

# “The Republic of Kosovo”, A Classical Mafia State. The History of Kosovo and Metohia

“Disputed Land”?

By [Dr. Vladislav B. Sotirović](#)

Global Research, January 10, 2023

Region: [Europe](#)

Theme: [History](#)

All Global Research articles can be read in 51 languages by activating the **Translate Website** button below the author’s name.

To receive Global Research’s Daily Newsletter (selected articles), [click here](#).

Follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) and subscribe to our [Telegram Channel](#). Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

\*\*\*

*Kosovo and Metochia (KosMet) is a southwestern province of the Republic of Serbia – a central region of the political, national, economic, cultural, and religious life of Serbia in the Middle Ages. The region was occupied by the Ottoman authorities in 1455 and subsequently was under the Islamic-Ottoman yoke until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The consequences of the Ottoman administration on the further development of the region were quite tragic in several points:*

1. The Christian medieval feature of KosMet was to the great extent replaced by Islamic characteristics.
2. The ethnic breakdown of the region was drastically changed at the expense of the Christian Serbs and in the favor of Muslim Albanians who occupied KosMet as migrants from neighboring North Albania.
3. The European culture of the region was significantly changed in the favor of the Asiatic-Oriental cultural feature.
4. KosMet became one of the fundamental sources of Balkan Islamic radicalism till today.
5. The region is during the last hundred years one of the principal points of the Balkan Powder Keg creating as such internationally recognized problematic Kosovo Question.

Nevertheless, after the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913, a larger (eastern) part of KosMet became reincluded into the Kingdom of Serbia, after the Ottoman Empire was pushed out from the biggest part of the Balkans by the Balkan Alliance composed of Serbian, Greek, Bulgarian and Montenegrin forces (the First and Second Balkan Wars 1912–1913).[i]

A minor (western) part of KosMet became at the same time for the first time in history included into the state of Montenegro due to Serbia’s generosity toward the Montenegrin “brothers”. In November 1918 Vojvodina, which was a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire,

joined Serbia, which in her turn joined the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (renamed in 1929 as the Kingdom of Yugoslavia), the new state of all South Slavs except Bulgarians.[ii] However, by the creation of the first South Slavic state on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1918 KosMet brought into this political entity a sizeable trouble-making Muslim Albanian population (the Shqiptars in the following how they are calling themselves), whereas in Vojvodina lived an approximately equal number of peaceful ethnic Hungarians followed by the German Volksdeuschers. However, from the political viewpoint, the difference between KosMet's Shqiptars on one hand and Vojvodina's Hungarians and Germans on another was quite immense as the latter never caused any serious troubles in the new state for the next twenty years of its existence while the Shqiptars, in contrast, became from the very beginning of the Yugoslav unification in 1918 an extremely disturbing and disloyal element within both Serbia and Yugoslavia.

Furthermore, for the last almost three decades, since the disintegration of Yugoslavia in 1991, **KosMet has become a hot spot on the globe attracting huge international attention primarily due to the Albanian policy of secessionism and Islamic holy war (jihad) against the local Christian Serb population.**

**On this place, one can ask a fundamental question: What makes a region of the size of Corsica and a population of something 1.5 million so special that it forced first Serbia, and then half the globe, to engage in extinguishing the fire which threatens in 1999 to endanger the entire world order and global security?**

**Nevertheless, the quasi-independent Republic of Kosovo is today a classical mafia state under the protection of the Western "democracies".[iii] Why?**

KosMet region, the southwestern part of Serbia, is considered by many Western authors as a "disputed land" for the last two centuries. A traditional Western image of the issue of the Kosovo Question is that two competing nations, the Serbs and the Albanians (Shqiptars) are fighting for the dominance over the region.[iv]

Nevertheless, it is finally created a wrong impression about the present-day political situation in concern to the Kosovo Question that it is that two sides are claiming their rights taking into consideration two different arguments:

the Serbs are referring to their "historical rights" while the Shqiptars are relying on their actual numerical preponderance which is, in fact, a product of 300 years of ethnic cleansing of and terror against KosMet Serbs. However, for all real and non-partisan experts on the Kosovo Question it is clear that, in essence, there is not the issue of "disputed land" between Serbs and Shqiptars but rather the issue of a robbery of the province by the latter.[v] In other words, the whole issue of the Kosovo Question is set up upside down by the Western corporate media, politicians, warmongers, and academics based on misconceptions, fake news, and even notorious lies about KosMet history and politics (one of the best examples is a British historian and "expert on Yugoslav history", Noel Malcolm). Those misconceptions, fake news, and lies are developed and maintained for a longer period of time up to the present, and, therefore, they have to be publicly presented and decisively refuted before any serious discourse on this matter is going to be carried out.[vi] Basically, it has to be exposed as real and based on the relevant sources of the historical, political, demographic, ethical, and religious background of the Kosovo Question. It has to be noticed in this respect that there are authors who argue that the Kosovo Question is predominantly of an anthropological nature, rather than a political one. Anyway, in principle, it has to be

examined a number of possible solutions to the “dispute”, from an ideal one to the realistic one, putting the whole issue in the broader historical and actual worldwide political perspective as otherwise, the issue of the Kosovo Question is going to be blatantly taken out from its real context (what a majority of Western “experts” are exactly doing).

A leading research direction of the issue can be, for instance, to take into serious consideration the case of Kosovo Shqiptars’ natural birth-rate phenomena. Here it is going to be presented only one illustrative case of this politically motivated phenomenon. A French magazine published a couple of photos from the Lion airport on April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1999, during the airborne aggression by NATO on Serbia (and partly on Montenegro), in the course of their “preventing a humanitarian catastrophe” at KosMet. However, one picture showed the French weaponry ready to be transported to KosMet, and the other presented an ethnic-Albanian family from KosMet, “refugees” just arrived in France. The latter photo deserves well one’s attention, for it speaks very much about the core of the Kosovo Question indeed as it exposes vividly the very crux of the matter. Let us analyze this picture, presenting the “unfortunate” family of Kosovars (as the Western “experts” call KosMet Shqiptars). First of all, it was a single family, consisting of three generations. On the left, we see the grandmother (with scarf), and on the right father and mother of the children posing around. Evidently, it is the peasant family. Though the children appear well dressed (probably by a humanitarian agency), the adults reveal their modest well-being. One can notice the first three daughters, the eldest and two twin girls next to her followed by two daughters in the front and two boys beside as well. The central figure appears as the young girl, of about 8, who shows the V sign in a Churchill-like gesture. What is she trying to tell us? The family is hardly in a “victorious position”. Who is going to defeat whom? Who instructed her to pose before the cameras in that manner? These are the basic questions that come to mind when looking at this scene at the Lion airport.

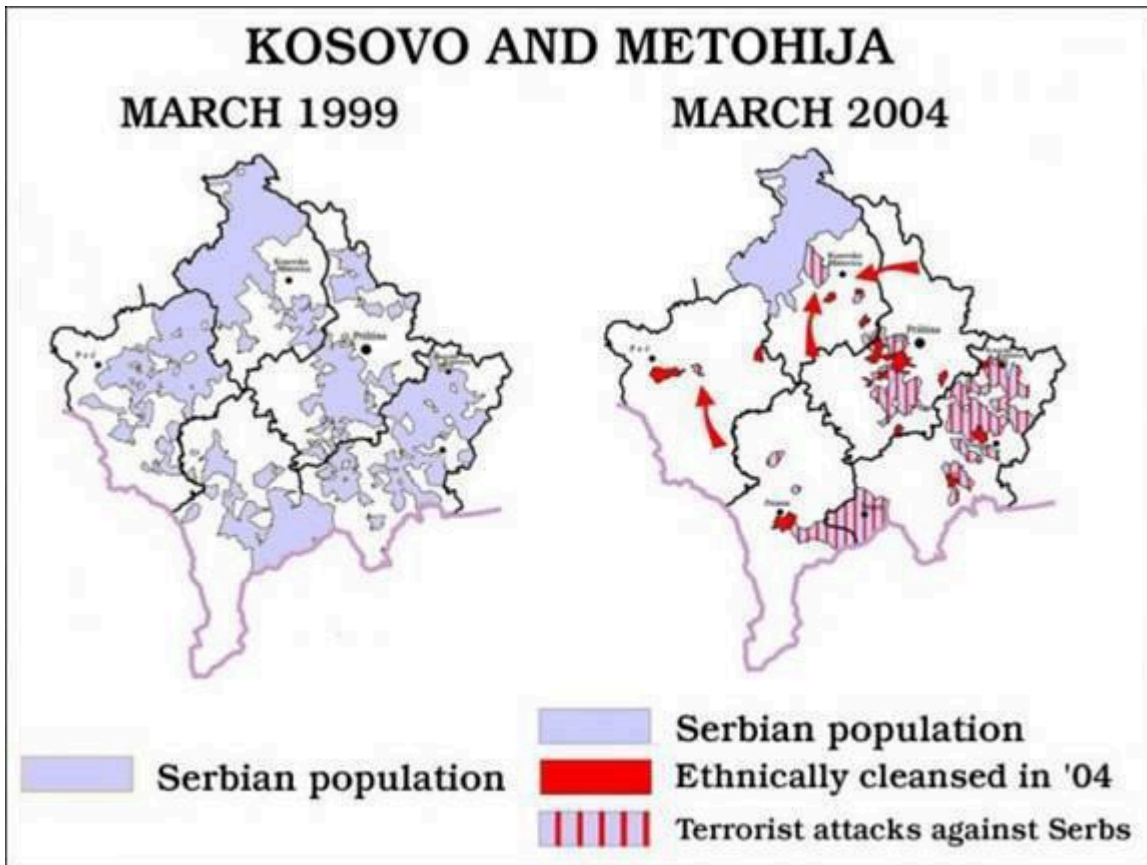
## Toponyms

The authentic and original toponyms of some regions probably tell the best about the genuine ownership of it from the ethnonational point of view. It is, however, the most problematic and hidden aspect of the Kosovo Question by the Western “experts” who never wanted to deal with this issue as it is clearly refuting their arguments about allegedly Albanian features of this region of South-West Serbia, called Kosovo and Metohia (but not only Kosovo), which is an autonomous province of Serbia since 1945 but enjoyed till 1989 a significant political sovereignty especially from 1974 (according to the last Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia).

To start from the very beginning, the very name Kosovo is a short-term Kosovo Polje, meaning in the Serbian language Field of Blackbirds (*kos* - blackbird in the Serbian language).[vii] In order to avoid confusion, it has to be adopted the standard rule for the terms used in, at least, scientific literature. Therefore, ethnic Albanians who are citizens of Serbia have to be designated by *Shqiptars* (Shqiptare, “sons of eagles”),[viii] as they call themselves and were usually called in Yugoslavia until the mid-1970s. Nevertheless, another interpretation of the term is stemming from *shqipoj*, “one who understands”. This interpretation appears in accordance with the similar case of *Slav* - “one who speaks (slovi)”, as different from *Nemac* (German), “one who is mute (nem)”. However, it is a fact that most of Serbia’s Shqiptars consider now the term pejorative but only if it is used by the Serbs, for several historical reasons.[ix] The principal reason is that many designations of the present-day Shqiptars/Albanians throughout history were, to many Balkan people

eponymous to wild people, including the Ottoman administration. In particular, the name *Arnaut*, widely used during the Ottoman occupation of the Balkans, was synonymous with the robber, highwayman, belligerent savage, etc.[x] The name Shqiptar was in many respects similarly used by the Slavic population. A modern equivalent to Shqiptar in Western usage as the term for KosMet ethnic Albanians/Shiptars is an artificial ethnonym *Kosovars* which is used mainly for purely political and propaganda purposes in order to show that a separate quasi-ethnic nation exists. Nevertheless, the term appears misleading for the very reason as it implies “inhabitants of Kosovo”, which includes all ethnicities of the province of KosMet. *Shqipëria* is the internal official name of present-day Albania and the Albanians (Shqiptars) themselves are calling their own national state in which they are living. The spoken and national language of all Shqiptars no matter which country they inhabitants is called by themselves *Shqip*. According to Albanian historiography, it is most probable that the ethnic name of Shqiptars is derived from the term *shqipon* (clearly to say).[xi]

The official term for Serbia’s southern province of KosMet is *Kosovo and Metochia* but for the very political reasons, the Shiptars are all the time omitting its second part (Metochia) using only the first one (as *Kosova* or *Kosovë*). The toponym Kosovo/Kosova/Kosovë with its root *Kos* simply means nothing in the Ship (Albanian) language as it is borrowed from Slavic/Serbian. Subsequently, the Shqiptars even do not have their name for the land they claim to be allegedly their own even from an immemorial time (by propagating false claims to be the oldest Balkan and even European people as the descendants of ancient Balkan Illyrians)! [xii] The question is why they are purposely omitting to use of the toponym Metochia? For the very political reason as the toponym shows that the Shiptars have historically nothing to do with this province. To remind ourselves, *Metochia* is corrupt of Greek μετόχι, which designates a dependency of a monastery, usually allotted by the local ruler or the king. The name refers to the monasteries complex of the western part of the province, bordering both Montenegro and Albania. The essence is that Metochia is crowded by medieval Serbian monasteries but not Albanian. The Serbian Orthodox Church in this matter even claims that around 70% of KosMet land legally belongs to it. However, the same region of Metochia is called by Shiptars as *Dukagjin* – the land of a duke.[xiii] It has to be mentioned here that it designates generally a border region, which used to be under the military rule of a duke (like Frankish *marka*). Northern Serbia’s region, which is an autonomous province as KosMet, is called *Vojvodina* (the land of a duke), for the same reason, since it was situated on the border of the Habsburg/Austrian Monarchy (renamed Austria-Hungary from 1867) with the Ottoman Empire after the Great Vienna War in 1683–1699 and a big part of it was under the military rule as such. Here it has to be emphasized that *kos* is a purely Slavic/Serb name, as *duka* is a corrupted Italian one.



However, these facts are not merely of linguistic nature but bear a heavyweight when dealing with the essence of the Kosovo Question for the very reason that the authentic toponyms, in general, appear to be the most reliable identification of a region and at the same time crucial evidence of the fact as to whom the region, in fact, historically belongs. Therefore, the basic clarifications of the KosMet toponym issue are necessary to be pointed out in the next paragraphs.

*Kosovo* is a pan-Slavic and pra-Slavic name of the kind of bird, which has about 300 subspecies, from the family *Turdidae*, derived from the Greek *kopsihos*. The Kosovo Field, where historically a number of important battles were fought, is situated northwest of the regional capital Priština.[xiv]

*Metochia* is derived from a Greek *metohi* as mentioned above, from *meteho* - to take part. It denotes a monastery estate (of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the KosMet case).

*Priština*, a pan-Slavic and pra-Slavic term, derived from *prysk*, derived in its turn from the Indo-European *(s)per*, to become the verb *prisnoti*, meaning "to spurt", "to gush". In the modern Serbian language, the term *prisht* designates decease, boil (anthrax).

The town of Priština was an important trade and mine medieval center, with an important Dubrovnik colony. A Serbian King Stefan Dečanski (1321–1331)[xv] used to stay at Priština, while Serbian Emperor Stephan Dušan (1331–1355) had his court here for some time.[xvi]

After Stephan Dušan, Priština became the capital of Vuk Branković's feud and retained that position even after the Kosovo Battle in 1389.

His wife Mara lived there with her sons, Grgur (Gregorie) and Đurađ (Georgie), as well as Prince Lazar's widow Eugenia (known in the folk songs as Empress Milica). The Ottomans

took Priština in 1439, but the Dubrovnik colony remains there as Dubrovnik had all the time very good political relations with the Ottoman authorities.[xvii] In 1660 a Roman-Catholic missionary mentions Priština as an important post between Novi Pazar and Istanbul (Constantinople). During the Austrian-Ottoman war in 1683–1699 (the Great Vienna War) the former had a small garrison there in 1689.[xviii] However, according to the Austrian records, there were about 360 villages around, some of which were set to fire by Muslim Turks and Tatars and (Serb Christian) inhabitants slaughtered. At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Priština appears to be an important trade town, with a famous fair, with some 12.000 inhabitants. France established her consulate there in 1812. According to some reports, Priština had at the time about 7.000–9.000 inhabitants, mainly Christian Orthodox Serbs, but some Muslim Arnauts and semi-Islamized Serbs too. However, in 1852 the reports count 12.000–15.000 inhabitants, one-third Serbs and Tsintsars (the Christian Orthodox Vlachs), the rest Muslim Arnauts.[xix] After two big fires in 1859 and 1863, Priština suffered a considerable decline.

*Prizren*, a pan-Slavic and pra-Slavic name, from *zreti*, to see. Derived from the Indo-European *gher*, to flash, participle perfect *zren*. A prefix *pri* is the common pan-Slavic and pra-Slavic. Prizren (a main urban settlement in Metochia) was mentioned as the episcopate in 1019 as subordinated to the Byzantine Ohrid archiepiscopate. The first Serbian archiepiscop (archbishop) St. Sava (1219–1236) subordinated it to his new Serbian archiepiscopate.[xx] Prizren was developed as a trade town in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, especially during Serbian King Milutin (1282–1321) and Serbian Emperors Stephan Dušan and Stephan Uroš (1355–1371), who had their courts there. Stephan Dušan built a monastery with a memorial church devoted to St. Archangels (Michael and Gavril). After falling into the Ottoman hands, the monastery was demolished and no trace of the grave of Emperor Dušan has remained. It was an important colony of Dubrovnik in Prizren, with two Roman-Catholic churches. The Ottomans took Prizren in 1455 and after that, the town was becoming more and more Islamic but even in 1878 2/3 of its population have been Christian Orthodox Serbs (today only several Serbs are left in the city). Nevertheless, during the Ottoman occupation, Prizren lost most of its trade role but there were some rich merchants like Turk Mehmed Hajredin Kukli-beg with his 117 shops, 6 watermills, and caravanserai (hotel). The Shqiptars appear there late, in the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century only. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, trade receives a new impetus at Prizren, with some 8.600 (1610) and 12.000 (1655) homes. The town was renowned for its fountains, watermills (600), nice houses, and pleasant gardens. Craftsmanship was very developed, especially guns and sabers productions. Prizren was the largest Serb town in the region, second only to Skopje. Still, the overwhelming majority of the population was Christian Orthodox Serbs. Though there was a Roman-Catholic episcopate chair, there were 30–40 Roman-Catholic homes only. However, in both the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries Prizren was a victim of ethnic-Shqiptar highlanders, mainly of the Mirdites tribe from North Albania. At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, many towns were devastated by the Shqiptars, including Prizren, mainly by highwaymen. For instance, father Sava reports how in 1795 Mahmud-pasha Bushatli and his Shqiptars devastated Prizren and only 7.000–8.000 homes remained, much lesser than there were in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

According to one record in 1805, Prizren experienced a revival. Its inhabitants were partly Muslims and partly Christian Orthodox, but both the Serbs, as their (Slavic) language revealed. The 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the further development of Prizren. According to J.

Miller (1844), the following statistics were offered; 6.000 homes, with 18.600 Orthodox citizens, 2.150 Roman Catholics, 4.000 Muslims (4/5 Serbs), and 600 Tsigans (Roma/Gypsies). Trade was mainly in the hands of the Serbs. The town had many mosques (12 big, 42 altogether), many clock towers, and one Christian Orthodox and one Roman-Catholic church. Trade was done mainly with Thessaloniki since the trade road to Skadar (Scodra/Scutari) was insecure due to the Shqiptar highwaymen.



*Mitrovica*, after the Greek St. Demetrios, Serb Dimitrije. Demetrios itself means son of Demetre, goddess of fertility and agriculture.[xxi] When Serbian King Milutin donated in the 14<sup>th</sup> century to the St. Stephan monastery at Banjska the church “St. Dimitrije under Zvečan”, the new town founded in the vicinity obtained the name D(i)mitrovica, or Mitrovica. Renowned Turkish traveler Evlia Čelebija mentions Mitrovica as “on the border of Bosnian vilayet”, with the castle (probably Zvečan) abandoned but the town flourishing. Father Jukić mentions (1852) 300 Muslim and 50 Orthodox houses. Unimpressive until 1871 Mitrovica experienced a fast development with a railway.

*Zvečan* was a Serbian castle built in the 11<sup>th</sup> century during Serbia’s fight against the Byzantine Empire. The castle served as a prison (something like London Tower), where many noblemen finished their lives, including King Stephan Dečanski’s brother, Constantine, and the King himself. Ottoman rule was imposed already at the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century after the Kosovo Battle. Zvečan used to be left empty for many periods. It suffered the most in 1884 when the wall material of the castle was used by the Ottoman authorities for building the bridge across the River Ibar in Mitrovica and some other objects.

As mentioned before, nearby *Banjska* was a village, which had a beautiful monastery, but was ruined after the Kosovo Battle.[xxii] Nevertheless, the place won its celebrity after the beautiful folk poem *Strahinjić Bane*, an epic Serb hero from Banjska. The Ottomans founded

a small town over the ruins of Banjska, with a mosque and sahat-kula (clock tower). At the hill foot, there was a bath,[xxiii] in use a long time afterward. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, one could still see a remnant of the minaret on the ruins of the old Serbian Christian Orthodox church, converted into the mosque in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

*Đakovica*, from the Greek *diakonos*, servant, pupil. The earliest record about the place came from the 17<sup>th</sup> century but the town probably existed before. The Albanian used toponym *Gjakova* was given by the Ottomans and the Shqiptars while the Serbs are calling the town *Đakovica*. [xxiv] This is the only area in KosMet (very close to Albania) in which, according to the first Ottoman population census (defter) in KosMet done in 1455, the Shqiptars lived in some big numbers. [xxv] It was a small town, which started to be massively populated by Shqiptars from neighboring North Albania after the First Great Serbian Migration from KosMet to the Habsburg Monarchy (i.e. to South Hungary) in 1689–1690. [xxvi] It was probably on that account that the Serbs used to call it Arnaut-Pazar. According to some sources, in 1844 there were 1.900 houses, 11 mosques, and 640–650 shops. In the same year, there were 18.000 Muslims, 2.600 Orthodox, and 450 Roman-Catholic inhabitants in *Đakovica*. As for the ethnic partition, the same records provide 17.000 Arnauts, 3.800 Slavs (Serbs), 180 Turks, and finally some Tsintsars and Gypsies (Tsigans). However, statistics greatly differ from author to author and may be taken as a rough estimate only. The Christians were engaged mainly in craftsmanship, with the Roman Catholics as goldsmiths and the Orthodox as saddle-makers and painters.

*Peć*, a pan-Slavic, and pra-Slavic from *pekti*, to roast. Pekt/peć means furnace. It is a cult place of the Serbian people, the former seat of the Serbian Patriarchate of Peć in the nearby church (est. 1346), established by the Serbian King Milutin (1282–1321). However, besides its spiritual importance, Peć was a town with a lively trade, especially by the Dubrovnik colony in the town. The Ottomans abolished the Patriarchate of Peć after 1459, to be re-established in 1557 and ultimately to be abolished in 1766 and subordinated to the Greek Patriarchate of Constantinople. [xxvii] In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were 2.000 houses with some 7.000–8.000 inhabitants, mainly the Christian Orthodox Serbs. The town had 900 shops. A principal occupation was silk production and agriculture (fruit and tobacco). Despite its size, Peć (in Turkish *ipek*) was not able to develop trade, due to, according to the source, insecurity "from (the local) Arnauts", who were "public highwaymen".

*Uroševac*, a pra-Church-Slavonic from *Uroš*, derived from *ur*, master, from Hungarian *ursu* for a lord. In Turkish *Ferizović*, in Shqip *Ferizaj*. It was a small Gypsy village. The railway made it a town and a trade center of the region.

*Lipljan*, an old Serbian, probably from the Roman name for the nearby Roman-Byzantine castrum *Ulpiana*.

*Orahovac*, a pan-Slavic and pra-Slavic name *oreh* for nut (*orah* in the contemporary Serb), derived from Indo-European *ar* and *reks* (to smash), something one eats skinned.

*Drenica*, derived from a pan-Slavic and pra-Slavic *dren*, dogwood, from the Indo-European root *dher(e)ghno*.

*Vučitrn*, derived from Serb *vuk*, a pan-Slavic and pra-Slavic *vlk*, for wolf, the Indo-European *ulkuos* [xxviii] and *trn*, the Teutonic-pra-Slavic term for *thorn* (the Indo-European *(s)ter*, for thorny plants). The town is built probably over the ancient *Vicianum*. It is mentioned for the



first time in the 14<sup>th</sup> century as a place belonging to the Serbian feudal lord Vuk Branković, who had his palace there too. The town was renowned for its trade activities, especially for its Dubrovnik colony. A Serbian despot Đurađ Branković (1427–1456) used it as his seat too. In the vicinity, there was a well-known trade and mine town Trepča. Vučitrn fell to the Ottomans in 1439 (or 1440) for the first time, then definitely in 1455 when all KosMet became finally occupied by the Ottoman Empire. Some travelers mention it as an important trade center. The Ottoman historian Turk Evlija Čelebija counts 2.000 houses, then tekija,[xxix] schools, a Christian Orthodox school, a hammam (bath), vineyards, and orchards. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Vučitrn appears as an insignificant place but becomes the seat of a sanjak.[xxx] In 1894 one counted about 7.000–8.000 inhabitants. The main occupation was blacksmith and leather craftsmanship.

*Glogovac*, a pan-Slavic and pra-Slavic name from *glog* for hawthorn (from Greek *glohiis* - top of a blade).

*Istok*, from *tok*, a pra-Slavic noun for flow (from the Indo-European *teq* - to run (away), and *iz* as the perfective prefix for the verb *teći* - to flow, from the Indo-European *eghs*.

*Gračanica*, a pan-Slavic and pra-Slavic diminutive of *gord*, initially any fenced settlement, later town, and castle, from the Indo-European *gherdh*, to fence.[xxxii]

*Kačanik*, a Turkish name, from *kaçak*-highwayman. Kačanik (situated on the very border to the present-day Republic of North Macedonia) was notorious for its highwayman activities from the beginning of its history, which dates from the 16th century. Situated at the entrance of the gorge Kačanik, made by the river Lepenac, it controlled the passage through the gorge, the only possible between Macedonia and KosMet. A report from 1573 warns people to guard themselves well in passing the gorge, for the danger from the local Shqiptars.

It was for this danger that Sinan-pasha built the small fortress at the gorge entrance, which was intended to protect travelers, mainly tradesmen, from robbery and slaughter. The Austrian soldiers during the Great Vienna War under General Piccolomini took the fortress in 1689, but after their retreat in 1690, the Ottomans captured the fortress and slaughtered the Austrian garrison. It was not until 1807 when Reshid-pasha cleared Kačanik from highwaymen that the traffic through the gorge was resumed. Around the middle of the 19th century, the town consisted of, according to the source, about a „hundred miserable Arnaut (Shqiptar) houses“, situated beside the ruined fortress. Before the Balkan Wars (1912–1913) town was renamed by the Ottomans as *Orhanije* and at that time had about 250 houses.

Names of the rivers, mountains, and other geographical entities are likewise Slavic in the entire KosMet. They are easily recognized by suffixes, like *-va* for the river, *-ica* for rivers or settlements. We mention the Rivers Sitnica, Studenica, etc. The suffix *-or* for mountains is considered to be of Celtic origin, but mountains with this ending are scattered all around the West Balkans. Some toponyms bear Turkish names, as expected after centuries of Ottoman rule in this part of the Balkans.[xxxiii] We emphasize here that since KosMet used to be separated from modern Serbia for two centuries, its development was considerably retarded concerning the language and folklore generally. It appears today as a sort of reservation in this respect, as a remnant of ancient times, from the medieval Serbian state and the Serbian nation in general. This is also the case with other mountainous regions of the

Balkans, in particular, North Albania, Montenegro, and Herzegovina, which were on the margin of European civilization and culture for centuries.[xxxiii]

As for the toponyms in Albania, many appear corrupted from the original Greek or Roman, whereas some bear purely Slavic names. This applies particularly to the plain regions, which were settled by ethnic-Shqiptar (Albanian) highlanders only relatively recently.

As was already pointed out above, these linguistic details are not merely of a linguistic nature but reveal the essence of the issue of who is the genuine owner of the “disputed” land. It concerns the question of “negative designation” as well. The ancient Greeks (and Romans as well) used to call other nations “barbarians”, meaning “non-Greeks” or “neither Romans nor Greeks”. It had somewhat pejorative overtones, which one could appreciate regarding their superiority over the surrounding nations, in particular, those much less civilized, like Skits.[xxxiv] The same point appears with the Israelites, who designate non-Jews as *goyim*, meaning (other, non-Jewish) nations.[xxxv] Though no Jew would admit it, it has a pejorative meaning whatsoever, and this overtone cannot be ignored.

The Shqiptar Question, in fact, involves all nationalities with whom the ethnic Shqiptars are in close contact at the Balkan Peninsula. Subsequently, one faces the conflict of the Shqiptars versus non-Shqiptars, which places inevitably the ethnic Shqiptars in a privileged position. This will sound cynical when we compare the civilization levels of both sides in the conflict over KosMet. Unfortunately, the term “non-Albanian” has been widely accepted by the international community, and even an eventual neologism that would substitute the unfortunate term “non-Albanian” would not do. In a sense, this terminology would correspond to a “non-sick” man (as compared to a sick one), meaning “healthy man”. “Non-Albanian” implies inevitably the feeling of “something wrong” with those singled out so.

Unfortunately, the story does not end here. Serbia used to have, during her recent history (since 1945), two regions, which had privileged positions relative to the rest of the state. One was the autonomous province of Vojvodina, the other the autonomous region (later to become a province, too) of . (KosMet). The problem is the “rest of Serbia”. Some call it “Serbia proper”, some “Central Serbia”. The first designation appears particularly unsuitable, for it implies that KosMet is not “proper Serbia”, thus concealing in the very name a political message.

\*

Note to readers: Please click the share buttons above. Follow us on Instagram and Twitter and subscribe to our Telegram Channel. Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

**Dr. Vladislav B. Sotirović** is a former university professor in Vilnius, Lithuania. He is a Research Fellow at the Center for Geostrategic Studies. He is a regular contributor to Global Research.

## Notes

[i] After both the First and Second Balkan Wars of 1912–1913 the Kingdom of Serbia and the Kingdom of Montenegro agreed to divide the territory of *Kosovo* (i.e., western portion of this province known as Metohia and eastern portion known as Kosovo) at such a way that largest portion of Metohia became incorporated into Montenegro, while whole portion of Kosovo (with Priština and Kosovo Field where the

Kosovo Battle occurred on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1389 between the Serbs and the Ottomans) and smaller part of Metohia have been annexed by Serbia (Никола Ђоновић, *Црна Гора пре и после уједињења*, Београд: Политика А.Д., 1939, 76; Борислав Ратковић, Митар Ђуришић, Саво Скоко, *Србија и Црна Гора у Балканским ратовима 1912–1913*, Београд: БИГЗ, 1972, 323).

[ii] About the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes see: Branko Petranović, *Istorija Jugoslavije*, knjiga I, Beograd: NOLIT, 1988; Алекс Н. Драгнић, *Србија, Никола Пашић и Југославија*, Београд: Народна радикална странка, 1994; Vladislav B. Sotirović, *Creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes 1914–1918*, Vilnius: Vilnius University Press, 2007.

[iii] Pierre Pean, Sébastien Fontenelle, *Kosovo une guerre “juste” pour créer un état mafieux*, Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 2013.

[iv] See, for instance: Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History*, New York: New York University Press, 1998.

[v] About Serbian-Shqiptars relations in KosMet, see: Душан Т. Батаковић, *Косово и Метохија у српско-арбанашким односима*, Београд: Чигоја штампа, 2006.

[vi] For instance, it was clearly done in my article: “Kosovo: What Everyone (Really) Needs to Know” (<http://global-politics.eu/kosovo-really/>).

[vii] In the German language, it is *Amsfeld* after *Amsel* for the blackbird and *feld* for the field.

[viii] The term is derived from *shqipojnë*, which designates the eagle, possibly totem of a tribe.

[ix] Nevertheless, as a matter of historical fact, Yugoslavia’s Shqiptar political leaders at the federal level used to use this term absolutely freely, during Josip Broz Tito’s era (1945–1980).

[x] By contemporary Balkan population *Arnauts* used to be experienced in a similar sense as North-American Indians by European population in the 19-th century. However, the Arnauts are the Albanized KosMet Serbs while usual Ottoman term for ethnic Albanians was *Arbanesh*. It is estimated that today there are approximately 1/3 of the KosMet Shqiptar population to be of the ethnic Serb origin (the Arnauts). About this problem, see: Душан Т. Батаковић, *Косово и Метохија: Историја и идеологија*, Београд: Чигоја штампа, 2007, 38–46.

[xi] Peter Bartl, *Albanien: Vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 1995, 20.

[xii] About the Illyrians, see: Aleksandar Stipčević, *Iliri: Povijest, život, kultura*, II dopunjeno izdanje, Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1989. In the book by Albanian historian Peter Bartl about Albania and Albanians KosMet as Albanian (Shqiptar) land is very rarely mentioned (Peter Bartl, *Albanien: Vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 1995). Oppositely to the Albanian case, KosMet is very well presented in the national folk songs of the Serbs. About the Slavic and Indo-European roots of the Serbian epic including and KosMet case, see: Александар Лома, *Пракосово: Словенски и индоевропски корени српске епике*, Београд: САНУ, Балканолошки институт, 2002.

[xiii] There is a false Shiptar interpretation of this toponym as that it was a land of the medieval family Dukagjini of the Shiptar origin.

[xiv] Undoubtedly, the most important battle occurred in KosMet was that of 1389 (June 15/28th) between Serbian army led by Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović and Ottoman army led by Sultan Murad I. Both

military leaders died during the battle. On the battle, see: Патко Пековић (избор текстова), *Косовска битка: Мит, легенда и стварност*, Београд: Литера, 1987. About Prince Lazar, see: Раде Михальчић, *Лазар Хребељановић: Историја, култ, предање*, Београд: БИГЗ, 1989.

[xv] About Stephan Dečanski, see: Станоје Станојевић, *Сви српски владари: Биографије српских (са црногорским и босанским) и преглед хрватских владара*, Београд: Отворена књига, 2015, 49–50.

[xvi] About the Empire of Stephan Dušan, see: Миладин Стевановић, *Душаново Царство*, Београд: Књига-Комерц, 2001.

[xvii] On the golden age of the history of Dubrovnik, see: Radovan Samardžić, *Zlatni vek Dubrovnika*, Beograd: Prosveta, 1962.

[xviii] About this war and KosMet, see: Радован Самарцић и други, *Косово и Метохија у српској историји*, Београд: Српска књижевна задруга, 1989, 127–141.

[xix] The Ottoman census system for the very taxation purposes did not count ethnic nations but rather only the confessional groups (*millets*).

[xx] About St. Sava, see: Драган Антић, Љиљана Цвекић, *Венац Светога Саве*, Шабац: Глас цркве, 1988.

[xxi] According to Robert Graves, Demetre means mother of barley.

[xxii] Slobodan Milošević's family claims to have the origin from Banjska.

[xxiii] Banja in the Serbian language means bath or spa.

[xxiv] There are indications that the original town-name was Jakova or Giacovo.

[xxv] Translated text of the original defter from 1455 to the Serbo-Croat language is published in 1972 by the Oriental Institute in Sarajevo:

<https://www.scribd.com/doc/98035320/Oblast-Brankovica-Opsirni-Katastarski-Popis-Iz-1455-Godine>.

[xxvi] About the First Great Serbian Migration, see: Стефан Чакић, *Велика сеоба Срба 1689/90 и патријарх Арсеније III Црнојевић*, Нови Сад: Добра вест, 1990.

[xxvii] About a historical role of the Patriarchate of Peć in the preservation of the Serbian national and cultural identity, see: Vladislav B. Sotirović, "The Historical Role of the Patriarchate of Peć in Preservation of Serbian National and Cultural Identity", *Актуалне проблеме науке в контексте православних традициј*, Сборник материјалов међународној научно-практичкој конференцији, 28–29 фебруара 2008 гођа, Армавир, Русија, 2008, 22–25.

[xxviii] *Ulk* has been preserved in contemporary Albanian, as a common name, with the same meaning – wolf. In modern Serb *Vuk* appears a common name, too, in particular among the people coming from poor regions (usually high mountains).

[xxix] Dervish house, after Turkish *tekke* (Arab *täkyä*).

[xxx] *Sanjak* was the Ottoman smaller administrative-territorial unit as a part of a bigger *pashalik*.

[xxxi] Some toponyms Shiptars still call by Albanian names, like Ferizaj for Uroševac.

[xxxii] About the Ottoman rule in the region, see: Peter F. Sugar, *Southeastern Europe under Ottoman Rule, 1354–1804*, Seattle–London: University of Washington Press, 1977.

[xxxiii] See the book by Maria Todorova: *Imagining the Balkans*, New York–Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

[xxxiv] The anecdote on the dispute between a bully Greek and philosopher Abaris, of the Scythian origin, who exclaimed “My homeland is a shame for me, but you are the shame of your homeland!” illustrates well the issue.

[xxxv] In modern parlance it renders *gentiles*.

*All images in this article are from the author*

The original source of this article is Global Research  
Copyright © [Dr. Vladislav B. Sotirović](#), Global Research, 2023

---

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: **[Dr. Vladislav B. Sotirović](#)**

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)

[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)