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THE PHENOMENON OF MILITARY-POLICE VIOLENCE IN KOSOVA IN THE YEARS 1981-1992

1. The military-police violence in Kosova was imposed under the circumstances of an outburst of the movement for the Republic of Kosova. Being a vast territory of high-levelled territorial, national and historic compactness, in the former federation of Yugoslavia, Kosova was a constitutional subject of this federation, but not a gradient of the republic component of the federation. The Albanians' massive demand for Kosova's full political individuality to the level of a republic, just like the other six federal republics, was estimated as a counter-revolutionary one. It was estimated as such by the power organs of the province of Kosova, of the Republic of Serbia and those of the SFRY, as well as by the organisations of the former communist league of Yugoslavia, of Kosova, the Republic of Serbia and of the Yugoslav Federation. On April 1, 1981 the SFRY presidency declared a state of emergency in Kosova¹. This implied the implementation of violence on the subjects that put forth the demand "Kosova - a Republic". On this occasion the military and police organs of former Yugoslavia assumed the responsibility of bending and oppressing this demand by force. These acts were perpetrated allegedly in the name of preserving the constitutionalism of the Yugoslav Federation, when it is common knowledge that such a demand was put forward precisely on the basis of the Constitution of the ex-SFRY. From the moment the state of emergency was declared and military police forces committed to it, violence assumed an organized state character against the Albanians, bringing about greater political riots in Kosova. Similar measures were adopted in other Albanian territories beyond Kosova in former Yugoslavia.

The created situation provided the Serbian chauvinistic circles with the pretext to up two questions: the creation of a unique Serbia by reducing the autonomy of Kosova and Vojvodina² and the redefining of the Serbs' position in the other republics of former Yugoslavia. In essence the aspiration for the formation of Great Serbia was actualized. War became inevitable. Violence in Kosova assumed double proportions: violence allegedly in the name of defending the constitutionalism of the Yugoslav federation and violence for the creation of unique Serbia, respectively of Great Serbia. Henceforth, on the one side the Albanians ought to defend the right an request for self-determination, while on the other, they ought to make efforts to maintain the autonomy they had enjoyed since 1974. Practically all the Albanians of Kosova found themselves facing military-police violence. Violence was extended also on the Albanians of the other territories in former Yugoslavia in the 80's of this century.

It was the military-police organs of Kosova, Serbia and Yugoslavia and their employees that exerted violence on the Albanians. meanwhile the number of Albanians working in these organs kept reducing. Henceforth, since June 1988 ethnically cleansed police formations operated in Kosova against the Albanians beyond any parliamentary and judicial control. 4 000 Albanian employees of the Kosove police³ counterpoised to their committment in the Serbian occupying police formations created

in Kosova to subdue the Albanians, who sought the right to self-determination democratically. Under these circumstances, in order to eliminate the facts about their crimes perpetrated in Kosova (murders, injuries, beatings, poisonings, etc), the Serbian military police forces occupied, by means force, the objects, means and documentation of the police of Kosova, dismissing from their jobs all those who were not loyal to Serbia's interests. The police forces which kept growing continuously occupied for their needs even schools⁴ and social places in Kosova. It is supposed that the number of policemen in Kosova in 1989 was

9 000, whereas in 1992 this figure amounted to 40 000⁵. According to German sources, "Serbia has concentrated in Kosova more than 100 000 fighting troops, (mobile) police forces as well as armed Serbian civilians enclosed in territorial defense troops. Military objectives were extended and time and again motorized troops roamed the streets of cities and villages. The association for Endangered Peoples of Getingen admitted that "the Albanians are mostly endangered by Serbian militarism"⁶. Special police units took part in some special police operations against the Albanians⁷. There were staged artificial court sittings against Albanian soldiers⁸. 66 Albanian soldiers were killed from 1982-1991. The explanation for these killings was the same for all: committed suicide. Beginning with April 1985 the supervision and control of all courts at all levels began in Kosova by groups of judges of the Yugoslav Federal organs and those of Serbia. 200 Albanian diplomats in jurisprudence, of a relatively long professional experience, employed in different-levelled courts of Kosova were dismissed from their jobs⁹. These are some indices testifying that ex-Yugoslavia and after 1989 Serbia resorted to violence against the Albanians and against their legitimate and democratic demands.

Due to the fact that violence in Kosova was addressed against the free will of the Albanians for self-determination and national development, the forms of its organization and implementation during the years 1981-1992 were similar to those undertaken by organs of various militarist states against certain populations. The forms of violence resorted to in Kosova during the years 1981-1992 were: broad and intensive propaganda in the mass media, instigating the crisis of the society in ex-Yugoslavia and the political and economic one, ideological subversion, intimidation, menace, rape, discrimination, genocide, ethnocide and direct actions against peace and international law. Such violence began with the organisation of special strife.

2. In the escalation of the forms of military-police violence in Kosova, special strife occupies the first place. Its intensity has moved from that of the highest degree to a medium one. Special strife was organised in the psychoterrorism form, which is a contemporary form of organisation of the special strife.

During 1981-1989 alone there were published about 800 000¹⁰ articles, statements, discourses, feuilletons, photos, interviews, caricatures, comments, reports on the Albanians and their country, their customs and traditions, the Albanian history, culture, language, and family life, the features and character of the Albanians, etc. Figures provide evidence to the quantity of these publications. In the parts published by the tribuns of the Writers' Association of Serbia entitled "On Kosova for Kosova" the most vulgar words are used; the words "uncouth outlaws", "criminals", "spies", etc., witness high frequency of usage in this tribune of Serbian intellectuals.

In many publicistic and "Scientific" publications, facts are distorted

particularly on the Albanian ethnogenesis, the Albanian League of Prizren, the Bujan Conference, etc. Some Serbian publicistic scientific theses and daily press have extensively dealt with the high natality rate of the Albanians and the danger allegedly "threatening" Serbian lands as a result of the increase of the number of Albanians. Spokesmen of this "danger" were some academicians and senior politicians, where the academicians Macura and Qosic and S. Dolanci from the politicians claim distinction. The latter admitted that "the Albanians in the year 2030 will be the largest nation in numbers in the Balkan, therefore this is a question of our strategy of growth"¹¹. The so-called expulsion of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosova has also become the object of writings and "scientific" and political instructions. They asserted that about 400 000 Serbs and Montenegrins were deported "by force" from Kosova and 320 Serbian and Montenegrin settlements were Albanianized. They sustained what was indeed false that 300 000 Albanians came from Albania and live in Kosova and their expulsion from Kosova is demanded at present, irrespective of the Official Declaration of the Serbian government, that only 723 persons from Albania live in Kosova. This was ascertained by the Commissariat on Emigrants and was published in "Politika", November 29, 1981. In this effect we pick out the observation of the Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, which says "The violence which in the course of the centuries reduced the Serbian population of Kosova led to the end of the Serbs"¹². These ideas met the unreserved approval of the provincial mentality of the Serbian and Montenegrin peasants of Kosova plain, who, in the so-called "Solidarity rallies" demanded the Albanians' deportation beyond the Bjeshkët e Nemura (Cursed Highlands).

3. The direct military-police violence adopted vast proportions and appeared in the form of the deprivation of the Albanians freedom and personal security, of the violation of physical and psychic integrity and of the deprivation of the Albanians' right to live. The facts of these forms of military police violence follow this order. From March 1989 up to October 1989, 584 373 Albanians were treated by the police¹³. Up to the end of 1992 the number of the Albanians that had to deal with the police reached the figure of 900 000 people¹⁴. Various maltreatments were committed against them, which according to intensity begin with threats and ended in beatings as a result of which, the people lost their consciousness wholly or partially. The isolation of the Albanians constituted a special form of military police violence in Kosova, exercised since the year 1981, but in a little known form. Later isolation attained an overt character. In 1989, about 237 Albanian intellectuals (teachers, journalists, economists, judges, physicians, university and secondary school professors, public employees and leaders of economic organizations) were deprived of their freedom and were shut in Leskovc prison out of Kosova. They were beaten till they fainted from the moment they passed the prison gate. They were interrogated till they were physically and psychically exhausted. They lived in that prison with blood-stained clothes, dirty, hungry, etc. We learned about these maltreatments from two publications of the isolated people¹⁵, providing a sad testimony for the readers. The juridically undefended isolated people were settled in a police barrack on March 28, 1989 and were released on June 26, 1989¹⁶.

Since 1991 the police violence against the Albanians, mainly against the peasants of the Dukagjin Plateau, was intensified under the pretext of gathering their

weapons. This form of violence resulted in the first victim, Adem Zeqiraj, who died as a result of the mortal beatings at the police station of Brovina (Ponoshec). Meanwhile, from 1991 to March 1993, 1 023 Albanians¹⁷ were registered as maltreated in police centres. This tested campaign by the Serbian police particularly in the years 1953-1956, accelerated the process of the Albanians' expulsion.

The beating of the Albanians, of the children in front of their parents, of the parents in front of their children, of women and aged people in fields, buses, private cars, weddings, streets, burial places and workplaces are special forms of the phenomenon of violence. To this end military and police punitive expeditions were organised in these villages: Baliq, Brestoc, Bukosh, Komogllave, Kosuriq, Morine, Mushtisht, Nedakoc, Pobergje, Pollate, Prekaz, Shipashnicë, Ternave, Zhur, as well as in some dwelling places and city quarters such as: Decan, Ferizaj, Gjakova, Kacanik, Klina, Lipjan, Mitrovica, Peja, Prishtina, Prizren, Skenderaj, Vushtria etc. In the course of such expeditions, houses were raided, family members maltreated, furniture of raided houses damaged, winter food reserves destroyed, and feminine ornaments and currency that had been obtained through great sacrifices plundered.

Police expeditions were organized also to occupy health, educational, and scientific institutions, the Radio-Television building, and the Press Palace where "Rilindja" was printed. They acted in the same way with the Faculty of Medicine on August 10, 1990 when police forces accompanied by three tanks entered the faculty breaking doors and windows, throwing out the Albanian doctors through violence.

The intoxication of Albanian children from 3-16 years of age¹⁸ in some pre-school institutions, elementary and secondary schools in Decan, Gjakove, Peje, Podujeve, Prishtine etc., remained a mysterious undertaking which might be attributed to the military-police secret service. 7 400 pupils many of whom will suffer grave consequences in a later period of their lives, were poisoned deliberately in an organised way.

Among the gravest effects of the military-police violence is the deprivation of the Albanians of life. During 1981-1992, 120 Albanians were killed by firearms and died as a result of physical and psychic tortures of the army and police of former Yugoslavia. Many of them were stabbed in the back, while some others are believed to have been killed with prohibited ammunition¹⁹. Besides these killed from the ranks of the Albanian civilian, 66 Albanian soldiers returned home killed by the soldiers of the YPA with the same explanation: committed suicide. This served as motivation for all the Albanians killed by the YPA.

The police and army of former Yugoslavia wounded 616 Albanians with firearms. Many of them have remained permanent invalids. As a result of police torture, during the years 1990-1992, grave bodily injuries have been inflicted to 3 667 Albanians.

The murders and injuries were inflicted by shooting against crowds of citizens and by aiming at certain individuals. Depending on the shooting target, it has been witnessed that there have been gunshots aimed at a calm crowd of Albanians who were minding their own way and business in the market or streets (the case of Malisheva and Podujeva), gunshots against school pupils and their parents who were speaking out in favour of the constitution (the Zur case) and gunshots aimed at certain individuals on the street, where there were no rallies or gatherings whatsoever (the case of Fatmir

Ukaj's murder in Peja, on November 27, 1990). Some of the assassinations assumed the proportions of massacres. Such murders were committed in Brestovc, Budrige, Gllogovc, Lupc, Janjeve, Malisheve, Mitrovica, Podujeve, Stanovc and Zhur. In these places the massacres have mainly been perpetrated since March 27-30, 1989²⁰. There have been killed, wounded and tortured citizens from all over Kosova.

Amongst those killed there were teachers, solicitors, farmers, pupils, students, craftsmen, etc. During the 1981-1990 period, there were killed 16 under-aged, who account for 22.53%

of those killed²¹. While 49 others were wounded by firearms. As documents²² of official organs, respectively judicial ones, read "no judicial procedure has taken place against the authors of these penal offences".

Serbia's mass media justified the murders and injuries inflicted on the Albanians with the necessity of the measures the so-called "power of the rule of law"²³ ought to undertake, proclaiming the Albanians "terrorists". As for the name it bears and the function it performs such a state can be defined as a military-police state power, a unitarianist-centralist state.

4. The Albanians in Kosova, as it is rightfully said, have been declared a population undefended by law "...outconstitutional, outlaw and outparliamentary"²⁴. With the adoption of the law "On the activity of the republican organs under special circumstances, the law "On the suspension of the activity of the Assembly of Kosova and its executive Council", the law "On labour relations under special circumstances" and of other laws, the police military units of the Serbian power occupied by force all the economic organisations and judicial organs, all the educational, cultural, scientific, informative institutions, the health and public protection enterprises of Kosova, etc. Based on the aforesaid laws and by imposing the Serbian military police violence on 460 economic and social organisations, 149 371 Albanians workers were dismissed from work. They accounted for over 2/3 of all those employed in public and state organisations²⁵. The integration of the economic organizations of Kosova with those of Serbia, which brought about the loss of the economic subjectiveness of Kosova, was attained through violence. Work in mines, the PTT service, the RTV of Prishtina, the faculties of the University of Prishtina, etc., is supervised by the military police forces. When the workers were dismissed from their jobs, the economic potential of the Albanian families was reduced and about one million Albanians of Kosova are currently fighting against famine and the illnesses that follow. They do not receive the right of health, social and retirement insurance. 1 657 health workers of the public sector were also expelled from the Faculty of Medicine. There are almost no Albanian physicians in the gynecological, pediatric and surgery wards. Infant mortality rates augmented. One out of three graves is an infant's grave. This is how biological struggle against the Albanians' natality made it way.

The police forces occupied secondary school and the Prishtina University buildings. The Albanian school is contested both from the point of view of its contents and of the organization of the educational-didactic and scientific work. It has been than 36 months that the Albanian teachers have not gotten their monthly revenues for their regular work.

Due to the police violence the Prishtina RTV suspended its broadcasts in the Albanian language since September 5, 1990; and on August 7, 1990, the sole newspaper

in the Albanian language "Rilindja" was banned. Amongst the Albanian journalists two were killed by the secret police of former Yugoslavia, six were condemned for 1-15 years imprisonment, 76 others witnessed (experienced) home raids and many journalists and their family members were beaten and maltreated.

With the ruining of the educational-didactic system of the Albanians and of the information system in the Albanian language, one of the main factors of the Albanians' national development ceased to function. The wide spread of the truth on the Albanians of Kosova was interrupted.

The ruining of the economic bank system, the educational-didactic system, health, social and retirement system, and the information system in the Albanian language, etc., instigated the process of the Albanians' expulsion from Kosova. Military violence forced many Albanian youngsters to refuse the appeals to join the Yugoslav Army, and a considerable number of Albanian soldiers abandoned their units and detachments of the Yugoslav army for not accepting combat against the Croats, Moslems and Slovenes. Many of them were obliged to leave Kosova and live in foreign countries without a definite status. The Albanians' emigration from Kosova is simultaneously thwarted with legally-reinforced operations for Kosova's Serbianization. Hence, Serbia's Assembly passed the document entitled "Program for the realization of peace, freedom, equality, democracy and prosperity in Kosova"²⁶. In order to carry this program into effect, special laws were issued, accordingly favoring the Serbs and Montenegrins materially and morally in order to come and live in Kosova. Amongst these laws there was one on the restriction of immovables' bargain, the law on the transfer of monetary means from the deposits of the People's Bank of Kosova to the deposits of the Belgrade banks. There was also a law on the conditions and way of dividing agricultural land to the citizens wishing to live and work in the territory of the Autonomous Province of Kosova and Metohi, etc. Special decisions and ordinances, such as: the decision of the renaming of streets, squares, schools and other cultural centres of Kosova, the decision on the changes and complements of town planning schemes and environmental arrangement, were passed besides the aforesaid laws. These laws, decisions and ordinances were accompanied by the use of violence by police and military units, which took the Albanians' land by force in order to build churches, dwelling flats, habitations, factories, etc., to meet the needs of the Serbs and Montenegrins who were to come and live in Kosova. All these measures, accompanied by military police violence forced about 500 000 Albanian youngsters to abandon Kosova. In this way, Kosova of the 80's and 90's of the 20th century is experiencing the ethnic cleansing of Albanian territories and changing by force of the national composition of its population.

1. The state of Emergency in Kosova was declared four times, three times by the Presidency of ex-Yugoslavia (April 1, 1981, February 27, 1989, AND April 24, 1990 and once by the Presidency of the RS 26.06.1990.

2. *Plava Knjiga*, ("Blue Book"), Beograd, 1976.

3. Amnesty International. *Yugoslavia Ethnic Albanians-Victims of torture and ill-treatment by police in Kosovo Province*, June, 1992, A index 48/18.

4. The dormitory of Middle School Pupils in Prishtinë.

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6. Speech of the association representative at the German- Albanian rally.
7. Special unit of the Federal Secretariat of Internal Affairs.
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9. *The ruining of Kosova's autonomy*, The Independent Lawyers' Association of Kosova, Prishtinë, 1992, pp.89-113.
10. R.Qosja, *Populli i ndaluar, Mega-Medium*, Prishtinë, 1990, p.198.
11. S.Dolanc, *Intervista*, Lublana, October 1988.
12. *Memorandum SANU*, Duga, Belgrade, September, 1986, p.41.
13. Statement of the Provincial Secretary of Home Affairs at Kosova's Assembly.
14. *Memorandum of the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights and Liberties in Prishtina*. UN Committee of Human Rights.
15. I.Osmani - F.Faslliu, *Tunelet e tmerrit*, Prishtinë, 1992; K.Berisha, *Ditari i një izolanti*, Prishtinë, 1992.
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17. Documentation of the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights and Liberties.
18. *The massive intoxication of Albanian children proven to be true and deliberate*, February 20, 1993.
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20. Z.Separovic - E.Ademaj, *Kosovo-Zrtva*, Zagreb, 1991, pp.122 - 123.
21. *Ibidem*, p.97.
22. *Memorandum of the CDHRL in Prishtina*. To the un Committee for the Defence of Human Rights and Liberties in Geneva, ("Bujku", dt. April 9, 1992).
23. "Borba", dt. 01.01.1993.
24. Dr. E.Stavileci, *Rrënimet e autonomisë së Kosovës*, Shoqata e Pavarur e Juristëve të Kosovës, Prishtinë, 1992, p.43.
25. The documentation of Independent Trade Unions of Kosova.
26. *Sluzbeni glasnik SRS*, no.15/90, dt.30.03.1990.

2. "NINT, 41.07.02.1993.
3. Speech of the association representative at the German-Albanian rally.
4. Special unit of the Federal Secretariat of Internal Affairs.
5. Parasiti's case.
6. The release of Kosovo's autonomy: The Independent Lawyer's Association to the release of Kosovo's autonomy. 1992, pp. 89-111.
7. R. Gora, *Forvili i ndaluar*, 1990, p. 12.
8. Dolac, *Interveju*, October 1988, an extract to national press.
9. Memorandum 24.VI.1992, *Interveju*, September 1992, p. 41.
10. Statement of the President Secretary of Home Affairs at Kosovo's Assembly.
11. Memorandum of the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights, 1992.
12. *Interveju*, 1992, p. 41.
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2. *Maro Knjiga* ("Blue Book"), Beograd, 1976.
3. Amnesty International, *Report on Ethnic Albanians: Victims of torture and ill-treatment by police in Kosovo Province*, June, 1992. A index 48/14.
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