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**Melissa Bokovoy**, team leader  
**Momčilo Pavlović**, team leader

Milan Andrejevich  
Marina Blagojević  
**Ferit Duka**  
**Valentina Duka**

**Thomas Emmert**  
**Bernd Fischer**  
**Ranka Gašić**

**Dušan Janjić**  
**Predrag Marković**  
**Besnik Pula**  
**Nebojša Vladislavljević**

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# KOSOVO UNDER AUTONOMY, 1974–1990

◆ Momčilo Pavlović ◆

## Introduction

Ethnic relations are the crucial issue in Kosovo, especially between the Albanians and the Serbs. These groups have not managed to find a suitable and long-lasting political solution to administering Kosovo together. From the time the territory of Kosovo became a part of Serbia and then of Yugoslavia in the early decades of the twentieth century, the Kosovo problem has been seen by some as a problem of continual “status reversal.” Whenever the Serbs administered Kosovo, as they did in the interwar period and from the end of World War II until lately, Kosovo Albanians<sup>1</sup> were discriminated against in political, economic, social, and cultural spheres and then were forced or intimidated into leaving.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, when Albanians were in a position to dominate, usually with the help of foreign troops—Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, Italian, German, Bulgarian, and NATO—the Serbs suffered discrimination and often had to flee from Kosovo (such was the case in both World Wars, as well as today). This idea of status reversal must, however, be examined carefully. Throughout the twentieth century, the period of Albanian ascendancy in Kosovo is very short. Veljko Vujačić observed in 1996:

The turbulent twentieth century has witnessed many reversals of ethnic fortune in the Balkans, with power shifting from one to another group, not the least between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo. On both sides, painful historical memories were reinforced by a constant process of power and status-reversal and conflict over a shared territory. This never-ending cycle of status-reversal can be briefly summarized as follows: Moslem (not Catholic or Orthodox) Albanians were the privileged group under the Ottoman empire (at least relative to Orthodox Serbs); Serbs “came out on top” after the Balkan wars (1912–1913) and the formation of Yugoslavia (1918); the status/power relationship changed in World War Two when a large part of Kosovo became a part of “greater Albania” under the sponsorship of Mussolini’s Italy; in

1945, the Serbs “took over,” albeit under the auspices of communist Yugoslavia and in the name of “brotherhood and unity”; after Kosovo became a fully autonomous province (1974), high Albanian birth rates and the gradual “Albanianization” of the local Communist party once more raised the painful specter of status-reversal (for Serbs); with the advent of Milošević to power, Serbs emerged as the dominant status group for the third time in this century. In each of these cases, the process of status-reversal was accompanied by a revival of unpleasant memories as well as actual instances of persecution which further reinforced them.<sup>3</sup>

The real problem with such an interpretation is that the Kosovo Albanians never held sole state power, nor did Albanians ever have the monopoly on violence.

It has been proven over the course of the last 150 years that symbolically Kosovo has meant different things to Kosovo Albanians and Serbs. It is not that these groups did not want to live together, for there is evidence of peaceful coexistence; rather, the adjoining nation-states of Albania and Serbia sought expansion into this province in their efforts to create a larger, that is “greater,” Albania and Serbia.<sup>4</sup> Such nationalist ideologies and platforms often destabilized relationships because of the threat of armed conflict, either by guerrilla, police, or military action.

Each national group, Serbs and Albanians, based its claims on very controversial arguments and policies. Some Serbs argued that the continuing Albanian drive for an independent Kosovo, more or less intensive at different times, was evident in Albanian disloyalty to the state: rebellions, demonstrations, robbery, and attacks on the Serbs and their property. At the same time, Albanians continuously tried to present their problem as an international one; that is, they tried to make the international community see them as an oppressed minority in Serbia and Yugoslavia. Albanians were quick to point out that in periods of Serb domination the authorities put evident pressure on the Albanians by arresting and harassing them, by making plans for the colonization of Kosovo after World War I, and by changing Kosovo’s ethnic structure to the benefit of the Serbs.

Although living on the same territory and often in the same towns and villages, the Kosovo Serbs and Albanians lived in a sort of apartheid. Notwithstanding some better moments in their relations and examples of cooperation (above all, in the economic sphere), there was no incentive to create a multiethnic society with stable and lasting institutions. However, there was evidence that relations between Serbs and Albanians between 1974 and 1981 were tolerably improving as a result of the ideology and policies of the League of Communists, the personal authority of Tito until his death in 1980, the state’s monopoly of violence, the international position of Yugoslavia, a broad autonomy granted to Kosovo by

the 1974 constitution, and the improving socioeconomic and cultural conditions of the ethnic Albanian population. Nevertheless, these policies were neither successful nor perceived as balanced. A year after Tito's death the Albanian–Serb conflict erupted, and during the 1980s, the largest numbers of political prisoners in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) were Kosovo Albanians. Within a decade the country disintegrated through violent conflict.

The focus of this research centers on the policies of the Serbs in Kosovo, on the dramatis personae, goals, methods, and results of that policy. These policies were, clearly enough, part of the general processes in the Yugoslav federation after Tito's death in 1980. By the end of the 1980s, the disintegration processes accelerated even further, influenced by events abroad, especially in Eastern Europe. We emphasize the political processes in Serbia, which have always had a direct impact on Serb–Albanian relations in Kosovo, especially on the Kosovo Serbs, and on the degree of Kosovo Serb influence on the policies emanating from Belgrade. We also attempt to distinguish facts from interpretation and propaganda and to offer differing opinions on the same events. A reconstruction of events and an analysis of this period will be presented only in general in order to concentrate on the following four major controversies concerning Serb–Albanian relations:

1. The dramatic demographic changes in Kosovo between 1961 and 1981 and the reasons for an increase in the Albanian population from 67.08 percent of the population in 1961 to 77.4 percent of the population in 1981.<sup>5</sup>
2. The demands of the Kosovo Albanians for political and economic equality in the SFRY, the League of Communists of Yugoslavia's (LCY's) response—greater autonomy, constitutional changes, but denial of republican status—and a specific Serbian response based upon what some Serbs perceived to be an ever escalating scale of Albanian demands—a separate republic, secession, and unification with Albania.
3. The reasons and causes of Serbian migration from Kosovo, ranging from economic and familial to escalating violence and intimidation of Serbs by Albanians.
4. The relationship between Kosovo Serbs and Serb nationalist intellectuals and officials of the Milošević regime. As the Kosovo Serbs became more discontented with the changing ethnic composition of Kosovo and the post-1966 twist in interethnic politics, what role did grassroots efforts play in the political struggles in late socialist Yugoslavia?

## Controversy 1: Demographic Changes in Kosovo, 1974–1981

The territory of Kosovo comprised 4.26 percent of the whole territory of Yugoslavia; 7 percent of the Yugoslav population lived there in 1981. In the early 1970s there were 916,168 ethnic Albanians, 228,264 Serbs, 31,555 Montenegrins, and 12,244 ethnic Turks in Kosovo. The Albanians made up 73.7 percent of the population of the region, the Serbs 18.4 percent, the Montenegrins 2.5 percent, and the Turks 1 percent. From 1945 to 1961, the proportion of Serbs in the province remained about 25 percent of the population. Beginning in 1961, the proportion of Serbs in the province fell. During the decades 1961–1971 and 1971–1981 the proportion fell at the same rate of about 5 percent per decade.

The demographic development in Kosovo is one of the most topical and at the same time one of the most delicate questions that researchers are currently facing. The problem lies in the lack of real information about population. The Albanians boycotted the last population census in Serbia of 31 March 1991. Because of that, their number is based on statistical estimates.<sup>6</sup> The previous two censuses of the Federal Secretariat of Information in Kosovo (1971 and 1981) are suspect. According to new analyses, the 1961 census, implemented under the supervision of federal and republican bodies, is the last one that may be considered objective. This census registered 646,805 Albanians and 227,016 Serbs (Table 1).<sup>7</sup>

**Table 1.** Kosovo's population by nationality.

	1948		1953		1961		1971		1981	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Albanians	498,242	68.5	524,559	64.9	646,805	67.2	916,168	73.7	1,226,736	77.4
Serbs	171,911	23.6	189,869	23.5	227,016	23.6	228,264	18.4	209,498	13.2
Montenegrins	28,050	3.9	31,343	3.9	37,588	3.9	31,555	2.5	27,028	1.7
Moslems	9,679	1.3	6,241	.8	8,026	.8	26,357	2.1	58,562	3.7
Romanies	11,230	1.5	11,904	1.5	3,202	.3	14,593	1.2	34,126	2.2
Turks	1,315	.2	34,583	4.3	25,784	2.7	12,244	1	12,513	.8
Croats	5,290	.7	6,203	.8	7,251	.8	8,264	.7	8,717	.6
Yugoslavs	—	—	—	—	5,206	.5	920	.1	2,676	.2
Others	2,103	.3	3,541	.3	3,110	.2	5,328	.3	4,584	.2
Total	727,820		808,141		963,988		1,243,693		1,584,441	

Source: Data from *Statistički Bilten*, no. 727, 1972, 11. Cited in Ruža Petrović and Marina Blagojević, *The Migrations of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo and Metohija: Results of the Survey Conducted in 1985–1986* (Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 1992), 78.

The censuses of 1971 and 1981 were implemented under the supervision of the authorities in Kosovo. In the 1981 census, the cooperation of the republic organs was explicitly rejected with the excuse that the statistical organs of the republic were not competent to undertake the census in Kosovo. Separatist demonstrations took place during the census.

Why did the proportion of Serbs decline in Kosovo? Numerous reasons for this decrease have been cited. Two of the most prevalent are: (1) the birthrate of the Albanian community of Kosovo, 35 per 1,000; and (2) the migration of the Serbs from the region. As Table 1 demonstrates there was a numerical decrease of Serbs as well as a proportional decrease between 1971 and 1981. Controversies arose over the increase in Albanian birthrates and the cultural norms ascribed to these increases; there was also controversy concerning the reasons for the Serb exodus from Kosovo. We will first turn our attention to the Albanian community's birthrates and consider the reasons for Serbian migration in another section below.

In 1979, Kosovo had the highest birthrate in Yugoslavia and in Europe, 26.1 per 100 people, compared to 8.6 for the national Yugoslav average.<sup>8</sup> During the 1980s, the discourse in the media in Serbia concerning the birthrates among Albanian women took on racial overtones. As Julie Mertus and others have noted, the study of higher Albanian birthrates has often been presented as a conscious decision on the part of Albanians to reproduce rapidly in order to change the demographic picture of Kosovo. In this regard, Albanian women are portrayed as baby factories. In fact, the difference can be ascribed to patterns of rural and urban communities, cultural and societal norms and expectations. It must be noted that Albanians are a larger percentage of the rural population in Kosovo. Mertus points out that urban Albanian women and other urban women in Yugoslavia had nearly identical birthrates.<sup>9</sup>

The discussion about birthrates must be framed within a larger discussion about the region's economic position vis-à-vis the other regions of the former Yugoslavia. Kosovo was the poorest and least developed region in Yugoslavia. The more developed republics of Yugoslavia and the region of Vojvodina gave 3 percent of their income for the development of the underdeveloped republics of Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the region of Kosovo. In 1971, Kosovo secured a special status through a mechanism by which its share was increased in the so-called Federation Fund for Inducing a Faster Development of the Underdeveloped Republics and Region of Kosovo. Kosovo received a share of 33.25 percent of this fund from 1971 to 1975, 37.1 percent from 1976 to 1980, and 43.5 percent from 1981 to 1985. The rest went to the other underdeveloped republics. The Republic of Serbia not only contributed to this federation fund but also provided other extra means for inducing the faster development of Kosovo.<sup>10</sup>

Within the party organizations of Yugoslavia and Serbia, Kosovo was seen as a development problem. According to Michael Palairet, “the development gap between Kosovo and the Yugoslav average has widened persistently and significantly. In 1952, Kosovo’s per capita social product was 44 percent of that of Yugoslavia, but by 1988 it was down to 27 percent.”<sup>11</sup> This decline was partly due to the high birthrates, which meant that absolute increase in the province’s income still translated into per capita declines. Palairet noted that much of the early investment in Kosovo went to extracting Kosovo’s mineral resources and ignoring investment in manufacturing and other sectors of the economy. After 1966, the federal government began to pour in resources for job creation in industry. Palairet pointed out that the return on the investment noted above was “abnormally low.” “The official statistics indicate that between 1971 and 1988 each unit of investment generated only 65 percent of the incremental income achieved in Yugoslavia as a whole. Frustration reigned as the money disappeared or appeared in large building projects. Slovenia went so far as to announce well before it declared itself independent that it was cutting its contribution by half.”<sup>12</sup> Kosovo’s poor economic performance is one of the reasons why Serbs chose to migrate to other parts of Yugoslavia.

This poor economic performance translated into high rates of unemployment: 29.1 percent, two and one-half times higher than the official rates in the rest of Yugoslavia. Seventy percent of the unemployed were young people between the ages of 20 and 25. The number of unemployed Albanians and Serbians reflects their proportion of the population. Between 1970 and 1982, the percentage of unemployed Kosovo Albanians rose from 76 percent to 77.6 percent, whereas that of Kosovo Serbs fell from 17.6 percent to 15.1 percent. The fact that Kosovo Albanians had gained greater political clout in Kosovo under the 1974 constitution did not necessarily translate into an advantage in employment in state-run enterprises. Indeed, Serbs and Montenegrins held 30 percent of the jobs in this sector.<sup>13</sup>

## **Controversy 2: Issues Surrounding the Kosovo Albanians and Their Political and Economic Status**

During the Communist period, Albanians and Serbs made contact through politics, that is through the Communist Party and its affiliated organizations, such as the Youth Association, syndicate organizations, the Socialist Association of the Working People, and the Union of Combatant Associations. The slogan “brotherhood and unity” allowed politicians an unlimited space for action and suppression of any sign of nationalism. The Kosovo constitution included the statement that all nations and ethnic groups in Yugoslavia fought against the fascists and formed an inseparable “brotherhood and unity” during the war. The fictive idea of

brotherhood and unity was the unifying principle of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. However, because there were more Serbs and Montenegrins both among Communists before 1941 and among resistance fighters afterward, Kosovo Albanians sometimes equated Communist Party domination with the domination of Serbian Communist officials and Serbian policy.

The period between 1948 and the mid-1960s can be characterized as a time when the Serbian minority in Kosovo dominated the province, symbolized by Aleksandar Ranković's security police's vigorous and at times brutal suppression of Albanian nationalism. During these years a substantial number of Albanians left the province. According to Nurcan Özgür Baklacioglu, "after 1958 the migrations of Albanians between Kosovo and Macedonia were the most significant amongst all other migrations occurring inside ex-Yugoslavia. The difference in minority policies and their applications, as well as the different economic and political conjunctures prevailing in Macedonia and Kosovo after 1946, caused continuous Albanian movement between these two territories."<sup>14</sup>

Shifting political alliances, together with demographic and social factors, altered the landscape by the end of the 1960s. Changes in the political status of Kosovo within Communist Yugoslavia began in the 1940s, and over the course of the next thirty years, the Autonomous Kosovo–Metohija Region (1947) became the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija (1963) and then the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo (1969).

In 1966, Tito and the League of Communists removed Ranković, limited the Serb-dominated UDBA and its anti-Albanian policies in the province, and subsequently sanctioned decentralization by granting more decision-making powers to the republics. What followed was Tito's and the LCY's attempts to reverse the severe discrimination against Albanians in the political, social, and economic life in Kosovo. Nevertheless, the LCY eventually discovered that the Albanians, especially students and intellectuals, were not satisfied with limited gains and wanted to push for greater autonomy; that is, an Albanian language university and recognition by the LCY that Albanians in Communist Yugoslavia should have the same political status as the South Slavs. As we will see, for some this meant the creation of a seventh republic in Kosovo. Ensuing crises in Kosovo, especially in 1968 and 1981, were the result of the LCY's "inability or unwillingness to grant the Albanian population symbolic [or political] equality with the Slav nationalities,"<sup>15</sup> that is, republic status.

During both crises, Kosovo was moving closer to becoming a specific polity as a result of changes to the constitution of 1963 and then the adoption of a new constitution in 1974 that granted both Kosovo and Vojvodina status as "autonomous provinces" of Serbia. This meant that the provincial elites could forge direct links with federal (*federativna*) authorities and bypass republican authorities. In effect, the federal constitution of 1974 gave Kosovo de facto republican



status, but not de jure status. As Albanian political leader Azem Vllasi observed, “Kosovo functioned as a republic in the federal state of Yugoslavia; we were not [a republic] only in name.”<sup>16</sup> This de facto equality increased the desire of ethnic Albanians to fight for all forms of political, economic, social, and cultural equality in Kosovo.

Immediately after 1974, political relations between Kosovo’s Serbs and Albanians seemed stable, at least on the surface. However, vivid social and cultural contrasts between the rich and the poor, between tradition and modernity, between new trends and the way of life from the previous century were evident. Party institutions dominated political discourse full of slogans and ideology. In reality, these ethnic communities lived apart but in peace, although there were, of course, some minor incidents. The parallel lives of the Serbs and the Albanians in Kosovo, which had lasted for centuries, continued during the Communist period as a result of the LCY’s policy of creating and maintaining separate institutions on the basis of ethnicity due to fears that the Serbs would dominate. For example, the lectures at the university were held separately in Serbian and in Albanian.

Controversy revolves around the issue of whether or not the desired goal of the Kosovo Albanians was in fact republican status or secession. Kosovo Serbs and Belgrade believed that Kosovo Albanians would continue to seek greater and greater concessions. Many argued that after 1968, the Albanians in Kosovo were not only striving for some significant improvement of their status, but also for secession of Kosovo from Yugoslavia. Vladimir Matić in a December 2003 report for the Public International Law and Policy Group titled “Unbreakable Bond: Serbs and Kosovo” noted the development of a unified and well-connected Albanian elite as a result of the establishment of the University of Priština. This elite pushed for republican status for Kosovo, “part of which was the right to secede. [This desire was portrayed] as separatist in Belgrade and was met by a re-awakening of Serbian nationalism.”<sup>17</sup>

### *The Constitution of 1974 and Some Political Results*

The process of reorganizing the Yugoslav federation, which started in the late 1960s, reached its climax in the 1974 constitution. For the first time, republics and even the autonomous provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo had their own constitutions. Many authors believe that the 1974 constitution gave to the republics and provinces prerogatives of the federal state and thus endangered that state. Some even want to trace the destruction of the country and the savage civil war to the crises that resulted from the constitutional changes.<sup>18</sup> In the 1974 constitution there are no articles concerning autonomous provinces per se (save Articles 1 and 4), but nevertheless the position of a province had always been treated in practice as equal to that of the republics. By this constitution, the provinces did in fact be-

come independent of Serbia, whereas the republic of Serbia was at the same time dependent on its provinces. Serbia was a kind of federation within a federation.

Thus the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo (SAP Kosovo), until 1968 known as Kosovo and Metohija, obtained a constitution in 1974 for the first time, according to which it had a right to regulate independently its social and economic affairs and its political bodies. The constitution defined the Kosovo Assembly as the highest institution of self-management and the highest authority of the province. The assembly was constituted by the Council of Associated Labor (ninety delegates), Council of Municipalities (fifty delegates), and the Socio-Political Council (fifty delegates).

According to the constitution, the Assembly of SAP Kosovo had the power to change the constitution of SAP Kosovo, had a vote in the event of changes to the federal constitution or to the constitution of Serbia, and had the power to decide on other crucial questions regarding the political, social, and cultural development of the region.<sup>19</sup> It also had the power to issue laws and budgets, to appoint and recall the president and the members of the executive council of the SAP Kosovo Assembly, the judges of the Constitutional Court of Kosovo, the judges of the Supreme Court of Kosovo, secretaries of the region, and other officials in Kosovo institutions. It controlled the executive council and other administration bodies of the province.

The nine-member presidency of SAP Kosovo was another important institution of the region, constituted in 1974. The presidency was a representative of the province, and it had “a right and obligation to initiate debate on important questions for the social and political life of the province” in the SAP Kosovo Assembly and in other institutions. These important questions included, above all, those related to the “equality of the nations and national groups.” The presidency had to perform special tasks in the sphere of “national defense,” and in the event of war, it had to lead the “people’s resistance” in the region. Other institutions of the region (executive council of the SAP Kosovo Assembly, Constitutional Court, Supreme Court, and other judicial bodies) basically performed the same functions as their counterparts in Serbia and the Yugoslav federation.

The autonomous provinces had a special status in the Republic of Serbia. They had the right to independently issue laws and constitutions within their jurisdiction, provided they were not in opposition to the federal constitution and federal laws. On the other hand, the Republic of Serbia could only issue a constitution with the approval of provincial assemblies, and any laws it passed were only valid for the territory of Serbia outside the provinces. This territory was not defined either by the constitution or by the laws, although the term itself had been used since World War II. The provinces were represented in the federal institutions as equals, and their representatives often voted differently from those of the Republic of Serbia. Besides, it often happened that the representatives of

Slovenia and Croatia seconded the position of their colleagues from the autonomous provinces.<sup>20</sup> However, when the votes of the provinces were in accordance with those of Serbia, other republics objected to what amounted to Serbia's having three votes in federal institutions. Some politicians from Serbia responded by stressing that they had nothing against other republics' forming autonomous provinces on their own territory in order to obtain more votes. Therefore, from 1974 onward, Kosovo had almost all the prerogatives of other federal units.

Until the early 1990s, the Kosovo Albanians participated in the institutions of the federation and the Republic of Serbia. From 1978 until 1988 they held, as representatives of SAP Kosovo, the following posts in federal institutions:

- 1978        Sinan Hasani, vice president of the SFRY assembly
- 1979        Fadilj Hoxha, vice president of the presidency of the SFRY
- 1983        Aslan Fazlija, president of the federal council of the SFRY assembly
- 1984        Ali Shukrija, president of the CK SKJ presidency
- 1985        Ilijaz Kurteshi, president of the SFRY assembly
- 1985        Sinan Hasani, vice president of the SFRY presidency
- 1986        Sinan Hasani, president of the SFRY presidency
- 1986        Hashim Redxepi, president of the presidium of the Union of Yugoslav Socialist Youth
- 1988        Kazazi Abaz, president of the council of republics and provinces of the SFRY assembly

Moreover, ethnic Albanians have represented Yugoslavia in fifteen countries as ambassadors. Three of them held the post of the assistant federal secretary for foreign affairs; three of them were general consuls; one of them was a director of a culture information center; and seven of them were heads of administration bodies and counselors in the federal foreign office. Moreover, they held important posts in defense: four of them were generals of the Yugoslav army; one of them was assistant federal secretary for defense; and two of them were commanders of the territorial defense of SAP Kosovo. They were also represented in

the institutions of Serbia, Macedonia, and Montenegro, whereas in Kosovo they held the majority of posts.

In summary, from 1974 to 1988, we find ethnic Albanians holding a number of leadership positions in the federation, some republics, and SAP Kosovo (Table 2). For the first two decades after the war, Communists of Serbian and Montenegrin ethnic origin prevailed in party leadership and in other institutions, in large measure because they had fought for the Communist resistance. By the late 1960s ethnic Albanians, already predominant in numbers, were steadily increasing their role in the politics and social life of the province but still not in direct proportion to their share of the population. Of the 47,791 Communists in Kosovo in 1973, 29,507 (61.7 percent) were ethnic Albanians, whereas 12,515 (26.2 percent) were Serbs and 3,824 (8.0 percent) Montenegrins. Ethnic Albanians still felt that they were being treated unequally because their representation in the League of Communists had not yet reached the percentage of Albanians in the total Kosovo population (73 percent in the 1971 census), whereas the Serbs constituted 26.2 percent of the League of Communists despite comprising only 18.3 percent of the total population.

**Table 2.** Number of ethnic Albanians in leadership positions.

Institutions	November 1974	November 1988
Federal	41	38
Republic of Serbia	17	20
Republic of Macedonia	21	18
Republic of Montenegro	10	11
SAP Kosovo	99	171

By the logic of Yugoslavia's ideology of brotherhood and unity, higher rates of Albanian participation in the political institutions of the 1970s federation would suggest that ethnic Albanians accepted the political system and that they enjoyed rights similar to those of other nations and national groups in Yugoslavia. This argument, however, ignores other factors like equality of employment, economic status, and the viability of cultural institutions. It also masks a crucial political factor: the will of the Albanians to form a republic of their own—a republic that might include the Albanian regions of Montenegro and Macedonia. To some within the Serbian Communist Party, the federal government had neither the will nor the means to begin a dialogue for this eventuality.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, the Serbian Communist Party stepped into this vacuum and suggested an alternative to the 1974 de facto status of Kosovo.

### *An Attempt to Change the Constitutional Position of Serbia in 1977*

On 16 January 1975, less than a year after the constitution was issued, the presidency of Serbia demanded its revision, explaining that it had brought disunity to the Republic of Serbia and that it was Serbia alone, among all other federal units, that had not obtained its “historic right to a national state within the Yugoslav federation.” This demand was aimed at recovering and reinforcing Serbia’s power over its autonomous provinces. It was formulated by a group of legal experts who were engaged for this task by the presidency of Serbia. Two years later, these experts published their analysis in a so-called blue book, a top-secret document on the malfunction of relations between Serbia and its provinces (appointment of officials, defense, planning, administration of justice, security, etc.). This publication caused a clash within the state and party leaderships of Serbia. The party leadership thought it unacceptable and censured it as “a centralist document.” The conflict was solved by the supreme arbiter, Tito, at a meeting with the representatives of the Central Committee of Serbia (T. Vlaškalić), Regional Committee of Vojvodina (D. Alimpić), and Regional Committee of Kosovo (M. Bakalli) held on 27 July 1977. Tito insisted on keeping the constitution intact regarding the position of the provinces, thus being consistent with his principle of ethnic balance and suppressing the power of the largest federal unit and its supposed aspiration for centralism and unitarism. Tito’s influence ended this dispute, but the problem, for both the Albanians and the Serbs, remained unsolved.

### *1981 Demonstrations in Kosovo*

In March 1981, a little less than a year after Tito’s death, demonstrations broke out in Kosovo. These demonstrations came as a surprise to the political leadership and to the public in general. Later, party and federal authorities blamed the Albanian leadership for not being strict enough in fighting nationalism and, then, for covering it up and not realizing the true causes of the problem. Yugoslav—especially Serbian—politicians and public opinion after 1981 always pointed out the continuity of “Albanian counterrevolution.” At the time, terms such as *counterrevolution* and *irredentism* were in common use. By branding them counter-revolutionaries, the Yugoslav leadership was in denial about the real problems facing Kosovo: its unequal political status, the socioeconomic crises that resulted in deeply divided national communities, and the nationalist sentiments that grew out of the events of 1981.

Disagreements and controversies surround any discussion of the intentions and motivations of the demonstrators. The initial riot began in the cafeteria at the University of Priština, whose students were expressing frustration at and con-

cern over a number of issues of some immediacy to them: unemployment and the inability of the federal state to recognize the demographic boom in higher education in Kosovo. These dissatisfactions were symbolized by inedible food and the squalid living conditions at the overcrowded and underfunded university. Kosovo's ratio of students was 274.7 per 1,000 inhabitants, the highest in the SFRY, compared to the national average of 194.9.<sup>22</sup> Initially, Serbian students at the university joined in the protests. Extrapolating from their experiences, these youthful protesters fixed on the broader theme of the inequities for all students in the province and for Albanians in particular. The demonstrations grew into mass protests all across Kosovo, and the main goal appeared to be the creation of a republic and not secession or unification with Albania, even though some support for the latter could be found.<sup>23</sup>

After the 1981 demonstrations the Kosovo question became the country's critical political problem. Everyone agreed that the whole country should exert itself in searching for a solution. Many protesters were arrested. Mahmut Bakalli was recalled from the post of president of the provincial committee of Kosovo, and Veli Deva was appointed in his place (he was previously himself recalled by Bakalli in 1971). The rector of Priština University was also recalled.

It is important to point out that until 1990 the Kosovo question was treated on the federal level, with significant differences of opinion.<sup>24</sup> The most important tasks were undertaken by federal institutions, not by Serbian ones. On 17 November 1981, the League of Communists of Yugoslavia agreed on a document titled "Political Platform for Action of the Yugoslav League of Communists in the Development of Socialist Self-Management, Brotherhood and Unity and Spirit of Community." In this document demonstrations were called "aggressive, ruthless, brutal and devastating actions with the scope of forming the Republic of Kosovo, which would secede from Serbia and Yugoslavia."

What is interesting is how the Yugoslav central authorities, as well as the international community (which also wanted nothing to do with the complex national issues being raised with the 1981 events), reacted to the events. Lacking any hard evidence of outside agitators, the LCY turned to the Kosovo Albanian leadership, who were accused of not waging an effective campaign against "greater Albanian nationalism and irredentism." The term *irredenta* in the hands of LCY officials meant "not only organized anti-Yugoslav activities for the purpose of uniting Kosovo with Albania, but almost any kind of Albanian national feelings or popular resentment."<sup>25</sup> The LCY really feared the rise of a mass-based separatist movement, which would constitute a major threat to the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. The vagaries of the causes of the demonstrations and their organizers did not prevent the LCY from pursuing the arrest, prosecution, and imprisonment of 226 workers for "organized activity" as well as "verbal crimes."<sup>26</sup> From this time forward, Kosovo Albanians would make up the highest percentage of

political prisoners in the SFRY. Amnesty International and others noted that by the mid-1980s plainclothesmen and military checkpoints proliferated across the province.<sup>27</sup>

Despite the delusions of the party leadership, most of the organizations advocating some type of Albanian nationalism were formed *after* the riots. According to Aleksandar Tijanić, “it is impossible that militant chauvinists and separatists have branches in every little village, enterprise, school, or sports association where inter-ethnic incidents are occurring.”<sup>28</sup> Analyzing the incidents, Tijanić argued that Yugoslavia’s central authorities “grossly underestimated to what extent the idea of a Kosovo republic seems natural to most Albanians.” He urged his readers to understand what was happening in Kosovo in the early 1980s by considering the nationalist movements of the south Slavs in the nineteenth century.

Despite Tijanić’s appeal for understanding the demonstrations as part of a larger historical example of ethnicity and nationalism in the Balkans, the federal authorities branded the events of 1981 counterrevolutionary, and the Serbian party leadership characterized them as an ethnic threat that gave rise to a Serbian nationalist reaction. Serbian migration from Kosovo became the symbol of Serbian victimization by Kosovo Albanians.

### **Controversy 3: Reasons and Causes of Serbian Migration from Kosovo**

Serbian migration from Kosovo was a permanent process since the early 1960s. The reasons for migrations were manifold, but public opinion believed them to be fear, pressure, inequality, and the failure of legislation to protect people and their possessions. This public opinion was shaped by Yugoslav and, especially, Serbian press reports about harassment of, violence (especially rape) against, and general mistreatment of Kosovo’s Serbs. The press reported violations against private and state property, such as sabotage, fires, disturbances of rail communications, explosions, and attacks on police and provincial authorities.<sup>29</sup> In addition, the Serbian population in Kosovo, especially after the political changes in the 1960s, considered themselves to be discriminated against in the labor market and before the provincial courts and police. Although little investigation was ever done to verify many of these reports,<sup>30</sup> a controversy broke out concerning the reasons for this continuous emigration of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo. The 1981 Yugoslav census listed approximately 110,000 Serbs from Kosovo living in other parts of Yugoslavia, 85,000 of whom had left the province between 1961 and 1981. Emigration continued into the 1980s. As a result, nearly a third of Kosovo Serbs had moved out of the autonomous province since 1961.<sup>31</sup>

The 1960s mix of politics, demographic decline, and steady migration out of Kosovo resulted in mounting grievances among Kosovo Serbs. The idea that Serbian emigration from Kosovo was a problem was brought out for the first time by Dobrica Ćosić in 1968, but this was censored by the Communist authorities. In the early 1970s, a number of Kosovo Serb officials raised the issue in Kosovo's party organs of the province's growing Albanization and the problems this posed for the non-Albanian population. Miloš Sekulović and Jovo Šotra pointed to growing pressure on Serbs, especially those living in the countryside, to emigrate from the province as well as their inadequate protection by the law enforcement agencies, their problems in education, and their obstacles to finding employment.<sup>32</sup> Kadri Reufi, an ethnic Turk, demanded that the leadership investigate the causes of the deteriorating position of this minority and claimed that the number of Turks in Kosovo was significantly reduced in the 1971 census because they were labelled Albanians. All three individuals were removed from the Provincial Committee and public life, the effect of which was to silence other non-Albanian politicians. The appeals of party members and ordinary people to local authorities and the provincial leadership were either ignored or rejected and the appellants harassed.

The major consequence of the 1981 events in Kosovo was the aggravation of already fragile ethnic relations. During the early 1980s, the majority of Yugoslav citizens who were arrested under Article 136 of the federal criminal code for "association for purposes of hostile activity" were Albanians. Modest improvements in Albanian access to state jobs and managerial positions during the 1970s and the outbreak of the demonstrations in 1981 led to complaints by Serbs in the region about "Albanianization." Despite the perceived reversal of fortunes, Serbs still held 52 percent of managerial positions and 20 percent of jobs in state positions. But perceptions are believed to have played a role in intensifying the migration of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo.

Although the migration of the Serbs from Kosovo had been fairly constant since the end of World War II, it was only after 1981 that it was discussed in public. The leadership was driven to action by public opinion. The issue was discussed at the eleventh conference of the Central Committee of the Yugoslav League of Communists, held on 20 December 1983. Beginning in 1985, Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo organized protests in the form of petitions and visits to party and state officials in Belgrade. In addition, Serbian intellectuals fixed upon this question and believed that Kosovo Albanians were winning the demographic battle. Although a 1986 memorandum by leading intellectuals of the Serbian National Academy of Arts and Sciences alleged systematic discrimination against Serbs and Serbia in the SFRY, it argued that the most egregious acts were taking place in Kosovo, where the Serbs of Kosovo were being sub-



jected to “physical, political, legal, and cultural genocide.”<sup>33</sup> Reflecting on the centuries-long struggle for independence by Serbia, the memorandum argued that all of Serbia’s sacrifices had been ignored and its independence usurped by the legal dismemberment of Serbia under the 1974 constitution. It stated:

A nation [Serbia] that has regained statehood after a long and bloody struggle, that has achieved civil democracy, and that lost two and a half million kinsmen in two world wars underwent the experience of having a bureaucratically constructed party commission determine that after four decades in the new Yugoslavia it alone was condemned to be without its own state. A more bitter historic defeat in peacetime cannot be imagined.<sup>34</sup>

The defeat was not only a legal and political one but also a demographic one.

According to the memorandum Kosovo Albanians were not only intimidating and driving out Serbs from Kosovo but they were outpacing Serbs in their birthrates. Thus, the memorandum proclaimed, “The expulsion of the Serbian nation from Kosovo bears spectacular witness to its historic defeat.” By pointing out the declining birthrates among Serbs and suggesting that the Serbian nation in Kosovo faced “biological extinction,” two highly charged sexual and gendered images came to represent the viewpoint of the Serbian intellectuals. Serbian women in this nationalist project had to resume their natural roles as mothers and bearers of the national citizens. Serbian men also had to be rejuvenated and protect the nation and Serbian women from a virile Albanian movement and its men. In the mid-1980s, rumors and unfounded accusations circulated that Albanian men were preying upon and raping Serbian women in Kosovo. Such rumors soon became embedded in Serbian popular culture with the production of both a play and a movie that featured the rapes of Serbian women by Albanian men.<sup>35</sup>

Many of the sentiments expressed in the memorandum and public discussions about Kosovo in Serbia were the backdrop for a 1985–1986 survey of Serbs who had left Kosovo titled “The Migration of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo.” This study was commissioned by the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences and conducted by Ruža Petrović and Marina Blagojević in the highly politicized environment of the 1980s. The authors’ findings indicate that more than three quarters of the emigration originated from noneconomic factors, mainly verbal pressure, damage to property, or seizure of crops and land, violence (assaults, fights, stoning, attacks on children and women, serious injury, attempted and committed rape), trouble at work, and inequities in the public sector. What also emerged from the survey was that there was a clear territorial pattern of emigration largely resulting from the level of pressure and inequalities. The latter was inversely related to the proportion of Serbs in a settlement, and the critical point for a major increase in the pressure was if their numbers dropped below 20–30 percent. This finding was compatible with evidence from the official census that

there was a strong trend toward emigration of Serbs from settlements where they accounted for less than 30 percent of the population.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, the decreasing proportion of Serbs in a settlement led to a sharp increase in pressure and inequities, which in turn resulted in emigration.

Petrović and Blagojević analyzed the migrations based on two different interpretations of why the migrations occurred. The first thesis was that the Serbian migrations were “normal migrations” motivated by “economic reasons” and that other ethnic groups in Kosovo migrated out as well during the same period. The migrations were ascribed to the process of “overall economic growth” and the “relative lag in economic development.” The lack of economic opportunities also prompted a large number of Kosovo Albanians to migrate to other parts of Yugoslavia and to western Europe, with 45,000 Albanians leaving the province between 1971 and 1981. The second interpretation was that the Kosovo Serbs were being driven out by Albanian separatists and by the policies of the Albanian authorities who ruled Kosovo when it achieved *de facto* republic status. Petrović and Blagojević concluded that the “pull factors” for migration were “mostly of a non-economic nature, not the kind of contemporary migrations prompted by the desire to improve one’s economic and social position.”<sup>37</sup>

They concluded further that although some left for economic reasons most emigrated out of the Kosovo province due to noneconomic reasons, such as threats to personal safety or property, ethnic discrimination, institutionalized discrimination by Albanian authorities, and a policy of “ethnic homogenization” by Albanian nationalists-separatists. According to some experts, “this study must be treated with some caution, not only because the Serbian Academy was at the forefront of national mobilization at the time, but also because of the survey’s timing.”<sup>38</sup> Analyzing the results, Helfant Budding notes that about two-fifths of the 500 families interviewed had emigrated before 1975.<sup>39</sup> Given the time lag, the intensity of news reports about intimidation and violence in Kosovo, and heightened Serb-Albanian tensions at the time of the survey, there may well have been some retrospective bias among the respondents. Nevertheless, interethnic tensions, especially among those Serbs whose presence in a community dropped below 30 percent, played a role in many emigration decisions according to the conclusions of the report.

#### **Controversy 4: Kosovo Serbs, Serbian Nationalist Intellectuals, and Officials of the Milošević Regime**

After the Albanian demonstrations of 1981, the mobilization of Kosovo Serbs began and developed largely in response to changes in the political context and within a political environment that was not totally unfavorable to the action of

grassroots groups from this ethnonational group. This mobilization of the Kosovo Serbs played an important part in the political struggles in late socialist Yugoslavia. The controversy and debate revolve around the contention by many specialists that throughout the 1980s Kosovo Serbs were little more than the passive recipients of the actions and attitudes of elites and counterelites. The specialists claim that the mobilization of various groups within this community was inspired, organized, and coordinated by the officials of Milošević's regime or by Serb nationalist intellectuals, or both. In fact, this was a grassroots mobilization.<sup>41</sup>

The mobilization of Kosovo Serbs, rooted in their discontent with the changing ethnic composition of Kosovo and the post-1966 change in interethnic politics, was initiated and spread principally by various grassroots groups within this community. The grievances of Kosovo Serbs could not translate into collective action in a political system that opposed any reference to their concerns, but they accumulated over time and eventually resulted in a high level of politicization of Kosovo's Serbs. As a local observer put it, "in the southern socialist autonomous province each and every head of a Serb household who takes himself seriously keeps a library of petitions, appeals, pamphlets and newspaper clippings."<sup>42</sup> The political change ultimately opened space for the collective action of various groups of Kosovo Serbs. In 1981, protests of Kosovo Albanians swept the autonomous province. As we have seen, a student protest over socio-economic issues turned into large-scale demonstrations with some calling for a republic of Kosovo, even union with Albania. The government declared a state of emergency, deployed tanks and security forces, closed schools and factories, and suppressed demonstrations. The scale of the protests apparently surprised the federal leadership and raised fears of a major separatist movement. Officials now increasingly paid attention to the complaints alleging inequalities facing the non-Albanian population in terms of the use of language, access to jobs in the state-controlled part of the economy, allocation of public housing, and inadequate protection of their rights and property by the courts and law enforcement agencies. Kosovo's officials came under much closer scrutiny by the federal leadership, and Albanian-Serb relations in Kosovo ceased to be their exclusive domain. The prevention of Serb emigration and redress of the Serbs' other concerns now became part of the party's policy.

The political change raised the expectations of Kosovo Serbs that the authorities would fully address their concerns. Soon, however, many from the community felt that the new policy did not begin to address all of their concerns, and emigration continued. Some believed that high officials in Yugoslavia and Serbia were not aware of the scope of the problem; therefore, they arranged a number of private meetings, sometimes involving large delegations, with officials and other people they thought to be influential. They met, for example, with Nikola Ljubičić, president of Serbia's state presidency (1982–1984); with party officials

in Montenegro; with Svetozar Vukmanović-Tempo, a retired member of Tito's old guard; with Branko Pešić, a Belgrade mayor; and many others.<sup>43</sup> In most cases the delegations were given a sympathetic hearing and assurances that the party's policies, including initiatives aimed at halting the emigration of Serbs, would be implemented.

Simultaneously, a growing number of ordinary people, mainly in predominantly Serb settlements, attended local meetings of official political organizations, mostly those of the Socialist Alliance of the Working People (SAWP, formerly the People's Front), to raise their concerns. In Kosovo Polje, a suburb of Priština with a dominant Serb population, roughly thirty political outsiders regularly debated various issues and forwarded the meetings' minutes to officials at all levels, from Priština and Kosovo to Serbia and the federation. Although remaining within the boundaries of officially permitted dissent, they increasingly laid blame for any inequalities on Kosovo's officials, both Albanians and Serbs. Early on the core members of this group, namely Kosta Bulatović, Boško Budimirović, and Miroslav Šolević, jointly prepared the meetings and gradually shifted the agenda from local problems to the issues of broader political significance.<sup>44</sup> Parallel developments unfolded in other predominantly Serb settlements.

Although Priština's and Kosovo's officials periodically attended the meetings in Kosovo Polje, the debaters felt that the authorities would not take their problems seriously unless they gained broader support among Kosovo's Serbs. Bulatović, Budimirović and Šolević, therefore, extended their activities beyond the official organizations and started mobilizing support at the grass roots. In 1985, they extended the core group to include informal advisors Zoran Grujić, a university professor, and Dušan Ristić, a former chief Kosovo official. They agreed that the post-1981 party's policy aimed at ending the politics of inequality and emigration of Serbs was adequate and that they should simply press the authorities to implement the policy.<sup>45</sup> In late October 1985, the Kosovo Polje group sent a petition to officials in Yugoslavia and Serbia. They protested against discrimination against Kosovo Serbs and asked for the protection of their rights and the establishment of law and order. They pointed out that Kosovo was becoming increasingly "ethnically clean" of Serbs, accused Kosovo's officials of the tacit approval of the forced migration of Serbs out of the region, and demanded that Yugoslavia's and Serbia's authorities bring that trend to a halt.<sup>46</sup> About 2,000 people signed the petition within ten days, and by April 1986, the number of signatories had multiplied several times.

In 1986, prominent activists initiated several highly visible protests and a series of small-scale local protest events. In late February, early April, and early November, they sent large delegations to the capital to meet officials of Yugoslavia and Serbia. The protest events also included a very visible protest march of

several hundred people that unfolded under the label of collective emigration just before the party congress in May, as well as a number of large public meetings in Kosovo Polje, including one before Serbia's party leader Ivan Stambolić.<sup>47</sup> There were also a series of small-scale protests across the autonomous province, mostly in the form of public meetings or outdoor public gatherings, organized in response to specific cases of nationalist-related violence. As people became aware of the advantages of noninstitutional action, they started petitioning local authorities, and sometimes managers of large state enterprises, to protest against discrimination at work.<sup>48</sup>

The main consequence of various post-1981 initiatives was the incipient and unconnected networks of activists and supporters in towns and villages inhabited by Serbs. Throughout 1986 the Kosovo Polje group, including the newly arrived Bogdan Kecman, worked to link the emerging local networks into a more powerful political force. Each of them took responsibility for a specific area of Kosovo and worked to strengthen links between the existing activists in the area, recruit new ones, and inform potential supporters about their initiatives. Before long the Kosovo Polje group could mobilize small groups of activists for protest events in and outside Kosovo within a few hours.<sup>49</sup> The activists' demands, which initially focused on the lack of protection by the law enforcement agencies and courts and inequalities in the public sector, gradually evolved toward constitutional issues. The protesters asserted that if the provincial officials were unable to guarantee protection to Serbs then Kosovo should be brought back under the jurisdiction of Serbia's authorities.<sup>50</sup>

Officials tolerated the mobilization for several reasons. Firstly, the highly decentralized political structure of socialist Yugoslavia, based partly on national rights and identities, encouraged groups to mobilize along national lines. After 1981 officials had already acknowledged the grievances of Kosovo Serbs and put emphasis on forestalling their emigration. Unlike Kosovo Albanian protesters in 1981, who had aimed at important constitutional change, Kosovo Serbs demanded little more than implementation of the existing party policy, which was much less likely to trigger repression. Serbs, though a minority group in Kosovo, constituted a majority in Serbia as a whole and a plurality in Yugoslavia, which rendered their concerns more urgent for Yugoslavia's political class. Other political changes also mattered. The change of political generations in the first half of the 1980s brought younger politicians into the highest regional offices, and many of them felt that repression against ordinary people would go against the values of their generation. Growing elite disunity, rooted in the decentralized political structure and intensified during leadership succession, had already resulted in deadlock at the federal level and now thwarted attempts to reach a common position on the grassroots protest.

Secondly, the modest scale of mobilization and its limited potential for expansion, which sharply distinguished it from the 1981 mobilization of Kosovo Albanians, were also important. The movement of a minority group in a peripheral region hardly posed a threat to the regime. Officials were mainly concerned about the potential implications for political stability at the center because protesters' demands were potentially highly resonant with Serbs outside Kosovo. Major protests of Kosovo Serbs that centered on the capital, such as the the May 1986 march, were therefore prevented. Officials often issued public threats to prominent activists, especially after the October 1985 petition, and Bulatović was briefly jailed in early April 1986.

Thirdly, activists opted for moderate protest strategies and repeatedly stressed that their protest was not antisystemic. The protests often unfolded under the auspices of the SAWP partly because officials rarely tolerated openly non-institutional initiatives and partly because the minority constituency of the movement ruled out large-scale discontent. The highly decentralized political structure of socialist Yugoslavia—including complex relationships between organs of Yugoslavia, Serbia, and Kosovo; a high level of local autonomy; and a large number of official organizations—provided space for the activists to organize, recruit new supporters and appeal for support.

From the early 1980s various groups of Kosovo Serbs sought contacts with influential people. Activists kept in touch with some earlier Kosovo Serb migrants, such as the managers of state enterprises and middle-rank officials in the capital and reporters for the Belgrade media based in the province. The confidants helped by identifying targets for appeal outside Kosovo because the activists knew little about institutional structure and informal political alliances, and they commented on protest strategies. Activists also established contact with dissident intellectuals, including Dobrica Ćosić, a well-known dissident novelist who had been purged from the party over the policy on Kosovo in 1968. Ćosić supported their cause and suggested that they make use of all legal channels. Other contacts from the Belgrade dissident circles urged radical action early on and claimed that protests of Kosovo Serbs in the capital would trigger demonstrations by hundreds of thousands.<sup>51</sup> Ćosić claims that he initiated the October 1985 petition at a meeting with a number of Kosovo Serbs but that a Belgrade journalist, an earlier Serb migrant from Kosovo, actually wrote the first draft.<sup>52</sup> This is probably true. Although Kosta Bulatović claimed that he initiated and drafted the petition, other prominent activists suspected that the Belgrade journalist, a friend of Bulatović, wrote the text.<sup>53</sup>

In January 1986, some 200 Belgrade-based intellectuals signed a petition supporting the cause of Kosovo Serbs, and the writers' union subsequently held a number of protest meetings. A number of dissident intellectuals had already initiated a debate on Kosovo a year before, partly from the perspective of a revisionist

history of Serb-Albanian relations and partly focusing on the current grievances of Kosovo Serbs.<sup>54</sup> Without doubt the dissident intellectuals' actions alerted the general public in central Serbia to the concerns of Kosovo Serbs and made a strong impression on officials throughout Yugoslavia and Serbia. However, this was only a part of the intellectuals' sweeping critique of the Communist regime and had little to do with either the creation or consolidation of the local protest networks. There was little difference between a few meetings of activists with Čosić and their contacts with other potential allies, insofar as the activists initiated nearly all of them. The significance of the October 1985 petition, drafted by the intellectuals, did not lie in its content; the same demands had featured prominently in the activists' discussions in the official organizations. The Kosovo Polje group had even drafted a similar petition two years before but collected only around seventy signatures.<sup>55</sup> The 1985 petition became important because nearly 2,000 Kosovo Serbs signed the text within ten days and thus demonstrated strong commitment to their cause despite a widespread fear of job loss or imprisonment.

Nor were the dissident intellectuals the only group that helped publicize the cause of the emerging movement. Kosovo Serb war veterans occasionally supported some activists' demands and demanded resignations of various Kosovo officials, both Albanians and Serbs. Before initiating any major protest event, prominent activists tested their ideas with at least some of their confidants to find out whether the chosen targets and timing were appropriate. While seeking contact with, and advice from, various quarters, the protest organizers made decisions on protest strategies on their own. They firmly believed that people at the grassroots level understood their problems best and could make appropriate decisions. More importantly, they were painfully aware that they, and not their confidants, would have to suffer the consequences of any wrong moves.<sup>56</sup>

Before 1988, political alliances in Kosovo's leadership had rarely followed ethnonational cleavage, and the views of most Albanian and Serb officials shifted over time with changes in the party's policy. This was reflected in the demands of Kosovo Serb activists for the resignations of some Albanian and Serb officials and their occasional support for other officials, both Serbs and Albanians. The activists had generally been cautious about Serbs in Kosovo's political establishment, feeling that their loyalty lay with the party's policy of the day.<sup>57</sup> After 1981, a number of Serb high officials, originally from Kosovo, who had occupied posts in federal organs were sent back to influential positions in Kosovo's leadership. The so-called weekend or traveling politicians, whose families stayed in Belgrade, had little connection with Kosovo Serb realities and were generally despised by ordinary people. The activists therefore continually sought allies among the leadership of Serbia but with little success.

Many authors consider 24 April 1987, the date of Milošević's visit to Kosovo, to be the moment when the Kosovo Serbs started to follow his policy. His visit to Kosovo Polje was not originally planned. Kosovo's officials designed Milošević's itinerary in such a way that he would not visit predominantly Serb settlements and thus would not have to face protesters. The Kosovo Polje group then staged a protest over a fake incident to attract the attention of Serbia's leadership. On 17 April the activists spread the word that Zoran Grujić, a university professor and coconspirator, had decided to emigrate from Kosovo. Apparently Grujić had been repeatedly interrogated by the police because of his links with the Kosovo Polje group. He claimed to have experienced problems at the University of Priština because of his Serb background. Within hours, around three hundred people gathered outside his house in protest. Of course, Grujić did not leave the province, but the activists exploited the case to invite Milošević to drop by on his Kosovo tour. Three days later Milošević, accompanied by Azem Vllasi, Kosovo's party leader, came to deliver a speech before three thousand Kosovo Serbs outside a local primary school. At the end, the activists insisted that he come again, this time not just to talk but also to listen to their complaints. Milošević accepted the invitation and approved their request to choose their own representatives for the meeting.

Milošević and Vllasi arrived in Kosovo Polje for this meeting in the afternoon of 24 April. When cars with the politicians approached the building, a crowd of several thousand protesters was already waiting. They passionately chanted: "We want freedom, we want freedom!" Police literally carried Milošević into the building while the protesters struggled to enter as well. It turned out that local party officials had drafted their own list of speakers, and when the police tried to stop others from entering the building, the chaos began. The police responded by beating protesters with truncheons, while the protestors threw stones at policemen and the building. Milošević was then asked to speak to the protesters and try to calm them down. Milošević asked the protesters to choose their own representatives, ordered the police not to beat people, and asked the protesters to maintain order themselves. The latter accepted this with ovations, and the meeting continued until early morning. The representatives, in most cases farmers, skilled workers, and teachers, spoke emotionally about inequalities and the lack of protection for Serbs from Kosovo's authorities. At the end, Milošević delivered a speech in which he made his position clear—namely his public disapproval of the use of force by the police.<sup>58</sup>

Milošević subsequently pulled all the strings to call a session of the Central Committee of Yugoslavia and demanded that specific targets be set for the performance of party and state organs in relation to the Kosovo problem. Milošević also demanded that a number of Kosovo's former chief officials, including Fadilj Hoxha, a retired member of Tito's old guard and an undisputed authority among



Kosovo Albanians, be held accountable before the party for their alleged tacit approval of the so-called counterrevolution. Hoxha had already retired, and his removal from the party would not have important immediate consequences for the personal composition and policies of Kosovo's leadership. However, by calling into question Hoxha's credibility Milošević implicitly questioned the policy of federal leadership from the late 1960s and Kosovo's highly autonomous status, which had been achieved under Hoxha's leadership. As the intervention of Milošević related largely to the implementation of previously jointly approved policies and remained firmly on the Titoist course, Milošević gained support from officials from other republics without difficulty. However, the developments initiated clashes in the leadership of Serbia. Minor disagreements over policy details on Kosovo were exaggerated in the heat of the power struggle between the factions based on the personal networks of Milošević and those of his former protector Ivan Stambolić. These unfolded according to the rules of the game in socialist party-states, with little influence from society.<sup>59</sup>

Since the 1967–1974 constitutional reforms, the main concern of officials from Serbia had been the fragmented political structure of Serbia.<sup>60</sup> In the aftermath of the 1981 protests of Kosovo Albanians, Draža Marković and Petar Stambolić claimed that the eruption of protests had resulted from the unconstitutional extension of the autonomy of Serbia's provinces, but they had little success in persuading officials from other republics to help strengthen Serbia's central organs. Following the change of political generations, Ivan Stambolić reaffirmed the need for greater coordination between the central government of Serbia and its autonomous provinces and emphasized economic issues and the concerns of Kosovo Serbs. The rise of Milošević in 1987 changed little in this respect, and Milošević reiterated the demands of his predecessors. The change in leadership, however, turned the fortunes of the growing social movement. Whereas Stambolić had kept pressure on Kosovo's officials to address the problems of Kosovo Serbs and ignored the protest networks, Milošević aimed to establish control over the mobilization by co-opting prominent activists. The change partly originated from the spread of mobilization so that it now had to be dealt with either through suppression or co-optation. Also, Milošević exploited the mobilization for his own ends and often provoked activists to publicly denounce his opponents. The activists did not object because they now felt a degree of protection from federal and provincial officials and their protests achieved greater visibility. Prominent activists were in turn under strong pressure to channel their initiatives toward official organizations and employ their influence over local networks to halt noninstitutional action.<sup>61</sup>

The growing influence of Milošević on prominent activists often failed to be transformed into action on the ground partly because the activists intended to proceed with protests until their demands had been fully addressed and partly

because of the highly decentralized character of their protest networks. Although influential, the Kosovo Polje group by no means presided over the networks, and other activists at times fully ignored its advice. Around thirty to forty prominent activists from various parts of Kosovo gathered occasionally and commanded sufficient influence to prevent any initiatives of which they disapproved or to start new ones. In the summer of 1988 the activists formed a protest committee that quickly became another important decision-making center. None of the three main circles of power within the social movement, however, could control a group of radical activists who at times would not listen to anybody's advice and proceeded with action, often getting support from one or two hundred supporters. The local networks, therefore, proceeded with protests across Kosovo. To placate Milošević they now staged all protests, even large outdoor gatherings, in the form of meetings of official organizations. In a growing number of cases officials who attended the meetings were booed at or prevented from speaking; in other cases the audience left the meetings altogether.

In the spring of 1988 prominent activists became increasingly skeptical about the claims of Milošević that a constitutional change aimed at empowering the central government of Serbia would occur in the near future. Convinced that pressure from the grass roots was essential to political change, they launched a petition in May 1988, before the federal party conference—the so-called small party congress—and soon presented it to officials of Yugoslavia and Serbia with nearly 50,600 signatures. The reason that nearly a quarter of Kosovo Serbs found themselves as signatories to the petition was that many activists signed up their whole families. Despite this wild exaggeration, the petition was a sort of plebiscite of Kosovo Serbs. The petitioners demanded that the federal organs temporarily establish direct rule in the province in order to establish security for the Serbs or, alternatively, recognize their right to self-defence. They also threatened that they might collectively emigrate from the province as a last resort.<sup>62</sup> Aware of the limits to the protest groups' organizational resources, officials in Yugoslavia and Serbia were nonetheless concerned that any activities under the label of collective emigration might trigger public unrest on a large scale. Milošević resolutely demanded a halt to such activities.<sup>63</sup>

Having to drop an important protest strategy and fearing a decline in participation by dispirited supporters, prominent activists found an alternative target—a protest in Novi Sad, the largest city in Vojvodina. After the unexpected success of the protest, the protest organizers and their nonelite allies outside Kosovo launched a series of protests in Vojvodina and Montenegro during the summer.<sup>64</sup> The protests coincided with a spiraling conflict among the elites of both republics and provinces over the amendments to the constitutions of Yugoslavia and Serbia, partly regarding the relations between Serbia's central government and its autonomous provinces. In September Kosovo Serbs began to protest all over the

province. The activists now engaged in cooperation with Kosovo Serb intellectuals because they needed well-educated people to deliver speeches at a growing number of protests.<sup>65</sup> Although the local Serb intellectuals had timidly signaled their discontent with the position of Serbs in Kosovo, few of them took part in protest activities prior to late summer 1988.

The consolidation of support for the social movement among Kosovo Serbs and the efforts of Milošević to break the resistance of Kosovo's officials to the constitutional reform gradually affected political alliances in the provincial leadership, which had rarely followed ethnonational cleavage. The first signs of rising tensions occurred in early 1988 when several Serb officials from the Priština Committee openly supported prominent activists. The September protest campaign coincided with a break between Kosovo Albanian and Serb members of the Provincial Committee. Serbs now supported Milošević's demand for chief officials in Kosovo to resign because of their alleged obstruction of the party's policy; Albanians defended their leaders and objected to the significant constitutional changes. In the aftermath of the purges of Kosovo Albanian officials and the abrogation of Kosovo's autonomy in 1989, Milošević filled key political and public-sector positions with low-ranking Kosovo Serb officials, mainly those who had little connection with the grassroots mobilization. Because the constitutional changes and the greater involvement of the government of Serbia in the affairs of Kosovo met many important demands of the Kosovo Serbs, the movement swiftly disintegrated.

## Conclusion

Without doubt, the support of dissident intellectuals and Milošević boosted the Kosovo Serb activists' prospects of success in terms of publicizing their cause and bringing urgency to their demands from chief officials. That support, nonetheless, mattered little in the creation and consolidation of the local protest networks. Although activists engaged in contacts with a range of influential people and opted for specific protest strategies with an eye on the broader political context, they remained an autonomous political factor and largely made decisions on their own. The mobilization originated from their discontent with the post-1966 change in the politics of inequality and a demographic decline of Kosovo Serbs, part of which resulted from their steady migration out of Kosovo. The changing political context strongly shaped the timing, forms, and dynamics of the mobilization. The changes in the party's policy on Kosovo after 1981 resulted in a softer approach by officials in Yugoslavia while at the same time excluding them from the authority of Kosovo's leadership. These developments opened the door for various groups to lobby officials outside the province and to initiate debates about their concerns in official organizations at the local level.

The slow response of the authorities to growing complaints shifted the efforts of some of the debaters to noninstitutional action and encouraged local protest networks. The relatively small scale and grassroots character of the protests and their moderate strategies, including mobilization partly within official organizations, shielded the activists from repression. Despite cooperation with Milošević, who put their demands firmly on the party's agenda, Kosovo Serb activists proceeded with noninstitutional action. The abrogation of Kosovo's autonomy, which met an important demand of Kosovo Serbs—the purge of Kosovo's leaders by Milošević and their replacement by Kosovo Serb party apparatchiks—effectively closed the space for autonomous political efforts by Kosovo Serbs. The dynamics of the mobilization of Kosovo Serbs differed little from the patterns of mobilization of other groups in socialist Yugoslavia, especially the protests of Kosovo Albanians in 1968 and 1981, because all unfolded in the aftermath of growing expectations and the relaxation of repression centered on those groups.<sup>66</sup> The case of the mobilization of Kosovo Serbs in the 1980s reveals that an exclusive focus on elites and their politics in the literature on conflicts surrounding the disintegration of Yugoslavia is misleading. Due to the gradual relaxation of repressive policies and practices, nonelite actors played an important political role even in the unlikely context of a socialist party-state.

## Notes

- 1 Throughout this chapter the terms *Kosovo Serbs* and *Kosovo Albanians* are used to denote those Serbs and Albanians who lived in Kosovo during the period under discussion. Although one of our readers noted that the adjective form is *Kosovo*, we have decided to maintain the common usage of *Kosovo Serb* or *Kosovo Albanian* because in recent years the term *Kosovar* has been used almost exclusively for Kosovo Albanians and has a political, not simply a geographical dimension.
- 2 After World War II Yugoslav—not just Serb—Communist leaders made the most important decisions on Kosovo. The pressures on Kosovo Albanians after 1948 had a lot to do with security considerations—the reaction of the Yugoslav leadership to the support of their counterparts from Albania for Stalin and the Soviet bloc—and were not simply a result of an attempt of Serbs in the leadership to discriminate against Albanians. This is not to deny that the result was to disadvantage members of this community and that Serbs within this period had an upper hand over Albanians in Kosovo. However, much of the security situation in Kosovo during the 1950s and early 1960s was designed and implemented by the Serbian head of Yugoslav security services (UDBA), Aleksandar Ranković.

Between 1967 and 1971, constitutional amendments were introduced that began to alter the relationship of Vojvodina and Kosovo vis-à-vis Serbia and began to have a decisive impact on Serb-Albanian relations. Secondly, major political change in Kosovo occurred after 1966, following the demise of Ranković and the centralist faction in the Yugoslav leadership. The power shift led swiftly to changes in the ethnonational composition of the political elite in Kosovo.

- 3 Veljko Vujačić, "Historical Legacies, Nationalist Mobilization, and Political Outcomes in Russia and Serbia: A Weberian View," *Theory and Society* 25, no. 6 (December 1996): 769.
- 4 While much has been made about goals and aims of a "greater" Albania or Serbia, the historical origin of the "greater" designation begins in the early nineteenth century when nationalist leaders from countries throughout Europe sought to maximize state borders to include all members of their nation or territories allegedly theirs.
- 5 Albanian speakers were an absolute majority of Kosovo's inhabitants by the mid-nineteenth century, and the percentage of the majority increased over the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. For a discussion of this issue see Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History* (London: Macmillan, 1998), 193–94.
- 6 Živorad Igić, *Kosovo i Metohija* (1981–1991): *Uvod u jugoslovensku krizu* (Priština, Podgorica: Jedinstvo, Oktioh, 1995).
- 7 *Statistički Bilten*, no. 727, 1972, 11. Cited in Ruža Petrović and Marina Blagojević, *The Migrations of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo and Metohija: Results of the Survey Conducted in 1985–1986* (Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 1992), 78.
- 8 *Statistički Bilten*, no. 727, 1972, 11, cited in Miranda Vickers, *Between Serb and Albanian* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 171; and Arshi Pipa and Sami Repishti, *Studies on Kosova* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1984), 127.
- 9 Julie Mertus, *Kosovo: How Myths and Truths Started a War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 8.
- 10 These extra monies may have benefited the Serbian population more than the Albanian population of Kosovo as reflected in the Serbian unemployment rate's falling and the Albanian unemployment rate's increasing in the period between 1970 and 1982. See discussion below and P. Prifti, "Kosova's Economy," in Pipa and Repishti, *Studies on Kosova*, 134–37.
- 11 Michael Palairat, "Ramiz Sadiku: A Case Study in the Industrialization of Kosovo," *Soviet Studies* 44, no. 5 (1992): 897–912.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 899.
- 13 Prifti, 134–37.
- 14 Nurcan Özgür Baklacioglu, "Albanian Migrations and the Problem of Security in the Balkans," *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies* 6 (2001): 75–121.
- 15 Paul Shoup, "The Government and Constitutional Status of Kosova: Some Brief Remarks," in Pipa and Repishti, *Studies on Kosova*, 71.
- 16 Interview with Azem Vllasi, Priština, April 1995, in *Kosmet ili Kosova*, ed. Bahri Cani and Cvijetan Milovojević (Belgrade: NEA, 1996), 93, cited in Mertus, *Kosovo*, 19.
- 17 Vladimir Matić, "Unbreakable Bond: Serbs and Kosovo," report prepared for the Public International Law and Policy Group, December 2003. <http://www.publicinternational-law.org/publications/reports/UnbreakableBondSerbsandKosovo1203.pdf>, accessed 3 June 2004.
- 18 It may be misleading to focus on the 1974 Yugoslav constitution, which changed little in the constitutional structure of Yugoslavia (it made mostly symbolic changes). Most important were constitutional amendments introduced between 1967 and 1971 that had a decisive impact on Serb-Albanian relations. Also, although autonomous provinces were strongly empowered in the long process of constitutional reform, Serbia was still officially designated as a unitary state like other Yugoslav republics. Other constitutional provisions also left much space for contrasting interpretations simply because Yugoslav leaders could not agree on the more specific and precise text. Therefore, the empowerment of autonomous provinces was only partly due to the constitutional pro-

- visions. Draža Marković said that Serbia's high officials believed that it was not the constitution itself but its extreme interpretation resulting from informal power relations in the federation at the time that strongly disadvantaged Serbia's central institutions.
- 19 Beginning in 1989, the Serbian assembly prepared amendments to Serbia's constitution that would eradicate Kosovo's autonomy. To do so, however, required the provincial assembly of Kosovo to vote and accept these amendments. Police intimidation and cohesion of Kosovo's deputies on the eve of the vote resulted in the provincial assembly's acceptance of the amendments. Sabrina Ramet, *The Three Yugoslavias: State Building and Legitimation, 1918–2005* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 353.
  - 20 Voting differently was, it seems, much more frequent. Although no one has, as far as we know, looked into the voting records, our impression on the basis of interviews with high officials of Serbia (those in office before the rise of Milošević) is that provincial high officials voted differently not only because their interests at times diverged with those of Serbia but often because they wanted to demonstrate publicly their newly acquired power. If this is true (answers from Serbia's high officials from different factions, generations, and institutional interests were very consistent in this respect), it is hardly a surprise that they came into conflict early, many years before the rise of Milošević.
  - 21 The assumption behind this idea is that symmetrical relationships between territorial units in a decentralized state are the only possible way to fairly and successfully regulate ethnonational conflict. This may be misleading. Research on ethnonational conflict regulation provides ample evidence that there is a variety of strategies to deal with the problem: recognition of identity of relevant groups, various levels of collective rights, territorial and nonterritorial autonomy, and so forth. Asymmetric relationships between ethnonationally based territorial units in decentralized states are often stressed as highly successful (e.g., post-Franco Spain, Canada, Russia in the 1990s). It is clear that Kosovo Albanians had obtained a recognition of their identity, very high level of collective rights, and extensive territorial autonomy but not the official right to self-determination, which was granted only to republics and constituent nations. That Kosovo did not become a republic was not simply a consequence of Yugoslavia's ideology of brotherhood and unity but perhaps had at least something to do with the comparative experience of dealing with similar phenomena. There is no reason to look at socialist Yugoslavia and its successor states as a special case—the comparative approach always brings a broader perspective on things.
  - 22 Vickers, *Between Serb and Albanian*, 197, cited in Pipa and Repishti, *Studies on Kosova*, 144.
  - 23 For a more extensive discussion see Julie Mertus, *Kosovo*.
  - 24 There was in fact a considerable difference of opinions on the policy toward Kosovo. Serbia's leadership, often supported by high officials of Montenegro and Macedonia, often came into conflict with high officials of other republics as well as those of Vojvodina and Kosovo. This was especially the case in the 1980s. These disagreements, even conflicts, however, occurred within the narrow leadership circle, masked by a united front that regional leaderships presented to society. This is hardly surprising given the authoritarian nature of the regime.
  - 25 Kjell Magnusson, "The Serbian Reaction: Kosovo and Ethnic Mobilization among the Serbs," *Nordic Journal of Soviet and East European Studies* 4, no. 3 (1987): 10. According to one of our team leaders, the cited author confuses the alleged suppression of the expression of national feelings of Kosovo Albanians with the real or perceived fear of secessionism, widespread in the Yugoslav multinational leadership (not only among the Serbs). The leadership did not act principally against expressions of national feel-

- ings by Albanians. Kosovo's institutions, political and cultural, remained intact, and previous high officials were replaced by Kosovo Albanians, not Serbs; expressions of nationalism outside institutions by members of Yugoslavia's other ethnonational groups were also sanctioned, though less harshly than in post-1981 Kosovo. One should not confuse the rhetoric of the leadership (e.g., Albanian nationalism as counterrevolution, which was fully in line with the CPY ideology) with what they really feared—the rise of a mass-based separatist movement, that is, a major threat to the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. This fear may have been irrational (this can certainly be discussed further) but it did produce tangible political consequences.
- 26 “More than 300 Persons Were Sentenced,” *New York Times*, 19 October 1981, A4, cited in Mertus, 43.
  - 27 *Yugoslavia: Prisoners of Conscience* (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1985), cited in Vickers, 224.
  - 28 Aleksander Tijanić, “Koliko je oraha u kesi?” *Duga*, 18–31 October 1986, 28–31, cited in Magnusson, 11.
  - 29 *Nin*, 2 November 1986, 23, cited in Magnusson, 8.
  - 30 Ivan Janković, “Krivično pravno represije politički nenasilnih ponašanja na Kosovu: 1979–1988,” in *Kosovski čvor: Drešiti ili seći?*, 63, cited in Vesna Pešić, *Serbian Nationalism and the Origins of the Yugoslav Crisis* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1996).
  - 31 Srdjan Bogosavljević, “A Statistical Picture of Serbian–Albanian Relations,” in *Conflict or Dialogue: Serbian–Albanian Relations and the Integration of the Balkans*, ed. Dušan Janjić and Shkelzen Maliqi (Subotica: Open University, European Civic Centre for Conflict Resolution, 1994), 17–29.
  - 32 Miloš Sekulović, interview by N. Vladisavljević, Belgrade, 18 August 2000. For details see Zejnel Zejneli, *Ko je izdao revoluciju* (Priština: Jedinstvo, 1988), 74–105.
  - 33 Memorandum (1986), Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences (SANU), cited in Gale Stokes, *From Stalinism to Pluralism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).
  - 34 Ibid.
  - 35 Wendy Bracewell, “Rape in Kosovo: Masculinity and Serbian Nationalism,” *Nations and Nationalism* 6, no. 4 (2000): 563–90. Bracewell gives an excellent summary of these issues, as does Julie Mertus in her chapter about the alleged rape of a Kosovo Serbian by Albanians in the late 1980s. See Mertus, *Kosovo*, especially the chapter “‘Impaled with a Bottle’: The Martinovic Case, 1985.”
  - 36 See Srdjan Bogosavljević, “A Statistical Picture of Serbian–Albanian Relations,” in Janjić and Shkelzen Maliqi, *Conflict or Dialogue*, 23, and Ruža Petrović and Marina Blagojević, *The Migrations of Serbs and Montenegrins*, 82–92, 100–04, 111–73.
  - 37 Petrović and Blagojević, 82–92, 100–04, 111–73.
  - 38 Audrey Budding, “Serbian Nationalism in the Twentieth Century,” Expert Report Submitted to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, 29 May 2002, 52. [http://hague.bard.edu/reports/hr\\_budding-pt4.pdf](http://hague.bard.edu/reports/hr_budding-pt4.pdf), accessed 15 September 2007.
  - 39 Ibid.
  - 40 This section is a condensed version of Nebojša Vladisavljević's research and articles on the mobilization of the Kosovo Serbs, especially, “Grassroots Groups, Milošević, or Dissident Intellectuals? A Controversy over the Origins and Dynamics of Mobilization of Kosovo Serbs in the 1980s,” *Nationalities Papers* 32, no. 4 (2004): 781–96; “Institutional Power and the Rise of Milošević,” *Nationalities Papers* 32, no. 1 (2004): 183–205, and *Serbia's Antibureaucratic Revolution: Milošević, the Fall of Communism, and Nationalist Mobilization* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

- 41 See for example Laura Silber and Allan Little, *The Death of Yugoslavia* (London: Penguin, BBC, 1996), 34–47, 58–59; Tim Judah, *Kosovo: War and Revenge* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 47–55; Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 339–43; and Mertus, chapter 2.
- 42 Aleksandar Tijanić, *Šta će biti s nama* (Zagreb: Globus, 1988), 130–31.
- 43 For an account of one of the meetings see excerpts from the diary of Draza Marković in Mirko Djekić, *Upotreba Srbije: optužbe i priznanja Draže Markovića* (Belgrade: Besede, 1990), 209–10.
- 44 Boško Budimirović and Miroslav Šolević, interviews by N. Vladislavljević, 15 and 17 July 2001, respectively.
- 45 Boško Budimirović and Miroslav Šolević, interviews, and Dušan Ristić in Miloš Antić, “Srbija nema rešenje za Kosovo,” *Borba*, 11 February 1993.
- 46 “Zahtevi 2016 stanovnika Kosova,” *Književne novine*, 15 December 1985.
- 47 For details see Vladislavljević, “Nationalism, Social Movement Theory, and the Grass Roots Movement of Kosovo Serbs,” 772–73.
- 48 See, for example, “Šta je ko rekao u Kosovu Polju: stenografske beleške razgovora u noći 24. i 25. IV 1987,” *Borba*, 8, 9–10, and 11 April 1987.
- 49 Boško Budimirović, Miroslav Šolević, and Bogdan Kecman, interviews by Vladislavljević, 29 August 2000.
- 50 See “Šta su Kosovci rekli u Skupštini,” *NIN*, 23 and 30 March, and 6 and 13 April 1986, and “Šta je ko rekao u Kosovu Polju.”
- 51 Miroslav Šolević and Boško Budimirović, interviews. See also Dobrica Ćosić, *Piščevi zapisi, 1981–1991* (Belgrade: Filip Višnjić, 2002), 169–70, 186–88.
- 52 Ćosić, *Piščevi zapisi*, 169–70.
- 53 Boško Budimirović and Miroslav Šolević, interviews.
- 54 For details on the views and actions of the intellectuals in relation to Kosovo see Jasna Dragović-Soso, “Saviours of the Nation”: *Serbia’s Intellectual Opposition and the Revival of Nationalism* (London: Hurst, 2002), chapter 3. For the text of the intellectuals’ petition see “Zahtev za pravnim poretkom na Kosovu,” in Aleksa Djilas, ed., *Srpsko pitanje* (Belgrade: Politika, 1991), 260–61.
- 55 Šolević, interview.
- 56 Šolević, interview.
- 57 Budimirović, interview.
- 58 Based on detailed eyewitness accounts of the events in *Nedeljna Borba*, 25–26 April 1987, 9; *Borba*, 19 January 1993, 15; *Borba*, 20 January 1993, 15; and interviews of Budimirović, Šolević, and Kecman by Vladislavljević. For all seventy-eight speeches see the full transcript from the meeting published in *Borba*, 8, 9–10, and 11 May 1987.
- 59 Nebojša Vladislavljević, “Institutional Power and the Rise of Milošević.”
- 60 Draža Marković, interview by Nebojša Vladislavljević, 16 August 2000.
- 61 Budimirović, Šolević, and Kecman, interviews, and Dušan Ristić cited in Antić, “Srbija nema rešenje za Kosovo.”
- 62 Copy of the petition in Vladislavljević’s possession. See excerpts in “Iz peticije 50.000 potpisnika,” *Danas*, 5 July 1988.
- 63 Budimirović and Šolević, interviews, and Mićo Šparavalo, a prominent activist, cited in Sava Kerčov, Jovo Radoš, and Aleksandar Raič, *Mitinzi u Vojvodini 1988. godine: rađanje političkog pluralizma* (Novi Sad: Dnevnik, 1990), 243–44.
- 64 Darko Hudelist, *Kosovo: bitka bez iluzija* (Zagreb: Centar za informacije i publicitet, 1989).
- 65 Stevan Marinković and Migo Samardžić, prominent activists, cited in Kerčov, Radoš, and Raič, *Mitinzi u Vojvodini*, 229–30, 241.



- 66 It has been noted in a review of this draft that in the late 1980s it was only the Kosovo Serbs who were marching to Belgrade to complain of their status and it was only the Serbs who were organizing protest meetings against the SFRY constitution. However, this observation does not take away from the argument that such mobilization was not unique for Socialist Yugoslavia. What differed, of course, was that this mobilization took place against the backdrop of the 1980s.