

KOSOVO

Past and Present

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The publication of this book is one of the major publishing undertakings by the Review of International Affairs. Founded at the time of the dramatic campaign launched against Yugoslavia in 1950 by Stalin and the Cominform, for the purpose of providing the foreign public with objective information about the situation in Yugoslavia and its views on world affairs, the Review of International Affairs, with the same idea in mind, wishes to present a number of relevant facts and comments on the situation in Kosovo.

The importance and topicality of this theme are owed to several circumstances.

As a result of a number of historical, political, economic, demographic and other factors, the situation in Kosovo has become a dangerous generator of the current crisis in Yugoslavia. The separatist movement in Kosovo has become the acid test for the capability of the Yugoslav political leadership, and of the social system, to safeguard the right of all the citizens of that autonomous province, irrespective of their national and religious affiliation, to a peaceful and serene life, and at the same time to remove any threat to the constitutional order and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia.

An insufficient knowledge of the extremely complex conditions in Kosovo, as well as the spread of various falsifications, have produced among some circles in the world a completely erroneous perception of the causes and effects and of the culprits and victims in the Kosovo imbroglio.

It is also no secret that even though the highest state and political forums in Yugoslavia have condemned the separatist movement and taken measures to stop the forcible uprooting of the Serbian and Montenegrin population from that autonomous province, which is a part of SR Serbia, the "Kosovo question" has become a subject of major political and other controversies in Yugoslavia. The different interpretations of the Kosovo situation are today the reason for sharp political dissension in Yugoslavia concerning some fundamental questions of its internal order and future development. This is made evident in the

debate in various political and government bodies, in the comments in the public media, and in many books on Kosovo with often diametrically opposed conclusions.

In this book, which has not been written especially for foreign readers, since it is simultaneously appearing in the Serbo-Croatian language, texts are presented by prominent Yugoslav experts, scholars and publicists concerning important historical and present-day aspects of the situation in Kosovo, as well as documents and information which may be of interest to the readers.

Editorial work has been performed by a team which included Milutin Milenković, a former director of Radio Belgrade, Miloš Mišović, a journalist, and Milorad Komatina, a retired ambassador.

The editors have not insisted on standardizing the facts appearing in different contributions, since they are frequently a result of individual research and assessments and there is a lack of reliable official sources (for example, the last population census in Yugoslavia, and in Kosovo, was carried out in 1981). Similarly, for political and historical reasons, the ethnic Albanians in Kosovo are variously described as Arbanas, Arnauts, Shqiptars, or Albanians, and these different appellations have been retained by both the authors and translators. Certain repetitions, differences in assessments, and a heterogeneity of styles are, of course, inevitable in a compendium of works by some thirty authors. The publishers regret that considerations of space did not permit, in some cases, the citing of long lists of source materials and literature used, as precedence was given to the documentary annex at the end of the book.

The publishers hope that this book, written by eminent journalists and authorities on the subject, will help the readers to familiarize themselves with the complexity and tragedy of the Kosovo drama, with its historical roots and modern implications.

Dr. Ranko Petković