Dardanians. It should be borne in mind that this is one of the hypotheses, although that which is most prominent and dominant, because as well as the hypothesis that identifies early Albanians as Illyrian (that Albanian has the Illyrian language as an ancestor), an outline is also given of the rival hypothesis which considers the early Albanians as Thracians (and that the Albanian language has Thracian as an ancestor). It would be good for these theories, which have various further modifications, to feature in the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania, but also in those of Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia.

The authors' claims about the similarities between Albanian and Illyrian customs are entirely generalised and should be taken with significant reservations when they are considered within their particular time context, which makes the Illyrian tribes of antiquity noticeably different from the Albanians of today. Similarly, it cannot be said categorically that the Illyrian language is very similar to the Albanian of today as long as *kohw nuk zotwrohet* even one text preserved in Illyrian. There are some 'glossa' or commentaries which explain the meaning of words, but the evidence is still marginal and insufficient to allow us to draw conclusions. There is a lack of any kind of knowledge of the grammatical system of the Illyrian language and a vast historical gap between Illyrian and Albanian since the documentation of written Albanian begins with the Gjon Buzuku missal of 1555.

The existence today of names of people such as Gent, Teuta, Agron, Bardhyl etc. cannot be used as an argument for the similarity of Illyrian and the Albanian of today. The current use of these names shows a particular political and cultural influence during the second half of the twentieth century, just as the use of Turkish

anthroponyms in the older generation of Muslim Albanians – among whom we find Belkize, Hikmete, Nekibe, Mustafa, Hashim, Ramush etc. – reflects the political and cultural influence of the Ottoman period. It should be said here that even toponyms – place names – are largely the remains of earlier languages. Likewise, the cities whose remains are found in the areas where Albanians live, can not be considered proof of Illyrian-Albanian continuity because we do not have evidence from material remains to tell us what language was spoken by their inhabitants, unless there are inscriptions, which are absent here.

Once again: there could be indicators of Illyrian-Albanian continuity, but there is a lack of sufficient evidence for final conclusions. In the end, as Noel Malcolm correctly notes, ancestors become a mystery if we investigate deep into the past of almost all peoples; when we research the past it emerges that they came from somewhere and who came first to a certain place is not an argument carrying any weight when decisions are being made about the rights or wrongs of a political situation today; furthermore, the peoples or tribes who were on the move in earlier times cannot be considered as monolithic entities who were not subject to changes in their identity as a result of migration from one place to another; and finally, the ancestors of all individuals are a mixture and we cannot suppose that **all** our ancestors were from the same people.

Last of all, some words about the glorification of the Illyrians, the causes of the Illyrians' wars with their neighbours and the Illyrians' slaughter as a result of these wars, about Romanisation and the collaboration of the Illyrians with their 'enemies'; beyond the textbooks analysed here, the book titled *The events in Albania, by a Gheg who loves his country*, one of the books which has always been most generous to the history of Albanians, and the first Albanian language book on the history of the Albanians from the Illyrians until the end of the nineteenth century, published in 1898 by the well-known Austro-Hungarian Albanologist Ludwig Thalloczy, reveals that the Illyrians 'robbed Roman boats whenever they could', 'were divided into small groups and fought amongst themselves', 'refused to recognise even their own king', 'got on well with the Greeks, who built cities among the Illyrians, including Durrës', 'gave themselves up to the Roman soldiers and always learned their language', and comments that 'the great things that Alexander the Great of the Macedonians achieved were done with his head and the Illyrians' muscles.'⁷

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7 Malcolm, Noel. *Kosovo: A Short History*. London: Pan Books, 2002, pages 22-40; Schmitt, Oliver. *Shqiptarët – një histori midis Lindjes dhe Perëndimit*. Tirana: KËB, 2012, pages 41-49; Matzinger, Joachim. *Shqiptarët si pasardhës të ilirëve nga këndvështrimi i gjuhësisë historike*. published in the book compiled by Oliver Schmitt and Eva Anne Frantz. *Historia e Shqiptarëve – gjendja dhe perspektivat e studimeve*. Tirana: Botimet Përpjekja, 2012, pages 13-39. Thalloczy, Ludwig. *Të ndodhurat e Shqypnis prej nji geqe që don vendin e vet*. Shkodra: Botime Françeskane, 2008, pages 95-122.

2. KOSOVO FROM THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD TO SERBIAN RULE

Ever since the division of the Roman Empire in 395 into the Western Empire with its headquarters in Rome, and the Eastern Empire (Byzantium) with its headquarters in Constantinople, the territory of Kosovo, which at that time had no role, remained nominally under the sovereignty of Byzantium. In 547-548 the Slavs conquered the territory of today's Kosovo and then reached as far as Durrës, and some years later penetrated deep into Greece. During the period 610-620, the Serbs established themselves in the Rashka area in the north-west of today's Kosovo and in the region of today's Montenegro, while in the middle of the seventh century they spread out from the Montenegrin coast into northern Albania. In 850 the Bulgarians took control of Kosovo, which remained under Bulgarian rule until 1014-1018 when King Samuel died and his empire disintegrated. Later, Byzantine power was reestablished under Emperor Basil, and for nearly two centuries Kosovo was under the Byzantines.

A lack of sources for the above period means that it is not present in the history text books of Kosovo and surrounding countries, or that it is entirely superficial. This chapter therefore aims to investigate only the presentation of: the arrival of the Slavs/ Serbs into the Balkans/ Kosovo; Bulgarian rule (850-1018); the return of Byzantine rule (1018-1216); and the aims, collaboration and conflicts of Albanians with others during these periods.

In the **Kosovan history textbooks** we can observe among the historic incidents of these periods the following features in relation to the issues identified:

- The Slav tribes arrived in the Balkans from 550 to 700 and formed their state in what is today Bulgaria, and later Serbs, Croats and Slovenes established themselves in the lands of our ancestors up to the Adriatic and Ionian coasts; in the lands which are today Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia, the 'Arberian-Albanian' people slowly disappeared before Slav inhabitants; only in the land of today's Albania, Kosovo and some regions of Macedonia, Montenegro and Greece did the ancient Albanian people not disappear, and retain their language, their customs and their ancient culture, which Albanians handed down from generation to generation; from the seventh century the Illyrians start to be called *Arbër* and *Albanë* while their name is *Arbëri* and *Albanon*, after the Illyrian tribe of the Albans which was spread across a wide territory between Kruja and Durrës; later this name includes all Albanian lands while one of the cradles of the *Arbëror* people was ancient Dardania – today's Kosovo – where the Illyrian population remained through the assimilationist policies of the Romans, the Byzantines and the Slavs; the *Arbër* were the descendants of the Illyrians and maintained their language, their customs and the culture of their ancestors and there is

much evidence to prove how language was retained and developed from the Illyrians to the Arbër and on to the Albanians of today: many Illyrian names for cities, mountains, plains, rivers, and regions continue to exist even today; things found in the graves of early Albanians, such as tools, jewellery etc., greatly resemble the same kind of things used by the Illyrians, and then there are similarities observed in dress, customs, and legends; much Illyrian-Arberian land was colonised by a range of inhabitants, particularly Slavs, which resulted in a blending of indigenous and incomer populations, which in many places meant a loss of Illyrian-Arberian identity.

- The Bulgarian rule of almost two centuries (850 – 1018) is not mentioned at all;
- About a thousand years ago, Arberian lands were under the rule of the Byzantine Empire, and in this were included Arberians, Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbs, Romanians etc; the first principality of Arberia with Kruja as its capital was established by Prince Progon in 1190 and extended from the Drin river to the Shkumbin river – not all areas inhabited by Arberian-Albanians were included in the state of Arberia; in 1208 the head of this state was Dhimitri who made the Albanian state independent from Byzantium and entered into friendly relations with various European states, gaining renown for his state; but with the death of Dhimitri (1216) the state slowly lost its importance⁸

As regards the issues with which this chapter opened, the **history textbooks of Albania** show the following features:

- The Slavs of the south began to arrive into the lands of the Byzantine Empire in the middle of the sixth century, conquering part of the territory by force, while another part was given to them by the Byzantine emperor of the time; at the end of the seventh century the Serbs conquered Albanian territory as far as Kosovo and Dukagjini, the area of today's Montenegro and around Lake Shkodra, as well as the territories where Macedonia lies today, the eastern part of which was inhabited by Albanians; unlike the other barbarian peoples who arrived, destroyed and left, the Slavs settled in the Balkans, in some places the locals assimilated them, and in places they withdrew or were assimilated by the Illyrians; the settlement of the Slavs in the Balkans reduced Illyrian territory;

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 8 Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 5*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 23-32; Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 6*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 97-108; Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 10*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 155-161.

- Bulgarian rule (850-1018) in the areas where Albanians currently live is mentioned only very briefly;
- The principality of Arberia with Kruja as its capital was founded in 1190 by Prince Progon and stretched from the Drin river to the Shkumbin; Progon's descendants were his sons Gjini and later Dhimitri who entered into alliances with Dubrovnik, Serbia, Byzantium, and the Papacy, and on whose death the principality lost its independence and was included within the Byzantine Empire; Progon's wife was Komnene, the daughter of the Serbian king Stefan Nemanja⁹

In the **Serbian history textbooks** the features are as follows:

- The Slavs of the south initially attacked the territory of the Byzantine Empire for plunder, and only from the middle of the sixth century did they manage to establish themselves in the Balkan peninsula, and only at the beginning of the seventh century did they conquer it, finding here Greeks, Thracians, Celts and Romanised Illyrians – the latter had already accepted Roman culture and spoke a range of Latin dialects; the Slavic tribes mixed with local and neighbouring peoples, so that a small number of these peoples lost their ethnic characteristics; the local people who lived together and were gathered into larger groups were not affected by Slavic influence; Albanians maintained their customs, their language and other national features; some of the Slavs who came adopted Albanian language and customs and became mixed;
- Bulgarian and Byzantine rule in Serbia and the Balkans is mentioned, but not explicitly that in Kosovo or the areas where Albanians lived at that time;
- The Byzantine reconquest (1018 – 1216) is not mentioned at all¹⁰.

The features of the **Montenegrin text books** are as follows:

- The Slavs of the south established themselves in the territory of the Balkans in the first half of the seventh century and undertook campaigns for plunder, attacking lands and destroying the Byzantine economy in the Balkans; the Slavs destroyed villages and cities, taking captive and

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9 Treska, Tomi and Menduh Dërguti. *Historia 6*. Tirana: Botime Shkolllore Albas, 2013, pages 74-77, 88-89; Dërguti, Menduh, Sonila Boçi and Ledia Dushku. *Historia 9*. Tirana: Botime Shkolllore Albas, 2013, pages 19-21; Treska, Tomi, Menduh Dërguti and Abaz Mullaj. *Historia e qytetërimit botëror 11*. Tirana: Botime Shkolllore Albas, 2013, pages 48-45; and Dërguti, Menduh, Ferit Duka, Ledia Dushku and Sonila Boçi. *Historia e shqiptarëve 12*. Tirana: Botime Shkolllore Albas, 2013, pages 40-61

10 Mihaljčić, Rade. *Istoria 6*. Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2011. page 42; Katić, Tatjana and Dušan Ilijin. *Istorijska i razred gimnazije*. Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2013, pages 184-87.

killing the Greek, Roman and semi-Romanised population, and for this reason some of these peoples left for the fortified cities of the coast, and another group found shelter in impenetrable mountain regions, and from this Romanised people the Vlachs and Albanians developed, not offering any threat to the Slavs so that peaceful relations were established between them.

- The almost two centuries of Bulgarian rule (850 – 1018) are not represented at all;
- In historical sources, the Albanians appear from the middle of the eleventh century as soldiers in the battalions of Byzantine commanders, and all the region where they had lived became part of Byzantium; the Arberians were skilled fighters so those in power used them in frequent wars; the Fourth Crusade and the break-up of Byzantium enabled the union of Albanian territory and among the many feudal lords was distinguished Dhimitri Progon who had the title Prince of Arberia, and ruled Kruja and surrounding areas. Progon was married to Komnene, the daughter of Stefan Nemanja. After Progon's death, the principality lost its importance¹¹

Below are the features of the **Macedonian textbooks**:

- at the end of the sixth century and in the first decade of the seventh century, the Slavs of the south populated the entire Balkan peninsula, including Illyrian lands, as far as Durrës in Albania; they attacked and plundered the Byzantine regions of the Balkans; during the attacks and settlement of the Slavs, some of the indigenous population moved to fortified towns while a small group retreated to the mountains. The old indigenous peoples remained protected in the northern areas of Albania and in the one-time provinces of New and Old Epirus. In time the Slavs mixed with the indigenous population who had a higher culture. The remains of the indigenous people of the Balkans are the Vlachs of today. With the settlement of the Slavs in the Balkans a process of Slavic influence began: changing the names of cities, towns, mountains, rivers etc.
- In the eighth century, the Byzantine Empire in the Balkans formed some administrative units which were called *themes*, and Albanian lands were a part of the *theme* of Durrës and of Nikopoja; in the middle of the ninth century Bulgaria conquered various Albanian regions (Berat, Devolli,

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 11 Popović, Radovan and Dragan Miranović. *Historia 7*. Podgorica: Textbooks and Learning Materials Unit, 2006, pages 11-12, 21, 50-55 and 69; Popović, Radovan and Dragan Miranović and Dragoje Gjokiq. *Historia 2*. Podgorica: Textbooks and Learning Materials Unit, 2006, pages 100-101.

the area around Vlora) and later, during the reign of the Bularian emperor Simeon (893 – 927) the borders of the empire expanded further into Albanian land: Vlora, Himara, Butrint, and later even Nikopoja and Durrës; in the second half of the tenth century, Albanian territory became part of the territory of Emperor Samoil (an emperor whom these textbooks consider to be Macedonian), but his rule was not sustainable and later the Byzantine Emperor Vasili II destroyed the state in 1018 and thus Albanian lands fell once again under Byzantine rule.

- Albanians are mentioned for the first time in historical sources in the middle of the eleventh century, while in the twelfth century the inhabitants across the territory of today's Albania were called Albanians ('shqiptar'). At the end of the twelfth century the principality of Arberia ruled in Albania, with Kruja at its centre, led by Progon, and after his death by his sons Gjini and Dhimitri. The principality achieved the height of its power under Dhimitri who was married to Komnene, the daughter of the Serbian King Stefan Nemanja and the niece of the Byzantine emperor¹².

Summary

A comparison of the representation of the period of the arrival and settlement of the Slavs in the Balkans within the history textbooks of Kosovo, Albania, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia reveals that the Slavs' plunder, attacks and destruction during their expansion is mentioned in all textbooks, but surprisingly not explicitly in the Kosovan textbooks. The German Goths, Huns and Bulgarians had attempted to establish themselves in these lands before the Slavs but none of the textbooks of these countries mention that the Slavs were not the first to establish themselves in this area in search of a better life. No other people has left traces in the Balkans like the Slavs, who destroyed an ancient civilisation's culture, the church organisation of the Christians, and changed the ethnic make-up of the population, but their spread in the Balkans took place in small groups and without clear structures, often even commanded by non-Slav military elites.

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12 Boshkoski, Millan, Jordan Ilioski and Nebi Dervishi. *Historia 6*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2008, pages 19-29 and 71-71; Boshkoski, Millan, Nebi Dervishi, Safet Neziri, Dime Maxhovski and Sasha Nikolloski. *Historia 1 arsimi gjimnazor*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2009, pages 154-159; Pavllovski, Gjorgji, Dime Maxhovski and Jovo Ratkoviq. *Historia 1 gjimnazi I reformuar*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2002, pages 91-97; Boshkoski, Millan, Jordan Ilioski, Gjorgji Isajllovski, Vllado Vellkoski, Miroslav Boshkoviq and Simeon Naumovski. *Historia 1 arsimi i mesëm profesional*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2006, pages 77-80; Boshkoski, Millan, Nebi Dervishi, Silvana Sidorovska – Cupovska, Natasha Kotlar, Jordan Ilioski, Dimko Popovski. *Historia 2 arsimi gjimnazor*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2008, pages 26-31.

The previous chapter said that something common to the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania was the thesis of Illyrian-Albanian continuity. In line with this the establishment of the Slavs in the Balkans is described in these texts as a reduction of Illyrian-Arberian territory. Even if we assume the Illyrian ancestry of the Albanians, this does not mean that all Illyrian tribes who lived in the Balkan peninsula – Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia, Croatia and Slovenia – are the ancestors of the Albanians, as the Kosovan textbooks claim, along with the textbooks of Albania. With the claim that ‘the Albanian people remained only in Albania, Kosovo, parts of Macedonia, Montenegro and Greece’, the Kosovan textbooks seem to be attempting to project the distribution of today’s Albanians into the Middle Ages and across their current spread in the Balkans. This claim clashes with the information that after the arrival of the Slavs into the Balkans, part of the indigenous population moved to coastal cities, while another group found shelter in the impenetrable mountain regions, mainly in the northern areas of modern Albania.

The Kosovan textbooks give a one-sided presentation of the mixing of indigenous populations with the Slavs: ‘the loss of Illyrian-Arberian identity’, but the Serbian textbooks do the same thing: ‘the loss of the ethnic characteristics of the Slav tribes, who took on the language and customs of the Albanians.’ Furthermore, the Serbian textbooks say that ‘the indigenous people who lived together and were gathered into larger groups were not affected by Slavic influence,’ and they add that ‘the Albanians maintained their customs, language and other national characteristics.’ In the textbooks of Albania this mixing together is presented as reciprocal, as it was: ‘when the Slavs settled in the Balkans, in some places the indigenous people assimilated them and in some places were assimilated by them’. The textbooks of Montenegro say that ‘the Albanians did not represent a threat to the Slavs and so peaceful relations were established between them’, while the Macedonian textbooks mention only the mixing that took place.

The almost two centuries long (850 – 1018) rule of the Bulgarians/ Macedonians in Kosovo, specifically in the areas where Albanians live today is not mentioned at all in the textbooks of Kosovo, Serbia or Montenegro, while in the textbooks of Albania it is mentioned extremely briefly, and in those of Macedonia in slightly more detail. Despite the lack of sources for this period, as mentioned at the start of this chapter, the textbooks of Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro and Albania should at least present in broad outline this reign which lasted almost two hundred years, from which we can date almost all toponyms in Albanian lands.

The return of Byzantine rule (1018 – 1216) in Kosovo, specifically in the areas today inhabited by Albanians, is not represented at all in the Serbian textbooks, while in those of Kosovo, Albania, Montenegro and Macedonia

only the principality of Arberia (1190 – 1216) is mentioned, with its centre in Kruja, founded by Progon and led later by his son, Dhimitri. The Kosovan textbooks present the principality of Arberia as a state, but in fact while the Byzantines ruled the coastal regions, in the mountain areas a comprehensive self-government was allowed by local feudal rulers.

As for collaboration between Albanians and others, the Kosovo textbooks speak of the friendly relations which Dhimitri entered into with various European states, but does not say with whom, and mentions even less of his alliance with Serbia or the information that his wife, Komnene, was the daughter of the Serbian king, Stefan Nemanja. This information is given in the Albanian, Montenegrin and Macedonian textbooks. Another example of collaboration between Albanians and others, which is given only in the Montenegrin textbooks, is that ‘...the Albanians, since they were skilled fighters, were used by those in power in frequent wars as soldiers in Byzantine military commanders’ battalions’.¹³

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13 Malcolm, Noel. *Kosovo: A Short History*. London: Pan Books, 2002, pages 40-44; Schmitt, Oliver. *Shqiptarët – një histori midis Lindjes dhe Perëndimit*. Tirana: KËB, 2012, page 49-59; Schmitt, Oliver. *Kosova: histori e shkurtër e një treve qendrore ballkanike*. Prishtina: Koha, 2012, pages 37-39; Schmitt, Oliver. “Monada e Ballkanit” *Shqiptarët në Mesjetë*. Published in the book edited by Oliver Schmitt and Eva Anne Frantz. *Historia e Shqiptarëve – gjendja dhe perspektivat e studimeve*. Tirana: Botimet Përpjekja, 2012, pages 67-90; Bartl, Peter. *Shqipëria nga Mesjeta deri Sot*. Prizren: Drita, 1999, 24-31

3. MEDIEVAL KOSOVO DURING SERB RULE

In 1160 in Rashka (the embryo of the Serbian state) a new ruling family emerged who ruled in Serbia for nearly 200 years, and whose founder was Stefan Nemanja. In 1180, benefiting from the weakness of the Byzantine Empire, and with the support of Hungary and Venice, Nemanja overcame Byzantine rule and extended his territory in every direction, including - in 1184-5 - some parts of Kosovo. In 1196 when Stefan Nemanja abdicated, Serbia included all of Eastern Kosovo.

Exploiting the political consequences of the conquest of Constantinople by the adventurers of the Fourth Crusade, at some point before 1208 his heir Stefan Nemanjić conquered almost all Western Kosovo with the exception of Prizren, and in 1216 even Prizren, thus taking almost all the territory of Kosovo under his rule. In 1217 Stefan was crowned King of Serbia by the Papal Legation, sent specially from Rome, and he is known to history as Stefan the First Crowned. The territory of Kosovo was ruled by the Serbian state until 1415.

This chapter investigates specifically how the textbooks present the Serbian conquest of the territory of Kosovo (beginning in 1184-5 and ending in 1216 at the latest), the Serbian rule of Kosovo (1216 to 1389), the Battle of Kosovo (1389) and, at the end, the final years of medieval Serbia in Kosovo (1389-1415).

In relation to these themes, the following is a summary of the presentation given in the **Kosovo textbooks**:

- In some textbooks, such as those for the fifth grade, the medieval conquest by Serbia is not mentioned at all, and in other textbooks – such as those of the tenth grade in all subjects – a very perfunctory mention is made of the fact that during this period areas inhabited by Albanians were conquered by the Serbian state among others.
- The Kosovan textbooks focus on Serb rule only under King Stefan Dušan (1331-1355) and this is a summary of the narrative of the experience under his rule: King Dušan conquered all Albania and the majority of the Balkans, and with this conquest the Byzantine rule over Arberianlands was ended for ever. Dušan didn't recognise even formally the existence of the Principality of Arberia. He established his own administration over the conquered lands and raised the Serbian church to the level of a Patriarchate, whose centre was in Peja/ Peć. The Serbian conquerors exercised oppression and savage economic, social and religious discrimination against Albanians, but despite these difficulties Albanians protected their existence and even sometimes rose up against the rule of King Dušan. Albanian endurance found support from European countries and even the Pope in Rome reacted, not only against the forced conversion of Catholic Albanians to Orthodoxy but also against the oppression of the Albanians. Although during the conquest the

process of colonisation of Albanian lands, especially in Kosovo, became widespread, the Albanians faced this pressure, continuing to endure and protecting the Albanian character of these lands.

- With the death of King Dušan in 1355, marking the end of his empire, Albanian nobles began their attempts to create an independent principality (the Balshaj the Principality of Shkodra, the Topiaj the Principality of Durrës, and the Shpataj the Principality of Arta). The Principality of the Balshaj, with Shkodra as its centre, included in its claims a large part of the territory of Kosovo and part of the territory of today's Montenegro (Zeta). Balsha I was the most distinguished prince of this family. He called himself Prince of Arberia and had as his aim the unification of all ethnic Albanian lands in one state, but he did not achieve it, while his principality took on the dimensions of an almost pan-Albanian state. The new ruler of this principality became Gjergj Balsha II but he neither had strength nor enjoyed the former extent of his territories. There were conflicts between the Albanian principalities as, for example, between the principalities of the Topiaj and the Balshaj.
- In the second half of the fourteenth century the Albanian, Serb, Bulgarian, Romanian and other lords formed a military alliance, with the Serbian prince Lazar at their head, to resist the oppression of Ottoman rule, and Albanian brigades took part, led by their princes: Muzaka, Balsha etc. In 1389 a savage battle took place near Prishtina where it is thought that the fighter Millosh Kopili, from the village of Kopiliq in Drenica, killed Sultan Murat. Both armies suffered great losses. The Albanian prince Teodor Muzaka was also killed in this battle as well as many princes from other countries. By the end of the war the Balkan armies were broken. The Ottomans continued their conquest of Balkan countries one by one. The textbook, *History 7* says '...it is said that Millosh Kopiliq killed the Sultan but the sources do not make this issue very clear, and neither is the question of his ethnicity clear nor has a final conclusion been reached by historians on many other issues.' The same textbook says of the Battle of Kosovo, '...there is plenty of oral evidence and epic songs but their truth is uncertain; many things which did not take place have been fabricated.'
- After the end of the rule of King Dušan in 1355, no episode from Serbian rule in Kosovo, which lasted until 1415, is presented other than the Battle of Kosovo in 1389¹⁴.

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 14 Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 5*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 25-36; Bicaj, Isa and Arbër Salihu. *Historia 7*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 40-52, 55-57; Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 10*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 155-168.

The core of the explanations given by the **textbooks of Albania** is as follows:

- Stefan Nemanja (1168-1196) is considered to be the founder of the Serbian state. In 1250 his son, Sava, established the centre of the autocephalous Serbian church in Peja. His state reached its height in the time of King Stefan Uroš II when, with the signing of the peace treaty with Byzantium in 1299, the Serbian kingdom took control of conquered territory in Ohrid and Durrës. In the period when its strength was growing the Serbian state established its rule over Kosovo.
- In the second quarter of the fourteenth century the Serbian state began to be strengthened and, under the rule of King Dušan, managed to conquer the majority of the Balkans, including all Albanian territory, and thus forming the Serbian Empire. Albanian landowners were replaced by Serbs. The Serbs established colonies everywhere, and particularly in Kosovo, built many Serbian Orthodox monasteries and substituted many toponyms with Serbian placenames. During Serbian rule a number of powerful anti-Serb uprisings were organised, incorporating all lands. The anti-Serb movement became even more powerful after the death of King Dušan in 1355, forcing many Serb conquerors to be displaced from their domains.
- With the death of King Dušan and the fall of the Serbian Empire, the submitted non-Serb lords became independent and created their own principalities. Many cities developed and became centres of national culture. Various principalities were created in Albanian territory, such as that of Arta, the Muzakaj, the Topiaj, the Balshaj etc. The Principality of the Balshaj ruled the territory of northern Albania, including the territory of Western Kosovo – such as the cities of Peja and Prizren – too. This principality was ruled by Plaku Balsha and his three sons: Strazim, Gjergj and Balsha II. The Balshaj became close to the Papacy and returned to Catholicism (previously they were Orthodox). They created an organised state with administrative systems, courts, prisons, a treasury etc. In their policy of expansion the Balshaj were opposed by the Topiaj, with whom they had many battles, but the greatest of these was in the Savra plain, near Lushnjë, where – with the help of the Turkish army – the Topiaj beat the Balshaj. Ottoman rule put an end to the rule of the Balshaj.
- Among the most important events of the beginning of Ottoman rule in the Balkans under the leadership of Sultan Murat I was the Battle of Kosovo in 1389 which took place in Fushë Kosovë or in Fushë Dardani (near Prishtina). The Balkan army was led by the Serb King Lazar. Albanian princes such as Gjergj Balsha II, Gjon Kastrioti and Teodor Muzaka took part in the battle. During the fighting the brave Albanian

Millosh Kopili killed Sultan Murat I, but the Balkan forces suffered losses and the Ottoman army completely took over the Balkan territory and many kings and princes accepted Ottoman rule and became vassals of the Sultan. Teodor Muzaka was killed in the battle which took place in Fushë Kosovë (1389).

- After the end of the rule of King Dušan in 1355, no episode from Serbian rule in Kosovo, which lasted until 1415, is presented other than the Battle of Kosovo in 1389¹⁵.

The trends in the **Serbian textbooks** are as follows:

- Taking advantage of unrest in the Byzantine Empire, Stefan Nemanja (1166-1196), who had the aim of uniting all Serbian land, extended the Serbian state considerably. As well as the areas around Western Morava, Greater Morava and Kosovo, he also brought under his control part of Northern Albania. His son, Nemanjić, made the Serbian state independent, while two years later his other son, Sava, made the Serbian church independent
- Serbian rule in Kosovo is mentioned with reference to Serbian medieval culture: the monastery of Gračanica, built by King Milutin, the monastery of Dečani, whose construction was begun by Stefan Dečanski and finished by his son Stefan Dušan; the church of Levisa in Prizren, the Patriarchate in Peja/ Peć, and so on. The rule was prominent also because of the mines – such as Brskova and Rudnik in the territory of Serbia and Trepča and Novo Brdo in Kosovo - which had an impact on the strengthening of the Serbian economy. The Serbian Empire under King Dušan is said to have included a large part of Albanian territory.
- Sultan Murat gathered his troops from the Asiatic and European parts of the Ottoman Empire and was also helped by Christian soldiers. His sons Bajazit and Jakup were military leaders. King Lazar did not manage to gather all the Serbian nobles and warriors. From the local Serb conquerors Vuk Brankovic, the conqueror of Kosovo, and the Bosnian King Tvrtko I were brought together. The battle took place on 28 June 1389 in Fushë Kosovë near Prishtina. The final results of the battle are not known. There were many killed on both sides and the two rulers King Lazar and Sultan Murat were killed – the latter by the Serb noble Miloš Obilić (Kobilić), about whom history has no other information. King Lazar's son-in-law,

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 15 Treska, Tomi and Menduh Dërguti. *Historia 6*. Tirana: Botime Shkolllore Albas, 2013, pages 121-125; Dërguti, Menduh, Sonila Boçi and Ledia Dushku. *Historia 9*. Tirana: Botime Shkolllore Albas, 2013, pages 22-23, 27; and Dërguti, Menduh, Ferit Duka, Ledia Dushku and Sonila Boçi. *Historia e shqiptarëve 12*. Tirana: Botime Shkolllore Albas, 2013, pages 55, 58-59, 73.

Vuk Branković, under whose rule was the territory where the battle took place, took part in the battle, but Lazar's other son-in-law, Gjuragj II Balšić, did not as he had links with the Turks.

- Nothing is said about the establishment of Albanian principalities after the death of King Dušan, nor about the Principality of the Balshaj which ruled over part of the territory of Kosovo.
- After the end of the rule of King Dušan in 1355, no episode from Serbian rule in Kosovo, which lasted until 1415, is presented other than the Battle of Kosovo in 1389¹⁶.

In the **textbooks of Montenegro**, the key points of the descriptions are as follows:

- After the death of the Byzantine Emperor Komnen (1143-1180), Stefan Nemanja (1166-1196) expanded the feudal Serbian state, taking advantage of the weakness of the Byzantines and the help of the Hungarians, and conquering Kosovo and Hvosna (Metohija) and part of the north of today's Albania, among others.
- Later, Nemanjić (1196-1228), the son of King Nemanja, elevated the Serbian state to become a kingdom (in 1217) and was crowned by the Pope of Rome as Stefan the First Crowned, making the Serbian church independent in 1219. During the reign of his son, Uroš I (1243 – 1276), the Serbian state developed economically – the most important mines of the time were, among others: Rudnik, Brskovo, Trepča, Janjevo and Novo Brdo, which were the best known. With the development of the mines in Serbia civilised settlements were founded: Rasi, Lipjan, Prizren and later Nis and Skopje and also of importance were coastal cities such as Kotor, Budva, Bar, Ulqin and Shkodra. This development made it possible for future rulers to conquer the territories of their neighbours. The son of Uroš, Milutin (1282-1321), who built the Gračanica monastery, conquered Northern Macedonia and transferred his capital to Skopje. The policy of expansion was continued by Milutin's descendant Dečan (1321-1331) who is known for the building of Dečani monastery, and later by his son Dušan (1331-1355) who conquered Macedonia, Albania, Northern and Middle Greece and even threatened the existence of the Byzantine Empire. His rule was interrupted by his untimely death, on the threshold of a planned attack on Constantinople.

16 Mihaljčić, Rade. *Istorija 6*. Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2011, pages 86-98, 104-114, 118-119; Katić, Tatjana and Dušan Ilijin. *Istorija za I razred gimnazije*. Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2013, pages 243-245.

- During the rule of Stefan Dušan, all of the territory of today's Albania, with the exception of Durrës, was part of the Serbian state, and it was conquered with the support of Albanian nobles. Particular Albanian nobles gained high courtly titles and took on great territories. After the death of Dušan the power of these Arberian vassals was strengthened. Albanian nobles fought among themselves to expand their personal power across the largest possible territory, and sometimes Venetians and Ottomans were included in these battles. From halfway through the fourteenth century up until the Ottoman conquest, the great lords often changed, born into the ranks of the leaders of the *fis*, the most well-known families among whom were the Topiaj, Muzakaj, Arianiti, Zenebisht, Shpats and others. In mountain regions the Albanians lived in tribal communities until the fifteenth century and in these very little influence was felt of the state rulers who frequently changed. By traditional law, the leaders of the tribes in these communities held special positions. They played the role of intermediary between the tribe and state authorities and thus the Byzantine, Angevin and Serb conquerors gave them titles and left to them the rule of their tribes. The Arberians were accomplished fighters so those in power used them in their frequent wars.
- The Balshaj are not mentioned among other Albanian feudal families in these textbooks. The core of the narrative about this family is this: after the death of Dušan the Serbian state could not resist the pressure of the nobility and the three sons of Balsha, Strazimir, Gjuragj and Balsha II Balshiq exploited this situation and sometime around 1360 rebuilt the state of Zeta (Montenegro) where Gjuragj I was the most important and had the most significant authority in the family. He conquered Prizren, and after the marriage of his brother, Balsha II, with the daughter of the despot of Vlora, also Vlora, Berat and Himara. Likewise, the grandson of Balsha II, Gjuragj II, married Elena, the daughter of the Serb King Lazar. The Hungarian king Zigmund gave him the title 'the Conqueror of Albania'. Gjuragj II who inherited from Balsha III brought Albanian and Ottoman mercenaries into the army. He went to his uncle Stefan Lazarević in Belgrade where he also died, while he left his property to his uncle since he had no male heirs. His mother became a vassal of the Ottoman Empire.
- After the death of Dušan, the Serbian state weakened and thus the feudal lords restored their territories. Among the leaders who were restored were the Ballshiq in Montenegro. In the continual clashes between the feudal lords Lazar Hrebelanović emerged as the most powerful and he managed to gather the confused feudal lords before the war against the Ottomans, to enter into peace with Hungary and to secure military aid

from Bosnia. On Vidovdan, 28 June 1389 in Fushë Kosovë, near Prishtina, the Turkish army (led by Sultan Murat I and commanded by his sons Bajazit and Jakup) met with the Serbian army (led by King Lazar and commanded by his son-in-law Vuk Branković, the conqueror of Kosovo and Metohija, and by Vlatko Vuković, sent by the Bosnian King Tvrtko). Little is known about the course of this battle. According to the account of Kostandin Filozof, the biographer of Lazar, a Serbian noble, at an appropriate moment pretending that he was giving up, killed Sultan Murat. Later folk songs named this nobleman as Miloš Obilić. After the death of Sultan Murat, his son Bajazit killed his own brother, Jakup, took command and emerged victorious. Prince Lazar was taken captive and killed immediately. Serbia remained a vassal state under Ottoman rule. The Battle of Kosovo became the subject of legends, embroidered with a range of fabrications: the supper in Kosovo, King Lazar ascending to the Empire of the Sky, the Treachery of Vuk Branković etc.

- After the end of the rule of King Dušan in 1355, no episode from Serbian rule in Kosovo, which lasted until 1415, is presented other than the Battle of Kosovo in 1389¹⁷.

The content of the **Macedonian textbooks** has this at its core:

- The medieval Serbian conquest of the territory of Kosovo is not presented at all, while in relation to Serbia's medieval rule it is said that at the end of the twelfth century and the beginning of the thirteenth Serbian culture showed great development and during this period the elaborate churches of Gračanica near Prishtina, Studenica, the Dečani monastery and the Monastery of Hilandar.
- These textbooks focus only on the time of Stefan Dušan when Serbia spread over a greater area, because in the wars with Byzantium she doubled her territory. In 1346 in Skopje, Dušan was crowned emperor, but Byzantium did not recognise this title. In 1348 Dušan conquered all of Albania. The Albanian feudal lords were unhappy with the Serb conquest because it interrupted their ongoing local self-administration and so from time to time there were revolts and uprisings against the Serbian conquerors. Dušan named as his successor his son Uroš, seen as a weak ruler as in his reign the Serbian Empire was broken up into smaller principalities. In Albania the local lords were strengthened and they began to withdraw from the state.

17 Popović, Radovan and Dragan Miranović, *Historia 7*. Podgorica: Textbooks and Learning Resources Unit, 2006, pages 25, 52-55, 64-67, 69-73; Popović, Radovan and Dragan Miranović and Dragoje Gjokiq, *Historia 2*. Podgorica: Textbooks and Learning Resources Unit, 2006, pages 39-40, 80-83, 100-104.

- After the death of Dušan and the weakening of the Serbian Empire, the local lords were strengthened. The greatest feudal families who created their own principalities were the Topiaj, who led the principality of Durrës, and at whose head was Karl Topia, called 'The Prince of Albania', the Balshaj who led the Principality of Shkodra, and who spread to the north towards Serbian territory, the Muzakaj, the Zenebishta and others. The Principality of the Balshaj, with Balsha II at their head, aimed to create a joint state, but the war with the Principality of Durrës and misfortune in the Battle of Savra with the Ottomans in 1385 weakened them.
- In 1389 Sultan Murat I set off for Serbia together with a great army. This forced the Balkan lords to create an anti-Ottoman coalition. The deciding battle took place in Fushë Kosovë. Prince Lazar led the Serbian army, which was also aided by the conqueror of Bosnia. In this battle the two leaders were killed: Prince Lazar and Sultan Murat. The Serbian military leader Miloš Obilić, pretending that he was giving up, entered into the tent of Sultan Murat and killed him with a sword. The Battle of Kosovo was decisive for the falling of Balkan lands under Ottoman rule. Prince Lazar was succeeded by his son, who became an Ottoman vassal. The Balkan feudal states, divided up, became vassals of the Sultan. The Albanian principalities soon became easy prey while those of the Serbs endured for longer.
- After the end of the rule of King Dušan in 1355, no episode from Serbian rule in Kosovo, which lasted until 1415, is presented other than the Battle of Kosovo in 1389¹⁸.

Summary

The Serbian conquest of the territory of Kosovo, which began in 1184-5 and ended in 1216 at the latest, is presented very fleetingly in the textbooks of Kosovo, Albania, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. Meanwhile, treatment of the Serbian rule of Kosovo from the end of the Serbian conquest in 1216 until the Battle of Kosovo in 1389 can be divided into two groups: on the one hand the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania and on the other those of Serbia in one sense, those of Montenegro up to a point, and the textbooks of Macedonia.

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 18 Boshkoski, Millan, Jordan Ilioski and Nebi Dervishi. *Historia 6*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2008, pages 70, 73-74, 78-80, 82-83; Pavlovski, Gjorgji, Dime Maxhovski and Jovo Ratković. *Historia 1 gjimnazi I reformuar*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2002, pages 96-97; Boshkoski, Millan, Jordan Ilioski, Gjorgji Isajllovski, Vllado Vellkoski, Miroslav Boshković and Simeon Naumovski. *Historia 1 arsimit i mesëm profesional*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2006, pages 79-80; Boshkoski, Millan, Nebi Dervishi, Silvana Sidorovska - Cupovska, Natasha Kotlar, Jordan Ilioski, Dimko Popovski. *Historia 2 arsimit gjimnazor*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2008, pages 36-38.

While Kosovo's rule by King Stefan Nemanja (1168-96) is mentioned by the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania entirely superficially, the rule of his descendants Stefan Nemanjić (1196-1228) and Stefan Uroš I (1236-1271) are not mentioned at all. Furthermore, these textbooks don't even speak of the rule of King Milutin (1282-1321) nor of how he enriched himself mainly by the exploitation of the mines of Kosovo (Trepča, Janjevo, Novo Brdo), and not even of the later construction of a myriad of churches, of which three are in Kosovo, among them the compact and complex masterpiece of Gračanica. Likewise, these textbooks don't feature the rule of Milutin's descendant Dečanski (1322-1331), nor his architectural masterpiece, the Dečan monastery. On the other hand, all that has been mentioned in this paragraph does feature in the Serbian textbooks, and markedly in those of Montenegro, and to a certain extent in those of Macedonia.

Out of all of the two centuries (1216-1415) of medieval Serb rule in Kosovo, the reign of King Dušan, the descendant of Dečanski, is the most important, among other reasons because it was in his reign that Serbia flourished most, conquering great territory which reached to southern Albania, part of northern Greece and even threatening the existence of Byzantium.

Out of all of this two century long Serbian rule in Kosovo (1216-1415), the Kosovan and Albanian textbooks focus only on the reign of Stefan Dušan (1331-1355), which is portrayed in exclusively negative terms: '... the Serbian conquerors used force and savage economic, social and religious discrimination, and undertook mass colonisation of Albanian lands,' and '... Albanian landlords were replaced by Serbs, many place names were replaced with Slavic names and only Serbs were found in the most senior posts of state administration...'. However, this oppression, discrimination and colonisation is mentioned nowhere in the writing of international experts on Kosovan history.

Furthermore, these textbooks say that the Albanian population faced repression, discrimination and colonisation, maintaining their existence and the Albanian nature of these lands. In the context of the 'maintenance of Albanian identity' the textbooks need to be aware that there was a continual process of Serbianisation of non-Serbs who were clearly Albanians or Vlachs and this was not a one-sided process but - given the dominance of Serbia Orthodoxy, of the rule of Orthodox Serbs and of medieval Serbian - there is reason to believe that the general trend in assimilation was in favour of the Serbs. However, as far as the 'maintenance of the Albanian nature of these lands' is concerned, it should be said that if we take as our source the 'golden bull' chrysobull (a decree issued by Byzantine Emperors), the Albanians were a minority on the decline; there is no doubt that Albanians were constantly present in this region, but all evidence suggests that in Medieval Kosovo they were only a minority.

On the other hand, the Serbian textbooks do not give any details of Serbian rule in Kosovo under King Dušan, while those of Macedonia restrict themselves purely to the occasional uprisings of Albanian feudal lords against the Serbian rulers, after '...on-going local self-administration was interrupted.' Meanwhile, the textbooks of Montenegro make no mention of Albanian uprisings against Serbian rulers, but differ radically from the other textbooks as they reveal that '...King Dušan conquered Albania with the support of the Albanian nobles, some of whom gained lofty courtly titles and were appointed rulers of great territories.'

The textbooks of Kosovo and Albania say that there were powerful anti-Serb rebellions which included all territories and which were even supported by European countries, and for their motive they mention repression, discrimination and colonisation, but these do not feature anywhere in the writings of international experts on Kosovan history. With their claims that 'anti-Serb rebellions were supported by European countries' these textbooks seem to attempt to say that Albanian anti-Serb rebellions were supported by European countries not only recently in 1998-1999 but also during medieval Serb rule.

The textbooks of Kosovo, Albania, Serbia and Macedonia – unlike those of Montenegro – do not state anywhere that in the Empire of Dušan Albanians really had a large role: the army of King Dušan which conquered northern Greece was made up mainly of Albanians who took revenge on the Byzantines for their earlier attacks on their land. After this conquest a large number of Albanians and Albanian Vlachs even moved to Greece. Likewise, it is not stated that it was at the head of an army which probably contained a large number of Albanians that King Dušan set off from his headquarters in Shkodra with the aim of attacking his father, Dečanski, in Nerodime, where he took him captive and executed him.

In the textbooks of Kosovo, Albania, Serbia and Macedonia, once again somewhat unlike those of Montenegro, there is no statement about the medieval Serbian state having two groups of people who enjoyed special treatment: Albanians and Vlachs. These two groups are mentioned several times, usually together, in the Code of King Dušan and a decree by King Dečanski even says that '... a Serb is not allowed to marry a Vlach,' which was not the case for Albanians, while a decree of King Milutin equated Albanians with Serbs.

In relation to the Battle of Kosovo of 1389 two groups can be identified. In the first are the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania, which reveal the participation of Albanians in this battle, and which mention not only the participation of the noble family Muzaka – led by Teodor Muzaka, killed in the battle - but also the participation of the Balshaj family, led by the Serb-Albanian Gjergj Balsha,

considered in these textbooks to be Albanian. It's possible that Balshaj didn't take part at all in this battle as when it took place he was in Ulqin – something mentioned only in the Serbian textbooks. It is also in these textbooks that the soldier who killed Sultan Murat is identified as an Albanian – Millosh Kopiliq from the Kopiliq village near Skënderaj. In the second group are the textbooks of Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia which make no mention of the participation of Albanians in this battle and identify the killer of Sultan Murat as a Serb - Miloš Obilić.

Bearing in mind the complicated political situation in the territory of Albania and the marked Ottoman influence in some parts of Albania, there is a significant possibility that in the Battle of Kosovo some Albanians, and even some Serb vassals, took part on the side of the Ottomans – which is not mentioned anywhere in the textbooks of Kosovo, Albania, Serbia, Montenegro or Macedonia. Likewise, in none of these textbooks, with the exception of the textbook for seventh grade in Kosovo, does it say that the ethnicity of Sultan Murat's killer is unclear; he could have been Serbian, Albanian, an Albanian Vlach, Hungarian etc. Furthermore, the rush of the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania and Serbia is completely illogical - though this is not true of the textbooks of Montenegro and Macedonia – in portraying Sultan Murat's killer as respectively an Albanian or a Serb, since the killing didn't take place on the battlefield, but treacherously, and thus as a duplicitous killing.

Finally, nowhere in the textbooks of Kosovo, Albania, Serbia, Montenegro or Macedonia, is there a presentation of even one episode of the medieval Serbian rule in Kosovo after King Dušan (1355) which lasted at least until 1415. I.e. there is no mention at all of the rule of the majority of Kosovo's territory by Vuk Branković, which lasted until 1395-6, nor of the later reign of Stefan Lazarević, nor is mention made of the reign some years later of the sons of Vuk Branković, who governed on condition of being Turkish vassals.

Meanwhile it must also be said that the foundation of the Albanian principalities after King Dušan in 1355, and particularly the Principality of the Balshaj with its centre in Shkodra, which included in its demesne also the western territories of Kosovo such as the cities of Peja and Prizren, is presented in the textbooks of all countries, with the exception of the Serbian textbooks. The Kosovan textbooks identify the aim of the Principality of the Balshaj to have been 'the union of all ethnic Albanian lands in one single state,' while the Albanian, Macedonian and Montenegrin textbooks say only that this principality aimed to expand, and the Serbian textbooks say nothing at all of its aims. Strangely, the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania and those of Macedonia reveal the conflicts between the Albanian principalities of the Balshaj and the Topiaj which is not done in the Serbian and Montenegrin textbooks. As for these conflicts, only the

Albanian textbooks claim that the Topiaj vanquished the Balshaj with the help of the Ottoman army. The Kosovan and Albanian textbooks do not mention any collaboration between the Balshaj and the Serbian rulers, nor that Gjergj II, the grandson of Balsha II, was married to Elena, the daughter of the Serbian king Lazar, nor that the final descendant of the Balshaj went to live with his uncle Stefan Lazarević in Belgrade where he died, while leaving his estate to his uncle, since he had no male heirs, while his mother became a vassal of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁹

19 Malcolm, Noel. *Kosovo: A Short History*. London: Pan Books, 2002, pages 42-95; Schmitt, Oliver. *Kosova: histori e shkurtër e një treve qendrore ballkanike*. Prishtina: Koha, 2012, pages 39-46; Schmitt, Oliver. "Monada e Ballkanit" *Shqiptarët në Mesjetë*. Published in the book prepared by Oliver Schmitt and Eva Anne Frantz. *Historia e Shqiptarëve – gjendja dhe perspektivat e studimeve*. Tirana: Botimet Përpjekja, 2012, pages 67-90; Bartl, Peter. *Shqipëria nga Mesjeta deri Sot*. Prizren: Drita, 1999, 24-31. Schmitt, Oliver. *Shqiptarët – një histori midis Lindjes dhe Perëndimit*. Tirana: K&B, 2012, pages 49-59.

4. KOSOVO UNDER OTTOMAN RULE

4.1 From Gjergj Kastriot-Skanderbeg to the Albanian National Awakening

What is the representation of the era of Gjergj Kastriot-Skanderbeg, the uprising of Pjetër Bogdani, Albanian feudal families, the lack of Albanian-language education and the Islamicisation of the Albanians?

This is a summary of the coverage of these themes in the **Kosovo textbooks**:

- The forced recruitment of Christian children from European countries was the toughest taxation. These children were sent to the court of the Sultan where they were educated and converted and, once they had become the Sultan's most loyal subjects, they rose to some of the highest state positions. This form of recruitment included all conquered territories and most of all Arbëria, whose resistance to Ottoman rule never wavered. The Kastriots' Principality was led by the noble family of the Kastriots who came from Has. Gjon Kastriot was married to Vojsava, who came from a noble family of Tetovo. Their youngest son, Gjergj, was taken prisoner by the Ottomans at the age of 9 and attended the Sultan's military school and because of the talent he showed he took the name Skënder and the title Bey, from which he was called Skënderbeu (anglicised to Skanderbeg). Since he was a distinguished soldier, the Sultan named Skanderbeg the ruler of Kruja, which enabled him to know the situation in the land of his birth and secretly to plan his return to his homeland. Skanderbeg awaited the appropriate moment to return to his homeland and thus it was that on 3 November 1443 in the battle of the Ottomans against the Hungarians (who were led by Janos Hunyadi) he found the opportunity to withdraw. This meant that the Ottomans suffered a defeat. On 28 November 1443 Skanderbeg raised his flag with the two-headed eagle in Kruja. On 2 March 1444 the Albanian League was founded in Lezha, with Skanderbeg at its head, and here all the Albanian princes came together, an Albanian army was created and Albanian cities were liberated, and the foundations were laid for the Albanian state of the time. Skanderbeg fought many battles, especially against the Ottoman Empire, but also with Venice; the most important were the first siege of Kruja in July to October 1450, the Albanian-Ottoman battles of 1452-1465, the second siege of Kruja in May-July 1466 and the third siege of Kruja in May-October 1467. In the autumn of 1448 the Hungarians attacked the Ottomans but they suffered severe misfortunes in Fushë Kosovë because Skanderbeg did not manage to come to the aid of the Hungarians because he was captured by the Serb despot Đurađ Branković. In 1455 Skanderbeg tried to conquer Berat but

he failed and this was his only loss in 25 years – some Arberian leaders such as Moisi Golemi and Hamza Kastrioti went over to the Ottoman side, but Skanderbeg showed himself to be merciful and humane even with those who betrayed him and they later regretted what they had done. Skanderbeg and the Arberians were seen as the defenders of Christianity in the Balkans so the Papacy in Rome gave them moral and material support. Skanderbeg had good relationships with the Pope, Naples, Venice, Dubrovnik, Zeta, and Hungary. Skanderbeg's work gained him respect across the Balkans and Europe. Skanderbeg's efforts prevented the Ottomans from conquering Europe. Skanderbeg is a major national and European figure. The Ottomans exploited the death of Skanderbeg to rule Albanian lands once again, and as a sign of revenge they killed many Albanians and forced many others to move from their homeland.

- The Albanians' efforts to win their lost freedom continued uninterrupted after the death of Skanderbeg. In 1689 a general anti-Ottoman uprising broke out with around 20 000 insurgents, at the head of whom was the Skopje Archbishop Pjetër Bogdani. This uprising was not supported by other peoples in the Balkans and was not successful. In Kaçanik at the beginning of 1690, the Austrian army, together with Albanian insurgents, was subdued by the Ottoman army. The withdrawal of the Austrians and bad luck for the Albanians created a difficult situation for the local population. Some Kosovan residents left together with the Austrian soldiers but there can be no question of demographic change in Kosovo at that time.
- Even after the Ottoman conquest there were feudal families of whom the best known were the Bushati family who founded the *pashaluk* of Shkodra, the Janina family who founded the *pashaluk* of Janina and the Begolli, Kryeziu and other families. There was rivalry between these families. After they became much stronger and started to become independent, the Ottomans destroyed the Janina *pashaluk* and killed its leader, Ali Pasha Tepelena, and later also destroyed the Shkodra *pashaluk*.
- The Albanians felt that they had been conquered, did not have their national and civic rights and were denied schooling in their mother tongue. The Albanians who had emigrated from their homeland because of Ottoman violence helped their country from the places where they lived. The Ottoman authorities were frightened by the education of the Albanians in their native language. Albanian intellectuals and patriots were persecuted, imprisoned and killed by the Ottoman authorities who did not allow the opening of Albanian schools. Despite these difficulties, the Albanians did not stop their activities and opened their national schools: the first school was opened on 7 March 1887. After

finishing higher education and because of the intellectual talents he demonstrated, the activist of the Albanian awakening, Hoxhë Tahsini, was appointed rector of the University of Istanbul.

- After the Ottoman conquest the country was almost completely destroyed by war and in Arberian lands Islam began to spread. Initially those who adopted the Islamic faith were the sons of Albanian nobles, who were sent to the Sultan's palace and returned to their country to take up positions in the administration or the army. The Ottomans thought that Islam would spread more easily this way to other classes among the population. Islamicisation spread first in Albanian cities, much more slowly in villages and not at all in the mountain areas. The factors which impacted on the spread of Islam were pressure through taxation on land, paid only by Christians, the selection of boys from Albanian Christian families and their dispatch to Istanbul, the reprisals of the authorities against the population and others.²⁰

The core of the coverage of the **textbooks of Albania** is as follows:

- The Ottoman conquest brought severe economic and political consequences. Much agricultural land was destroyed and many cities were burned and pillaged. The Arberian princes were stripped of their property, forced to become vassals of the Sultan and to pay tribute and to serve in the army. These things encouraged the outbreak of anti-Ottoman uprisings. The Principality of the Kastriots, led by Gjon Kastriot, who came originally from Has, was once of the principalities which most grew in strength in the fifteenth century. In 1415 Gjon Kastrioti sent his son Gjergj to the Sultan as a hostage where he was educated in military school and took the name Skënder (anglicised to Skander), the title Bey and the rank of general. Skanderbeg took part in many battles and held many posts in the Ottoman administration. In 1443 the Ottoman army in which Skanderbeg was a part fought near the city of Niš with Hungarian forces led by Janos Hunyadi. In this battle the Ottoman forces were routed and Skanderbeg judged this to be the best moment to return to his homeland and liberate his country from Ottoman rule. During the Niš battle, Skanderbeg took from the secretary of the Sultan a document with the Sultan's seal in which Skanderbeg was named ruler of Kruja castle. He arrived in Kruja with his own fighters, took the castle, expelled the conquering Ottoman forces and on 28 November 1443 he took down the Ottoman flag and raised the flag with the Kastriots' symbol, declaring

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20 Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 5*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 37-54 and 55-74; Bicaj, Isa and Arbër Salihu. *Historia 7*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 58-72 and 113-132; Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 10*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 169-185.

himself victor. Since he knew that the Sultan would send a large military force to reconquer Arberian territory, on 2 March 1444 Skanderbeg called a national assembly of the Arberian princes in Lezha where it was decided to create an alliance, of which Skanderbeg was chosen as leader. He carried out dozens of successful battles against the Ottomans, such as the Battle of Torviolli of 1444 and the breaking of the Turkish expeditions of 1445-7, but the biggest battles were those in defence of Kruja (1450, 1466, 1467). Skanderbeg's victories drew the attention of all Europe, and Albania began to be considered a powerful anti-Ottoman defence. The Battle of Berat (1455) was the hardest battle, where the forces of Skanderbeg's state suffered severe losses, and some Arberian nobles like Moisi Golemi and Hamza Kastrioti were swayed, betrayed Skanderbeg and secretly went over to the Sultan. At the Battle of Oronik the Ottoman forces led by Moisi Golemi were broken and Moisi Golemi regretted what he had done and returned to Skanderbeg who forgave him. Hamza Kastrioti, the nephew of Skanderbeg, who was at the head of the Ottoman forces at the battle of Uji i Bardhë, suffered severe misfortune, was taken prisoner, sent to prison in Italy and later forgiven by Skanderbeg. The same fate befell the Ottoman forces in the Vajkali valley in Bulqizë, who were led by a skilled commander Ballaban Pasha, of Arberian origin. Skanderbeg maintained relations with many states such as the Papacy, Naples, Milan, Ragusa and Hungary. Skanderbeg died on 17 January 1468 at the age of 63. After his death the Albanian lands fell under Ottoman rule. His son Gjon also made efforts for liberation, as did his grandson Gjergj after him but after several years both were forced to withdraw. Skanderbeg entered history as a figure of status both nationally and internationally.

- Between 1614 and 1620 efforts were made to organise a Balkan anti-Ottoman movement and four Balkan assemblies were organised for this, in which Albanians, Montenegrins, Serbs and Macedonians took part, but since international support was not secured, these efforts failed. In 1689, in the war between the Ottoman and Hapsburg Empires, the Albanians were encouraged by the victories of the Austrian army and broke out in forceful uprisings which swiftly spread and included the territory of Kosovo. At the head of this general uprising, which included 20 000 people, was the Archbishop of Skopje, Frang Bardhi, a distinguished figure of our national culture. The Austrian army made progress towards Prishtina, Prizren and Skopje and was welcomed in every city as an army of liberation. Some of the insurgents united with the Austrian army. The victories of the insurgents and the Austrian army were interrupted at the Battle of Kaçanik in 1690 where the Austrian army was broken by the Ottoman forces who reestablished their rule in the territory of Kosovo.

- The *pashaluk* of Shkodra was created by the Shkodran Bushatli family. The founder was Mehmet Pasha Bushatli. His descendant, Mahmut Pasha, attempted to create a Balkan alliance and a call was made to an assembly in Podgorica where many Albanians, Montenegrins, Serbs and Macedonians took part and decided to create an alliance called the Illyrian Confederation and to fight against the Ottoman Empire. Mahmut Pasha organised two uprisings and emerged victorious in both. He was killed in 1796 in an attack he had undertaken against Montenegro. The last ruler of this *pashaluk* was Mustafa Pasha Bushatli. Alongside the *pashaluk* of Shkodra was created the *pashaluk* of Janina whose history is linked to the figure of Ali Pasha Tepelena. He took control of the *pashaluk* of Janina in 1787 and transformed it into a place of power and authority. He maintained relations with the great powers of the time – France, England and Russia. The policy of independence which he followed put him in conflict with the Ottoman Empire which sent an army against Ali Pasha. After he was betrayed by many of his allies, including even his sons, he was killed on Janina's island, his head cut off and sent to the Sultan. The *pashaluks* were steps towards the creation of a nation state.
- In the sixteenth century the economy began to come to life, cities grew, trading centres and markets were created, and crafts and trade developed. Albanian traders increased their activity not only domestically but also across the Balkans and Europe. There were changes in education, culture and religion. During the seventeenth century religious primary schools and high schools were opened in Albanian, textbooks were drafted, works of literature were translated and the foundations were laid for Albanian literature by Gjon Buzuku, Pjetër Budi, Frang Bardhi, Pjetër Bogdani and others. There was also particular development in Arabic-alphabet literature known as 'the literature of the couplet-writers'. In all Albanian cities Islamic schools (*medresas*) were opened and lessons were held there in Turkish or Arabic. In northern Albania schools were opened which taught in Albanian while in southern Albania schools were opened teaching in Greek. Many new buildings were constructed – mosques and churches, public baths, fountains, clocktowers etc. – which were decorated by great artists like Onufri, Selenica, Shpataraku etc..
- Alongside the Catholic and Orthodox faiths, the Islamic faith emerged and spread rapidly, especially in the eighteenth century.²¹

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21 Dërguti, Menduh, Sonila Boçi and Ledia Dushku. *Historia 9*. Tirana: Botime Shkollore Albas, 2013, pages 29-43; Dërguti, Menduh, Ferit Duka, Ledia Dushku and Sonila Boçi. *Historia e shqiptarëve 12*. Tirana: Botime Shkollore Albas, 2013, pages 73-84.

In the **Serbian textbooks** the trends are:

- After the break-up of the Serbian kingdom, great Albanian families such as the Shpataj, Matrënga and Topiaj, and later the Muzaka, Kastriot, Dukagjin and Arianit emerged on the political scene, creating regions under their control. The Ottoman threat, which hung over all the Balkans, included the Albanian areas. Wars between the great Albanian families, characteristic of all Balkan lands, facilitated the Ottomans' influence, especially during the time of Sultan Bajazit I. Most Albanian dynasties became vassals of the Ottomans. In the first decade of the fifteenth century a new Ottoman conquest of Albanian territory took place. At this time the Albanian sanjak was formed as an integral part of the Ottoman Empire. This regionalism included the Kastriot family circle. Gjergj Kastriot, the son of Gjon Kastriot, called Skanderbeg by the Turks, evaded Ottoman conquest during the 1440s, conquered the city of Kruja and began a war for the liberation of the territory. Other Albanian dynasties gathered around him and until his death (1468) he succeeded in resisting Ottoman attacks. Skanderbeg became a byword for Albanian resistance to Ottoman rule, a central character in popular tradition and later also an important part of the formation of national identity. After his death the Ottomans oppressed other great tribes and continued their conquest further.
- When the Turks began to achieve success in the war against the Austrians, especially after the Battle of Kaçanik, the so-called Great Migration of the Serbs took place in 1690. Escaping the Turks and accompanying clerics and laymen from the area of Macedonia, Kosovo and Metohia and Rashka, Patriarch Arsenije III took with him the church values. The exodus of Serbs crossed the Sava and the Danube and moved into the area of southern Hungary. It is said that around 60 000 souls migrated. After 1690, in Kosovo and Metohia the abandoned Serbian hearths began to be populated to a great extent with Islamicised Albanian tribes from northern and central Albania. The next and important migration, once again into Hungary, took place half a century later, in similar conditions, during the Austro-Turkish war (1737-1739). This migration involved fewer people and included the Albanian Kelmendi tribe as well as Serbs.
- There is nothing about the Albanian feudal families.
- There is nothing about the (lack of) Albanian schools.
- Islamicisation mostly included two ethnic groups – the Albanians and the Serbs. From the coming of the Turks until today these two groups have been members of three faith communities – Orthodox, Catholic and Muslim, with the distinction that there are more Orthodox Christians

among the Serbs and more Muslims among the Albanians. Islamicisation of the Serbs took place mostly in the area from Lika to Metohia, in the Rashka region and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Islamicisation was a long process and most marked in the sixteenth century, but there was no halt in conversions until the beginning of the twentieth century. With the acceptance of Islam, people changed their beliefs, their lifestyle, their thinking and even the way they looked, since Muslims were also distinguished by their costume. All of this meant that the Islamicised world took on another mental character. In the area of Old Serbia (Kosovo), the move to Islam had an accompanying characteristic: the Albanians, privileged because of their numbers and as Muslims, forced names, language and customs on the Serbs. This process is known as Albanisation.²²

In the **textbooks of Montenegro** the core of the narrative is as follows:

- In the fifteenth century the Ottoman authorities ruled across all this territory. In order to protect their positions and privileges, the majority of the Albanian feudal lords agreed to be vassals. The Albanian people rose under the leadership of Gjergj Kastrioti - Skanderbeg in resistance to the Ottoman authorities. In the fifteenth century the most important families were the Dukagjinis in the north and the Kastriots near Kruja, who were faced with the conquering force of the Ottomans. The famous Albanian military commander, Skanderbeg, carried out a heroic war against the Ottomans. Using the Ottomans' difficulties during the time of the wars of 1443-44 he escaped from the Sultan, established his authority over Kruja and regained his family's land. This encouraged other Albanian feudal lords who joined Skanderbeg and offered a strong front against the Turks until Skanderbeg's death (1468). Skanderbeg ruled independently for 25 years over part of Albania. In this period he opposed the Ottomans with bravery and success, for which he gained great praise. After his death Sultan Mehmet II reconquered all the territory. Albania was one of the territories where the Ottoman authorities had strong points of support.
- There is no mention at all that in 1689 in Kosovo an anti-Ottoman uprising broke out with around 20 000 insurgents, at the head of which was the Archbishop of Skopje, Pjetër Bogdani.

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22 Smilja Marjanović-Dušanić and Marko Šuica. *Istorija za II razred gimnazije*. Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2009, page 217; Radoš Ljušić. *Istorija za I razred gimnazije*. Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2008, pages 75, 88-89.

- In the first half of the nineteenth century, a powerful anti-reformist movement from the feudal Albanian oligarchy in the *pashaluks* of Janina and Shkodra strongly opposed the Ottoman Empire. The *pashaluk* of Janina was led by Ali Pasha Tepelena who grabbed the territory of his neighbours and expelled from Albania those who propped up the Ottoman Empire. In his own territory he ruled as a despot and oppressed the Christians just as much as the Muslims. In order to achieve his ambitions he established alliances with France and England, and under his rule Janina became an economically developed centre. After the siege which began in 1820, the Ottoman empire established their rule in this *pashaluk* and Ali Pasha was killed in 1822. The *pashaluk* of Shkodra was led by Mahmut Pasha Bushati and later by Ibrahim Pasha Bushati, a man loyal to the Sultan, who helped the Ottoman Empire in putting down all the revolts in Thrace, Bulgaria and Serbia. Ibrahim's successor was Mustafa whom the Ottoman Empire helped to extend his authority to bring him into conflict with Ali Pasha Tepelena. Relations between Mustafa and the Ottoman Empire broke off after he abandoned the Greek border and sabotaged participation in the Russian-Ottoman war of 1828-29. In 1830-31, Mustafa led the anti-reformist movement in Albania, established relations with Hysein, Gradašević, Miloš Obrenović, and Petar Njegoš, thus threatening the rule of the Sultan in the Balkans. After Mustafa's weakening and withdrawal, the rule of the Bushatlis came to an end. During the implementation of the reforms, the Ottoman rulers made many reprisals and this caused new revolts and uprisings to break out in Albania.
- Nothing is mentioned about the (lack of) Albanian schools.
- The Albanians spread a strong process of Islamicisation in the seventeenth and eighteenth century and took part in the Ottomans' campaigns. During and after the Great War of 1683-99 the Albanians were also included in the migrations which occasionally led them to migrate to neighbouring countries.²³

The contents of the **Macedonian textbooks** have this at their core:

- With Ottoman authority established in Albania the Albanians' situation became much more difficult. Many inhabitants who hadn't accepted Ottoman rule withdrew to mountain regions while others left Arberia. The Principality of the Kastriots became a centre of anti-Ottoman resistance. This principality achieved increased strength at the beginning of the

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 23 Popović, Radovan and Dragan Miranović, *Historia 7*. Podgorica: Podgorica: Textbooks and Learning Materials Unit, 2006, page 70; Popović, Radovan and Dragan Miranović and Dragoje Gjokiq, *Historia 2*. Podgorica: Textbooks and Learning Materials Unit, 2006, page 101; Borozan Gjorgje, Sasha Knezheviq and Sait Shabotiq, *Historia 3*. Podgorica: Textbooks and Learning Materials Unit, 2009, pages 29 and 90.

fifteenth century under the leadership of Gjon Kastriot who came from the Has region of Kosovo. Unable to resist the Ottoman Empire, Gjon was forced to accept the role of vassal to the Sultan and to give up his nine year-old son, Gjergj, as tribute to the Sultan. Gjergj was forced to accept Islam and to take a Muslim name, Skander. Even though he was in the service of the Ottomans, Skanderbeg retained his love for his homeland and links with the country of his birth, and with his own people. He waited for the appropriate moment to leave his obligations with the Sultan and then after the Ottomans' misfortunes at Niš in September 1443 at the hands of the Hungarians led by Janos Hunyadi, Skanderbeg – who had taken part on the Ottomans' side – found an opportunity to return to his homeland and to fight for the liberation of Albanian lands. He was presented by the Sultan as the new leader before the Ottoman incumbents in Kruja. On 28 November 1443, after taking Kruja, he raised the flag with the black double-headed eagle. The uprising of 1443 liberated the majority of Albania. On 2 March 1444 in Lezha Skanderbeg called a national assembly of Albanian princes with the aim of opposition of the Ottoman forces and at this assembly it was decided to create a military-political alliance under the command of Skanderbeg. There is information about Skanderbeg's battles with the Ottoman Empire and with Venice, the first siege of Kruja (July – October 1450), the Albanian-Ottoman battles (1452 – 65), the second siege of Kruja (May – July 1466) and the third siege of Kruja (May – October 1467). There is also information about Skanderbeg's links with European countries – Hungary, Italy, Naples, Venice, Dubrovnik and other countries in the region. The Ottoman Empire managed to conquer Kruja only in 1478, ten years after the death of Skanderbeg. Under Skanderbeg, the Albanian principalities united for the first time into a country. Skanderbeg prevented Ottoman progress towards Europe.

- Albanian cities experienced severe attacks during the Ottoman conquest and the majority of the population was either killed or emigrated. There were attempts at the Balkan level, in which Albanian, Serb, Montenegrin and Macedonian representatives took part, to organise anti-Ottoman resistance: in 1614 in Kuç, in 1616 in Prokuple, in 1620 in Belgrade. In September 1689 the Austrian army led by General Piccolomini headed towards Kosovo. He was welcomed with high honours in Prishtina and Prizren. More than 20 000 Albanian insurgents joined him, led by Pjetër Bogdani. After the death of Piccolomini (November 1689), the Albanian attitude towards the Austrians changed for various reasons: Piccolomini's successor, Holstein, regarded the Albanians with mistrust and attempted to disarm them, offended them and behaved poorly to them; the Austrians did not reduce taxation for the Albanians; another reason was the death of Pjetër Bogdani who had calmed his countrymen with his authority. Nevertheless, a large number of Albanians continued to fight the Austrians. The situation of the

Austrian army and the Albanian insurgents deteriorated when the Grand Vizier, the Albanian Mustafa Pasha Qyprili, was appointed commander of the Albanian army. The Austrian forces and the Albanian insurgents were forced to withdraw. The Ottomans committed unimaginable crimes. Along with the Austrian army a large number of people from Serbia and Kosovo, mainly insurgents loyal to Austria, withdrew. The majority of those who left were Albanian. The term 'Serbs' used in documents can be understood to refer to Orthodox Albanians who were Kosovan insurgents who joined the Austrians.

- After a long battle for power between the Begolli family from Peja and the Causholli family from Shkodra, the Bushatli family from Shkodra took power in the *pashaluk* of Shkodra. Mehmet Pasha Bushatli was appointed by the Sultan as Pasha of Shkodra and is considered to be the founder of this *pashaluk*. His descendant, Mahmut Pasha, can be considered the most powerful ruler of the *pashaluk* since he extended his territory even further and this had an impact on the deterioration of relations with the Ottoman Empire. The Sultan removed Mahmut Pasha from his role and sent a powerful army against him. The two clashed in Kosovo where Mahmut Pasha achieved great victory. After this, Mahmut Pasha called an assembly in Podgorica where representatives took part from Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina and decided to create an alliance with the name of the Illyrian Confederation and to fight against the Ottoman Empire. He organised two uprisings and was successful in both. He was killed in 1796 in the attack he launched against Montenegro. Ibrahim Bushatli took his place, following a peaceful policy towards the Ottoman Empire. The final ruler of this *pashaluk* was Mustafa Pasha Bushatli. In the second half of the eighteenth century there were frequent conflicts between the Albanian feudal families in central Albania and especially in Janina. In 1786, after taking power in Janina, Ali Pasha Tepelena attacked the feudal lords in opposition to him and eliminated the bands of rebels and extended his *pashaluk*. He was appointed by the Sultan as the ruler of Janina. He also had links with European countries - France, England and Russia - who sent their diplomatic representatives to Janina. The strengthening of the *pashaluk* of Janina impacted on a cooling of relations with the Ottoman Empire who sent an army against Ali Pasha. During the conflict, many of Ali Pasha's commanders surrendered and the situation became worse when even Ali Pasha's son surrendered. Ali Pasha was killed in 1822.
- There is nothing on the (lack of) Albanian language schools.
- There is also nothing on the Islamicisation of the Albanians.²⁴

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 24 Boshkoski, Millan, Nebi Dervishi, Silvana Sidorovska – Cupovska, Natasha Kotlar, Jordan Iljoski, Dimko Popovski. *Historia 2 arsimi gjimnazor*. Skopje: Prosvetno Delto, 2008, pages 64-80, 121-123.

Summary

The Albanian uprisings against the Ottoman Empire during 1443-1468, led by Gjergj Kastrioti - Skanderbeg, brought Albanians to Western conscience for the first time. These were not the only uprisings but due to Skanderbeg's charismatic figure they were the strongest Christian uprisings in the Balkans. Indeed, except in Albania's textbooks, there is no mention elsewhere that Skanderbeg escaped from the Sultan and returned to Kruja, benefiting from the difficulties of the Ottomans in the time of the 1443-44 war, and during the battle against the Hungarians in Nis, managed to obtain from Sultan's secretary a document sealed by the Sultan himself which appointed him as the ruler of Kruja.

Although Skanderbeg's uprisings occurred in a small territory mainly comprised of mountains and not cities, they were extraordinary in their dimensions as they faced the greatest empire of the period. Yet the uprisings were made possible, among others, because of Skanderbeg's *vassalage* to Italian states, which in Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia's textbooks is presented as an *alliance*, while not mentioned at all in Serbian and Montenegrin textbooks. Further, the textbooks of Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia represent Skanderbeg's wars mainly as a string of successive victories, not as wars with victories and defeats, as they indeed were. Even when presenting a defeat of Skanderbeg, they attribute it exclusively to 'traitors' such as Hamza Kastrioti and Moisi Golemi.

The motives behind uprisings led by Skanderbeg, especially in textbooks of Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia are presented as nationalistic (aiming to lead the Albanian people towards freedom) yet their motives were mainly religious, proprietary, and even vendettas for his father killed by Sultan's order. Thus for example the Assembly of Lezha is presented as a national unity or a league and there is no mention anywhere that rulers of families from other ethnicities, such as the Crnojević family, had also joined the Assembly. The unity was not a national league but a military one and each member of the league maintained their full independence, while Skanderbeg was only the first among leaders, and not, as stated in these textbooks, the ruler of an Albanian state.

When describing Skanderbeg raising the double-headed eagle flag in Kruja, none of the textbooks specify that the flag was that with the Byzantine eagle. None of these textbooks mention that Skanderbeg's father came from Dibra, a mixed territory (Albanian, Serbian, Bulgarian and Vlach), or that he was married to Vojsava Branković, a noble Serbian woman, or that the children were given Byzantine Orthodox (Konstantin, Gjergj) and Slavic names (Reposh, Stanisa, Mamica, Vlaica, Jela).

The Ottoman conquest, particularly in the Kosovan textbooks, is presented exclusively in a negative light, but the occupation of Albanian territories cannot be compared with the consequences suffered by other Balkan peoples, especially Bulgaria and Serbia, since Albanians had had no ecclesiastical organization prior to the Ottoman conquest, no state tradition, no art or literature that could be qualified as Albanian. One should keep in mind that before the Ottoman conquest Albanian dynasties would issue their documents in Greek, Latin and Slavic languages, and not a single document was written in Albanian.

Furthermore, only textbooks of Albania and Macedonia surprisingly mention the efforts to organize an anti-Ottoman Balkan movement during 1614-1620, which is why Balkan assemblies were organized – in Kuç in 1614, Prokuplje in 1616, Belgrade in 1620 – attended by Albanians, Serbs, Montenegrins and Macedonians, destined to fail as they lacked international support.

Regarding the clash between the Ottoman and Austrian forces in autumn 1689, the textbooks of Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia only present the Albanian participation, led by the Roman Catholic Archbishop Pjetër Bogdani, allied to the Austrian forces led by Aeneas Piccolomini. These texts present Pjetër Bogdani's uprising (Albania's texts wrongly refer to it as "Frang Bardhi's uprising") as one of many continuous Albanian efforts to regain the freedom lost after Skanderbeg's death.

However, these textbooks do not mention that the Ottoman forces fighting against the Austrian ones were led by the Albanian Mahmut Mahmutbeyoglu, who was a Pasha of Peja with about 10 thousand troupes, both Albanian and Serb. The same textbooks do not specify – with the exception of Macedonian ones – that the Main Ottoman Vizier was Mehmet Köprülü, a member of a powerful Albanian dynasty in the public service of the Ottoman Empire. These textbooks completely ignore the Serbian participation in the uprising, alongside Austrian and against Ottoman forces, led by Patriarch Arsenije Crnojevic, and Kosovo's textbooks even claim that the anti-Ottoman uprising failed as it was not supported by other Balkan peoples.

On the other hand, textbooks of Serbia and Montenegro do not present the Albanian participation in the clash between Ottoman and Austrian forces. Serbian textbooks only present the participation of Serbs in the war against Ottoman forces and focus particularly on the withdrawal of the Austrian army in the early days of 1690 after the attack by the Ottoman army, which had robbed, killed and expelled many people from Kosovo. These textbooks claim that only Serbs fled from the Kosovo territory and that this eviction, known as the 'Great Migration', was large in its scale.

Serbian historiography generally claims that the evicted were exclusively from Kosovo and that they numbered about 400-500 thousand, but the Serbian textbooks note that the evicted were not only from the Kosovo's territory, but also the areas of Macedonia and Serbia, while saying that the number of refugees was supposedly about 60 thousand. However, with regards to the number of evicted refugees, international researchers like Malcolm claim it was about 30-40 thousand. Serbian textbooks further maintain that homes abandoned by Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija were largely occupied by Islamized Albanian tribes pouring from northern and eastern Albania. Kosovo textbooks say that some Kosovar people withdrew along with the Austrian soldiers, adding that there can be no talk about any demographic changes in Kosovo at the time. In fact, most of the displaced from Kosovo's territory had been Serbian and it is indisputable that the ethnic structure of Kosovo changed because of this displacement and the arrival of Albanians from the territory of present-day Albania – this arrival was triggered by an economic drive and due to feuds, also aiming to neutralize the insurgent and looting groups of the population.

All textbooks, except those of Serbia, present the Albanian feudal families, with special emphasis on Bushati family, that established the Patriarchy of Shkodra, and the family of Janina that established the Pashalik of Yanina. None of these textbooks present the Kosovo Albanian feudal families, except some Kosovo textbooks which briefly mention Begolli and Kryeziu families. Kosovo textbooks and those of the surrounding countries need to present, in a dignified manner, the Kosovo Albanian feudal families such as the Begollis in Peja, Kryezius in Gjakova, Rrotllas in Prizren, Gjinolis in Prishtina and Gjilan, and so on. The Gjinolli family in particular was so powerful in the early 19th century, that its members were called "second rulers" of Kosovo, after the Sultan.

The spread of Islam among Albanians is mentioned only in passing in textbooks of Albania and Montenegro, not mentioned at all in Macedonian ones, while Kosovo and Serbia's textbooks focus in more length on the process, highlighting the factors which contributed to its spread. Kosovo textbooks claim that the spread of Islam was influenced by the land taxes only payable by Christians, the taking of young boys from Albanian Christian families to Istanbul, and the reprisals by the state bodies. In fact, the main reasons behind converting to Islam among Albanians were mostly financial: the economic drive, as the conversion eased the taxes; career opportunities; societal status, namely prestige. This is why the pace of Islamization was more rapid in cities. Another reason for the conversion was that Albanians Catholics had even less priests than during the medieval Serbian rule. It must be noted that the conversion under pressure has not been frequent.

During the 15th and the 16th centuries a systematic method of forcibly recruiting young boys was developed. It was known as *devshirme*; one boy would be taken from forty households, sent to Istanbul, where his religion was changed, he was taught Turkish and trained to serve as a soldier. Of course *devshirme* was not popular in Christian villages, which is why in 1565 a rebellion against it broke out in Albania. Yet there is no mention in these textbooks that some areas, such as Novobërda, were exempt from *devshirme*, which was considered a special privilege. Similarly, it is not stated anywhere that the Albanians were valued highly by *devshirme* collectors due to their physical stamina and combat skills, and there no mention that many of them managed to become rulers and hold senior state posts, disproportionately to their population size: two head viziers in the 15th century, Daut Pasha and Ahmet Pasha, are known to be of Albanian origin, while the total number of Albanian head viziers in the history of the Ottoman Empire, including many Kosovo Albanians, is believed to be 42. Out of 92 great viziers that governed from the 15th until the 17th century, 25 were of Albanian descent, 19 of Turkish descent.

Christians were deprived of certain rights, such as possession of guns, but this restriction was not observed at all in Albanian areas. In general, Christians had obtained the status of a second-hand population and were subject to a disparity in the Ottoman legal practice: their testimony was not considered valid against a Muslim in courts, but on the other hand there are many records of Muslims testifying in favour of Christians and against other Muslims. However, Christians were allowed to adhere to their religious life, preserve their churches and have their own civil courts, even expand and build new churches – thus for example, in the second half of 16th century, in the area of Peja Patriarchate the building of churches and monasteries was allowed.

In the last two centuries of the Ottoman rule there were several occasions of cruel reign in the Balkans, but the entire Ottoman rule cannot be labelled as violent, because in its early years (at least until the end of the 16th century) it was a regular system of rule. The claim that the Turkish reign has suppressed national identities in the early period is not a sound one, because the modern concept of national identity had not emerged in this part of Europe at the time.

Finally, the vast majority of Kosovo's textbooks, unlike Albanian ones, do not present any of the religious buildings erected during almost five centuries of Ottoman rule, such as religious temples (mosques, masjids, tombs, tekkes); educational facilities (madrasas and libraries); and other structures (public baths, stone bridges, public fountains, residential houses, clock towers, fountains, inns, bazaars, etc.). Also, Kosovo textbooks, unlike Albanian ones, do not present writers of Albanian origin who wrote in oriental languages or in Albanian but with Arabic script, such as Suzi from Prizren, Mesihi from

Prishtina, Jahja Dukagjini, Koçi Bey, Lutfi Pasha, Nazim Berati, Mehmet Akif Ersoy, Sheh Maliqi from Rahovec and many others. The textbooks of Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia do not deal with these issues at all.

Meanwhile, as regards schools, Kosovo textbooks say that the Ottoman rule did not allow for them to open in Albanian language, and that the Albanians were not discouraged by this and opened up the first Albanian school on March 7, 1887. Textbooks of Albania are correct in claiming that Islamic schools (madrassas) opened up in all Albanian cities, with lectures held in Turkish or Arabic, adding that schools in Albanian were open in Northern Albania, and schools in Greek in Southern Albania. It is worth mentioning that some Albanians in Yugoslavia continued to write in Arabic script up until the eve of World War II.²⁵

25 Malcolm, Noel. *Kosovo - A Short History*. London: Pan Macmillan, 2002, pp. 181-201 and 116-180; Schmitt, Oliver. *Kosova: histori e shkurtër e një treve qendrore ballkanike*. Prishtina: Koha, 2012, pp. 87-127; Schmitt, Oliver. *Shqiptarët - një histori midis Lindjes dhe Perëndimit*. Tirana: KÛB, 2012, pp. 56-81 and 120-135; Bartl, Peter. *Shqipëria - nga mesjeta deri sot*. Prizren: Drita, 1999, pp. 44-78; Gawrych, George. *Gjysmëhëna dhe shqiponja - sundimi otoman, islamizimi dhe shqiptarët 1874-1913*. Tirana: Bota Shqiptare, 2007; Përpjekja Review 28-29. *Skënderbeu i kërkimit shkencor*. Tirana: 2012.

4.2. The Albanian national awakening

What is the presentation of the Tanzimat reforms and the Albanian uprising, the Albanian National Awakening, the deportation of Muslim Albanians from the land of the Niš Sanjak in 1877-8 and the League of Prizren and League of Peja, and specifically the Albanian political groups of this period, their political aims and their collaboration with 'the enemy'?

The following is the core of the presentation given to the issues above in the **Kosovan textbooks**:

- In the 1830s a range of administrative, financial, military and educational reforms were undertaken in the Tanzimat period. Albanian land was divided into four vilayets, and recruitment began of regular soldiers who had to serve for many years, far away from their home. These reforms made the situation worse and as a result a series of anti-Ottoman uprisings erupted, starting from the 1830s and continuing until the 1870s. Among the demands of those in the uprising the most important was for government by Albanians. The uprisings of the Tanzimat period were by the general population; Albanians from various regions took part in them, irrespective of their religious backgrounds. The uprisings fought against ethnic oppression and economic exploitation, forcing the Ottoman Empire to bring forward the implementation of reforms in many regions, especially mountain areas, but they did not achieve the success they had hoped for because they were put down harshly by the Ottoman army.
- The Albanian National Awakening was a wide movement which aimed at the liberation and union of all Albanian lands in an independent state. It began in the 1830s and ended in 1912 with the declaration of Albania's independence. Among the preoccupations of the members of this Renaissance movement was the creation of a shared alphabet. In 1825 Naum Vexhillarxhi drafted an Albanian alphabet and in 1844 he produced the first Albanian primer.
- The Serbian army committed genocide and terror against the Albanian population in 1877-8, using violence to force the relocation of around 160 000 Albanian inhabitants from 640 settlements in the Niš Sanjak region and elsewhere. These Albanians were forced to find shelter deep in the Kosovo Vilayet and these people are still today known as 'muhaxhirë' (refugees). This mass violent deportation meant ethnic cleansing of these Albanian settlements and their colonisation with Serbian populations.

- Albanians carried out a continuous war for liberation from the Ottoman rule which had denied ethnic and civic rights: mother tongue education, administration and courts. The Albanian representatives from all areas, irrespective of their religious background, joined together in June 1878 and created the League of Prizren which organised its own army to expel the invaders and to create an independent Albanian state. In 1881 the Ottoman Empire put down the League of Prizren with huge military force, imprisoning and killing its main leaders, but the Albanians never gave up their position opposing the Ottoman rulers.
- Even after the League of Prizren was put down, the Albanians' war for liberation and national unity continued. The League of Peja was formed in 1899 for this reason. The person who had the idea of forming this pan-Albanian league was Haxhi Zeka. Around 500 representatives from many Albanian lands took part in the League of Peja Assembly and it was decided to create branches of the League across Albania. Some textbooks say also that the task of the League of Peja was to fight against the division of Albanian lands by neighbouring countries, but the demand for autonomy was not made by Haxhi Zeka and his supporters, because of an unfavourable political situation and the position of conservative elements.²⁶

The core of the information given in the Albanian textbooks is:

- The Tanzimat reforms included reforms in the administration, the army, finance and education. Albanian territory was divided into four vilayets (Shkodra, Kosovo, Manastir and Janina). Foreigners nominated by Istanbul were employed in the administration and compulsory military service was established in the army with no compensation, while taxes were raised and gathered by Ottoman officials and state schools were opened alongside religious schools. The Ottoman state equated ethnicity with religion and as a result did not recognise Albanian ethnicity, denying the right to language and the right to opening schools in Albanian. The Albanians opposed the Tanzimat reforms and from the 1830s to the 1870s the Albanians broke out into wide-spread uprisings against Ottoman rule. The uprisings were put down after the Sultan used significant military force.
- The Albanian National Awakening developed during the nineteenth century and spread until 1912, having as its main aim the country's liberation and independence through armed struggle, the union of

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²⁶ Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 5*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013. pages 57-60; Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 10*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013. pages 53-65; Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 11*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013. pages 37-47; Bajraktari, Jusuf and Arbër Salihu. *Historia 12*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013. pages 52-65

all Albanians into one nation, irrespective of religious or regional background, and for the union of all Albanian lands into one state. In the field of education, Naum Veqilharxhi of the National Awakening movement drafted the first Albanian alphabet and primer in 1844. Serbia, Montenegro and Greece wanted to expand their lands by including Albanian land. There were two schools of thought within the National Albanian Movement: the first called for an autonomous state within the Ottoman Empire, which would later lead to independence for Albania, since at the beginning an independent Albania would not be able to withstand the threats of neighbouring countries; while the second group called for an immediate declaration of Albania's independence, even through fighting the Ottomans. These two groups would exist until the declaration of Albania's independence.

- There is nothing about the expulsion of Albanians from the lands of the Sanjak of Niš in 1877-8.
- The Russian-Turkish war, which erupted in April 1877, ended with Russian victory in February 1878 with the Peace Treaty of San Stefano, according to which Ottoman Empire was to lose around eighty percent of the territory which it ruled in the Balkans. Albania wasn't mentioned at all and, made up of three religious communities, Albanians were not recognised as an ethnic group. This was a source of distress to the Albanians and prompted them to react. In December 1877 the Central Committee for the Protection of the Rights of the Albanian Nation (the Istanbul Committee) was created, led by Abdyl Frashëri. In Prizren on 10 June 1878 the League of Prizren was founded, in which delegates from the majority of Albanian regions participated, though not all delegates from the south managed to take part. The League of Prizren opposed the break-up of Albanian lands. Within it were two schools of thought: the national party who wanted to give the League a national character, and a religious group, who had the Ottoman Empire behind them, and who wanted the League to have a Muslim character and to include in it all Balkan Muslims. On 17 June 1878 the Kararname (Decree) was agreed by which – thanks to the influence of the pro-Ottoman party – allegiance was pledged to the Ottoman Empire, and the League was portrayed as an organisation which protected the Muslims of the Balkans. However, in many branches of the League both in the north and south of Albania, the national platform dominated. Thus in 1878 the League's Assembly gathered once again and agreed a new statute declaring the League of Prizren an Albanian League. The Congress of Berlin reviewed the Treaty of San Stefano but nevertheless gave to Greece, Serbia and Montenegro land inhabited by Albanians. Likewise, the Congress of Berlin did not take account of the Albanians' demands and treated them according to their

religion – the Muslims as Turks, the Orthodox as Greeks, the Catholics as latinë. The Ottoman Empire did not show itself able to defend Albanian territory so the relations between the League of Prizren and the Ottoman Empire deteriorated: the League of Prizren forces did not obey the Ottoman Empire and had armed clashes with their forces, even killing the Sultan's envoy, Mehmet Ali Pasha Maxhar. The League of Prizren demanded the creation of an autonomous Albanian vilayet within the Ottoman Empire. The League was put down by force by the Ottoman Empire and its leaders were detained and sentenced to life imprisonment. This was the first liberation movement of a national character in which all Albanian lands took part.

- At the end of the nineteenth century the Albanians brought up the issue of autonomy for Albanian lands once again, meaning the union of the four Albanian vilayets and the use of Albanian in the administration and in schools. For this reason the leaders of the National Albanian League had the idea of forming an organisation similar to that of the League of Prizren. In January 1899 the League of Peja was formed in that city, with Haxhi Zeka at its head. Its main obligation was defending Albanian lands from being broken up. In the spring of 1900 the League of Peja was dispersed.²⁷

The main contentions of the **Serbian textbooks** are as follows:

- In Old Serbia, the Orthodox Serbs lived mixed with local Muslims and Arbers (Albanians). Old Serbia was divided into several sanjaks, of which the best-known were Novi Pazar, Niš and Prizren. The Serbs were a majority everywhere, except in Metohia and in some peripheral parts of Kosovo. In these places the majority of the population was made up of Muslim Albanians who had moved from the north of Albania, mainly after 1690. The centres of Serb national activities were the monasteries (Dečani, Peć, Gračanica) and some large city centres (Priština, Gnjilane, Prizren, Skopje).
- The central part of Old Serbia, specifically Kosovo and Metohia, was plunged into anarchy from 1804 until 1875. A considerable number of Kosovo's Serbs took part in the first Serb uprising but later, in the 1820s, savage measures were taken against them in Central Kosovo by the treacherous Albanian pashas. In order to create space for their relatives from northern Albania to inhabit the fertile plains of Kosovo and Metohija they expelled the Serbs and populated their villages.

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27 Dërguti, Menduh, Sonila Boçi and Ledia Dushku. *Historia 9*. Tirana: Botime Shkolllore Albas, 2013, pages 44-64; Dërguti, Menduh, Ledia Dushku, Ferit Duka and Sonila Boçi. *Historia 12*. Tirana: Botime Shkolllore Albas, 2013, pages 85-94.

The Serbian Metropolitan of Prizren was often the target for Albanian scorn and attacks while the Serbian monasteries were defended from constant pillage by paying high sums to the local Albanian thugs. The Serbs of Old Serbia expected that liberation would come through the Eastern Crisis. The Serb vanguard, under the command of Major Radomir Putnik, in 1878 reached as far as Gračanica and they held there a festive commemoration for the brave fallen of the Battle of Kosovo. Nevertheless, the Russian-Turkish peace forced the Serbs to leave Kosovo. In the middle of the nineteenth century, during the frequent Arber uprisings against local authorities and the reforms of the Sultan, the Serbian markets in Priština, Prizren, Mitrovica and other towns were ransacked and closed.

- Nothing is said about the Albanian National Awakening.
- From liberated southern Serbia Albanians arrived who had been expelled from Toplica and Jablanica. Because of having lost what they had owned in Serbia, the Albanians took revenge against the Serbs of Kosovo. Because of this, a large number of Serbs from the border areas crossed into the Kingdom of Serbia, leaving their own lands to the Albanians.
- The Albanian League of Prizren (the so-called League of Prizren 1878-1881) attempted to present the entire territory of Old Serbia, Albania and Macedonia as uncontested Albanian territory. For this reason, Old Serbia (Kosovo) was to be an area in which the Serbian population was oppressed constantly with no punishment being given to the oppressors, and from which they were expelled by the Albanians.
- Nothing is said about the League of Peja²⁸.

In the **Montenegro textbooks** the core of what is said is as follows:

- There is nothing on the Tanzimat reforms and the Albanian uprisings from the 1830s to the 1870s.
- Because of living for many centuries within the Ottoman Empire, and the majority Muslim population, the Albanians were quite late in starting to build their national culture. Muslim Albanians used Turkish/ Arabic/ Persian script while Catholic Albanians used Latin script. Because of their identification with the Ottomans, the Albanians studied in Ottoman schools. Only in the 1840s did the Albanians start to fight for their own language and alphabet. At the head of this movement was

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 28 Andrijasheviq, Zhivko, Sait Shabotiq, Dragutin Papoviq and Slobodan Drobnjak. *Historia 8*. Podgorica: Unit for textbooks and learning materials, 2008, page85; Borožan Gjorgje, Sasha Knezheviq and Sait Shabotiq. *Historia 3*. Podgorica: Unit for textbooks and learning materials, 2009, page 138-139.

Naum Veqilharxhi who drafted the Albanian alphabet and published the first Albanian primer.

- Nothing is said about the expulsion of Albanians from the lands of the Sanjak of Niš in 1877-8.
- From 1875 to 1878 a group of Albanians of influence founded in Istanbul the Committee for the Defence of Albanian Rights and drafted a programme of Albanian territorial autonomy in four vilayets (Shkodra, Kosovo, Manastir and Janina). However, the conditions imposed by Russia on the Ottoman Empire with the Peace of San Stefano jeopardised the programme for territorial autonomy since the edges of these vilayets now belonged to Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro and Greece. The Albanian leaders exploited the dissatisfaction of Austro-Hungary and the other Great Powers and revised the Peace of San Stefano at the Congress of Berlin. Just before the Congress of Berlin the Albanians founded the League of Prizren. The leaders of the League demanded that the Albanian question should also be reviewed but their request was not heeded. The League intervened militarily in the decision to leave Plav and Gusinje to Montenegro and part of Northern Epirus to Greece. The Albanian-Montenegrin conflict was solved with the mediation of the Great Powers giving Ulqin to Montenegro instead of Plav and Gusinje. Since the League's demand for full autonomy was in open conflict with the Ottoman Empire, the latter used force and stamped out the League at the end of 1881, imprisoning or interning its leaders.
- In 1899 the League of Peja was established in that town, building on the programme of the League of Prizren. After the Young Turk revolution in 1908, and dissatisfied with the authorities' stance, from 1909 to 1912 Albanians attempted to achieve autonomy through uprisings, but without calling into question the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire. Albanians linked their political fate with defence of the Ottoman Empire.²⁹

The core of the content of the **Macedonian textbooks** is as follows:

- In the 1830s, in the Tanzimat period, a range of administrative, financial, military and education reforms was undertaken, with the aim of establishing a centralised administration and strengthening the army, and with which all citizens of the Ottoman Empire would be equal, irrespective of religion or ethnicity. The Ottoman Empire thus established Ottomans

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²⁹ Andrijasheviq, Zhivko, Sait Shabotiq, Dragutin Papoviq and Slobodan Drobnjak. *Historia B*. Podgorica: Unit for textbooks and learning materials, 2008, page85; Borozan Gjorgje, Sasha Knezheviq and Sait Shabotiq. *Historia 3*. Podgorica: Unit for textbooks and learning materials, 2009, pages 138-139

as high officials in the administration and, without knowing either the language or the culture of the Albanians, began recruitment of regular soldiers and raised taxes etc. Since the Ottoman Empire saw ethnicity as the same as religious identity, it did not recognise the Albanians as an ethnic group in themselves and the right of development in education was denied across Albania. These reforms made their situation worse and, as a consequence, a series of anti-Ottoman uprisings broke out, starting in the 1830s and continuing until the 1870s. Among the demands of the rebels the most important was for governance of the country by Albanians. The Albanian rebels demanded from the Sultan that they should be exempt from the reforms and to have their right to autonomous self-government recognised. The uprisings of the Tanzimat period were broad-based and Albanians from a range of geographical backgrounds, irrespective of their religious affiliation, took part in them. The rebels fought against ethnic oppression and against economic exploitation, forcing the Ottoman Empire to put off the implementation of the reforms in the mountain areas.

- The Albanian National Awakening was a wide movement with the aim of liberation and union of all Albanian lands into an independent state. It began in the 1830s and ended in 1912 with Albania's declaration of independence.
- There is no mention of the deportation of Muslim Albanians from the lands of the Sanjak of Niš in 1877-8.
- The Treaty of San Stefano between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, signed on 3 March 1878, envisaged a considerable part of Albanian land being given to Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro. This fomented dissatisfaction among the Albanians. The Great Powers (Germany, England, France, Italy, Austria-Hungary and Russia) were also dissatisfied and so they decided to call an international congress in Berlin. Given this situation, on 10 June 1878, Albanian representatives from all regions founded in Prizren a general league of a national character for the defence of ethnically Albanian lands from being divided up. When the Ottoman Empire saw that it could not prevent the Assembly of the League of Prizren from meeting, it attempted to exploit it for its own ends and tried to give it an Islamic character. The Congress of Berlin changed several of the San Stefano decisions, but the decisions of this Congress likewise fomented dissatisfaction among the Albanians because of the destruction of territorial integrity and their national interests. The League of Prizren organised its armed forces for the defence of Albanian land. Because of pressure from the Great Powers, the Ottoman Empire tried to persuade the Albanians not to oppose the decisions of the Congress of Berlin, sending to Kosovo Marshal Mehmet Ali Pasha, who was killed by League

of Prizren forces in Gjakova. The League of Prizren wanted autonomy as a first step to independence. In 1881 the Ottoman Empire opposed the League of Prizren with force, carrying out unprecedented terrors.

- With the aim of opposing the ambitions of neighbouring states against Albanian lands, Albanian patriots formed a new league on the model of the League of Prizren and called the League of Peja. Led by Haxhi Zeka, it was formed in January 1899 with a participation of about 500, mainly from Kosovo. The League of Peja's task was to fight the breaking up of Albanian land by neighbouring countries, leaving the demand for autonomy for later. The League of Peja was a concern to the Ottoman Empire and in 1900 they dispersed the League with significant military force.³⁰

Summary

In the first half of the nineteenth century, with the aim of being transformed into a modern state, the Ottoman Empire began implementation of a range of reforms in the army such as suspending of the janissary units, suspending the outdated system of timars, sending officers for training in France, wearing western-style uniforms etc. These were accompanied by reforms in education, developing a state school system and announcing equal rights for non-Muslims. The history textbooks of Kosovo and Albania, as well as those of Macedonia, represent these reforms solely as oppression of Albanians who were fighting for freedom from the Ottoman authorities, while the Serbian and Montenegrin textbooks don't present any information on this at all. In fact, in order to effect these reforms the Ottoman Empire needed to take real power from provincial rulers who did all they could to retain their small local empires.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the spread of nationalist ideas – the expulsion of the Ottoman invaders and the creation of independent nation states – meant the opposition of provincial rulers and of Istanbul, and for this reason this option was not entertained at this time by the Muslim population, including Albanians, who saw remaining in the Ottoman Empire as a guarantee against being conquered and expelled by others. This fact is represented accurately only in the textbooks of Montenegro. In fact, the main reasons for rebellion were not the demands for autonomy and national liberation but demands against the draft, opposition to western-style uniforms, new taxes, attempts for disarmament of the population and others.

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30 Boshkoski, Millan, Nebi Dervishi, Silvana Sidorovska – Cupovska, Natasha Kotlar, Jordan Ilioski, Dimko Popovski. *Historia 2 arsimi gjimnazor*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2008, pages 126-138.

None of the textbooks of these countries mentions that in 1822 Muslims and Christians, Albanians and Serbs, organised a large protest, which was not an uprising but a petition directed at the highest authorities, calling for the resignation of the tyrannical ruler, Maliq Pasha Gjinolli, who ruled in Prishtina. Likewise, none of the textbooks of these countries mentions the local rulers in Prizren at this time from the Rrotlla family – Rustem Rrotlla and later Mahmut Rrotlla, who had a strong affection for the Serbs.

It should be added that at this time a new state school system was imposed in Kosovo, in Turkish for the Muslims, in Serbian for the Orthodox – mainly for the Serbs – and in Italian for the Catholics. Every community was allowed to open schools in their own language and financing of these schools was also allowed from neighbouring states, but the Ottoman state still denied the Albanians the right to open schools. This is mentioned in the textbooks of Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia, but without explaining the reasons for this denial, which are found only in the textbooks of Montenegro: the majority of Albanians were Muslim, used Arab script, identified with the Ottomans and learned in Ottoman schools.

The textbooks of Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia present the Albanian National Awakening which began in the 1830s and ended with Albania's declaration of independence in 1912, as a wide movement aiming at liberation and union of all Albanian lands in an independent state. The Serbian textbooks don't present the Albanian National Awakening at all, while in the Montenegro texts it is represented much more accurately, with the claim that in the vast majority of cases Albanians attempted to achieve autonomy without calling into question the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire.

On this point the only exception are the textbooks of Albania which portray the two schools of thought within the Albanian National Movement, though they confuse the aims. According to these texts, one party was calling for an autonomous state within the Ottoman Empire, which would later lead to independence for Albania, while the other demanded the immediate declaration of Albania's independence, even if it meant fighting the Ottoman authorities. In fact, opinion within the Albanian National Movement was in great part divided on the form of autonomy within the Ottoman Empire.

The mass expulsions of Muslim Albanians from the lands of the Sanjak of Niš within Serbia in 1877-8 are not mentioned at all in the textbooks of Montenegro and Macedonia, and barely in those of Albania. Strangely, the Serbian textbooks say that from liberated southern Serbia Albanians expelled from Toplica and Jablanica arrived in Kosovo, but do not specify who had expelled them and why. Likewise, these textbooks add that because of losing their possessions in Serbia these Albanians took revenge on the Serbs of Kosovo, causing a large

number of Serbs from the areas along the border to move into the Kingdom of Serbia, leaving their own possessions to the Albanians.

Naturally, this expulsion features in the Kosovan textbooks, but the numbers which the texts give for 160 000 Albanians expelled from these areas seem to be inflated. Noel Malcolm says that although numbers are missing, a contemporary study concluded that in all this region there were 110 000 Albanians while an approximate assessment of the number of refugees established in Kosovo's territory in 1877-8 would be around 50 000. Likewise, these textbooks don't mention anywhere that as well as the Albanians a small number of Muslim Slavs were established in the territory of today's Kosovo. These textbooks don't give examples of, for instance, the case of a Serb army commander who refused to expel the Albanians from the town of Vranjë, with the explanation that they were well-behaved and peaceful.

In none of the textbooks apart from those of Serbia is any mention made of how this expulsion of Muslim Albanians from these lands and their relocation in the territory of today's Kosovo had the effect of souring relations between Muslims and Christians in Kosovo – the refugees took a very aggressive stance against local Christians, especially against Orthodox Serbs. Similarly, there is no mention made of how because of this situation there was an ongoing flux of Serbs from Kosovo (of course there were other reasons for moving, such as general stagnation, weak administration, better life in Serbia etc.). On the question of the number of Serbs expelled from Serbia in the period 1878-1912 Malcolm says that 60 000 seems a reasonable assumption.

As for the League of Prizren, it should be said that there was not a gathering in Prizren of representatives of all Albanian land, as the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania, but also those of Macedonia, claim, because the vast majority of the representatives in the Assembly of Prizren were from Kosovo and the highlands, while from southern Albania there were only two representatives, one of whom was Abdyl Frashëri. In relation to the religious persuasions of the participants in the League of Prizren, the Kosovan and Albanian textbooks, but also those of Macedonia, claim that all Albanian faith communities were included, but only five of the delegates gathered in Prizren were Christian, and at the end of the first document issued by the League of Prizren it even says 'this document is signed by 47 **Muslim** representatives, all from the cities of Northern Albania and Bosnia.' In this document, called the Kararname or Decree, approved on 18 June 1878, nothing is said about schools, about the union of Albanian lands into one vilayet, or about autonomy, and even less about an independent Albanian state.

The Kosovan textbooks mention only that in 1881 the Ottoman Empire put down the League of Prizren with great military force, imprisoning and killing its main leaders, but there is no mention of the collaboration between the League of Prizren and the government of the Ottoman Empire (which is mentioned only in the Montenegro textbooks), while initially the Ottoman authorities had great sympathy for the League of Prizren and offered no hindrance to its formation, because the League also had the aim of defending the areas inhabited by Albanians who until then had been under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. And so the very first article of the Kararname says that the League of Prizren was formed with the aim of opposing every government except that of the Sublime Porte while in article 2 it is stressed that the aim of the League of Prizren is '... to protect the imperial rights of the unassailable person of His Majesty the Sultan, our ruler.' Moreover, the document refers to the sharia in relation to the protection of life, property and the honour of loyal friends of non-Muslim faiths, while the final article says that 'the League will pass from generation to generation, to the children of our children, and he who breaks with it will be considered a traitor to the Islamic faith and will be cursed and scorned by us.'

The collaboration between the League of Prizren and the Ottoman Empire ended after an angry crowd of Albanians in Gjakova killed Mehmet Ali Pash, the Ottoman Empire's envoy who came to persuade the Albanians to accept the decisions of the Congress of Berlin on border changes. In 1879, only a little more than a year after the founding of the League of Prizren, in a meeting held in Prizren, the League agreed to accept the programme of autonomy, while nearly three years later, in a large gathering in Prizren, the League declared that it would work for full independence – a declaration which strengthened the resolve of the Ottoman Empire to stamp it out. After the League of Prizren was violently crushed by the Ottoman Empire, there was a range of uprisings in Kosovo for three decades, though all were local and short-lived.

None of the textbooks presents the political dynamics during the League of Prizren period. The textbooks of Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia refer only to 'the Albanian national movement', leaving it to be understood that there was just one political force in existence with historical continuity and carrying on an uninterrupted battle for liberation from Ottoman power. Two schools of thought existed within the League of Prizren: the *Muslim traditionalists*, who dominated, especially in Kosovo, and the *intellectual autonomists* who had sympathy mainly outside Kosovo. These opinions are not mentioned in the textbooks of Serbia and Montenegro, where the League of Prizren is presented entirely superficially.

The League of Peja, led by a fiery Muslim cleric, Haxhi Zeka, is not represented at all in the textbooks of Serbia and Montenegro, but it is reflected in the Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia textbooks. This league was committed to a

high level of autonomy within the Ottoman Empire, and not to independence or national union, as some of the Kosovo history textbooks claim. It is not mentioned in any of the textbooks that the rival of Haxhi Zeka, Riza bey Kryeziu from Gjakova, wanted the movement's efforts to be directed only against the enemies of the Sultan and not against the Sultan. Likewise, the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania – but not those of Macedonia – say that the participants in the Assembly of the League of Peja were from many Albanian regions but in fact the vast majority of them were from Kosovo.

The first aim of the League of Peja was a ceasefire and an end to feuds between Albanians, and it was thus known as Besa ('the pledge') or 'Besa-Besë'. The League of Peja focused mainly on territorial defence. The twelve-point programme of the League of Peja began with pledging allegiance to the Sultan and an oath on the Koran, which is not mentioned in any of the textbooks. Autonomy was not mentioned in the twelve points, despite what the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania claim, but there were some autonomist elements such as union of the four vilayets into one Albanian unit, the foundation of local Muslim committees for public order where Sharia law and the Kanun of Lekë traditional code would be implemented. The task of the League of Peja was to fight against the break-up of Albanian lands by neighbouring states, but the demand for autonomy was not made by Haxhi Zeka and his supporters because of the unfavourable political situation and the stance of some conservative elements.

Attacks on Serbian Orthodox sites in Kosovo are mentioned only in the textbooks of Serbia which say that they were often the target of Albanian scorn and attacks, and that they were defended from constant pillaging by paying large sums to local Albanian thugs. Meanwhile, none of the textbooks talk about the care for these sites. This means that it is not mentioned anywhere that Isa Boletini protected the Serbian Orthodox community in Mitrovica and was even awarded a medal by the Serb consul for this. Nor it is mentioned anywhere that Albanian guards protected Dečani Monastery.³¹

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31 *Malcolm, Noel. Kosovo - A Short History. London: Pan Macmillan, 2002, pages 181-201 and 217-238; Schmitt, Oliver. Kosova: histori e shkurtër e një treve qendrore ballkanike. Prishtina: Koha, 2012, pages 47-133; Schmitt, Oliver. Shqiptarët - një histori midis Lindjes dhe Perëndimit. Tirana: K9B, 2012, pages 136-168; Bartl, Peter. Shqipëria - nga mesjeta deri sot. Prizren: Drita, 1999, pages 78-105; Gawrych, George. Gjysmëhëna dhe shqiponja - sundimi otoman, islamizimi dhe shqiptarët 1874-1913. Tirana: Bota Shqiptare, 2007; the full text of the Kararname or the Decree of the League of Prizren can be found in Belegu, Xhafer "Lidhja e Prizrenit dhe veprimet e saj", Tirana, 1939*

5. KOSOVO UNDER SERBIAN RULE 1912-2000

5.1. Kosovo 1912-1913

This section investigates the specifics of the treatment of the Albanian uprising of 1912, the liberation/ occupation of Kosovo in October and November of 1912, together with the crimes committed by Serb forces in the period October 1912 – March 1913, the declaration of Albanian independence on 28 November 1912 and the Conference of London of 1912-3.

This is the core of the explanations given by the **Kosovan textbooks** for the above events:

- Albanians insisted on the independence of their country, but the Ottoman Empire would not recognise it, and so Albanians across the territory were thrown into a war against their rulers. However, Albanians found themselves in a difficult position as in order to liberate themselves they had to fight against the Ottomans on the one hand and on the other hand against neighbouring states – Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria and Greece – to protect themselves. In the beginning, the Ottoman Empire did not accept their demand for autonomy, but when the rebels headed for Skopje, the capital of the vilayet of Kosovo, and liberated it, the demand was accepted, but with some changes. Because of the armed provocation offered by Montenegro, the rebels came to an agreement with the Ottomans and declared the uprising to be at an end.
- The Serbian army conquered Kosovo in October 1912 and headed for other parts of Northern and Middle Albania. Conquest by the armies of neighbouring states was accompanied by bloody terrorist acts against the Albanian people, who were the victims of violence and nationalist terror exercised by Balkan states.
- Albania's declaration of independence was the result of a war which been waged for some centuries by Albanians against the Ottoman rulers. Obstacles to the development of the activities of the Albanian Government included Greece, Serbia and Montenegro who had entered Albanian territory. At the Ambassadors' Conference in London in 1912-3 the European countries took the decision to divide Albanian territory, giving to neighbouring countries much Albanian land, including Kosovo and *Çamëria*³²

32 Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 5*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 68-77; Bajraktari, Jusuf, Fehmi Rexhepi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 10*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2011, pages 74-81; Abdyli, Ramiz and Emine Bakalli. *Historia 11*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2012, pages 188-195; Bajraktari, Jusuf and Arbër Salihu. *Historia 12*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 144- 154.

The core of the explanations given by the **Albanian textbooks** is as follows:

- The Albanian uprising of 1912 against the Ottoman Empire began in the vilayet of Kosovo, and later spread to other vilayets. The demand of the Albanian rebels was autonomy within the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire did not accept the demand for autonomy so the rebels took Skopje, the capital of the vilayet of Kosovo. This disturbed the Ottoman Empire, as well as Balkan states. The Ottoman Empire accepted the majority of the Albanians' demands, but with some changes. The rebels accepted the changes because the external situation was deteriorating as a result of the attempts of the Balkan states to divide Albanian territory between themselves.
- The Serbian army conquered Kosovo and headed for other parts of Northern and Middle Albania. The conquest of Kosovo and Albanian lands by the Serbian and Montenegrin army was accompanied by the destruction of villages and towns and the loss of life. The Serbian and Montenegrin governments changed the composition of the population of Albanian territory by forced expulsion of Albanians, forcing them to change their religion, and favouritism and settling Albanian lands with Slav populations. With the aim of uniting lands with Albania the Kosovan leadership who were in Albania organised an armed uprising on the lands which had fallen under Serb and Montenegrin rule. The Serbian army stamped out this uprising by burning and destroying villages and exercising violence against local populations. Some people saved themselves by moving to Albania.
- The Albanian Declaration of Independence had great significance because it marked an end to a five hundred year rule and crowned the war which Albanians had waged. The London Conference ruled that Albania had declared itself an autonomous, sovereign and inheritable principality under the guarantee of the six Great Powers. This conference decided on Albania's borders, leaving Kosovo and Çamëria outside the country³³.

The main thrust of the **Serbian textbooks** is as follows:

- The Albanian uprising of 1912 does not feature at all.
- The Third Serbian Army liberated **Kosovo** with a lightning thrust and went on to penetrate to the **Adriatic Sea**. On 23 October 1912, on the plain where the Battle of Kosovo was fought in 1389, the Serbs celebrated the liberation of Kosovo, the cradle of Serbian nationhood, which many generations had waited for during the nineteenth century. There is no

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 33 Dërguti, Menduh, Sonila Boçi and Ledia Dushku. *Historia 9*. Tirana: Botime Shkolllore Albas, 2013, pages 64-73; Dërguti, Menduh, Ferit Duka, Ledia Dushku and Sonila Boçi. *Historia 12*. Tirana: Botime Shkolllore Albas, 2013, pages 84-86.

mention of the crimes committed by Serbian forces between October 1912 and March 1913.

- The Albanian Declaration of Independence on 28 November 1912 had the practical implication that Serbia would not gain access to the sea³⁴.

In the **Montenegro textbooks** the core of the events set out is as follows:

- With the uprising from 1909 until halfway through 1912 the Albanians of the vilayets of Kosovo and Shkodra forced on the Ottoman Empire an urgent solution to the Albanian question. With the powerful persistence of the movement of the Kosovan uprising in 1912 and with the drafting of the 14 point programme, the framework of Albanian autonomy was set out. Co-operation between Albanians and the members of the Balkan Alliance was not achieved.
- At the beginning of October 1912 Montenegrin forces launched a successful military operation against Metohia (Peja and Gjakova). Later, the Serbian army – after taking Kosovo and most of Macedonia – travelled through Albania, arrived at the Adriatic coast, and took Durrës at the end of November 1912. Instead of a war for the liberation of their countrymen, the interests of the political elite dominated so that all attempts at war were converted into a land grab, settling of scores, looting and a lack of respect for the national rights of minorities, in particular the Macedonians.
- At a time of the total supremacy of the Balkan Alliance, when the Ottoman Empire was forced to request a ceasefire, at the assembly of Albanian leaders in Vlora in November of 1912, representatives from all Albanian territory, led by Ismail Qemali, declared Albanian independence. At the London Conference the Albanian question dominated. The Conference recognised Albania as a new autonomous state and opened the question of her borders. This spoiled the plans of the Balkan allies. Serbia was forced to withdraw its army from Albania and to give up on access to the sea. Recognition was given to the territory which Serbia had taken in Novi Pazar, in Kosovo and in Macedonia.³⁵

The content of the **Macedonian textbooks** has the following key points:

- The general Albanian uprising of 1912 started because the Ottoman Empire did not meet the Albanian demands for national autonomy. The

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34 Đurić, Đorđe and Momčilo Pavlović. *Istorija 3*. Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2010, page 67.

35 Andrijasheviq, Zhivko, Sait Shabotiq, Dragutin Papoviq and Sllobodan Drobnjak. *Historia 8*. Podgorica: Unit for textbooks and learning materials, 2008, pages 121-122, 130-133; Borožan Gjorgje, Sasha Knezheviq and Sait Shabotiq. *Historia 3*. Podgorica: Unit for textbooks and learning materials, 2009, pages 156-160.

centre of the uprising was Kosovo. The Ottoman Empire and the pro-Turk leaders were against autonomy.

- The forces of the Balkan alliance started a conquest of Albanian and Macedonian land parallel with the war against the Ottoman forces. Serb forces conquered Kosovo and headed for other parts of Northern and Middle Albania. A military and police regime was established in Kosovo where Albanian schools and alphabet and the flag etc. were banned. The new situation was very difficult for Albanians so in order to save their fatherland from danger, they organised resistance against the Serb army.
- After the Balkan War passed very quickly and after the Ottoman Empire had started to lose its power in the Balkans it was no longer right to demand the autonomy which had been the request until that point, but instead to demand full independence. Thus on 28 November in Vlorë, declaration was made of Albanian independence, which was the result of the centuries-old battles of the Albanian people against Ottoman rule. The declaration of independence was a great victory against the long Ottoman rule and against the plans of neighbouring states for conquest. At the London Conference, dominated by the Albanian question, the principle of self-determination was not taken into account, but only the right of the victor. In opposition to the will of the Albanian people, the conference decided that Kosovo and other Albanian territory in the north would belong to Serbia and Montenegro³⁶

Summary

The general uprising of 1912, led by Hasan Prishtina, initially aimed at territorial autonomy within the Ottoman Empire, with official recognition of the borders of the territory with Albanian majorities and ethnically Albanian civil and military authorities. As a result of internal divisions and after they had taken control of the territory of Kosovo in the summer of 1912, the leaders of the Albanian uprising put forward a new political platform of fourteen demands (known as the 14 points of Hasan Prishtina), which envisaged non-territorial autonomy - with no explicit mention of Albania's army or borders. The points mainly deal with education, agriculture, trade and transport, but also include the declaration of a general amnesty for the rebels, reparation for homes that had been destroyed and a court hearing for the government cabinet of the Young Turks.

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 36 Boshkoski, Millan, Jordan Ilioski, Gjorgji Isajilovski, Vllado Vellkoski, Miroslav Boshkoviq and Simeon Naumovski. *Historia 1 arsimit i mesëm profesional*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2006, pages 103-104; Boshkoski, Millan, Nebi Dervishi, Silvana Sidorovska – Cupovska, Natasha Kotlar, Jordan Ilioski, Dimko Popovski. *Historia 2 arsimit gjimnazor*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2008, pages 139-144 and 148-149.

In the Serbian textbooks there is no representation at all of the Albanian uprising of 1912; in some Kosovan textbooks its aim is represented as being for an Albanian state independent from Ottoman rule; in the textbooks of Albania, Montenegro and Macedonia and in some of the Kosovan textbooks the aim of this uprising is presented as it in fact was: autonomy within the Ottoman Empire. But these textbooks do not present in an explicit way the changes to the political aims of the Albanian rebels: from territorial autonomy to non-territorial autonomy. The motives for ending the uprising are mentioned only in the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania where the Kosovan textbooks say that the Albanian rebels declared the end of the uprising since ‘...armed provocation by Montenegro began at the border’, while the Albanian books mention as the motive, ‘... the deterioration of the external situation from the Balkan states’ attempts to declare war on the Ottoman Empire and to divide Albanian territory between themselves.’ Thus the reason for the political demands of the Albanian leaders of the time not being realised is, in the textbooks of Albania and Kosovo, attributed only to neighbouring countries.

In none of these countries’ textbooks is mention made of the fact that the Albanians of this time were divided: on one hand the majority of representatives of the cities – members of the aristocracy – who opposed autonomy, and on the other, the leaders of the uprising whose aim was autonomy and who were likewise divided since some of them wanted to remain powerfully connected with the Ottoman Empire. The representatives of the cities – the members of the aristocracy – are mentioned as ‘...pro-Turk elements who were against autonomy’ only in the textbooks of Macedonia and in two Kosovan textbooks, *Historia 11* and *Historia 12* for general gymnasium. These divisions were the main reason for the change in the political goals from territorial autonomy to non-territorial autonomy.

In no country’s textbooks is there a representation of the fact that the divisions between the leaders of the Albanian uprising were encouraged by the representatives of Serbia who armed some of the leaders of the Albanian uprising. Furthermore, all the political currents of the time are presented under the umbrella of what the texts call the National Albanian Movement, which is presented as a homogenous structure with clear demands. A representation of these divisions is crucial because they had a decisive impact on the changes to the political platform from territorial autonomy to non-territorial autonomy. However, the Albanian rebels didn’t achieve even non-territorial autonomy because, instead of creating organs of power, they dispersed immediately after the Ottoman Empire officially accepted their fourteen points, thus excluding the possibility of starting legal proceedings against the Young Turks’ government.

After the Ottoman regiments had started to leave Kosovo at the end of September 1912 and with the declaration of war by Montenegro, and later by other members

of the Balkan League (Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece) against the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of October 1912, Serb forces entered Kosovan territory. The Balkan League Treaty – guaranteed by Russia – described the division of territory after the withdrawal of the Ottoman Empire which also controlled the areas inhabited by Albanian majorities in the Balkans, including Kosovo. In the middle of October 1912, the Serbian King, Peter Karađorđević, in his declaration titled 'To the Serbian People' said among other things, '...My army will meet in Old Serbia with Christian and Muslim Serbs who are equally dear to us, but also with Christian and Muslim Albanians, with whom our people has for thirteen uninterrupted centuries shared joy and sorrow. We will bring you freedom, brotherhood and equality for all.' The Albanians decided not to take part in the war between the Balkan Allies and the Ottomans. Thus on 23 October 1912, on the plain where the 1389 Battle of Kosovo had been fought, the Serbs celebrated, as the Serbian textbooks say, '...the liberation of Kosovo, the cradle of Serbian statehood, which many generations had waited for during the nineteenth century.' On the other hand, the entrance of Serbian troops into Kosovo and other areas inhabited by Albanians is represented as a conquest in the textbooks of Kosovo, Albania and even of Montenegro and Macedonia.

For the crimes committed by Serbia in Kosovo from October 1912 to March 1913, the Serbian textbooks say not a word. Naturally these crimes are mentioned in the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania. The Kosovan textbooks describe these crimes only as 'bloody terrorist crimes against the Albanian people, against whom violence and nationalist terror was exercised by the Balkan states,' while the Albanian textbooks mention only '...destruction of villages and towns, loss of life, Albanians forced to leave their homes, forced religious conversion, settlement of Albanian lands with Slavs.' Strangely, these crimes are also presented in some way in the Macedonian textbooks - where the difficult situation and the establishment of a military/ police regime are illustrated with the banning of schools, the alphabet and the flag - and even in an indirect way in the Montenegrin textbooks which mention '...land grabs, looting and disrespect to the national rights of minorities'.

Neither the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania nor those of Serbia, Montenegro or Macedonia make mention of, for example, the report, *Albania's Golgotha*, by the Austrian social democrat Leo Freundlich, which says that the number of Albanians killed at the end of 1912 and the beginning of 1913 was as many as 25 000. Nor do the textbooks refer to the writings of the war correspondent Leon Trotsky for the Russian daily newspapers, or to the findings of the 'Report of the International Commission for Investigation into the Causes and Conflict of the Balkan Wars' drafted by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Likewise, none of the countries' textbooks mentions the articles of the Serbian social democrats Dimitrije Tucović, Kosta Novaković, Dušan Popović, Dragiša Lapčević and Triša Kačlerović published in the Belgrade socialist newspaper, "Radničke Novine".

Strangely, Albanian resistance to these crimes committed by Serb forces is mentioned only in the textbooks of Albania and Macedonia. The Albanian textbooks also mention that this resistance was put down by the Serbian army.

At the time when these bloody events were taking place, on 28 November 1912, Albania declared independence in Vlora, a coastal city in the south of Albania, which was the only Albanian city not yet conquered by the troops of the Balkan Alliance. After the declaration of Albanian independence, the Ambassadors' Conference in London, called to discuss mainly the Albanian question, in December 1912 agreed on Albania's autonomy within the Ottoman Empire, while in July 1913 it was decided that Albania would be a sovereign and hereditary principality and neutral, guaranteed by the Great Powers.

The textbooks of Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia consider the declaration of Albanian independence to be the crowning achievement of the Albanians' war which lasted several centuries against the five centuries of Ottoman rule, and see the Conference of Ambassadors in London in 1912-3 as responsible for the division of Albanian land and Kosovo being left outside Albania. However, these textbooks should bear in mind that the Balkan states, supported by Russia, proposed that the territory of Albania should be half as large as it is today, while Albania – supported by Austro-Hungary – proposed territory twice as large as it is today. The decision of the Great Powers, on England's proposal, fell between the Russian and the Austrian aspirations. Thus the Great Powers actually recognised as Albanian a greater territory than the Albanians had managed to take under their administration.

On the other hand, the textbooks of Serbia and Montenegro represent Albania's declaration of independence and the Ambassadors Conference in London as a barrier to the plans of the Balkan allies, since Serbia was forced to withdraw her army from Albania and to give up on getting access to the sea. The Montenegro textbooks add that with this conference the territory which Serbia had taken in Kosovo was recognised as hers. Nevertheless, these textbooks, and particularly those of Serbia, should bear in mind that the Ambassadors Conference in London in 1912-3 actually recognised as Serbian the territory which Serbia took in Kosovo by means of the crimes mentioned above³⁷.

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37 Malcolm, Noel. *Kosovo - A Short History*. London: Pan Macmillan, 2002, pages 245-257; Schmitt, Oliver. *Kosova: histori e shkurtër e një treve qendrore ballkanike*. Prishtina: Koha, 2012, pages 134-142; Schmitt, Oliver. *Shqiptarët – një histori midis Lindjes dhe Perëndimit*. Tirana: KËB, 2012, pages 168-169; Bartl, Peter. *Shqipëria – nga mesjeta deri sot*. Prizren: Drita, 1999, pages 123-131; Schwartz, Stephen. *Kosovo: Background to a War*. London: Anthem Press, 2000, pages 41-42; Gawrych, George. *Gjysmëhëna dhe shqiptarja – sundimi otoman, islamizimi dhe shqiptarët 1874-1913*. Tirana: Bota Shqiptare, 2007, pages 291-301; Castelan, Georges. *Histori e Ballkanit*. Tirana: Çabej, 1996, pages 390-396; Freundlich, Leo. *Golgota e Shqipërisë*. Prishtina: Rrokullia, 2010. Report of the International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conflict of the Balkan Wars. Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1914.

5.2 Kosovo between the two World Wars 1918-1939

This section looks at the specifics of the presentation of Kosovo under Austrian/ Bulgarian rule from 1915 to 1918; the conquest/ liberation of Kosovo in 1918; the Albanian armed uprisings of 1918-1924; the expulsion of Albanians and appropriation of their property and settlement by Serbs.

In relation to the above, this is the core of the explanations given in the **Kosovan textbooks**:

- At the end of 1915, after attacks by Austro-Hungarian forces, Serbian and Montenegrin forces were forced to withdraw from Kosovo. They withdrew to Greece through Kosovo, Montenegro and Albania. During the withdrawal through Albanian land they committed crimes of pillaging and more serious crimes against the Albanian people. In their place Austro-Hungarian and Bulgarian authorities were set up and they divided Kosovo into two zones of control. Conditions in the zone under Austro-Hungarian rulers were more favourable than in the zone under Bulgarian rule, as the Austro-Hungarians allowed local self-administration and Albanian-language education. The Albanians organized armed resistance against the Austro-Hungarian and Bulgarian authorities.
- At the end of 1918, Kosovo and other Albanian lands were reconquered by Serbia who exercised terror and state genocide against the Albanians through their military and police regime, burning and destroying whole villages. Thousands of Albanians were expelled to Albania and Turkey. Land was taken by many Albanians and given to Serbian and Montenegrin settlers. Albanians were banned from using the Albanian language and the Albanian flag.
- Albanians organized armed warfare against the Serb authorities and created free zones into which for a time the Serbian army could not penetrate. With the aim of liberation and national union the Albanians formed the 'National Defence Committee' with its headquarters in Shkodra and branches in the main centres of Kosovo. The National Defence Committee organized the national movement from 1918 to 1924, and collaborated with the Xhemijeti, the only political party that Albanians supported, and with the armed rebels in Kosovo. In 1924 the Serbian authorities killed rebel troop leaders, including Azem Bejta, and imprisoned the members of the Xhemijeti, sentencing Ferhat Draga, the leader of this party, to 100 years imprisonment.
- In the period between the two World Wars, through so-called 'agrarian reform' using the lack of cadasters, Serbia appropriated about 400 thousand hectares of land belonging to Albanians, and gave it to Slav

settlers and Orthodox monasteries. During this time about 15 000 Slavic families with 75 000 inhabitants were settled on Albanian land, and on the other hand, as a result of expropriations of property around 250 000 Albanians were moved from their land to Turkey. The summer of 1938 saw the signing of the Yugoslav-Turkish Convention on the movement of Albanians to Turkey – a document which envisaged around 400 000 Albanians moving to Turkey, although because of changes in the political situation in Europe this convention was not implemented³⁸

The essential parts of the narrative in the **Albanian textbooks** are as follows:

- No mention is made of the withdrawal to Greece through the Albanian mountains by Serb forces in October 1915. In January 1916 Kosovo was conquered by Austro-Hungarian and Bulgarian troops. The conditions in the Bulgarian zone were very tough: abuses, imprisonment and internment; in the Austrian zone the situation was different: Albanian language, schooling, the flag and more were all allowed.
- In October 1918 Serb forces returned to Kosovo with the help of French forces. The Albanians protested, but without success. Albanians lost their national rights. Disarmament of the Albanian population began. No Albanian language school was allowed to open and the publication of Albanian books and newspapers was also forbidden.
- In such circumstances the Albanians responded through the Kosovo National Protection Committee, whose aim was the organisation of armed resistance by Albanians under Yugoslav rule, and their union with their mother country – Albania. This resistance was organised by rebels under the leadership of Azem Bejta, but it was quickly stamped out by Serbian forces. An important role was played in the protection of Albanian rights by the 'Xhemijeti', a political party led by Nexhip Draga and which had representation in the Yugoslav parliament.
- Serbian policy aimed at changing the ethnic structure in Kosovo and for this reason they started an 'agrarian reform' to expropriate Albanians' land and expel them from Kosovo, and to settle Kosovo with Slavic farmers. The land of the Albanians who had taken part in the uprising was confiscated and given to Serbian war veterans. 1938 saw the signature of the Turkish-Yugoslav agreement on moving Albanians to Turkey. This envisaged the movement of around 250 000 Muslims to

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38 Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 5*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 80-81; Rexhepi, Fehmi. *Historia 9*. Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 62-71, 76-78; Bajraktari, Jusuf, Fehmi Rexhepi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 10*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2011, pages 101, 127-130; Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 11*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 131-137; Bajraktari, Jusuf and Arbër Salihu. *Historia 12*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 184-86.

Turkey, but the Yugoslav government included Albanian Muslims in their definition of Turks. Furthermore, since city residents were excluded from the movement of people it was made clear that this measure was being taken against Albanians as those living in cities were mainly ethnic Turks. However, because of changes in the political situation in the Balkans, this convention was not implemented.³⁹

The core content of the Serbian textbooks is as follows:

- In autumn 1915 Bulgarian and Austrian troops entered Serbia. Many Serb soldiers and civilians, together with King Peter Karađorđević, withdrew to the mountain ranges of Albania to reach the Adriatic Sea where the troops of their French and British allies awaited them. This retreat was the hardest movement in Serb history and known as the ‘Albanian Golgotha’ because during the retreat, because of a winter freeze and other difficulties, tens of thousands of Serbian soldiers and civilians fell and were attacked by bands of local Albanians. The textbooks deal only with the occupation of Serbia by Austrian and Bulgarian troops and in the maps published in the chapter on this period Kosovo features as an integral part of Serbia.
- In November 1918 the Serbian army liberated the entire territory of Serbia (in the map Kosovo features as Serbian territory). There is no mention of the killings of Albanians by Serb forces which were mainly carried out at the end of 1918 and the beginning of 1919.
- There is no mention at all of the armed Albanian uprising against Serb forces between 1918 and 1924.
- As for the expropriation of land and expulsion of Albanians and settlement with Serbs, these textbooks make reference only to the ‘agrarian reform’ across the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and the only specific thing that is said is that as a result of these ‘around 500 000 peasant families benefited.’⁴⁰

In the **textbooks of Montenegro** the core of the narrative is as follows:

- The Serbian forces were forced to retreat to Greece through Kosovo and Metohia, Montenegro and Albania. A large population moved together

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39 Dërguti, Menduh, Sonila Boçi and Ledia Dushku. *Historia 9*. Tirana: Botime Shkolllore Albas, 2013, pages 78-79, 95-96; Dërguti, Menduh, Ledia Dushku, Ferit Duka and Sonila Boçi. *Historia 12*. Tirana: Botime Shkolllore Albas, 2013, pages 90-91.

40 Đurić, Đorđe and Momčilo Pavlović. *Istorija 8*. Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2010, pages 74, 103; Đurić, Đorđe and Momčilo Pavlović. *Istorija 3*. Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2010, pages 95, 96, 124, 155.

with the army, moving from the country to escape the conquest and its terror. As a result of losses, people taken captive, desertions and the trials during the crossing of the Accursed Mountains which were covered in ice, the number of soldiers in the army reduced from day to day. During the journey many soldiers' and civilians' bodies were left covered with snow; these were people who had died from hunger and cold. From the coast of Albania the Serbian army was transported to Corfu. This was the 'Albanian Golgotha' that the Serbian people and army experienced. Nothing is said about Kosovo under Austrian/ Bulgarian rule between 1915 and 1918.

- On 1 November 1918 the Serbian army liberated all the territory of Serbia (on the map both Kosovo and Macedonia feature as Serbian territory). The majority of ethnic minorities in Yugoslavia did not have their rights. This was particularly true for Albanians who not only lacked the conditions for development as a nation (having neither schools nor newspapers in their native tongue) but who were also oppressed by the authorities who put them under pressure to leave their homes.
- There is no mention of the armed Albanian uprising against Serb forces between 1918 and 1924.
- Many peasants had their own land but worked other people's land. Under the influence of revolutionary ideas, in 1918 and 1919 the peasants demanded agrarian reforms. It was announced that the peasants were free owners while the large landlords were offered compensation. In Kosovo and in Metohia, in Vojvodina and in Macedonia some of these lands were settled with soldiers and volunteers from the First World War. With state lands given to the settlers, the authorities helped a number of peasants but also in this way changed the ethnic composition of the population, in regions where the majority was made up of Albanians, Germans and Hungarians.⁴¹

The contents of the **Macedonian textbooks** have the following key features:

- The Slovenes, Croats, Serbs and Muslims from countries under Austrian rule were forced to take part in the war and to fight for other people's interests, but against their will. From the middle of October 1915, the combined armies of Austro-Hungary, Germany and Bulgaria struck deep into Serbia. The Serbian army, attacked on all sides, was forced to withdraw through Kosovo, Montenegro and Albania for Corfu.

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41 Burzanović, Slavko and Jasmina Gjorgjević. *Historia 9*. Podgorica: Unit for textbooks and learning materials, 2008, pages 24, 25, 58 and 63; Rastoder, Sherbo, Radoje Pajović and Zvezdan Folij. *Historia 4*. Podgorica: Unit for textbooks and learning materials, 2009, pages 52 dhe 115.

The conditions of the civilian population in the areas in Serbia and Montenegro occupied by the German, Austro-Hungarian and Bulgarian army, were very tough. This gave rise to popular resistance against the occupiers.

- In September 1918 the Entente armies (Italian, French, Serbian, English and Greek) liberated Serbia. The Serbian army returned Kosovo and took other lands where Albanians lived. The South Slavs created the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes but did not take account of the fact that there were other ethnic groups such as, for example, the Macedonians, Montenegrins, Albanians, etc.
- There was dissatisfaction in Kosovo about the establishment of Serbian rule. Albanians formed the Kosovo National Defence Committee whose aim was the liberation of Kosovo and the defence of Albanian independence. This resistance was organised in guerrilla form. A group of Albanians in Yugoslavia decided to form a legal party, the 'Xhemijeti' which was not religious but political. The Xhemijeti representatives in the Yugoslav Parliament revealed the Greater Serbia policy towards the Albanians and defended the rights of Albanians, opposing agrarian reform.
- The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes attempted to change the ethnic structure of territories where Albanians had lived. Thus in Kosovo around 15 000 families were settled from territory where Serbs had lived. Around 400 000 hectares of workable land were taken from Albanians and given to Serbs. As a consequence of this agrarian settlement policy the interethnic relations between Albanians and Serbs deteriorated. The authorities organized bands of Çetniks who used threats, pressure and fear against the Albanians. A large number of Albanians from Kosovo were left without land and so about 50 000 Albanians were forced to work the land of settler families. After the Balkan wars the Albanians represented 90% of the population while in 1940 their number had fallen to 70%. Around 200 000 Albanians moved to Turkey and Albania. In 1938 Yugoslavia and Turkey signed an agreement about the removal of 400 000 Albanians to Turkey.⁴²

Summary

In relation to the retreat to Greece at the end of 1915 by Serbian-Montenegrin forces through Kosovo, Montenegro and Albania, as a result of attacks by Austro-Hungarian, German and Bulgarian forces, the Kosovan textbooks

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⁴² Vellkoski, Vllado, Halit Sejdiu, Arijan Alademi, Dimka Risteska and Gjorgji Pavlovski. *Historia 8*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2005, pages 12-14, 21, 33-35, 45-46; Veljanovski, Novica, Gordana Pletvarska, Sonja Cvetkovska and Shyqeri Xhaferi. *Historia 3 – arsimi gjimnazor*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2009, pages 74-76.

say simply that the Serbian forces ‘...during their retreat through Albanian lands committed not only pillaging but serious crimes against the Albanian people,’ while the Albanian textbooks don’t deal with this retreat at all. The textbooks of Kosovo and Albania make no mention of the antagonism of the Albanians and the killings of Serbian soldiers and civilians who, at the end of 1915, were leaving Kosovo through the Albanian mountain ranges. The Macedonian textbooks make a superficial reference to this retreat and describe the situation of the civilian population in the areas of Serbia and Montenegro occupied by the German, Austro-Hungarian and Bulgarian armies, as very tough. The textbooks of Serbia and Montenegro, on the other hand, focus more on this retreat, describing the difficulties and many losses of Serb soldiers and civilians during the crossing of the Accursed Mountains, calling it the ‘Albanian Golgotha’. For these textbooks, the causes of the loss of many Serb soldiers and civilians were hunger, cold and other difficulties. Furthermore, the Serbian textbooks, who present this retreat as the most difficult action in Serbian history, say that the Serbian soldiers and civilians also suffered attacks from local bands of Albanians during the retreat.

During the First World War, Kosovo - like Serbia - was split almost in half: into an Austrian zone, where Albanian language schools were allowed, as was the use of Albanian in the administration, and a Bulgarian zone where the authorities established harsh conditions in which people not only had forced labour but suffered from not having enough to eat. This situation is represented in the Kosovan and Albanian textbooks but not in those of Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. Similarly, the armed resistance of the Albanian rebels in Kosovo, led in the Bulgarian zone by Idriz Seferi and in the Austrian zone by Azem Bejta, is described in the Kosovan and Albanian textbooks but not in those of Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. Meanwhile, the collaboration of these Albanian rebels with local Serbs against the Austrian or Bulgarian forces is not mentioned anywhere in any of the textbooks of these countries.

At the end of the First World War, after the Austrian and Bulgarian troops had left, Serb troops entered Kosovo and - according to the Kosovan textbooks - they ‘reconquered Kosovo and other Albanian lands’ and through a military and police regime exercised ‘terror and state genocide against the Albanians, burning and destroying whole villages and expelling thousands of Albanians to Albania and Turkey’ but these textbooks don’t offer data to support the description of this as ‘genocide’. The Albanian texts represent the entry of Serb troops in Kosovo as the ‘reestablishment of Serb forces in Kosovo’, adding that the Serbian regime denied Albanians their rights as an ethnic group, not allowing them Albanian language schools or publication of books or newspapers.

On the other hand, the Serbian textbooks represent the arrival of Serbian troops in the territory of Kosovo as a liberation and make no mention of the treatment of Albanians by Serb troops. Although the Montenegrin textbooks don't mention Kosovo directly when they mention the liberation of Serbia at the end of 1918, they include Kosovo on their map as part of the territory of Serbia; nevertheless, unlike the textbooks of Serbia, they say that Albanians did not enjoy their rights either of schooling or of newspapers in their mother tongue and that they were subjected to oppression by the authorities who used force to expel them from their homes. The Macedonian textbooks say that the Serbian army returned to Kosovo and took other lands where Albanians were living, and add that when the South Slavs created the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, they did not take into consideration the existence of other ethnic groups, among whom they mention the Albanians.

The armed resistance of the Albanians under Yugoslav rule against Serb forces in the period 1918-1924 does not appear at all in the textbooks of Serbia and Montenegro. Meanwhile, the textbooks of Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia say that this uprising had as its aim liberation and national unity and briefly mentions the *kaçaks* (peasant rebels) as the agents of the armed uprising, and the Xhemijeti as the only political party which Albanians supported and which had an important role in protecting the rights of Albanians by means of the representatives it had in the Yugoslav parliament.

In none of the countries' textbooks is it recorded that the activities of the *kaçak* movement were made difficult after the destruction of the *kaçak* base in the village of Junik in the **neutral zone** between the borders of Albania and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, nor that at the end of 1923, the Prime Minister of Albania - Ahmet Zog - sent the Albanian army to fight the *kaçaks*. Nor is it mentioned that joint Albanian-Yugoslav troops were established in the zone to prevent the return of the *kaçaks* there. Likewise, the books don't say that in Albania the head of the rebels, Azem Bejta, was officially sentenced to death in absentia as was Hasan Prishtina who was one of the leaders of the Kosovo National Defence Committee.

These textbooks do not speak about the agreement made by Azem Bejta with the local Serbian authorities to live without being betrayed, on condition that he moved within just three villages. In these textbooks the activities of the rebel movement are represented only as a war for liberation and national unity and so there is no mention either of the meetings between the rebel leader Azem Bejta with senior Serb officials where Kosovo's right to **self-government** was demanded. It is not mentioned in any of the textbooks that a large number of Albanians worked with the authorities and were employed in local administration and that therefore some of them were a target for

attack by the rebels, just like the Slav settlers. Likewise, it is not mentioned that the formation of bands of local Serbs to carry out anti-rebel operations encouraged rebel attacks on some Serb villages, even though the rules of the rebel movement included, among other things, not damaging local Serbs. These rules are not given in any of the countries' textbooks.

It is not specified in these textbooks that as well as uprising, the Albanians used a parliamentary strategy, represented by the Society for the Right to Defend Islam ('Islam Muhafaza-yi Hukuk Cemiyeti') which was known as the Xhemijeti for short. None of the textbooks give the full name of the 'Xhemijeti'. This political association, which was considered an aristocratic party, demanded religious autonomy and sometimes also protested about living conditions in Kosovo which is information which does not feature in the textbooks. None of the textbooks mentions that this political group collaborated with the two main Serbian political parties in Yugoslavia – the democrats and the radicals – and sometimes even shared electoral lists with them.

As for the agrarian reforms and the expulsions, the textbooks of all countries, with the exception of Serbia, say that in the period between the two World Wars the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes aimed to change the ethnic composition of the population in Kosovo and used the so-called agrarian reforms for this, breaking up old Ottoman property which should have been given to local peasants. A large part of this land, including land belonging to the rebels, was given to settlers from Serbia and to Serbian soldiers and volunteers. However, none of the textbooks mentions that during the division of these lands local peasants were not excluded, and that these local people included Albanians. Nor do the textbooks say that although the majority of the land was given to Serb settlers, local Serbs expressed their willingness to join the Albanians, presenting a united front against the incomers.

The Serbian textbooks speak about the agrarian reforms across the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and the only more specific thing they say is that as a result of these '...around 500 000 peasant families gained land.' The Albanian textbooks speak only about '...the expropriation of Albanian property and the settling of Albanian land with Slav elements' but they do not give figures for this. The Kosovan textbooks, on the other hand, claim that between the two World Wars '400 000 hectares of land were expropriated and around 15 000 Slavic settler families were settled with around 75 000 family members' in Kosovo. Noel Malcolm, who quotes Serb, Albanian and international authors, says that 200 000 hectares were expropriated and half of this was given to the settlers – while in Kosovo more than 13 000 families, with around 70 000 members, were settled in Kosovo. As for the expulsion of Albanians in the period between the two World Wars, the Serbian textbooks say nothing. The

Albanian textbooks mention this issue without giving any number, while the Albanian books say that ‘...around 250 000 Albanians were forced from their ethnic lands’ but give no evidence to support this figure. On the other hand, Noel Malcolm says that the number of Albanians and other Muslims from Kosovo who were expelled between the two World Wars is supposed to have been between 90 000 and 150 000.

In the Kosovan, Albanian and Macedonian textbooks a special place is given to the agreement reached in July 1938 between Yugoslavia and Turkey for the expulsion of around 40 000 families to Turkey in the period 1939-1944, but that the outbreak of the Second World War prevented this from being implemented. Officially the agreement speaks of ‘repatriation’ of the ‘Muslim Turk’ population, but it was clear from the zones which are specified within it that the majority of those to be moved would be Albanian. In the Kosovan textbooks, the number of people who would move is recorded as 400 000, in the Albanian textbooks it is 250 000 and in those of Macedonia it is 400 000. International authors give the figure as 200 000 and 400 000 and add that the majority of them must have been Albanian. However, none of the textbooks mention that the agreement between Yugoslavia and Turkey was not only opposed by the victims and their countrymen, but motivated 65 students from Kosovo – of whom 56 were Serb and Montenegrin, 1 Turkish and 8 Albanians – to circulate all around Kosovo, as well as around foreign embassies in Belgrade, illegal posters denouncing this plan⁴³

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43 Malcolm, Noel. *Kosovo - A Short History*. London: Pan Macmillan, 2002, pages 258-288; Schmitt, Oliver. *Kosova: histori e shkurtër e një treve qendrore ballkanike*. Prishtina: Koha, 2012, pages 143-160; Schmitt, Oliver. *Shqiptarët - një histori midis Lindjes dhe Perëndimit*. Tirana: K&B, 2012, pages 168-179; Bartl, Peter. *Shqipëria - nga mesjeta deri sot*. Prizren: Drita, 1999, pages 170-207. Judah, Tim. *Kosova - Luftë dhe Hakmarrje*. Prishtina: Koha, 2002, pages 41-42; Fischer, Bernd. *Mbreti Zog dhe përpjekja për stabilitet në Shqipëri*. Tirana: Çabej, 2000, pages 29-51; Schwartz, Stephen. *Kosovo: Background to a War*. London: Anthem Press, 2000, page 75.

5.3. Kosovo in Yugoslavia 1945 – 1990

This section looks specifically at how the following themes are presented in the textbooks: Kosovo under Italian/ German/ Bulgarian rule 1941-1944; the reconquest/ liberation of Kosovo in 1945; the situation of the Albanians in Kosovo after the Second World War; the demonstrations of 1968, the 1974 constitution and the demonstrations of 1981.

This is the core of the information given in the Kosovan textbooks in relation to the themes above:

- At the time of the Second World War Kosovo was divided into three zones of operation: Italian, German and Bulgarian. The Italian invaders met powerful resistance from the Albanians, and to modify their dissatisfaction they declared Kosovo's union with Albania. This was very important because many Albanians were employed in the Kosovo administration, they were allowed their national symbols, schools, newspapers, books, radio and so on. All of this was done to gain the Albanians' sympathy and support. The Albanians of Kosovo were in principle against Fascism, but they had greater hatred for Yugoslav rule and for this reason they welcomed the Fascists as liberators and saviours. Although they had suffered greatly under royal Yugoslavia, the Albanians took care of the Serb and Montenegrin minorities. The Albanians organized anti-fascist demonstrations – and later armed attacks - in various cities. On the basis of the instructions of the Yugoslav Communist Party for Kosovo, in the summer of 1943 the Main Headquarters of the National Liberation Army of Kosovo was founded. It had Fadil Hoxha as commander and its task was to co-ordinate the partisans' activities in Kosovo. A group of nationalist intellectuals collaborated with the Germans in order to protect the national union declared at the time of the Italians. In this context the Second League of Prizren, chaired by Rexhep Mitrovica and committed to an Ethnic Albania, was held from 16 to 20 September 1943 in Prizren. The National Liberation Council for Kosovo and the Dukagjini Plain held its first conference in Bujan on 31 December 1943 and 1 and 2 January 1944 and issued a resolution that Kosovo and the Dukagjini Plain, inhabited by an Albanian majority, wished to join with Albania. The Yugoslav Communist Party did not recognize the Bujan resolution because it was in conflict with its own plans for taking power in Kosovo. Nor did the Communist Party of Albania fully support the Bujan decision.
- After the expulsion of the fascist Nazi regime, Serb, Montenegrin and Macedonian Partisan units entered Kosovo and other Albanian areas.

They exercised violence against the Albanian people. The Serb genocide in Kosovo intensified from the autumn of 1944. Under the leadership of Shaban Polluzha the Albanian population countered this violence. Albanians were not allowed to live in a common country and even within Yugoslavia they remained divided between four parts of the country. With violent means, Kosovo was established as an autonomous province within Serbia, which continually exercised violence and terror against the Albanian population. On 8 February 1945, on the pretext of putting down a counter-revolution, Tito declared martial law in Kosovo with Sava Drljević at the head of the administration. Later the terror and genocide intensified in Drenica where Yugoslav Partisan units killed four thousand Albanians during the spring of 1945. On 1 April 1945 in Tivar thousands of mobilised Albanian soldiers were killed and thrown in the sea. As a consequence of martial law and the Serbian, Montenegrin and Macedonian terror and genocide around 45 000 Albanians were killed in Kosovo during this period. In Prizren from 8 to 10 July 1945 the state and party institutions of Yugoslavia and Kosovo (which were in the hands of Serbs and Montenegrins) organised a conference of the National Liberation Council of Kosovo which imposed a resolution on the annexation of Kosovo from Federal Serbia within Yugoslavia. Those who opposed this resolution were killed or sentenced to long terms in prison.

- The Albanian population, and particularly the National Democratic Committee of Albanians, stubbornly maintained resistance to the reestablishment of Serbian power. Repression continued until 1966. The form this repression took was also through the arms collection in 1955-6, where 3000 (in some texts the same authors say 300 000) Albanians were beaten and 100 people died from torture and then 250 000 (in some texts the same authors say 400 000) Albanians were forcibly moved to Turkey from the beginning of the 1950s until 1966. After the fall of Aleksandar Ranković (1966), Albanians began to use their language and their flag more freely.
- Albanians were never reconciled to Serb rule and in order to show their dissatisfaction demonstrations were organised in 1968, where they demanded a Republic, a Constitution and a University. The sacrifices were great but so were the effects because this accelerated the founding of the University of Prishtina (UP), the Kosovo Constitution was approved, the Kosovo Academy of Arts and Sciences was approved, and there was a growth in publishing and cultural, scientific and other activities. Collaboration began between the Albanians of Kosovo and those of Albania in the areas of education, science, culture, sport and trade. In 1981, with the support of the Albanian people, students

organised demonstrations once again with the demand for ‘the Republic of Kosovo’. The police arrested, killed and wounded hundreds of Albanian protesters⁴⁴

The core of the narrative in the **Albanian textbooks** is as follows:

- Albanian land in the former Yugoslavia was divided between the Italian, German and Bulgarian conquerors. The majority of Kosovan territory was under the control of the Italians, who declared the union of these territories with Albania, creating ‘Greater Albania’. An administration was set up with Albanian employees and Albanian as the language of administration, with publication of books and newspapers allowed in Albanian and Albanian language schools opened. The union of the majority of Kosovo with Albania, despite having been done by the regime, had a positive impact on the Albanians. Even in the German zone the Albanians managed to get the right for an Albanian administration and Albanian language teaching, while in the Bulgarian zone the situation did not improve. Kosovo’s Albanians won some rights, so their situation was better than under the Yugoslav rulers and for this reason their persistence against the regime was not strong at first. In many cities demonstrations were organized where there were demands for independence and the Albanian flag flew. In Kosovo, as in Albania, two distinct schools of thought emerged: communist and nationalist. The few Kosovan communists joined the anti-fascist movement and established the Main Headquarters of the National Liberation Army for Kosovo and the Dukagjini Plain. The rest of the population aimed at defending the union they had achieved and in Prizren from 16 to 20 June 1943 they organized the Second League of Prizren. These nationalists announced that they would not collaborate with either the Yugoslav nor the Albanian partisans. There were also independent nationalists such as the Kryeziu brothers. In Bujan on 31 December 1943 and 1 and 2 January 1944 the Kosovan Communists held a meeting which issued a resolution saying that war against the German conquerors was the best way to solve the national issue – i.e. of the union with Albania, according to the principle of self-determination. The Yugoslav Communist Party opposed the decisions of this conference.
- Kosovo was annexed to the Yugoslav state, as part of Serbia, with violence. The Yugoslav Army Headquarters gave orders to Kosovan

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⁴⁴ Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 5*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 85-98; Rexhepi, Fehmi. *Historia 9*. Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 110-123, 156-174; Bajraktari, Jusuf, Fehmi Rexhepi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 10*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2011, pages 154-157 and 193-199; Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 11*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 159-163 and 208-211.

partisan brigades to follow the conquering armies to the north of Yugoslavia while the Montenegrin, Serbian and Macedonian armies entered Kosovo and established Serbian rule with violence. From 8 February 1945 martial law was established. In Tivar in just one night hundreds of mobilized Albanians were shot. In July 1945 in the Prizren Assembly with 137 members, of whom 33 were Albanian, a resolution was approved by which Kosovo was recognized as part of Serbia. On 3 September 1945 the leadership of the Serbian Parliament approved the law which declared Kosovo's annexation by Serbia.

- The situation in Kosovo was very serious. The population of Kosovo was considered to be an ethnic minority. The Serbian administration did not recognize the ethnic rights of the Albanians in Kosovo, although after the war there was an improvement in Albanian education as some primary schools were opened and thanks to good relations between Albania and Yugoslavia some teachers were sent. Publication of magazines and newspapers in Albanian was allowed and libraries and radio stations were set up. From 1947 these rights were lost little by little: the use of national symbols was banned, the administration was made up of Serbs, and Albanian wasn't spoken there. In 1945 the Yugoslav regime allowed the return of Slavic settlers who had left during the war. The Albanians of Kosovo organized themselves to respond to unparalleled Serb violence and the return of Kosovo to Serbia. The main organization for Kosovo's Albanians at the time was the NDSH (the National Democratic Committee of Albania, or *Komiteti Nacional Demokratik Shqiptar* in Albanian) which aimed at the liberation of Kosovo and of other areas and their union with Albania. The Serbian regime took harsh steps. In 1947 the NDSH was abolished. During the 1950s a new wave of repression began against the Albanians: the *campaign for disarmament of the population*, where Albanians who did not know how to use arms were forced to buy them to escape violence; and the expulsion of Albanians whereby 400 000 Albanians were expelled from Yugoslavia before 1966, although the ethnic structure of Kosovo did not change, thanks to the high birth rate in this area.
- On 1 July 1966 a meeting was held on Brioni of the highest Yugoslav Communist institutions, where a form of decentralization of Yugoslavia was demanded. Kosovo Albanian legal experts and politicians demanded a change to Kosovo's status, but their demands were not fully met. The Albanians' demands grew. In November 1968 demonstrations were organized with demands for a Republic of Kosovo. The Yugoslav police suppressed these demonstrations with violence. The Yugoslav government made some concessions to the Albanians of Kosovo: the use of the flag was allowed, the university was founded etc. In 1974

the Kosovo Assembly approved the Constitution of the Socialist Autonomous Province which gave Kosovo a higher legal status and the Albanians' situation improved. Nevertheless, Kosovo continued to be dependent on Serbia, which aimed at reducing its autonomy. In March 1981 Albanian students began to organize demonstrations, at first against poor living conditions. Later the demonstrations spread with the demand for a Republic of Kosovo. The demonstrations were put down with violence. The Serbian authorities began to deny Albanians all their rights. All connections were stopped between the University of Prishtina and the University of Tirana.⁴⁵

The core of the **Serbian textbooks** is this:

- All that is said about Kosovo under Italian/ German/ Bulgarian rule from 1941 to 1944 is that Kosovo and Metohia were included in Italian Albania and that the Albanians in Kosovo and Metohia committed terrors against Serbs, but there is no data on the number of civilians killed during this period.
- Serbia was formed territorially in 1945 with the union of some areas of the divided Sanjak and the incorporation of Vojvodina and Kosovo and Metohia within it with special status. Serbia took its definitive form from the middle of 1945 when Vojvodina became an autonomous province while Kosovo had a lower level of autonomy. After the situation in Kosovo calmed down and martial law and army rule had been withdrawn and in the time of ever greater collaboration with Albania, the People's Assembly of the Province of Kosovo and Metohia approved a Resolution in Prizren (on 9 and 10 July 1945) which declared the wish of the delegates for the annexation of this province by Federal Serbia. Serbia became the **only federal unit** in which **autonomous units** were formed, even though the same or similar causes existed for the constitution of autonomy in other federal units too. The 1946 constitution set out the possibility for other units to form but they were never formed.
- There is nothing on the situation of the Albanians in Kosovo after the Second World War until the fall of Aleksandar Ranković (1966).
- At the end of November 1968 demonstrations broke out in Kosovo, with a strong demand for Kosovo to become a republic. There were demands for a new constitution, a breaking up and union of the regions

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45 Dërguti, Menduh, Sonila Boçi and Ledia Dushku. *Historia 9*. Tirana: Botime Shkolllore Albas, 2013, pages 112-114 and 131-134; Dërguti, Menduh, Ledia Dushku, Ferit Duka and Sonila Boçi. *Historia 12*. Tirana: Botime Shkolllore Albas, 2013, pages 118-119 and 137-139.

where Albanians lived, and acclaim for Enver Hoxha. Since these were huge separatist demands, Tito considered them to be simple treachery, criticising those 'who are still living in the old world and are not willing for all ethnicities and nations in our country to have the same rights'. By this he meant the Serbs. After these events (the demonstrations were put down with violence) harsh discussions continued on changes to the character of the federation. The autonomous provinces in the Republic of Serbia gained greater autonomy. Changes to the character of the federation, made with amendments in 1969 and 1971 led to the reinforcement of the position of the republics, but also of the provinces. The amendments ensured greater independence of the provinces who gained the status of a constitutional part of the federation, although they didn't have the character of federal units. The provinces could take part in decision-making in the republic, while the republic did not have the right to interfere in the work of the provinces. The new constitution was approved in February 1974 and was immediately called a 'charter for a self-governing society'. Soon the Constitution of Serbia was also approved, as well as the constitutions of Vojvodina and Kosovo and when these were declared no political leader from Serbia was invited. These constitutional changes enabled further strengthening of the independence of the republics and the provinces, but also a weakening of unity, breaking up of the economy and nibbling away at the idea of Yugoslavia as a shared country. Nevertheless, the heads of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia spoke with ever more optimism about unity, stability and progress. The provinces gained wide autonomy in law-making and executive power, so that in practice they had equal status with members – meaning the countries – of the federation. With these constitutions, the Republic of Serbia also won the right of confederalisation. The provinces won the right to decide, with rights equal to the republics, about the work of the federation – even according to the principle of consensus (agreement). Without their vote the federation could not make decisions. The first signs of destabilisation in Yugoslavia were seen in Kosovo. The eruption of nationalism and Albanian separatism in spring of 1981 marked the awakening of a dormant nationalism, fatal to unity. The republics began a game over Kosovo. Despite the widespread propaganda, the Albanian political elite in Kosovo was already ruling sovereign in Kosovo. Pressure continued against Serbs with repression, rape, destruction of property, and even killings out of nationalist hatred. This only intensified the movement out of Kosovo of Serbs who had in fact been growing in number since 1945, and thus caused a reduction in the number of Serbs to a total of 13.2%. The events in Kosovo and Metohia impacted negatively on the relations across Yugoslavia. With the issue of solving the problems of Kosovo and

Metohia Milošević began the reform of the Serbian Communist League and of relations within the federation. Many meetings received the massive support of Milošević's personality and his policies. This caused a change in the leadership of Kosovo and Metohia, of Vojvodina and Montenegro⁴⁶

In the **textbooks of Montenegro**, the core of the narrative is this:

- There is nothing about Kosovo under Italian/ German/ Bulgarian rule 1941-1944.
- Nor is there anything about the reconquest/ reliberation of Kosovo in 1945.
- Nor about the situation of the Albanians in Kosovo after the Second World War.
- On the demonstrations of 1968 in Kosovo there is nothing, while about the constitution of 1974 and the rights which Kosovo won from this constitution it says: with the constitution of 1974 the competences of the federal government were reduced and the role of the republics and provinces was increased. As for the demonstrations of 1981 it says that: in the first half of the 'eighties Yugoslavia had to face an outburst of Albanian nationalism in Kosovo. The student protests of 1981 turned into mass demonstrations calling for Kosovo to become a Republic, which was explained officially as the first step for breaking away from the SFRY. The police and army put down the demonstration but the inter-ethnic relations in the province became even worse.⁴⁷

The content of the Macedonian textbooks has this at its core:

- In order to oppress the Albanian population and for easier administration of Albanian areas, Germany, Italy and Bulgaria cut up and divided between themselves the Albanian territory outside Albania. In April 1941 Italy entered into the territory of Yugoslavia through conquered Albania, occupying the territory inhabited by Albanians and declaring the formation of Ethnic Albania (Greater Albania). Use of language and the flag and holding of meetings of a ethnic nature were allowed, Albanian-language schools were opened, publication of newspapers

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⁴⁶ Đurić, Đorđe and Momčilo Pavlović. *Istorija 8*. Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2010, page 137; Đurić, Đorđe and Momčilo Pavlović. *Istorija 3*. Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2010, pages 208, 235, 243, 245, 248.

⁴⁷ Burzanović, Slavko and Jasmina Gjorgjeviq. *Historia 9*. Podgorica: Unit for textbooks and learning materials, 2008, pages 120, 128; Rastoder, Sherbo, Radoje Pajović and Zvezdan Foliq. *Historia 4*. Podgorica: Unit for textbooks and learning materials, 2009, page 254.

and magazines was allowed, Albanian administration and police were formed and so on. Despite these rights, the Albanian population considered the Italians to be an occupying force, and from the moment of occupation they began to prepare for an armed anti-fascist war. In the zone controlled by the Germans, the Albanians did not enjoy all these rights, while in the Bulgarian zone they had no rights at all. In Prizren the Second League of Prizren was founded, led by Bedri Pejani. For its own interests, Germany supported this political organisation. After the capitulation of Italy, Germany attempted to secure the territory of Kosovo with the help of the SS Skanderbeg division. Out of the 50 000 recruits which Germany had foreseen having in Kosovo, the division mobilised only 6 500. The members of this division wore German uniforms with Albanian caps but they did not manage to gain the necessary sympathisers and support.

- After the liberation of Macedonia, the Macedonian army - with two divisions - and the Albanian army crossed into the territory of Kosovo, helping with the liberation of Kosovo and clearing of the terrain of leftover German forces and SS divisions. After the liberation of the country, the local secret services (OZNA) undertook measures to root out any 'counter-revolutionary' tendencies through repressive measures. In February martial law was established in Kosovo. Some reactionary elements within the Yugoslav army took advantage of this to take revenge on the Albanian people, who were considered collectively to have been collaborators with the occupier. During this time some group killings were carried out of innocent Albanian residents of Kosovo. At the Prizren Assembly of 1945 it was decided, without the agreement of the Albanians, that Kosovo and Metohia would remain as an autonomous province under Serbia and Yugoslavia.
- The Albanians' situation did not improve. Because of a range of forms of pressure from Yugoslavia, around 250 000 Albanians moved away. One of the things which impacted on this movement was the campaign for collecting weapons. After the sacking in 1966 of Aleksandar Ranković, the head of the Yugoslav police, a decisive reversal was made in the treatment of the Albanians.
- In November 1968 the Albanians organised demonstrations demanding the declaration of Kosovo as a Republic. With the constitution of 1974 the Albanians won rights almost equal with other Yugoslav nations. The University of Prishtina was founded and later came the opening of institutes, museums, libraries, archives, theatres, newspapers, magazines, the Academy of Sciences and Arts, and so on. After the death of Tito the situation became more complicated. The Albanians considered that the time had come to call for the declaration of the

Republic of Kosovo. Demonstrations were organised in 1981 and initially these were considered counter-revolutionary even by the Kosovan leadership itself. In March 1989 in extraordinary circumstances the Kosovo Assembly gave approval for a change to the constitution and on 28 March 1989 Kosovo's autonomy was suppressed.⁴⁸

Summary

In general, the textbooks of Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia claim that the Albanians opposed the fascist regime in Kosovo although at the beginning they welcomed it as liberation saving them from Serbian slavery and they add that the union of the majority of the territory of Kosovo with Albania, even though it was achieved by Italian conquerors, had a positive impact on the Albanians. On the other hand, the Montenegrin textbooks do not make any reference to Kosovo under Italian, German and Bulgarian rule, while all that the Serbian textbooks say about this is that at the time of the Italian regime in Kosovo and Metohia, armed Albanians committed terrors against Serbs, but no data is given about the number of civilians killed during this period. For these Albanian crimes, mainly against villages inhabited by Serbs, in order to get rid of settlers and achieve the return of property confiscated during the period between the two World Wars, and which are mentioned only in the Serbian textbooks, foreign authors say that the numbers of Serbs and Montenegrins expelled from Kosovo in this period is between 30 000 and 100 000, while the killings, destruction and thefts, although being reciprocal, had Serbs and Montenegrins as their main victims. Furthermore, the Kosovan textbooks not only fail to mention these crimes, but also claim that the Albanians, despite their suffering under Yugoslav rule, demonstrated care of the Serbian and Montenegrin minorities, and even in many cases took them under their protection.

After the capitulation of the Italian fascists in Kosovo and the arrival of the German Nazis, two essentially different factions crystallised on the political scene in Kosovo: the nationalist faction, supported by the German Nazis and organised into the Second League of Prizren, which announced that it was committed to keeping Kosovo united with Albania; and the Communist faction, supported mainly by the Yugoslav Communists and organised into the National Liberation Council for Kosovo and Metohia, which declared at the Bujan Conference its desire

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⁴⁸ Vellkoski, Vllado, Halit Sejdiu, Arijan Alademi, Dimka Risteska and Gjorgji Pavllovski. *Historia 8*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2005, pages 130-131; Veljanovski, Novica, Gordana Pletvarska, Sonja Cvetkovska and Shyqeri Xhaferi. *Historia 3 – arsimi gjimnazor*. Skopje: Prosvetno Dello, 2009, pages 134-135, 137-138, 163, 164, 204-205, 208-209.

for Kosovo to unite with Albania, suggesting the right to self-determination even if that meant breaking away. The textbooks of Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia do not deal at all with these factions which in the Albanian textbooks – unlike in those of Kosovo – are represented more clearly even though only superficially. The Albanian textbooks even briefly present the independent nationalist groups, such as that of the Kryeziu brothers in Gjakova, which opposed the regime. Nevertheless, while in the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania these two factions are represented in passing, in no textbook is there a description of the armed conflict between them, nor the fact that one had support from the German Nazis and the other from the Yugoslav Communists.

After the withdrawal of German troops from Kosovo, Partisan forces established themselves in the cities of Western Kosovo, while Bulgarian forces, who were joined by the Yugoslav Partisans, entered Eastern Kosovo. Leaving Kosovo, alongside the German troops, were the majority of the armed groups created by the Second League of Prizren, including members of the SS Skanderbeg division which took part before its withdrawal in gathering and expelling Communists from Kosovo, including a number of Jews. This is not presented in the textbooks of any country, with the exception of a superficial presentation in the Macedonian textbooks.

According to the Kosovan textbooks, violence was exercised against the Albanian population by the Serbian, Montenegrin and Macedonian Partisan units who reached Kosovo after the expulsion of the Nazi Fascist occupiers, and this is even described as a genocide, taking the number of Albanians killed in this period to 45 000. The Albanian and Macedonian textbooks also describe this expulsion as violent. The latter say that some reactionary elements of the Yugoslav army took advantage of the situation to take revenge on the Albanian population, who were seen collectively as collaborators with the occupiers. The Serbian and Montenegrin textbooks do not make any reference to this having happened. However, Noel Malcolm, who analyses the data from a range of authors, comes to the conclusion that the figure of 45 000 Albanians killed is an exaggeration.

None of the textbooks mentions that the Kosovan partisans were divided into at least two groups: on the one hand the partisans led by Shaban Polluzha, who refused orders to fight the German troops in the north of Yugoslavia and decided to stay in Kosovo to defend the Albanian population from the Yugoslav Partisans; and on the other hand, the partisans led by Fadil Hoxha, who agreed to be the deputy to Savo Drljević, the Yugoslav military authority commander in Kosovo. Nor do these textbooks mention the information that the partisans of Shaban Polluzha, centred mainly in Drenica, were swiftly killed by the partisans of Commander Savo Drljević and Deputy Commander Fadil Hoxha, aided by divisions of partisans from Albania. In fact there is

even, especially in the textbooks of Kosovo, the invention of an organisation called the National Liberation Army of Kosovo ('Ushtria Nacionalçlirimtare e Kosovës' or 'UNÇK' in Albanian) while it is known that that the Kosovo Communists were part of the National Liberation Army of Yugoslavia.

The vote in the Prizren Assembly in July 1945 for Kosovo to become part of Serbia and thus of Yugoslavia is presented in the Kosovan textbooks as a forced issue and it is said that those who opposed the resolution were killed or sentenced to long terms in prison, while the Albanian textbooks say that out of 142 members in this assembly only 33 were Albanian – something which is not claimed in the other countries' textbooks. The Macedonian textbooks also more or less say that the decisions of this assembly were without the approval of the Albanians. While the Montenegro textbooks don't say anything about this, the Serbian textbooks say that at a time of ever greater collaboration with Albania the resolution was approved, showing the desire of the delegates for the annexation of this province within and as a part of Federal Serbia. Thus these texts need to take into account the fact that in this assembly where the resolution for Kosovo's annexation by federal Serbia was approved by acclaim, only 33 of the 142 members were Albanian (and part of the Communist faction) and even that the members of this assembly were reminded quite deliberately that there were 50 000 troops in Kosovo ready to defend the spoils of war.

As for the situation of the Albanians in the period 1945 – 1966 when the Yugoslav authorities forced tens of millions of Albanians in Yugoslavia to move to Turkey, using different forms of pressure such as the campaign for arms collection, the Serbian and Montenegrin textbooks say not a word, while the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania and those of Macedonia give inflated figures: 250 000 and 400 000 Albanians respectively as having moved from Yugoslavia to Turkey. From 1945 to the middle of the 'sixties a range of political groups and organisations of Kosovo Albanians resisted Yugoslav rule, and the leader among them was the illegal organisation, the National Democratic Committee of Albanians which, like other groups, soon dissolved. This organisation is mentioned in the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania, but there is no mention of the other illegal organisations which opposed Yugoslav rule, among the most significant of which was the Revolutionary Movement for the Union of the Albanians ('Lëvizja Revolucionare për Bashkimin e Shqiptarëve' or 'LRBSH' in Albanian), led by Adem Demaçi. These textbooks therefore don't specify that at that time there were two political factions: one legal and one illegal.

During the 1960s, amendments were approved year on year in the Constitution of Serbia and of Yugoslavia in favour of Kosovo, and in July 1966 the decision was taken that the second most powerful person – after Tito – in the Yugoslav administration, the Minister for Internal Affairs Aleksandar Ranković, was to be removed from his post. This marked the end of the movements of population

and abuses like the mass campaigns for weapons and similar things which had been features of the atmosphere of control of the Ranković period.

On 27 November 1968 the illegal organisation of the so-called '68 Group', many of whose members had been part of the LRBSH, organised demonstrations in various cities in Kosovo, with the main demand being for a Republic of Kosovo. In the textbooks of Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia there is superficial mention of these demonstrations but as well as a lack of reference to their organisers there is not even a reference to the fact that the **legal** political officials of Kosovo considered these to be hostile and nationalist. These textbooks attribute the advancement of Kosovo's constitutional position in Serbia and Yugoslavia exclusively to these demonstrations, ignoring the fact that for this advancement the reestablishment of relations between Albania and Yugoslavia had impacted on Kosovo's **legal** political officials. The Montenegro textbooks don't mention these demonstrations at all while the Serbian textbooks represent them as separatist, and that afterwards harsh discussions continued about the change to the character of the federation, which led to securing greater independence for the provinces who '... could take part in the decision-making of the Republic, while the Republic didn't have the right to get involved in their work.'

This independence for the provinces was crowned in 1974 with the approval of the Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) which secured for the two Autonomous Provinces, Kosovo and Vojvodina, who were constituent parts of the Republic of Serbia, a status which was in most ways similar to that of the six Yugoslav republics, especially in economic decision-making and some areas of foreign policy. The Kosovan textbooks mention the approval of the Kosovo Constitution in 1974 only as an effect of the demonstrations of 1968, but don't deal at all with the rights which Kosovo was guaranteed. The Albanian textbooks say that on the basis of this constitution the Assembly of Kosovo could now approve laws and that without its approval the territory of Kosovo could not be changed. However, on the basis of this constitution, the territory of the SFRY was made up of the territories of the republics and nor could the territory of the republics be changed without the agreement of the republics. The Albanian textbooks also mention Kosovo's right to be represented in the SFRY Assembly and the creation of some autonomous institutions in the judiciary and finance. The SFRY Assembly was made up of the Federal Chamber, where the republics had the right to send 30 delegates each, and the provinces each had the right to send 20, and the Chamber of the Republics and the Provinces where the republics had the right to send 12 delegates each, and the provinces could send 8 each. Nevertheless these textbooks stress that although Serbian hegemony was noticeably reduced with this constitution, Kosovo continued to be dependent on Serbia, who tried in every way possible to reduce the province's autonomy. The Serbian textbooks mainly focus on the strengthening of the independence of the

provinces who, according to these books, gained wide autonomy in legislative and executive power and equal status in the federation, with the decision-making rights equal to the republics on issues of the federation. However, although they say that Serbia won elements of confederation they don't mention at all that in the introduction to the SFRY Constitution and the Constitution of Serbia the right of each nation to self-determination even to withdrawal from the federation is mentioned, but this does not feature in the Constitution of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo. Furthermore, on the basis of these 1974 constitutions the Albanians were considered an ethnic group and not a nation.

The textbooks of every country deal with the demonstrations which broke out in March and April 1981, initially organised by students of the University of Prishtina for better conditions, and later by a range of political and illegal groups of Kosovo Albanians, with the demand for a Republic of Kosovo. As with the demonstrations of 1968, the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania don't give the organisers of these, and nor do they mention the opinion of the senior Albanian political officials in Kosovo about nationalism, separatism, hooligan crowds and Albanian counter-revolutionary organisations. Only the Macedonian textbooks say that the demonstrations of 1981 were considered counter-revolutionary even by the Kosovan leadership itself. The Montenegro textbooks present these demonstrations briefly and correctly, while those of Serbia say that after these demonstrations pressure continued against Serbs, with rape, destruction of property and even killings inspired by racial hatred, and that these only intensified the movement of Serbs away from Kosovo.

Relations between Albanians and Serbs cooled even more after the demonstrations of 1981, when Serbia made plans to remove Kosovo's autonomy, starting propaganda campaigns in the media against what the Serbian textbooks describe as '...pressure against Serbs, rape, destruction of property and even killings inspired by racial hatred.' In terms of the rapes in Kosovo, the Committee of Serbian Lawyers and Experts for the Defence of Human Rights analysed the statistics of rapes and attempted rapes during the 'eighties in an analysis published in 1990 and concluded that the frequency of this crime was much lower in Kosovo than in other parts of Yugoslavia, and that in the vast majority of cases, the attacker and the victim were of the same ethnic group. Similarly, as far as movements of people were concerned, it should be said that one of the main reasons for these was the mismanagement of the Kosovan economy and the level of unemployment which was the highest in Yugoslavia.⁴⁹

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49 Malcolm, Noel. *Kosovo - A Short History*. London: Pan Macmillan, 2002, pages 289-334; Schmitt, Oliver. *Kosova: histori e shkurtër e një treve qendrore ballkanike*. Prishtina: Koha, 2012, pages 164-233; Fischer, Bernd. *Shqipëria gjatë Luftës, 1939-1945*. Tirana: Çabej, 2000, pages 124-129; Krieger, Heike (ed.). *The Kosovo Conflict and International Law*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, 2-8; Surroi, Veton. *Fadil Hoxha në vetën e parë*. Prishtina: Koha, 2010, pages 233-255.

5.4 Kosovo during the 1990s

This section considers the specifics of how the following are presented in the textbooks: civil resistance at the end of the 1980s, civil resistance during the 1990s, armed resistance 1998-1999, war crimes; the Rambouillet Conference and the NATO intervention.

In relation to the issues above, this is the core of the narrative in the **Kosovan textbooks**:

- The political leadership in Kosovo which was, from 1981 to 1989, an instrument in the hands of Serbian policy, understood rather late the game being played about the suppression of autonomy. In 1989 demonstrations broke out across the population for the protection and promotion of autonomy. The Trepça miners locked themselves in the mine for two weeks in protest and demanded the defence of the independence of Kosovo's institutions and for Kosovo's fate to go to the UN. On 23 March 1989, the Kosovo Assembly, surrounded by tanks, gave its approval for a change to the constitution. During the demonstrations against the change to the constitution, 30 people fell as martyrs. 254 intellectuals and members of the Albanian leadership were isolated. One particularly severe form of Serb police repression was the poisoning of 7000 Albanian pupils.
- On 23 December 1989 the Albanian intelligentsia founded the Democratic League of Kosovo (in Albanian, 'Lidhjen Demokratike e Kosovës' or 'LDK'), which, under the leadership of Ibrahim Rugova, focused on solving the issue of Kosovo and the Albanians in Yugoslavia on the basis of the principle of self-determination. Later other parties were founded and the Co-ordinating Council of Albanian Political Parties in the former Yugoslavia, which supported Kosovo as an independent and sovereign state, supported the demand of Albanians in Macedonia to be a state-forming faction, while for the Albanians of the Presheva Valley it called for a high level of autonomy with the right of union with Kosovo. With the aim of unifying the Albanian people a campaign of blood feud reconciliation was begun and more than 1200 blood feuds were resolved. On 2 July 1990 the Assembly of Kosovo made a Constitutional Declaration on Kosovo's independence and equality in Yugoslavia. On 7 September 1990 the Constitution of Kosovo was approved. In September 1991 a referendum was held on Kosovo as an independent and sovereign state. On 24 May 1992 parliamentary and presidential elections were held. The Serbian authorities expelled Albanian pupils and students from schools and university departments,

but the Albanians organised an independent education system through schools held in private houses. Likewise, the Serbian authorities sacked thousands of Albanians, many of whom were forced to emigrate. The Albanians, led by Ibrahim Rugova, convinced the world that they wanted freedom. The world was convinced that Kosovo deserved freedom.

- Serbian repression meant that on 1 October 1997 protests broke out among UP students and the wider population against the occupying powers. The Serbian police and army killed and massacred Albanians across Kosovo, and so to defend and liberate the Kosovo population the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) emerged, first announcing its presence on 28 November 1997. Its platform for freedom and independence, for open society and democracy, was supported by the entire Albanian population. The KLA's war intensified particularly after the heroic battle in Prekaz of the Jashari family, led by Adem Jashari.
- The Serb occupying force put in motion a powerful military, police and propaganda machinery, not only against the KLA but also against the civilian population, a consequence of which were the terrifying scenes of barbarism of bloody squadrons, the killings and massacres of innocent and powerless people, the burning of homes, mass imprisonments etc. From January until December of 1998 more than 2000 Albanians were killed and this number does not include the large number of the missing, while the number of those displaced was 430 000, the vast majority of them within Kosovo. The Yugoslav Army violently expelled from Kosovo more than one million Albanians. During the NATO bombing campaign alone, the Serbian army killed around 15 000 Albanians. More than 3000 Albanians were lost without trace, while 5000 remained captive in Serbia. More than 1500 KLA soldiers fell as martyrs for Kosovo's freedom.
- The peaceful policy and the KLA fight had their own results. The war of the KLA entered a new phase after the Reçak massacre and the failure of the Rambouillet talks. In order to stop the explosion of Serbian crimes against the Albanians, there was military intervention by the international community. After three months of NATO's bombing and ongoing campaigns by the KLA, the Yugoslav Army was forced to withdraw from Kosovo. Along with the KLA units, now NATO forces entered Kosovo. The UN established a civilian authority and NATO a military one. The KLA was transformed into the KPC.⁵⁰

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50 Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 5*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 99-106; Rexhepi, Fehmi. *Historia 9*. Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 62-71, 76-78; Bajraktari, Jusuf, Fehmi Rexhepi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 10*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2011, pages 199-207; Rexhepi, Fehmi and Frashër Demaj. *Historia 11*. Prishtina: Libri Shkollor, 2013, pages 211-221.

The core of the narrative in the **textbooks of Albania** is as follows:

- The situation deteriorated for the Albanians of Kosovo when Slobodan Milošević appeared in Serbian politics. He began to substitute his people within the Kosovo leadership which caused new mass protests. Milošević's second step was the change of the 1974 constitution. On 23 March 1989 the Kosovo Assembly, surrounded by tanks, changed the 1974 constitution, placing Kosovo under Serbia's authority. Following this, the Kosovo Assembly was closed and all institutions once again filled with Serbian employees. This brought a new wave of protests. The miners went on strike to regain their rights.
- In December 1989 the Democratic League of Kosovo (in Albanian, 'Lidhja Demokratike e Kosovës', 'LDK') was formed, headed by writer Ibrahim Rugova whose aim was organising peaceful resistance by the Albanians and the internationalisation of the Kosovo issue. Other parties were also formed. On 2 July 1990 the Kosovo Assembly announced their Constitutional Declaration, according to which Kosovo gained the status of a republic within the Yugoslav federation. On 7 September 1990 the Kosovo Constitution was declared, and a few days later a referendum was announced to approve the Republic, where 90% of the population voted in favour of the declaration of a Republic. Parliamentary and presidential elections were announced and a government was created. Serbia did not accept these decisions and increased their violence which became a genocide in Kosovo.
- Alongside the peaceful wing, in the middle of the 1990s a military wing also appeared: the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) with general commander Adem Jashari, who fought to defend his country against the Serbian army who were committing massacres against the civilian population. Many Kosovo Albanians were forced to leave their homes to escape Serb massacres. In the spring and summer of 1998 the KLA brought part of Kosovo under its control. During the summer of 1998 the Serbian army regained power over these parts of Kosovo, carrying out bloody reprisals against the civilian population. Although a ceasefire was announced and it was promised that some troops would be withdrawn from Kosovo, on 15 January 1999 Serb troops in Reçak massacred 45 Kosovar Albanians.
- Representatives of Kosovo and Serbia were brought together at a conference at Rambouillet, near Paris, to discuss a solution for the crisis. An agreement was signed only by the Albanian delegation. According to this agreement, Kosovo remained part of Yugoslavia, in which it would enjoy 'substantial autonomy' while the issue of independence would be discussed three years later. Serb forces began attacks of

ethnic cleansing in which around one million Albanians left Kosovo, and were given shelter in Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro and other European countries. After this act NATO bombed Serbia and forced it to withdraw from Kosovo. Kosovo was placed under UN administration in accordance with Resolution 1244. NATO troops had responsibility for the demilitarisation of the KLA, and creating conditions for the return of refugees etc. Albanians returned to their homeland.⁵¹

The core of the **Serbian textbooks** is as follows:

- There is nothing about civil resistance at the end of the 1980s in Kosovo.
- Nor about civil resistance during the 1990s in Kosovo.
- As for armed resistance during 1998 and 1999, they say that the daily acts of armed Albanian terrorist groups declaring themselves the Kosovo Liberation Army, their ransacking and confrontations with the forces of order, in which more civilians fell, caused a marked deterioration in the situation in Kosovo.
- Eventually Western countries got involved, giving open support to the Albanians. After the unsuccessful talks at Rambouillet and Paris and the refusal of the Serbian group to sign the ultimatum demands for the withdrawal of the army and police from Kosovo in February 1999 led to NATO aggression which lasted from 24 March 1999 to 10 June 1999. Around 1200-2500 civilians died, of whom 88 were children, while around 5000 people were wounded. Significant material damage was caused and this has unofficially been assessed at 30 billion dollars. Other sources estimate it to be around 100 billion dollars. In the FRY NATO dropped more than 23 000 bombs and missiles and during the bombing hit 7643 houses, around 300 schools, 53 hospitals and 50 churches and monuments. After 78 days of uninterrupted bombing, the army and the police withdrew from Kosovo. According to the terms of the Kumanova Agreement of 9 June 1999, the army had to withdraw five kilometres into its own territory from the administrative border with Kosovo (the safety cordon). The UN Security Council agreed Resolution 1244 on Kosovo, with which the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia was guaranteed. From the moment that NATO forces entered into Kosovo several hundred Serb civilians were killed and more than a thousand people were kidnapped. More than 220 000 Serb and other non-Albanian civilians left Kosovo. Jiri Dinstbir, the UN's special rapporteur for human rights in the former

51 Dërguti, Menduh, Sonila Boçi and Ledia Dushku. *Historia 9*. Tirana: Botime Shkolllore Albas, 2013, pages 135-136; Dërguti, Menduh, Ledia Dushku, Ferit Duka and Sonila Boçi. *Historia 12*. Tirana: Botime Shkolllore Albas, 2013, pages 139, 152-153.

Yugoslavia, said in his report for the UN Secretary General that ethnic cleansing of Serbs was occurring in Kosovo in front of the UN and KFOR. In February 2000 the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia sent a letter to the UN Security Council where it made accusations about the UN mission in Kosmet because of the serious situation of the breaches of Resolution 1244, claiming that from the arrival of KFOR 4249 terrorist attacks had been carried out, 899 people killed, 784 people wounded and 834 people kidnapped. In May 1999 the Prosecutor of the Hague Tribunal, Louise Arbour, filed charges against FRY President Slobodan Milošević, the President of Serbia, Milan Milutinović, the deputy president of the federal government, Nikola Šainović, the Chief of the General Staff of the Yugoslav army, General Dragolub Ojdanić and the Minister of Internal Affairs, Vlačka Stojilković. Five million dollars were offered for information leading to the arrest of Slobodan Milošević, Radovan Karadžić and Ratko Mladić. On 1 April 2001 Milošević was arrested and on 28 June 2001 he was extradited to the Hague. He died 2006 in the Hague Tribunal prison.⁵²

In the **Montenegro textbooks** the core of the description is as follows:

- In Autumn 1986 a programme was set out that was known as the Memorandum of the Academy of Arts and Sciences of Serbia. It emphasised the union of all Serbs in a national state, or life in a centralised Yugoslavia, as the interest of the Serbian people.
- Serbia's state organisation was also changed. In March 1989 the autonomy of the provinces was withdrawn, and the Kosovo Assembly dismissed.
- The new focus of war became Kosovo. After the loss of autonomy the majority Albanian population refused to recognise Serbia's state power and created its own parallel institutions.
- Conflicts between the Albanians and the police and the army became ever more common and turned into an uprising. The international community got involved, intervening politically in favour of the Albanians. After the failure of talks at Rambouillet came further intervention in military form, by NATO. During the bombing of the FRY which lasted a few months (March-June 1999), Serbia suffered losses of its people and huge destruction of economic, military and communication sites. According to the provisions of the peace Agreement, international military forces were established in Kosovo. In the presidential elections in the FRY in

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 52 Đurić, Đorđe and Momčilo Pavlović. *Istorija 3*. Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2010, pages 251-253 Đurić, Đorđe and Momčilo Pavlović. *Istorija 8*. Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2010, pages 186-187.

September 2000 the rule of Slobodan Milošević came to an end. The new Serbian government sent Milošević to the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague⁵³

The **Macedonian textbooks** make no reference to Kosovo during the 'nineties.

Summary

At the end of 1988 hundreds of thousands of Albanians protested in Kosovo against the withdrawal of Kosovo's autonomy from Slobodan Milošević's Serbia. The Kosovo textbooks do not make clear that the protesters opposed the change in Kosovo's Communist leadership. Likewise, the strike by the Kosovo miners, who in 1989 blocked themselves in for ten days in the mine with their main demand being against the fall of Kosovo's autonomy, is presented in these textbooks without their demands for 'brotherhood and unity and the right path of Tito'. These protests and strikes are not represented at all in the Serbian and Montenegrin textbooks, while in the Albania textbooks they are presented briefly as strikes for the reestablishment of Albanians' rights. After these strikes and protests an extraordinary situation was announced and hundreds of intellectuals, professors and leaders of social enterprises were arrested. These arrests are mentioned only in the Kosovo textbooks, which don't give any details of the arrest and trial also of the former political leader of the Albanians in Kosovo, Azem Vllasi, who was released from prison after almost a year.

Despite these protests and strikes by the Albanians of Kosovo, Serbia completed the process of suppressing Kosovo's autonomy when, on 23 March 1989, the Kosovo Assembly, with an Albanian majority, approved this. The Serbian textbooks don't mention this at all while those of Montenegro mention it extremely briefly. The textbooks of Kosovo and of Albania say that the Kosovo Assembly building was surrounded by Serb army and police, but these textbooks not only fail to mention that the assembly had an Albanian majority but also don't say that ten Albanian deputies of the Kosovo Assembly voted against the withdrawal of autonomy of 1974. Some months after the suppression of Kosovo's autonomy, the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) was formed and this, under the leadership of Ibrahim Rugova, soon became undoubtedly the largest political party leading Kosovo. None of the textbooks say that initially its policy platform was one of autonomy.

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53 Burzanović, Slavko and Jasmina Gjorgjević. *Historia 9*. Podgorica: Unit for textbooks and learning materials, 2008, pages 128, 129, 131 and 132; Rastoder, Sherbo, Radoje Pajović and Zvezdan Folić. *Historia 4*. Podgorica: Unit for textbooks and learning materials, 2009, pages 254-256.

In March and April 1990, thousands of Kosovan pupils were sent to hospital straight from school because of stomach ache, headache and vomiting from, as was said at the time, mass poisoning of Albanian children. Later on the basis of analyses of blood and urine a United Nations toxicology expert came to the conclusion that sarin and tabun had been present. In 1995 it was made public that the Yugoslav Army had produced sarin. Nevertheless, this is not mentioned in the textbooks of Serbia and Montenegro, while in the Albanian textbooks a picture is given of '...mass poisoning of Kosovan pupils by the Serbs' while the Kosovo textbooks say that one of the severe forms of police oppression was '...the poisoning of over 7000 pupils and students with chemical weapons.' However, none of these textbooks mentioned that in some parts of Kosovo dozens of attacks occurred against local Serbs by Albanians who believed that their children had been poisoned by the Serb authorities in Kosovo.

On 2 July 1990, in front of the Kosovo Assembly building in Prishtina, the deputies of the Kosovo Assembly, supported by the LDK, declared Kosovo as a republic **within Yugoslavia**. After this declaration Serbia suppressed all Kosovo's legislative, executive and judicial institutions; the vast majority of Albanians in work were let go from their jobs; the television, radio, newspapers, hospitals, factories were closed and Albanian students and teachers were forbidden from using the UP premises. After two months, on 7 September 1990, the Kosovo Assembly declared the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo **within Yugoslavia**, and on 26-30 September 1991 a referendum was organised for the recognition of Kosovo as a sovereign and independent state **with the right to join with Yugoslavia**. The textbooks of Serbia and Montenegro don't mention these developments at all; those of Albania mention them partially and inaccurately and those of Kosovo give a more accurate presentation of the declaration of Kosovo as a republic within Yugoslavia. As for the Kosovo Constitution, neither the textbooks of Kosovo nor those of Albania mention that this, too, was a constitution for Kosovo as a republic **within Yugoslavia**. Likewise, nowhere do these textbooks say that immediately after the act of declaring this constitution, the majority of the Assembly deputies fled from Kosovo. The textbooks of Kosovo and Albania present the referendum as a referendum on Kosovo as a sovereign and independent state, without mentioning **the right to join Yugoslavia**. On 19 October 1991 the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo changed the constitution and removed all connection with the state of Yugoslavia but this is not mentioned in the textbooks of Serbia and Montenegro, nor of Kosovo or Albania.

In this period, under the leadership of the LDK a parallel system was created in various areas: education, health, finance, media, culture and sport; presidential and parliamentary elections were organised and in the diplomatic sphere there was lobbying for the internationalisation of the Kosovo issue. This is not

mentioned in the Serbian textbooks and those of Montenegro say only that ‘... after the withdrawal of autonomy the majority Albanian population refused to recognise the state authority of Serbia and created its own parallel institutions.’ The Albanian textbooks mention only the parliamentary and presidential elections, but not the parallel system in the abovementioned areas, while this parallel system is given space in the Kosovo textbooks. They mention the suppression by Serbia of all Kosovo’s legislative, executive and judicial institutions; the sacking of the vast majority of employed Albanians; the closing of television, radio, newspapers, hospitals, factories; the prevention of Albanian students and teachers from using UP premises, and the creation of a parallel system in various areas: education, health, finance, media, culture and sport, and the organisation of presidential and parliamentary elections. These are mentioned partially in the Albanian textbooks while they are not mentioned at all in the Serbian and Montenegrin textbooks.

Until the middle of the 1990s there was no opposition to **passive and peaceful resistance**, led by the LDK under Ibrahim Rugova. At this time, Adem Demaçi, who had suffered 28 years in Tito’s Yugoslav prisons because of his work for the union of the Albanian lands under Yugoslavia with Albania, was included in the Parliamentary Party of Kosovo (PPK) in order to carry out **active peaceful resistance**. This was because, according to him, in Kosovo a class of people was being born who were unhappy with the policy of **passive and peaceful resistance** and were demanding an armed solution. This division in Kosovo’s politics is not represented in any country’s textbooks. Demaçi did not achieve his aim for **active peaceful resistance**. In September 1996, through the mediation of the Sant’Egidio Community, Ibrahim Rugova signed an agreement with Slobodan Milošević for the return of Albanian pupils and students to school and university buildings which had been taken over by Serbian state institutions. This doesn’t feature in any country’s textbooks either.

The Serbian/ Yugoslav parties to the agreement did not keep their word and so on 1 October 1997 the students of UP organised protests for the Albanians’ return to classes in UP buildings. These protests are included only in the Kosovo textbooks, where the **repression of the Serb regime** is called ‘Serb repression’; the **protests of the students**, who were joined by many Albanian citizens, are called ‘protests by the population and by students’; while the declared aim of the student protests, their **return to university buildings**, is not mentioned anywhere. This presentation could create the impression that these protests were organised for the liberation and independence of Kosovo from Serbia.

The human rights abuses carried out by the Serbian regime against Kosovo’s Albanians during the 1990s are presented in the Kosovo textbooks as **massacres** by the Serb regime **across** Kosovo which ‘...encouraged the emergence of the KLA for the protection of the Kosovo population.’ In the Albanian textbooks

these abuses are presented as **genocide** while the justification for the emergence and the aims of the KLA is the same as in the Kosovo textbooks. The textbooks of Serbia and Montenegro give no evidence of these abuses, and the Serbian textbooks present the deterioration of the situation in Kosovo as a consequence of the ‘...pillaging and confrontations between Albanian terrorist groups, declaring themselves to be the Kosovo Liberation Army, and the forces of order, affecting ever more civilians,’ but they don’t give details of the ethnicity of these civilians. The Montenegro textbooks say only that ‘...conflicts between the Albanians and the police and the army became ever more common and turned into an uprising.’

The division between the peaceful and military wings of Kosovo politics is not mentioned in the textbooks of any country, and what also goes unmentioned are the three forms of a political and military vision of war in Kosovo: a) the vision of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Kosovo (in Albanian, ‘Forcat e Armatosura të Republikës së Kosovës - **FARK**’), founded by the Ministry of Defence of the government of the Republic of Kosovo, which was in favour of war directed by professional officers; b) the vision of the National Movement for the Liberation of Kosovo (in Albanian ‘Lëvizja Kombëtare për Çlirimin e Kosovës - **LKÇK**’), formed mainly by former political prisoners, who envisaged the creation of a wide political and military front for organising a general armed uprising, which would include all political and military groups whose aim was the liberation of Kosovo from Serbia; and c) the vision of the Kosovo Liberation Army, **the KLA**, created by the People’s Movement of Kosovo (in Albanian ‘Lëvizja Popullore e Kosovës - **LPK**’), who preferred guerrilla warfare with the aim of provoking military intervention by NATO against Serb forces. The absence of these concepts of the three elements means there is also an absence of data on the tensions and frictions between them.

The textbooks present only the crimes of the ‘other side’, offering labels instead of facts and arguments for the crimes. For example, in the textbooks of Serbia and Montenegro there is no mention of a single Albanian killed by the Serb/ Yugoslav forces during the armed conflict in Kosovo, while in all the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania there is no mention of any Serb killed by KLA or NATO forces during or after the armed conflict. The Kosovan and Serbian textbooks also exaggerate the crimes of the ‘other side’ and leave space for misinterpretation. The Serbian textbooks refer to a letter from the FRY sent to the UN Security Council in February 2000 which said that from the moment that NATO forces entered Kosovo ‘... 899 people have been killed and 834 people have been kidnapped’ but it does not give these people’s ethnicity or the fate of the people who were kidnapped. The Human Rights Fund (HRF) with its headquarters in Belgrade notes 1123 Serb civilians killed in that period (January 1998 to December 1999), of whom 786 were killed after NATO troops

arrived (June 1999 – December 1999). The number of civilians killed by NATO is not given at all in the Kosovo and Albania textbooks, while in the Serbian textbooks it is at least doubled and it does not give evidence that the majority of these killings happened in Kosovo.

The Kosovo textbooks, on the other hand, say that during the armed conflict in Kosovo, only in the period from January-December 1998 ‘...more than 2000 Albanians were killed, not including a very large number of missing.’ But in this period the multi-volume publication, the **Kosovo Memory Book 1998 - 2000** of the HRF, records 1660 Albanians killed (including 678 KLA soldiers) and 296 Serbs (including 167 members of the Yugoslav Army and the Ministry of Internal Affairs). According to the Kosovo textbooks, in the period of the NATO bombings (24 March to 10 June 1999) ‘... the Serbian army killed around 15 000 Albanians.’ The **Kosovo Memory Book 1998-2000** gives a total figure of 7864 Albanian civilians killed in the period January 1998 – December 2000, which includes the 78 days of NATO’s bombing. Thus the number of those killed has been doubled by the Kosovo textbooks, and no source is given for their data.

More or less the same thing as in the presentation of the killings can be seen in the presentation of deportations/ movements of people. The Kosovan and Albanian textbooks do not note the number of Serbs and other non-Albanians who moved from Kosovo after the arrival of KFOR, while the Serbian textbooks give this number as over 220 000 and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) gives it as 210 000. In the same way, the textbooks of Serbia and Montenegro do not report the deportation of Albanians from Kosovo during the NATO bombing which, according to UNHCR, included as many as 862 979 people. In the Kosovan textbooks this number is **more than** a million Albanians while in the Albanian textbooks it is **around** one million Albanians.

The Kosovan textbooks describe the crimes by Serb forces against Albanians during the war in Kosovo as ‘**genocide**’. Instead of the definition from the UN Convention on the prevention and prosecution of the crime of genocide, or arguments as to whether Kosovo experienced a **genocide**, these textbooks offer phrases such as ‘... the terrifying scenes of barbarism of the bloody squadrons.’ Furthermore, by describing the crimes of Serb forces in Kosovo as **genocide**, the authors of the Kosovan textbooks ignore the opinion of the Supreme Court of Kosovo, according to whom the actions of the Serbian regime under the rule of Slobodan Milošević can be described more as **crimes against humanity** than as **genocide**.

As stated above, the textbooks of Serbia and Montenegro do not present the crimes of Serb forces against Kosovo’s Albanians, but they give the information that the International Tribunal for war crimes in the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) had filed charges against the main political and military leaders of the FRY and

Serbia, although without giving the details of the accusations against them. On the other hand, the textbooks of Kosovo and Albania not only do not reflect the crimes committed by the KLA against Serbs and other non-Albanians during and after the armed conflict in Kosovo, but do not mention the ICTY charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity filed against the two main commanders of the KLA. The crimes committed by the KLA against Serbs and other non-Albanians **during** the armed conflict in Kosovo are not included at all in the Serbian textbooks. As for the crimes of the KLA, these textbooks give information **only** about crimes committed **after** the armed conflict and the entry of KFOR troops in Kosovo. From these textbooks it appears that **during** the armed conflict in Kosovo only NATO committed crimes.

During the 78 days of NATO's bombing of the FRY, according to the Serbian textbooks '... between 1200 and 2500 civilians were killed', but in the table given in these textbooks for civilian losses from the NATO bombing, there is information on only 347 civilians killed. This table mentions the Albanian ethnicity of only 70 civilians killed by NATO forces near Gjakova, while for the 50 civilians killed in the village of Luzhan near Podujeva, 20 near Peja and 87 in the village of Korisha near Prizren, their Albanian ethnicity is not noted anywhere. Likewise, this table does not mention anywhere the attack of NATO forces on the Dubrava Prison where, according to HLC 112 Albanian prisoners were killed. It could be that this attack is not included in the table because only 29 of the prisoners of Dubrava prison were killed by NATO bombs on 19 and 20 May 1999 while the others, again according to HLC, were executed by Serb forces on 21 and 23 May 1999. As for the killings of civilians by NATO, a report by the organisation Human Rights Watch (HRW), based on field research, says that during the bombing of FRY territory NATO killed a minimum of 489 and a maximum of 528 innocent civilians. According to HRW the majority of these innocent civilians were killed in Kosovan territory and the number of these is between 279 and 318 people. Thus the number of civilians killed by NATO has at least been doubled in the Serbian textbooks, while in the Albanian and Kosovan textbooks it is not noted at all.

Before the Rambouillet Conference, one of the most important political events was the meeting in May 1998 of a delegation from Kosovo, represented by Ibrahim Rugova, with Slobodan Milošević, where the parties agreed to a peaceful solution to the Kosovo issue. This is not presented in any of the textbooks of these countries. Certainly one of the most important moments during the **armed conflict** in Kosovo was also the conference organised in Rambouillet in France which is represented very briefly and variously in the textbooks of Kosovo, Albania, Serbia and Montenegro. They do not, however, give reasons for the failure of these talks, nor do they give the essence of the document called the **Interim Agreement for Peace and Self-Government**, signed in Paris on 18 March 1999 by the Albanian representatives of Kosovo at the conference and the

mediators Christopher Hill (USA) and Wolfgang Petritsch (EU), but refused by Serbia/ FRY and the mediator Boris Majorski (Russia).

The authors of these textbooks do not say that this document, whose implementation was guaranteed by 28 000 NATO troops in Kosovo, envisaged for Kosovo **substantial autonomy** within the sovereignty and territorial integrity of FRY. Likewise, no mention is made of the terms of this document for the demilitarisation of the KLA or that 2500 police and 1500 FRY soldiers would remain within Kosovan territory. The Serbian textbooks say that ‘... NATO aggression occurred after the Serbian parties at Rambouillet in Paris refused to sign the ultimatum demands for the withdrawal of the army and police from Kosovo’. For Serbian pupils the impression is thus created that ‘the Western countries who got involved, giving open support to the Albanians’ had as their aim the removal of Serbia from Kosovo.

With the information that they give, the Kosovan textbooks create the impression that the KLA did not give up on its political position. As well as not mentioning the KLA representatives signing up to **substantial autonomy** for Kosovo, for the Kosovan textbooks the political platform for the KLA’s war was freedom and the independence of Kosovo. Thus it is not shown anywhere that this platform was initially – as the oath of KLA soldiers said – ‘...for the liberation and unification of the conquered lands of Albania’.

Meanwhile the Albanian textbooks mention the substantial autonomy that Kosovo would enjoy within the FRY on the basis of the **Interim Agreement for Peace and Self-government** document but they add that ‘the issue of Kosovo’s independence would be discussed after three years.’ In fact this document does not mention independence anywhere, but has a phrase which is not very clear: ‘...after three years an international meeting will be called to determine a mechanism for a final solution for Kosovo, on the basis of the will of the people, the opinions of the relevant authorities, the efforts of each party in relation to the implementation of this agreement and the Final Helsinki Act...’. As well as not specifying anywhere which people it is whose will is to be considered, together with the ‘will of the people’ catchphrase the factors include support from the Final Helsinki Act, and in accordance with this, international borders can be changed only by agreement of the two parties.

After Rambouillet, the most important thing during the war in Kosovo was undoubtedly the time of the NATO bombings against Serbian and Yugoslav military and police targets which, according to the Serbian textbooks, was NATO **aggression** which took place after the Serbian/ Yugoslav party refused to withdraw military and police personnel from Kosovo. As was mentioned above, the international community did not demand the withdrawal of **all** Serbian/

Yugoslav military and police from Kosovo and thus this presentation in the Serbian textbooks seems to aim to present Serbia as 'the victim of the Western countries who openly sided with the Albanians.' On the other hand, the Albanian textbooks say that initially around a million Albanians were expelled from Kosovo and later '...NATO's military forces bombed Serbia and forced it to withdraw from Kosovo'. However, as was mentioned above, according to UNHCR in the period 24 March – 10 June 1999, which is the period when the NATO bombings took place, Serbian forces deported 862 979 people from Kosovo and committed the majority of the killings of Kosovo Albanian civilians.

For the Kosovan textbooks, NATO intervened militarily '... to stop the explosion of crimes which Serbia was committing against Albanians'. According to these textbooks, Kosovo was liberated from Serbia '...after the successful liberation war of the KLA and the **entry** of NATO troops in June 1999'. If the KLA wasn't in a position to stop the explosion of crimes which Serbia was committing against Albanians and NATO had to intervene militarily it is hard to understand that Kosovo was liberated **after the successful KLA war** and the **entry** of NATO troops. Likewise, the Kosovan textbooks say that '... **as well as** the KLA war units, NATO forces called KFOR **also** entered Kosovo.' It is as if we are left to understand that the KLA forces weren't even in Kosovo but that they entered like the NATO troops, but the Kosovo textbooks do not say from where and when they entered.

Some of the Kosovan textbooks also say that the Serbian/ Yugoslav party withdrew from Kosovan territory as a consequence of '...the NATO bombing and the ongoing KLA campaign.' The Technical Military Agreement for the withdrawal of the Serbian/ Yugoslav forces from Kosovo, signed on 9 June 1999 in Kumanova, was **only** between NATO and the FRY, and more specifically Serbia. The authors of the Kosovan textbooks, like those of the Albanian textbooks, do not specify that the KLA was not part of this important agreement for ending armed conflict in Kosovo. As well forcing Serbian/ Yugoslav forces to withdraw from Kosovo it also guaranteed something which is again not mentioned in these textbooks – that a limited number of these forces (**hundreds, not thousands**) could return to Kosovo. This guarantee does not feature in the textbooks of Serbia or Montenegro either.

Likewise, none of the historical accounts say anywhere that initially the aim of NATO was not to withdraw all Serbian/ Yugoslav military and police from Kosovo, but it became so on 3 June 1999, a few days before the end of the bombing, when the President of the FRY, Slobodan Milošević, accepted the document drafted by Strobe Talbott (USA), Martti Ahtisaari (EU) and Victor Chernomyrdin (Russia) which demanded the withdrawal of all FRY/ Serbian police, military and paramilitary forces from Kosovo. This was because only in this way could the refugees feel safe to return to their homes and NATO troops

were established in a safe environment with no chance for any conflict with those of Serbia/ FRY, nor for the latter with the returning population.

The demilitarisation and transformation of the KLA is also presented in the Kosovan textbooks only as a transformation of the KLA into the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) ‘... on the basis of an agreement signed in September 1999 between General Agim Çeku, Commander of the KLA, and General Michael Jackson, the Commander of KFOR’. The **Commitment to the Demilitarisation and Transformation of the KLA** document which the Political Director of the KLA, Hashim Thaçi, **offered** to Commander Jackson on 21 June 1999 does not feature anywhere. In this document Hashim Thaçi committed to the KLA’s soldiers being disarmed and integrated into civil society as a civil organisation for emergency intervention, the KPC. According to this document the KLA agreed not to obstruct the return of FRY personnel (in **hundreds, not thousands**) to Kosovo in order for them to carry out specified tasks under authorisation and command from the KFOR commander. In the Albanian textbooks, the disarmament of the KLA is mentioned briefly: ‘... the task of KFOR was to disarm the KLA’ while in the Serbian and Montenegrin books it is not mentioned at all. On the civilian authorities in Kosovo established by the UN, and the military authority established by NATO the Kosovan textbooks offer only data and numbers of troops brought in. Nowhere is there importance given to the aim of the NATO mission in Kosovo for the implementation of Resolution 1244 of the UN Security Council. Likewise there is no specific information about the UN mission in Kosovo, UNMIK, which – in accordance with Resolution 1244 – guaranteed Kosovo temporary international administration under which the Kosovan population enjoyed substantial autonomy within the FRY. The Serbian textbooks do feature the guarantee of the territorial integrity of the FRY in accordance with Resolution 1244⁵⁴.

54 For the miners’ demands: Maliqi, Shkëlzen. *Nyja e Kosovës – as Vllasi as Milošević-i*. Ljubljana: Knjizna zbirka KRT, 1990, page 254; Malcolm, Noel. *Kosovo - A Short History*. London: Pan Macmillan, 2002, pages 334-356; Clark, Howard. *Civil Resistance in Kosovo*. London: Pluto Press, 2000, pages 58, 70-157; Ismajli, Rexhep, Hivzi Islami, Esat Stavileci and Ilaz Ramajli. *Akte të Kuvendit të Republikës së Kosovës – 2 korrik 1990-2 maj 1992*. Prishtina: Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo, 2005, pages 7-8 and 9-41, 98-101, 119 and 141-142; Gashi, Shkëlzen. *Adem Demaçi biografi e pautorizuar*. Prishtina: Rrokullia, 2010, pages 118-140; Kandiç, Nataša. *Libër kujtimi i Kosovës 1978-2000*. Prishtina: Human Rights Fund, 2011, page 457; UNHCR Country Updates – Former Yugoslavia, UN Inter-Agency Humanitarian Situation Report: Kosovo. 65-70; See also: <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e48d9f6.html>; Schabas, William. *Gjenocidi në të Drejtën Ndërkombëtare*. Prishtina: FINNISH-UNHCR Human Rights Support Programme - Kosovo, 2003, page 467; Human Rights Watch. Civilian Deaths in the NATO Air Campaign. Found at: <http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/2000/nato/>; Interim Agreement for Peace and Self-government, Paris, 18 March 1999. Found at: <http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/ramb.htm>; Technical Military Agreement document between the international security force (KFOR) and the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia, Kumanovo, 9 June 1999. Found at: <http://www.nato.int/kosovo/docu/a990609a.htm>; Document drafted by Strobe Talbott (USA), Martti Ahtisaari (EU), Victor Chernomyrdin (Russia) and accepted by the Parliament of Serbia on 3 June 1999. Found at: <http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/peace.htm#plan>; Commitment to the Demilitarisation and Transformation of the KLA. Found at <http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/peace.htm>; Resolution 1244 of the UN Security Council. Found at: <http://www.un.org/Docs/scres/1999/sc99.htm>.

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This report takes an objective look at the way the most important periods of Kosovo's history, from antiquity to the present, are presented in the primary school and high school textbooks of Kosovo, Albania, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. These five countries' textbooks, approved by their respective Ministries of Education, serve as key sources enabling us to identify similarities and differences, but also their historiographical falsifications. Set against these are the statements of international authors on Kosovo from antiquity to the present.

Indirectly, this publication aims to shed light on what kind of neighbourly relations the governments of the five states in question are proposing to the generations whom they are educating with these textbooks. Meanwhile in more explicit ways, and supported by facts, the report aims to reveal the basis for the often contradictory claims among the peoples of Kosovo.



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