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What happened to Kosovo Albanians:

The impact of religion on the ethnic identity in the state building-period

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Executive Summary

The understanding of development of the secular nature of the Albanian ethnic identity represents a starting point for analysing the impact of religion on social and political identity shifts of Kosovo Albanians, who, during the last century, have persistently nurtured secularity and religious cohabitation as an instrument of self-defensive nationalism.

The process of the Albanian national awakening (Rilindja Kombëtare) started as an elite phenomenon or as a top-down cultural movement. In addition to its lateness, the Albanian nationalism had another specific feature as compared to other Balkan peoples – it was secular in its origins and character. Since both, the Ottoman Empire, and its neighbours insisted to divide Albanians according to their religious lines, for the Albanian revivalists it was crucial to overcome the religious division by opting for a secular Albanian national identity based on "cultural and linguistic unity." Therefore, secularity – first being Albanian, accompanied with religious cohabitation, became the key feature of the Albanian nationalism.

During almost 90 years of Yugoslav/Serbian rule, the Albanian nationalism in Kosovo continued to be secular in its nature. Such a reality paved the way for a new Albanian nationalism in Kosovo and structured its collective references as a self-defence of their ethnic identity, which was opposed to religiosity that has been used as an instrument for assimilation. The process of disintegration of former Yugoslavia and struggle for independence (1989-1999) marked the strongest social homogenization of Kosovo Albanians. The key features of the Albanian nationalism during this time were pro-Western orientation and general unification of Albanians regardless of their religious and social background.

After the liberation and instalment of the UN Administration, similarly to other post-communist countries, the resurgence of religiosity started in Kosovo as well. The new circumstances have inevitably triggered a process of radical transformation and redefinition of the place of religion. The presence of both Islam and Christianity became visible and pronounced in all public spheres, from personal lives, to society at large, including politics. The consequences of war created multiple conditions that were at play during the first years after 1999, which provided fruitful bases for the religiosity of the society. To begin with, the societal disorientation, high poverty, weak economy and political ambiguity, turned Kosovo into a fertile ground for the

resurgence of the religion. The entire Kosovar society was rapidly exposed to a variety of competing ideas, which were simultaneously, more liberal, as well as more conservative.

Kosovo war-ravaged population was exposed to different international faith-based organizations that have mushroomed throughout the country after the war. Under the guise of humanitarian aid, such organizations have ruthlessly exploited the poverty and fragmented social conditions of Kosovar Albanians, especially in rural areas, and seriously disrupted cultural traditions of these communities. In addition, UNMIK and the international community, in general, paid little or no attention to the activities of different faith based "humanitarian organizations" with radical agendas. During this period, the democratic changes have enabled the development of new links between Kosovo and the rest of the Muslim world, thus favouring the renewal of different religious doctrines. Thus, the revival of Islam in Kosovo was mainly influenced, on one hand, by the organizations of Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States, and Turkey, on the other. While their primary aim was to control the population's spiritual life, to politicize Islam and to encourage intolerance towards secularism in Kosovo, the specific objective of the most of the Middle East organizations was to introduce and strengthen the radical Islam, which also caused frictions within Islamic Community of Kosovo. Consequently, once a non-disputable issue about the model of Islam in Kosovo, as a unique traditional model, after the war gradually started to change, and with it the secular ethnic identity of Kosovo Albanians and their religious cohabitation.

The period since the Declaration of Independence is of exceptional importance for the topic under discussion, given that it entails several cross-cutting important factors. Firstly, independence of Kosovo meant that Kosovar political elite, especially the government, had both an increased authority, as well as responsibility in dealing with all important issues in the country. Secondly, the Declaration of Independence formalized the beginning of the process of the creation of the new Kosovar identity for Kosovo Albanians. Such a process provided additional manoeuvring space for strengthening of the religious (Muslim) identity. Thirdly, the Declaration of Kosovo Independence coincided with the global expansion of radical Islamic networks, the so-called Arab springs, and the creation of the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). These factors juxtaposed together created a reality that, in turn, resulted in radicalization and extremism of certain layers of Muslim Albanians in Kosovo.

The attitude of Kosovo institutions and of its political elite towards political Islam, in general, and its radicalization in Kosovo, in particular, has been, to say at least, ambiguous. Although all main Kosovo political parties are secular, they have in general also failed and were not willing to address the increasing signs of radicalization among Albanian Muslims in Kosovo. Apart from Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK) that

has openly denounced such public displays, other political parties have been rather silent in this direction. Unfortunately, most of other major political parties have flirted with such radical groups in order to secure electoral support.

In relation to religion and identity shifts among Albanians in Kosovo, the emergence of the new Kosovo national identity represents another important consequence of the Kosovo independence. Kosovo Albanians who have for centuries nurtured a strong Albanian national identity, were after independence confronted with somewhat confusing reality. Having accomplished their own political project of independent Kosovo, they were suddenly exposed to divergent loyalties. Obviously, as a new independent state, Kosovo faced the challenge of forging a secular national identity that can overcome ethnic and religious divisions. As a result, symbols of the new state such as flag and national anthem were shunned from any Albanian national symbols of the past. However, rebranding of Kosovo has inevitably had a de-nationalizing impact on Kosovo Albanians. Unfortunately, instead of viewing the Kosovo state identity and the Albanian identity as complementary, political debates in Kosovo have often portrayed them as exclusive. This has in turn, weakened the traditional historic Albanian identity of Kosovo Albanians, especially among the youngsters. As a consequence, the loyalty of Kosovo Albanians has since independence slowly shifted from Albanianism and Kosovo state, to a religious identity, with the emergence of elements of radical Islam.

These findings are supported by the results of the opinion polls that clearly indicate a major identity shift of Kosovo Albanians from the secular ethnic identity to religious ethnicity. On the other side the research shows that there is no clear correlation between level of education and religiosity. Furthermore, the results of the research indicate that the standard of living is not a determinant of, either religious cohabitation, or religious intolerance and extremism. These results seriously challenge the socio-economic paradigm of explaining religious intolerance and extremism. Instead, the ideological paradigm, as documented also by the qualitative research, certainly proves to be the explanatory framework for significant social and identity shifts among Kosovo Albanians, namely from secular ethnic identity and religious cohabitation into a rapid ethnic religiosity and gradually increasing religious intolerance and extremism.

The most concerning fact inferred from these findings is the projection that if the current trend of de-secularisation of the ethnic identity of Kosovo Albanians continues in the next two decades with the same pace, in Kosovo may easily emerge three new sub-national identities, namely, Muslim Albanians, Christian Albanians and (old)Albanians. This would undoubtedly mark the end of Albanianism as we know it, and with it, the end of secular and pro-western Kosovo as well.

Recommendations:

- The government institutions and political leaders should re-introduce a joint public discourse that will promote the secular identity and religious cohabitation among Kosovo Albanians, which is the most natural and efficient tool in dealing with political religiosity, radicalism and extremism.
- Since the secular character of ethnic identity of Kosovo Albanians coincides with the modern European values and the Constitution of Kosovo, it should not be seen as a danger by International Community to the building of a cohesive citizen based multi-ethnic country; in contrary, it has to be considered as the most valuable asset for safeguarding of its secular constitutional order.
- The Justice System of Kosovo should swiftly implement the Legal Framework (Penal Code) regarding the religious and ethnic hatred, as well as extremist preaching.
- The Law on Religious Communities should be adopted as soon as possible, which should address their place in the secular Constitutional order of Kosovo, as well as their financial accountability, including the out-law of Koranic Schools that are functioning outside of the control of the Islamic Community of Kosovo.
- The Faculty of Islamic Studies of Kosovo should include in its curricula the subjects of Comparative Religions, the History of Albanian People and Kosovo, and the History of State and Albanian Customary Law, in order to avoid the educational patterns of denial of the religious and national past, as well as for nurturing inter-religious cohabitation.
- The curricula of secondary schools should introduce the course on the History of cultural and religious identities in Kosovo, namely Roman Catholicism, Christian Orthodoxy, Islam and Protestantism, in order to strengthen the mutual understanding and religious cohabitation in the country. The syllabus and the respective texts should be commissioned by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, to be drafted by a top ranking international university in this field.
- Prishtina should re-adjust its relations with Ankara regarding religious influence and the undermining of secularism of Kosovo Albanians and of Kosovo state. Turkey should understand that friendly relations with Kosovo can be developed in a healthy manner only by respecting the secular ethnic identity of Kosovo Albanians, as well as their historical interpretation of the past.

Introduction

This paper is an introductory research that aims to map-out the influence of Islam and Christianity on ethnic identity of Kosovo Albanians, and to identify possible identity shifts that occurred in the state-building period, as well as their implications for the future of Kosovo's society and its values.

During the communist period, religious communities were under state control, and their impact on society was quite limited. With the beginning of transition and efforts for freedom of Kosovo, the political pluralism among ethnic Albanians was developed based on strong ethnic secularism with multi-religious cohabitation, which, as such, was coinciding with modern European values and aspirations. In the past, both, Muslim and Christian religious Kosovo Albanian leaderships played a significant role in building this identity. However, this secular social and political identity of Kosovo Albanians, started to fade immediately after the war of 1999, with the intrusion of religious based organisations from the Middle East countries. Moreover, after the Declaration of Independence in 2008, the political and radical Islam started to grip a significant ground in Kosovo, which coincided also with the "Arab Spring" and the emergence of the "Islamic State of Iraq and Syria" – ISIS.

In order to get a better understanding of relations between ethnicity and religion among Kosovo Albanians, the first two chapters of this paper analyse the secular origins of Albanian national identity, and the Identity of Albanians and the Religion in Kosovo during Yugoslav rule. The analyses of the role of religion on the contemporary political and ethnical identity shifts are discussed in the third chapter, Ethnic Albanians and Kosovo's State-Building: The Correlation between Ethnic Identity and Religious Affiliation, whereas the last chapter analyses the results of the opinion polls that provide clear indication of erosion of secular ethnic identity, and of the strengthening of religious identity among Kosovo Albanians. Finally, the paper draws conclusions on key identified factors that have caused the strengthening of the religious identities, at the expense of secular ethnic identity of Kosovo Albanians, its implications for the Kosovo's future, and it also provides a number of recommendations on nurturing the secular character of Kosovo Albanian identity and the multi-religious cohabitation.

I. The Secular Origins of Albanian National Identity

The late 19th century marks the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the beginning of the national awakening for the people in the Balkans. It was during this period that they "structured domestic affairs in support of nationalist territorial expansion at the expense of the contracting Ottoman Empire, often in mutually exclusive competition with one another."[1] Under the threat of Serbian and Greek nationalism and territorial claims, the Albanians living under the Ottoman Empire were practically forced to develop their own national agendas as self-defence.[2] The state formations in the Balkans in the late 19th, early 20th century found Albanians in a rather peculiar position: they had not yet developed a strong national sentiment, while at the same time having a weaker national movement as compared to other Balkan peoples.[3] Consequently, the process of 'nationalization' of the Albanians was not smooth, due not only to the relative lateness of it, but also because throughout history, they found themselves citizens of different states and subject to different nationalizing programs.

During the nineteenth century, when the liberal ideas of the Enlightenment together with the revolutionary ideas of the French revolution reached the Balkan people, the national awakening also started in this part of Europe. Many Albanian leaders and intellectuals known as revivalists (rilindasit) became influenced by the ideas of the Western Europe and embarked in a mission to lead their nation towards national independence. However, as seen from the above analysis, when national consciousness began to rise among the various peoples in the Ottoman Empire, Albanians found themselves professing different religions, speaking different dialects and using different alphabets.[4] These religious, cultural and social divisions during the nineteenth century prevented Albanians from developing a solid foundation for the development of a common national consciousness to a large extent. Therefore, the Albanian revivalists had to develop a specific national agenda that would appeal to all Albanians independently from their religious, linguistic, cultural, social and economic differences. Moreover, such a national agenda had to overcome all the above mentioned factors that seriously hindered the development of a common Albanian national consciousness.

The process of the Albanian national awakening (Rilindja Kombetare) started as an elite phenomenon or as a top-down cultural movement. First it began among the Arbëreshi

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[1] Hupchick, Dennis P., *The Balkans: from Constantinople to Communism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, p. 274.
[2] Ibid, p. 274.
[3] Misha, Piro, "Invention of Nationalism: Myth and Amnesia," in Stephanie Schwandner-Sieevers and Bernard Fisher eds. *Albanian Identities: Myth and History*, London: Hurst, 2002, p. 40.
[4] Vickers, Miranda, *Between Serb and Albanian: A History of Kosovo*. New York: Colombia University Press, 1998, p. 40.

living in Southern Italy, and in some of the political and economic centres of the Ottoman Empire like Janina and Istanbul. Initially, the inspiration for the Albanian nationalists came from the European Enlightenment and different writings of Western scholars, travellers and poets alike. These Westerners played an important role in the construction of the Albanian national identity, since they noticed that the Albanians were a distinctive linguistic and ethnographic community who had their distinct language and culture.[5] Albanian revivalists aspired to detach Albanians from the Ottoman Empire while at the same time seeking the sponsorship and guidance of western European powers. Poems and books were written about Scanderbeg, who over time was given a lead role by Albanian nationalists as a national hero. Scanderbeg's identity as a Christian prince, the alliance with the Kingdom of Naples as well as the recognition he received from the Venetians and the papacy - were all used as arguments to affirm the European identity of Albania.[6]

In a section about Scanderbeg of his famous book "Albania: What it Was, What it Is, What it Will Be," the well-known Albanian revivalist Sami Frasheri elevates Scanderbeg's figure to almost mythical proportions. He asserts that all European states were waiting for Scanderbeg to save Europe.[7] Similarly, Naim Frasheri (Sami's brother) in his epic poem "History of Scanderbeg," also describes Scanderbeg as the Albanian and European Christian symbol of resistance against Muslim Ottomans. Clearly, Scanderbeg became the perfect national symbol for the Albanian nationalists who urged their fellow countrymen to look away from their Ottoman past, while trying to convince Europe that Scanderbeg as the "Champion of Christendom" was proof of Albania's cultural affinity to the Continent. To show the strategic orientation of Albanians towards Europe and Western civilization, Naim Frashëri even went a step further by famously declaring that for Albanians "the sun rises from the West".[8]

In addition to its lateness, the Albanian nationalism had another specific feature as compared to other Balkan peoples – it was secular in its origins and character. There were several important intertwined factors that shaped the Albanian nationalism and contributed to both its lateness as well as secularism. Firstly, in the case of Albanians, the religion was more a divisive rather than a unifying factor. In fact, the non-existence

[5] Pirro Misha, "Invention of Nationalism: Myth and Amnesia", in Schwandner-Sievers & Bernd J. Fischer eds. *Albanian Identities: Myth and History*, Indiana University Press, 2002, p. 33.

[6] Skendi, Stavro, *The Albanian National Awakening*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967, p. 4.

[7] This book that was originally published in 1899 in Bucharest represents the most articulate programme of the Albanian Revival and had a very strong influence among all Albanian intellectuals. See Sami Frashëri, *Shqipëria ç'ka qenë, ç'është, e çdo të bëhetë?*, Prishtinë: Dija, 1999, p. 32.

[8] Jonilda Rrapaj and Klevis Kolasi, "The Curious Case of Albanian Nationalism: the Crooked Line from a Scattered Array of Clans to a Nation-State" The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations, Volume 44, 2013, Ankara Universty, Faculty of Political Science p. 212.

of a unitary religion was an important element that had a significant impact on lateness and secularity of Albanian nationalism. While in the case of other Balkan nationalisms, religion as a factor of unification for the population, played a positive role in the development of nationalism, in the Albanian case it certainly had a divisive role.[9] Albanians were basically divided into three religions: Islam, Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism. Muslims who made about 70 percent of the population were further divided into Sunni Muslims (forming the majority) and Bektashi Muslims, a liberal Shiite sect which was a heterodox and syncretic order that harboured the first pioneers of nationalism among Albanian Muslims.[10] Moreover, the Albanian-inhabited areas made a complex religious picture. The Catholics were concentrated around the city of Shkoder, the Orthodox were found mostly to the south of the Shkumbin river, around the towns of Korca and Giirokaster, while Muslims lived throughout the country, but mostly in the centre and the Kosovo region. Only the Muslim Albanian speakers were allies and equal to the Ottomans. They were employed and paid well, many of them rose to high administrative positions, and they were also protected from Slavic and Greek encroachment.[11]

Since both the Ottoman Empire and their neighbours insisted to divide Albanians according to their religious lines, it was crucial for the Albanian revivalists to overcome the religious division, by opting for a secular Albanian national identity based on "cultural and linguistic unity" rather than religious diversity.[12] Therefore, secularity became the key feature of the Albanian nationalism. The solution found to the "religious question" was expressed under the slogan "the Albanians' faith is Albanianism" taken from the famous Pashko Vasa's poem "Oh Albania, Poor Albania." In this poem, Pashko Vasa, a Roman Catholic from Shkodër who held various high administrative positions in the Ottoman Empire, calls upon Albanians to "not look to church or mosque," because "the Albanians' faith is Albanianism!"[13] Clearly, the ideas conveyed by this poem are radical, in its calls for the secular, ethno-linguistic unification of Albanians as well as in its anti-foreign and anti-clerical messages. Vasa accused both Christian and Muslim Albanian religious establishment for collaborating and using religion to keep Albanians divided. Moreover, Pasko Vasha urges Albanians to reject religion as their source of

[9] Nathalie Clayer, *Në fillimet e nacionalizmit Shqiptar: lindja e një kombi me shumicë myslimane në Evropë*, Tiranë, Botime Përpjekja, 2012, p. 138.
[10] G. W. Gawrych, *The Crescent and the Eagle: Ottoman Rule,Islam and the Albanians, 1874-1913*, London and New York, 2006, p. 21.
[11] Misha, p. 41.
[12] Ibid., p. 210.
[13] Pashko Vasa, " Oh, Albania, Poor Albania," in *Albanian Literature: A Short History* ed. Robert Elsie, London: I.B. Tauris, 2005, pp. 84-88.

identity and to adopt secular, pseudo-Rousseauian, civil religion, based on ethno-linguistic and national identity.[14]

The secular character of Albanian nationalism could also be backed up by the fact that both Muslim and Christian Albanian revivalists worked together for the "Albanian cause" independently form their religious background. On the other hand, though Hastings contends that Judo-Christianity was the "constructor" of 19th century nationalism, and Islam its "restrainer," this was different in the case of the Albanian nationalism.[15] Most of the Albanian nationalists were Muslims, who despite holding high administrative positions in the Ottoman Empire joined the struggle for an independent Albania.[16] Moreover, similarly to their fellow Christian Albanians, Muslim nationalists also defied religious divisions and appealed on Albanianism instead. For instance, in his poem "What is Religion, What is Nation," Skendo Frasheri, the son of Abdyl Frasheri, calls upon Christian and Muslim Albanians to open their eyes, since they are brothers and have always been Albanians.[17]

On the other hand, the nature of Albanian civilization and heritage was another important factor that inhibited development of the Albanian national consciousness. The divisions and various levels of development within the Albanian community encouraged clanism and localism, thus making the nature of the Albanian society a serious obstacle to unity. In addition to their religious differences, the Albanians were also divided linguistically, culturally, socially and economically.[18] Linguistically Albanians were split between the northern Gheg dialect and the Tosk dialect used by southerners, although their shared mother tongue was unique among all other Balkan languages. There was little communication between North and South, while pronounced dialectic differences prevented the common language from unifying an ethnic Albanian self-identity. The lack of a standard literary alphabet inhibited further linguistic ethno-national identity, and until 1908, the few writings in Albanian used modified Latin- or Arabic-based vernacular

[14] Licursi, Emiddio Pietro, "Empire of Nations: The Consolidation of Albanian and Turkish National Identities in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1878 – 1913," Bachelor Thesis, Columbia University, 2011, p. 58.
[15] Hastings, Adrian, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism*, Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 165.
[16] Abdyl Frashëri – member of the second Ottoman parliament from Janina; Ismajl Qemajli - member of the restored Ottoman Parliament of 1908, the president of its lower house, the Ottoman Chamber of Deputies and Governor of Beirut; Hasan Prishtina – three times member of the Ottoman parliament from the Vilayet of Kosovo.
[17] Real name of Skendo Frasheri was actually Mithat Frasheri, and he was the son of one of the first Albanian revivalists, Abdyl Frasheri. See Skendo Frasheri, "Fe Ç'është, Komp Ç'është," Journal Albania, Brussels, 25 June 1897.
[18] Bernd J. Fischer, "A Brief Historical Overview of the Development of Albanian Nationalism," Presented at East European Studies center discussion on March 23, 2005, Washington D.C., p. 2; http://opus.ipfw.edu/history_facpres/1 (14.04.2016).

transcriptions.[19] Furthermore, as Fischer points out "this disunity was fostered by the co-existence of three conflicting stages of civilization: the fiercely independent mountain clans in the North, the feudal Beys in the South (who ruled over a generally docile Muslim Tosk peasantry) and the more educated and urbanized population of the Hellenic and Catholic fringes."[20]

The situation was further complicated with the fact that unlike the other Balkan `nations', Albanians had no state prior to 1912, either in its own right or under a different name.[21] Consequently, the Albanians could not look back to a powerful medieval empire like the empire of Bulgarian tsars or Stefan Dusan's Serbia.[22] Moreover, the Serbian Kingdom of Stefan Dusan which collapsed in 1355 had at one time encompassed the territory of Kosovo and expanded southward into other parts of Albanian territories. This possession by a medieval Serbian state over Albanian populated territories later became the foundations of Serbian nationalist claims over Albanian inhabited territories in the 19th century. Therefore, the late nineteenth-century Albanian national movement had to firmly be grounded in ethnicity and differed from the experiences of its neighbouring Balkan peoples. Instead of emphasizing a glorious national past and common religion as the two prime ethnic markers of their identity, the Albanians opted for a different, secular basis of their ethnic or national identity.[23]

Consequently, in addition to religious differences, the Albanian nationalists had to cope with the lack of a powerful state in the past as well as linguistic, cultural, social and economic divisions among Albanians. To overcome all these divisions and create a sense of unity, Albanian nationalists, similarly to Italian Risorgimento,[24] began to write and disseminate different writings about the glorious past of the Albanians. In addition, Albanians revivalists formed cultural clubs, political organizations, and published their own newspapers. Different writings of this period claimed a direct ethno-linguistic continuity with the ancient Pelasgians and Illyrians, which served to ground Albanian culture in a glorious past. The figure of Scanderbeg was also employed to spark the sense of pride about the common history. Although essentially concerned with political

[19] Hupchick, p. 303.

[20] Fischer, 2005, p.2.

[21] Noel Malcolm, "Myth of Albanian National Identity: Some Key Elements," in Schwandner-Sievers & Bernd J. Fischer eds. *Albanian Identities: Myth and History*, Indiana University Press, 2002, p. 73.

[22] Csaba-Barnabas Horvath, "The Onset of Albanian Nationhood," International Relations Quarterly, Vol. 3, No. 2, Summer 2012, p. 1.

[23] Guy, Nicola C., "Ethnic nationalism, the Great powers and the question of Albanian independence, 1912-1921," PhD thesis, Durham University. Department of History, 2008, p. 28.

[24] The Italian Risorgimento was an ideological and literary movement that helped to arouse the national consciousness of the Italian people, and it led to a series of political events that freed the Italian states from foreign domination and united them politically. It claimed that Italians were the ethnic, cultural, and linguistic descendants of the ancient Romans who inhabited the Italian Peninsula for centuries.

matters, the Albanian revivalists embarked into the Albanian ethno-cultural development, since obviously for the success of the created national program, a concrete ethnic identity was required. Ultimately, for the first time, the northern Ghegs and southern Tosks were to be brought into a concerted working partnership.[25]

Nevertheless, unable to use common religion as the prime ethnic marker of their identity, the Albanian nationalists made the Albanian language as the defining feature of identity and of the national movement. In such a reality, a written Albanian language became the necessary precursor for cultural and political development. Taking advantage of the growing interests of Western European philologists in the Albanian language, the Albanian intellectuals proclaimed it an ancient Indo-European language (Illyrian) and started producing grammar, vocabularies, and folklore collections. Later on, in 1879, the Albanian intellectuals led by the nationalist Frasheri family founded the "Society for the Development of the Albanian Language."[26] The major breakthrough in this direction was achieved when in the Congress of Manastir in 1908, the unified Albanian alphabet was decided. Despite fierce debate between Bektashi, Catholic and some Orthodox Albanians, who insisted on the Latin alphabet, and Sunni Muslims and some Orthodox Albanians, who defended an Arab or Orthodox script, the decision was taken to use a standardized Latin-based Albanian alphabet for written language and education.[27] The Congress itself was another display of the secularity of the Albanian nationalism, since Albanian delegates of all religions came together to jointly decide on such an important matter.

It should be mentioned that throughout its existence, the Ottoman Empire has deliberately introduced administrative structures and policies to effectively inhibit the development of a national consciousness among its subjects. While some of these policies were applied to the Balkan peoples in general, others were applied specifically to Albanians. In order to understand how these measures directly impacted the lateness and secularity of the Albanian nationalism, it is important to analyses the structure and functioning of millets, vilayets as well as schooling policies in the Ottoman Empire. In 1453, after the conquest of Constantinople, Sultan Mehmet II made an important decision regarding the organization of his expanding empire. He introduced the millet[28] system to relate and administer the empire's subjects. That decision was necessary to create an institutional structure for administratively integrating increasingly growing numbers of Balkan non-Muslims into the Ottoman state. The "millet" system organized

[25] Hupchick, p. 305.
[26] Ibid., p. 306.
[27] Rrapaj and Kolasi, 2013, p. 205.
[28] In today's Turkish language "millet" means "nation", however, in the 15th century and throughout the Ottoman Empire, the usage of the term did not focus on nation, but on religion and it basically meant religious nation.

the Ottoman Empire according to religious adherence, rather than by territory, economic status, or ethnic background. Such structure was in place for the next four and a half centuries, down to the revolution of the Young Turks in 1908 and it shaped not only how the Ottoman rulers viewed their subjects, but also the way those subjects viewed themselves and their neighbours.[29]

All *subjects* were distributed among three *millets* that represented the most important existing non-Muslim faiths: (1) The Orthodox Christians who represented the single largest and economically most important non-Muslim group were headed by the patriarch of Constantinople; (2) the Jews who had great commercial and cultural significance were headed by an elected representative of the rabbinical council in Istanbul; and (3) the Armenian Christians were headed by an Armenian patriarch of Istanbul appointed by the Sultan, who represented also the empire's Roman Catholic subjects.[30] Obviously, the Muslims *de facto* constituted the fourth *millet*, making at the same time the Muslims of the Balkans members of the Ottoman-Turk "political nation" regardless of their mother tongue.[31] While for Greeks, Serbs and Bulgarians this system assured a form of a pre-modern type of the political national consciousness, it only divided up the Albanians. Moreover, such a system represented an element from which the main disadvantages of the Albanians have originated.

In such a system the biggest group of Albanians – the Muslim ones – were counted as Turks. On the other hand, the Orthodox Albanians did not have their national church like the Greeks, Bulgarians and Serbs, and belonged to the Greek Church since they lived mainly in the southern territories neighbouring Greece. Therefore, such a millet system that viewed Muslim Albanians as "Turkish" and Orthodox ones as "Greek," resulted in two biggest Albanian groups having to do more with Turks and Greeks than with each other. The smallest Albanian group, the Roman Catholics, was formally not part of either of the neighbouring national churches, but was formally represented by the Armenian patriarch. Paradoxically, although the Catholic Albanians were the most "western" ones, without proper representation until the start of the Tanzimat reforms, they remained the least developed economically and the fewest in numbers.[32]

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[29] Payton, James R. Jr., "Ottoman Millet, Religious Nationalism, and Civil Society: Focus on Kosovo," *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*: Vol. 26: Issues 1, Article 2, 2006, p. 12.

[30] It should be mentioned that when the millet system was institutionalized, Catholics refused to subscribe to this official framework. Due to French alliance with the Turks against the Habsburgs, the Catholics of the Ottoman world received as a reward a protector at the Porte in the person of the French ambassador. In this way, at the start of the Tanzimat reforms the Roman Catholic millet was also established by the Ottoman Empire. See Roumen Daskalov and Alexander Vezenkov eds., *Entangled Histories of the Balkans - Volume Three: Shared Pasts, Disputed Legacies*, Brill, 2015, p. 386.

[31] Hupchick, p.133.

[32] Csaba-Barnabas Horvath, "The Onset of Albanian Nationhood," International Relations Quarterly, Vol. 3, No. 2, Summer 2012, p. 2.

Millet identification eliminated all considerations of ethnicity, and thus lacked any territorial connotations associated with the Western European concept of nation. Millet affiliation governed one's life no matter where one lived within the empire, or how mixed the population was. They were all members of their own self-contained administrative communities without any claims on the others. Consequently, for all Ottoman subjects the homeland laid anywhere within the borders of the empire, thus increasingly leading to mixed ethnic populations throughout the Balkans.[33] Since in the millet system the national communities had no geographical boundaries, every cultural community considered all territories in which its congregation was a majority as its own. As a result, once the Ottoman Empire started disintegrating, the Greek nationalists saw territories of southern Albania as theirs, while Serbs claimed the northern part of territories inhabited by Albanians. In that way, such a system from the beginning carried in itself the possibility of bloody wars.

Clearly, while the millet system provided fertile grounds for the Greeks, Serbs and Bulgarians to create their nation states with direct support of their respective churches, it represented a serious obstacle for the Albanian nationalism. Only a radical break from the *millet* system made possible the paradigm shift that enabled the two bigger Albanian communities to be seen as one community separate from Greeks and Turks, rather than linguistically different Greek or Turk aggregations.[34] On the other hand, though by the late nineteenth century, religion was giving way to the German conception of nations in Eastern Europe based on linguistic foundations, in the Balkans, religion remained an important marker of identity much longer than elsewhere. Only when the millet system broke down, the Albanians were able to emerge professing a distinct ethnicity or nationality based on the German model.[35]

On the other hand, *vilayets* as administrative regions further contributed to the internal isolation and division of Albanians living in the Ottoman Empire. If the *millet* system divided Albanians religiously, the *vilayets* did so territorially. Since the Ottomans divided their subjects into administrative units without regard to nationality, Albanian territories ended up being divided into four separate *vilayets*: Kosovo, Shkodra, Manastir and Janina. Not surprisingly, one of the key requests by the Albanian nationalist elites at early stages was the creation of a single administrative unit encompassing all Albanian territories. However, despite several regional re-divisions of Albanian lands during the Ottoman rule, such single administrative region was never created. The lack of such a

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[33] Hupchick, p.134.
[34] Horvath, 2012, p. 2.
[35] Duijzings, Ger, *Religion and Politics in the Identity of Kosovo*, London: Hurst & Company, 2000, pp. 7-8.

single administrative, economic, religious or cultural centre has negatively affected the formation of a common national consciousness among Albanians.[36] Moreover, being aware that language, education and culture were the critical elements in the development of the Albanian nationalism, the Ottomans placed severe restrictions on teaching in the Albanian language. Therefore, the Muslim Albanians used to attend only Islamic schools, Catholics Italian schools, whereas Orthodox Albanians could only go to Greek schools.[37] This in turn, additionally impeded the process of a common written language that could eventually lead to a common literature, the subsequent discovery of a common past and the growth of modern Albanian nationalism.[38]

The final factor that shaped the Albanian nationalism was linked with the fact that Albanians had no great power patron or protector. As the experience at the Congress of Berlin showed, the Albanian national movement suffered from the serious drawback that the Albanians had no great-power patron or protector like other people in the Balkans.[39] Namely, a year before the Berlin Congress in 1877, the prominent Albanian Intellectual, Abdyl Frasheri, together with a group of Albanian speaking leaders in Istanbul petitioned the Great Powers not to fragment Albanian-Inhibited lands within the empire. They called upon the Porte to create an Ottoman province to include all Albanian-inhabited lands.[40] However, the Berlin Congress did not take into consideration Albanian grievances, it denied the existence of an Albanian nation behind a geographical phrase, and gave a green light only to the establishment of Serbian and Montenegrin independence. Since then, it became essential for the Albanian nationalists to attract the attention of the Great Powers and eventually secure a Great Power patron by demonstrating the distinct Albanian identity and showing the European character of the Albanian nation.[41]

Actually, such reality has confronted the Albanian nationalists with a rather sensitive dilemma. On the one hand, they needed to attract the attention of the Great Powers by demonstrating the distinct Albanian identity and the European character of the Albanian nation. On the other hand, as long as the Ottoman Empire remained a viable suzerain power, they thought that Albanian interests could at least temporarily be adequately

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[36] Jonilda Rrapaj and Klevis Kolasi, "The Curious Case of Albanian Nationalism: the Crooked Line from a Scattered Array of Clans to a Nation-State," The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations, Volume 43, 2013, p. 199.

[37] Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans: Twentieth Century*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p.85.

[38] Fischer, 2005, p.1.

[39] Fischer, 2005, p.2.

[40] Perry, Duncan, "Conflicting Ambitions and Shared Fates: The Past, Present and Future of Albanians and Macedonians," in Victor Roudometof ed., The Macedonian Question: Culture, Historiography, Politics, Boulder: Columbia University Press, 2000, p. 266.

[41] Rrapaj and Kolasi, 2013, p. 211.

protected if a satisfactory autonomous state within it could be secured.[42] This is why the about eighty delegates, mostly Muslim religious leaders, clan chiefs, and other influential people from the four Albanian-populated Ottoman *vilayets* who founded the Prizren League in 1878, initially worked only to gain autonomy for the Albanians, but not to create an independent Albania.[43] By the same logic, the League was initially not opposed by Istanbul, since the Ottoman authorities and the Albanian League found common cause in resisting the new Balkan states' initial post-Berlin nationalist territorial pressures. However, once that viability was compromised, for the Albanian nationalists it became essential to secure a patron among great powers. At the same time, they increasingly called for an independent Albanian state comprising all Albanian territories previously under the Ottoman rule. Meanwhile, the increasing interest in Albanian matters by Italy and Austria-Hungary, made the Albanians believe that these two powers might be intent on preventing the expansion of Greece and Serbia at the expense of Albanian inhabited lands. The efforts of Italy and Austria-Hungary in shipping, trade and education, exposed many Albanians to western ideas and western culture and created important ties between them and these European powers.[44] Eventually, Austria-Hungary played a pivotal role both in the self-declared independence of the Albanian state in November 1912 and in its international recognition in December 1912 at the conference of ambassadors, London.

Namely, after the astonishing success of the small Balkan states at the beginning of the first Balkan War, the great powers acknowledged that the *status quo* could no longer be maintained. Austria-Hungary was aware that swift action was required if notion of an independent Albania was not to yield completely before the territorial gains of the victorious Balkan allies. Thus, with the diplomatic support of Vienna, eighty-three delegates from all over Albania gathered at the Congress of Vlora on the 28th of November 1912 and proclaimed independent state of Albania. [45] The declaration itself was again another proof of the secular character of the Albanian nationalism since the participating delegates were representative of both Muslim and Christian religion. Austria-Hungary once again showed to have most interests at stake in the Albanian question when it played a crucial role in organizing the Ambassadors Conference in London in December 1912. Previously, Vienna has been the traditional protector of the minority Catholic population in the Balkans, especially in northern Albania. Consequently, it could claim to be genuinely acting in the interests of nationality and ethnicity, which the Berlin Congress established as the basis for future settlements.

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[42] Guy, 2008, p. 43.

[43] For an extended account on the Albanian national awakening see Skendi, Stavro, *The Albanian National Awakening 1888-1912*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967, pp. 88-108.

[44] Fischer, 2005, p.3.

[45] Gewehr, Wesley M., *The Rise of Nationalism in the Balkans, 1800-1930*. New York: H. Holt and Company, 1931, p. 91.

However, it should be mentioned that national and moralist arguments were used by Austria-Hungary only when they suited its economic and strategic interests. Economically, Austria was both the largest exporter and importer to and from the western Balkans. Strategically, because it was more interested in the northern coastal regions (Scutari) than on inland Kosovo or the southern areas conflicting with Greek ambitions, at the end, Vienna advocated a small Albanian state.[46] As a result, the Conference confirmed the existence of the Albanian state, more or less within the borders it has today, but in certain parts the actual line of the frontier needed to be settled.[47] However, the Balkan Allies against Ottoman Turkey were awarded large swathes of mainly Albanian-inhabited territory, including Kosovo. Most of the Albanian-inhabited areas went to Serbia and Montenegro while Greece received the large southern region, known as northern Epirus by Greece and Chameria by Albania.[48] Thus the newly created Albanian state encompassed no more than fifty percent of the territories inhabited by Albanian speakers. As a result, the largest minority in Europe was created with more Albanians living outside the Albanian state than within its borders. Ironically, though the Albanians in Kosovo carried out most of the liberation uprisings, Kosovo itself was left under Serbia's rule, outside the borders of a newly created Albania. This would in turn lead to the rise of a new Albanian nationalism, the one of those who were left out of the Albanian state borders, particularly in Kosovo.

[46] Guy, 2008, p. 79.
[47] Judah, Tim, Kosovo: What Everyone Needs to Know, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 38.
[48] Gallagher, Tom, *Outcast Europe: The Balkans, 1789-1989*. London: Routledge, 2001, p.64.

II. Albanian ethnic identity and the religion in Yugoslavia(s)

During the period between the creation of the Albanian state and World War I, nationalism of Albanians in Kosovo became more active through general revolts against the military power of Serbia, and later (1915-1918) of Bulgaria. Its main aim was to join up the territories of the Albanian cultural areas left out of the Albanian state borders to those of Albania. Albanian nationalists were mainly organized around the Committee for the National Defence of Kosovo which in a loose form had existed since May 1915. It was founded in Shkoder with the primary objectives of campaigning against the border decisions of the Ambassador's Conference, i. e. the liberation of Kosovo and the unification of all Albanian-inhabited lands. A further objective was to organise raids into Serbia and smuggle arms to insurgents over the border. It was led by Hoxha Kadriu from Pristina, while most of its members were political exiles from Kosovo with the two most prominent being Hasan Pristina and Bajram Curri.[49]

When on December 1st 1918, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes - informally called Yugoslavia - was created, vast amounts of the Albanian population were integrated into the newly created state against their will and under particularly violent conditions[50]. With the aim of changing the ethnic reality of Kosovo, Serbs engaged in a campaign of terror coupled with colonization on the one hand, and forced expulsion of Albanians, one the other. During the period until 1939, an estimated 40,000 Orthodox Slav peasants were moved into Kosovo and given good land and benefits, while over half a million ethnic Albanians were forced to emigrate from the region.[51]

Most of the interwar period was punctuated by periods of armed Albanian resistance to Serbian authorities, and the oppressive Serbian government policies. Serbs believed it was particularly undesirable for Albanians to receive education in the Albanian language, being afraid that linguistic ties would fuel Albanian nationalism.[52] Namely, linguistic assimilation was part of the tendency to Serbianize the region, an ideology that was planned even before World War I. Consequently, Serbian authorities closed all Albanian-language schools that were opened by the Austro-Hungarian Empire during its occupation of Kosovo in World War I. Instead, the only educational institutions authorized by the Serbian regime were religious schools, both Islamic and Catholic

[49] Vickers, Miranda, *Between Serb and Albanian: A History of Kosovo*, New York: Colombia University Press, 1998, p. 93.
[50] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Report of the International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars, Washington, D.C., 1914, http://www.archive.org/ details/ reportofinternat00inteuoft (18.04.2016).
[51] Poulton, Hugh, Who Are the Macedonians?, London: Hurst, 1995, p. 91.
[52] Perritt, Jr Henry, *The Road to Independence for Kosovo: A Chronicle of the Ahtisaari Plan*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 18.

ones.[53] Obviously, the Serbian authorities were keen on emphasizing the religious rather than the ethnic background of Albanians in Kosovo. Moreover, in 1937, Vaso Cubrilovic, proposed to reclassify Albanians as "Turks," and force them to emigrate by making their lives in Kosovo unbearable and miserable. Ultimately, concrete arrangements were made between Serbia and Turkey to encourage relocation of tens of thousands of Albanians from Kosovo to Turkey – a policy that also continued in socialist Yugoslavia until the 1950s and 1960s.[54]

However, these religious schools gradually turned into underground educational centres and were used as platforms to generate and spread Albanian nationalist ideas. Due to continued prohibition of Albanian secular schools in inter-war Yugoslavia, the Muslim clergy in Kosovo started following up the earlier trend of introducing the Albanian language into religious schools.[55] This new national mission of religious schools forced Serbian educational authorities to forcefully replace Albanian imams with imams from Bosnia, who spoke no Albanian. Obviously, such policy aimed at forestalling Albanian nationalist activity in religious institutions. However, Albanians in Kosovo again gave precedence to their national language over common religious identification, and thus Bosnian Muslim teachers were faced with fierce opposition and boycott by their Albanian co-religionists in Kosovo.[56] In addition, Albanian nationalists also managed to revive Albanian secret schools that were entirely secular.[57] Obviously, during this period the Albanian nationalism in Kosovo continued to be secular in its nature. Though Kosovar Albanians were predominantly Muslim, with significant minorities of Roman Catholics and a few Orthodox Christians, Islam has played only a peripheral role historically in the identity of Kosovar Albanians. Although Muslim Kosovar Albanians continued to celebrate Ramadan and other Muslim holidays, the majority of them considered themselves first of all nationalist Albanians, and only incidentally Muslims.[58]

After World War II, Kosovo Albanians again remained a part of the socialist Yugoslavia despite the promises to join Albania if they join the partisans and fight against the occupying forces. Consequently, in December 1945 the Albanian National Liberation

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[53] Merdjanova, Ina, Rediscovering the *Umma: Muslims in the Balkans between Nationalism and Transnationalism*, Oxford University Press,2013, p. 43.

[54] According to Noel Malcolm, under pressure from Yugoslav authorities from 1945 to 1966 for Muslims to identify themselves as "Turks," some one hundred thousand Kosovar Albanians migrated to Turkey; see Malcolm, Noel, *Kosovo: A Short History*, New York: New York University Press, 1998, pp. 322-323.

[55] Vokrri, A., *Shkollat dhe arsimi në Kosovë ndërmjet dy Luftërave Botërore (1918–1941)*, Prishtinë: Enti i teksteve dhe i mjeteve mësimore i Kosovës, 1990, pp. 303–14.

[56] Pirraku, M., "Kulturno-prosvetni pokret Albanaca u Jugoslaviji (1919–1941)," *Jugoslovenski istorijski casopis* 1–4, 1978, p. 361.

[57] See, Banac, Ivo, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984, pp. 377.

[58] Perrit, 2010, p. 19.

Committee for Kosovo declared the unification of Kosovo with Albania.[59] However, following a request in July by Kosovo's unelected "Regional People's Council" of whose 142 members only 33 were Albanian, in September 1945 Kosovo was formally annexed to Serbia as an 'autonomous region,'.[60] Moreover, the Albanians in Kosovo were recognized only as a nationality in socialist Yugoslavia, and not as a nation since the Albanian national 'homeland' was outside of Yugoslavia.[61] In addition, though according to the 1948 census Kosovo Serbs and Montenegrins made up only 27.5 percent of the population, all of Kosovo's institutions and especially the security services were dominated by Serbs and Montenegrins.[62] Such a reality paved the way for a new Albanian nationalism in Kosovo and structured its collective references.

Though immediately after the establishment of the communist regime, Albanian language schools were opened in Kosovo, just a few years later the Yugoslav authorities cracked down the Albanian self-determination aspirations by closing most of the schools and banning Albanian national symbols and holidays. Albanians were again encouraged to identify as "Turks," while new Turkish schools were opened. At the same time, a governmental treaty with Turkey that allowed the Turks in Yugoslavia to emigrate was signed in 1953. This unleashed a massive exodus to Turkey, with many Albanian and Slavic Muslims being forced to represent themselves as Turks in order to leave the country.[63] In turn, this increased the Albanian nationalism in Kosovo and other parts of former Yugoslavia as a reaction to strong ethnic discrimination due to the building up of the nation states of Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro on exclusive ethno linguistic premises. Such discriminatory policies also helped raise awareness of an Albanian identity and promote an intra-Albanian ethnic solidarity in former Yugoslavia. Such Albanian identity was again mainly formed through a secular nationalist ideology based upon ethnic symbols and exclusive myths, rather than religious belonging. The recent history of Albanians in Kosovo, makes it clear that Islamic religious references have been absent from the discourse and political actions of their nationalist movement.[64]

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[59] Calic, Marie-Janine, "Kosovo in the twentieth century: A Historical Account," in Albrecht Schnabel and Ramesh Thakur eds. *Kosovo and the Challenge of Humanitarian Intervention: Selective Indignation, Collective Action, and International Citizenship*, Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2000, p. 19.

[60] Malcolm, p. 315.

[61] Rusinow, Dennison, *The Yugoslav Experiment 1958-1974*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977, p.188.

[62] Judah, p. 51.

[63] According to Yugoslav sources during this period around 80,000 have emigrated, while Turkish sources set the number at 150,000. See Merdjanova, 2013, p. 43.

[64] Iseni, Bashkim, "National Identity, Islam and Politics in the Balkan," Brückenschläge - "Bosnischer Islam" für Europa, Stuttgart-Hohenheim, 20-22.11.2009, p. 3.

The most radical displays of Albanian nationalism in Kosovo, such as demonstrations that asked for the elevation of the status of Kosovo into a republic within the federation in 1968 and 1981, were also strictly secular. Intellectuals, students and ordinary Albanian citizens joined these events with a highly nationalistic agenda independently from their religious affiliation. Moreover, since 1974, when the new Constitution gave increased autonomy to Kosovo, Albanians concentrated solely in advancing their ethnic, linguistic and educational rights, rather than their religious ones. Still, the harsh repression of Albanians following the demonstrations of 1981 further deteriorated the Serbian-Albanian relations and contributed to an increased Albanian nationalism. Then, the nationalist policies in Kosovo of Slobodan Milošević, once again triggered defensive Albanian nationalism, this time among Kosovo Albanians.

III. Ethnic Albanians and Kosovo's State-Building: Correlation between ethnic identity and religious affiliation

III.1. Struggle for Independence and social homogenization: 1989-1999

When in 1986 Slobodan Milošević became Chairman of the Serbian League of Communists, Serbian nationalism was already actively promoted by intellectuals and politicians throughout the country.[65] After his election, Milošević concentrated in securing votes in the rotating Yugoslav Presidency that was introduced after Tito's death. Initially, he encouraged and supported mass protests in Vojvodina and Montenegro that led to the resignation of their respective governments. The newly established puppet regimes in these two federal units were loyal to Milošević and fully controlled by him. In 1989 an amended Serbian constitution that would substantially reduce the powers of the two autonomous provinces was submitted to the governments of Kosovo, Vojvodina and Serbia for approval.[66] These amendments were first approved on the 10th of March 1989 by the Vojvodina Assembly, then by the Kosovo Assembly on the 23rd of March and the Serbian Assembly on the 28th of March.[67] The building of Kosovo's assembly was surrounded by police and tanks, and deputies voted in favour of constitutional amendments that would restore Serbia's power over province.[68] With this, Serbia gained control of three seats on the federal Presidency which, together with the full control over the puppet regime in Montenegro, would give Milošević four out of eight seats in his struggle to maintain the control over federation.[69]

Albanians responded to the suppression of Kosovo's autonomy with mass demonstrations throughout the province. Thousands of people came out to take part in demonstrations which were forcibly crushed by special police resulting in 29 protesters being killed, and 97 civilians and 30 policemen injured.[70] The ethnic protests were strongly supported by Albanian intellectuals, students and ordinary citizens throughout Kosovo, many of whom were arrested and later put on trial. On 5th of July 1990, the Serbian Assembly unconstitutionally dissolved the Kosovo Assembly as well as Kosovo's provincial executive council and assumed full and direct control of the

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[65] Gagnon, V. P., "Ethnic Nationalism and International Conflict: The Case of Serbia," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 3, Winter 1995/1995, p. 132.

[66] Such approval from Kosovo was necessary since the constitution of Serbia couldn't be changed without the consent of the two provinces.

[67] These amendments, though formally not abolishing Kosovo's autonomy, have basically seriously degraded it. Kosovo became subordinated to Serbia, and its veto power was removed.

[68] For details see Judah, p. 67.

[69] Ibid. p. 74.

[70] According to official figures 24 Albanians were killed during these demonstrations, unofficial accounts mention 70 demonstrators killed.

province. The entire structure of provincial administration was dismantled, and practically overnight Albanians were dismissed from their jobs, denied education in their own language, and exposed to a massive abuse of their human rights and civil liberties.[71]

When communism started to collapse all over Central and Eastern Europe, the League of the Communists of Kosovo also dissolved within a very short period of time. Accordingly, on the 23rd of December 1989, the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) was founded and Ibrahim Rugova was elected its first leader. LDK was in fact a broad-based political movement that quickly absorbed former Communist Party members and became the main focus of opposition to Serbian rule from then until the Kosovo war in 1998.[72] During the same period, other different independent organizations were founded, such as the Council for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms (CDHRF) in 1989 and the Union of Independent Trade Unions (UITU) in 1990. Meanwhile, during the 1990s, all Yugoslav republics also abandoned the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and adopted democratic multiparty systems. Kosovo, however, instead of a transition from one-party into a multi-party system, rather, witnessed a transition from the Left, Communist, one-party system into the Right one-party system.[73] Supported by the overwhelming majority of Kosovo Albanians, the LDK led by Ibrahim Rugova adopted non-violence as their resistance against the Serbian regime. Faced with an opponent whom they perceived to be genocidal, who seemed eager to provoke war, non-violent resistance emerged as an option for survival.[74] It should be mentioned though, that non-violence was more than a simple display of realism since it became part of the construction of a 'modern' Albanian identity. It was supported by both the village reeves and the urban intelligentsia in a common effort to avoid a tragedy. The reeves saw it as a key point to maintain Albanian society in Kosovo throughout the struggle. The urban intelligentsia, on the other hand, perceived it as a move that brings Kosovo closer in attitude to the rest of Europe.[75] All in all, this was the period of an

[71] The abrogation of Kosovo's autonomy was followed by a series of legal acts, valid only on the territory of Kosovo, which deprived Kosovo Albanians of many basic human rights. They included the Act on Labour Relations Under Special Circumstances, the Education Act, and the Act Restricting Real Estate Transactions. As a result, of 170,000 Albanians employed in the public sector, 115,000 were dismissed. The Education Act virtually expelled almost half a million young Albanians from the state education system; see Muhamedin Kullashi, ``Kosovo and Disintegration of Yugoslavia,'' in Dusan Janjic and Shkelzen Maliqi,eds. *Conflict or Dialogue: Serbian-Albanian Relations and Integration of the Balkans*, Subotica: Open University, 1994, p. 183.

[72] Judah, p. 69.

[73] Agani, Mentor, "The Integration of Kosovo's Political Parties in International Political Party Organizations: An Explanation of the Delay," Prishtina: KIPRED and KAS, 2015, pp. 5-8.

[74] Maliqi, Shkelzen, "Self-Understanding of the Albanians in Nonviolence," in D. Janjic´ and S. Maliqi (eds), *Conflict or Dialogue: Serbian-Albanian relations and integration of the Balkans*, Subotica, 1994, p. 239.

[75] Clark, Howard, *Civil Resistance in Kosovo*, London: Pluto Press, 2000, p. 66.

overwhelming homogenization of the Albanians in Kosovo, across the boundaries of religion, wealth, class and profession.[76] Meanwhile, the *de facto* apartheid forced the ethnic Albanian community to the margins of social and economic organization, leading them to gradually establish their own parallel institutions, with a functioning presidency, government, legislature, and an education and medical system.[77]

Although the Albanian community in Kosovo was overwhelmingly Muslim, Islam remained completely marginalized among Albanians in Kosovo during this period. Similarly to Albanian revivalists at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, Albanians in Kosovo strongly opposed the politicization of Islam. Instead, they promoted their European and Western values as a hallmark of their "European Identity."[78] In addition, they constantly rallied around Catholic symbols, above all Scanderbeg and Mother Theresa, observed Catholic holy days and attended Catholic ceremonies for Easter and Christmas. Such a display of solidarity for religious equality through which the Kosovo Muslim majority paid respect to its catholic minority was also meant to demonstrate that they were not the Muslim fundamentalists portrayed in Serbian propaganda.[79] In the classrooms of the Albanian elementary and high schools, Kosovo education authorities decided that the portrait of Scanderbeg should be hung. The great Albanian Christian national hero from the 15th century again stirred up a sense of an all-Albanian national unity. On the other hand, the "spiritual unification" through education served as a forerunner of an all-Albanian political unification.[80]

Still, the religious community leaders, both Muslim and Catholic, have played an important role on the nationwide ethnic homogenization of Albanians in Kosovo and their struggle against Serbia. Since the early 1990s, the leadership of the Islamic Community of Kosovo (ICK)[81] has aligned itself with the political agenda of the Kosovar political elite and has actively lobbied in favour of the independence of Kosovo.[82] In addition, Muslim religious objects, especially the *Madrese* in Prishtina, were often used for parliamentarian and governmental meetings. In terms of the overall resistance against Serbian rule, the Islam has additionally strengthened the opposition to the Orthodox Serbs, while the armed conflict has together with the ethnic ones also

[76] Kostovicova, Denisa, *The Politics of Identity and Space*, New York: Routledge, 2005, p. 117.
[77] For a detailed explanation on this issue see Pula, Besnik, "The Emergence of the Kosovo 'Parallel State' 1988-1992," *Nationalities Papers* 32, no. 4 (December 2004): pp. 797-826.
[78] Merdjanova, 2013, p. 45.
[79] Clark, 2000, p. 66.
[80] During this period, there were calls for the creation of a unified all-Albanian education system, instead of two separate systems in Kosovo and in Albania; see Kostovicova, 2005, p. 131.
[81] Bashkësia Islame e Kosovës (BIK).
[82] Iseni, p. 5.

reinforced religious boundaries.[83] Similarly, the Catholic community leaders and intelligentsia were very active during the period of non-violent resistance against Serbia. Anton Çetta, Don Lush Gjergji, Mark Krasniqi have in addition of holding high positions in Kosovo parallel institutions, also played a leading role in blood feud reconciliation campaigns.[84] Most importantly, leaders of the religious communities in Kosovo have actively cooperated with political elites and other relevant structures in advancing the position of Albanians and Kosovo during 1989-1999.[85] Nevertheless, during this period for an overwhelming majority of Albanians faith was not a matter of religion, but rather of enormous trust in Rugova personally, who as a wise, brave and careful individual should know what was best for Kosovo.[86]

If non-violence was the underlying form of resistance, solidarity, parallel educational and health system, and blood feud reconciliation campaigns were the defining elements of the national and civil resistance that directly contributed to the overwhelming ethnic homogenization and mobilization of Kosovo Albanians. Different forms of civil resistance were developed in the beginning of the 1990s, such as putting candles in the windows or balconies before the beginning of the curfew, or organizing one hour long silent demonstration in the streets of Prishtina with the posters declaring 'Stop the violence'. More importantly, as part of their civil resistance to Serbia, Albanians in Kosovo created their own "parallel" system of education and health. Though education was organized in private houses and garages, especially for high schools and University students, new curricula that aimed to promote the Albanian national identity were introduced.[87] The parallel system of education further galvanized the entire Albanian community in Kosovo into action, and contributed to its unprecedented homogenization. Parallel institutions became an important aspect of national pride and motivation for continuous solidification among Albanians for their statehood. In addition to being an embodiment of the Albanian civil and peaceful resistance, such an educational system served as an argument to prove the existence of the independent state in Kosovo.[88]

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[83] Merdjanova, 2013, p. 44.

[84] Anton Çetta was the first President of Mother Theresa Association, the founder and leader of the Reconciliation Committee for erasing blood feuds in Kosovo and in 1992 he was elected as a LDK member of the Assembly of Kosovo; Don Lush Gjergji has succeeded Çetta as the President of Mother Theresa Association and was also member of the Reconciliation Committee , Mark Krasniqi was a member of the Assembly of Kosovo during the legislatures of 2001-2004, 2004-2007, and 2007-2010 representing Albanian Christian Democratic Party of Kosovo and LDK, and has also served as President of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo.

[85] Most notably the cooperation of Nike Prelaj and Don Lush Gjergji with Rexhep Boja during blood feud reconciliation campaigns.

[86] Clark, 2000, p. 117.

[87] Kastrati, Ardian, "Civil Society Development and its Impact on the Democratization Process in Kosovo," *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences,* Vol. 6 No. 2 S5, April 2015, p. 74.

[88] Kostovicova, 2005, p. 97.

On the other hand, since thousands of Albanian health-workers were dismissed from their positions in public hospitals, Albanians in Kosovo also had to organize their parallel healthcare system. The backbone of that health system was the "Mother Theresa Association" (MTA) that was symbolically named after Mother Theresa - the famous Catholic Albanian figure. Additional display of excellent inter-religious relations among Albanians in Kosovo during this period was the appointment of Anton Çetta – a prominent Albanian Catholic intellectual – as the first director of the Association. Moreover, the Association provided medical services and food distribution to all categories of the civil Albanian population throughout Kosovo regardless of their religious affiliation.[89] The Mother Theresa Association opened its first clinic in Prishtina in March 1992, while meanwhile continued expanding its network of health facilities. Consequently, at the beginning of 1998 such network included 91 clinics and some 7,000 volunteers that were offering medical services and distributing humanitarian aid to around 350,000 people. It should be mentioned that all treatments, including medicine, were free, for all citizens regardless of their ethnic or religious background. Interestingly enough, due to increasing international support,[90] MTA clinics were often better stocked with medicines than the Serbian ones, and thus an increasing number of Serbs started going there for treatment.[91] On the one hand, such reality revealed that Albanian self-activity could be more effective than the Serbian regime in providing health services to citizens. On the other hand, it showed the Albanian solidarity in practice that cared for people of all ethnic and religious groups.

The final element that played an important role in the overall process of ethnic homogenization of Albanians in Kosovo was undoubtedly the large-scale reconciliation movement to end blood feuds in Kosovo. Historically, the most common customary law among the Albanians was the Kanun or Code of Leke Dukagjini. Among others, the Kanun included an elaborate legal rule that tried to regulate the blood feud.[92] After the suppression of Kosovo's autonomy, the key motivation for ending blood feuds was the need for Kosovar Albanians to unite in the struggle against the Serbian rule. In such reality the major concern was obviously the defence of the Albanian nationhood, represented through a strategy of national defiance against the Serbian regime.[93] Thus, on the one hand, the Kanun became an important point of reference to delineate Serbian opponent. On the other hand, it served the purpose of reinforcing the unity of the Albanian ranks. One way for Albanians to respond to Serbian repression and

[89] For details see Clark, 2000, p. 107; see also Kastrati, 2015, p. 74.

[90] Since 1994, Mother Theresa Association has received considerable support from international organizations such as *Medecins sans Frontieres* and Catholic Relief Services.

[91] Clark, 2000, p. 108.

[92] Kastrati, 2015, p. 74.

[93] Clark, 2000, p. 64.

violence was by eliminating violence among them.[94] Consequently, in the early 1990s the Albanian intellectual elite of Kosovo, led by academic Anton Çetta, initiated a nationwide campaign of blood feud reconciliation. During a period of several years, some 500 activists travelled throughout Kosovo to persuade feuding families to make peace and end their feuds.[95] According to certain sources approximately 2,000 ceremonies of reconciliation have taken place and hundreds of families involved in 1,200 blood feuds throughout Kosovo were reconciled.[96] During this period, not only were the religious differences inexistent and subdued by ethnic homogenization, but Kosovo had witnessed unprecedented religious cooperation both on an institutional and individual level. The Kosovo Islamic Community and the Catholic Church strongly supported these efforts, while their two prominent religious leaders, Rexhep Boja and Don Lush Gjergji were personally involved in almost all blood feuds reconciliation gatherings.

Nevertheless, by the late 1990s there were growing concerns among Albanians that the policy of non-violence was not being rewarded by the international community. Consequently, from 1997 the violence in Kosovo started increasing significantly. The influx of small weapons into Kosovo following violent social unrest in Albania, combined with a complete breakdown of law and order, helped the emergence of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), a secret guerrilla force that followed a strategy of attacks on police stations and assassinations of Serbian officials, police officers, and Albanian collaborators with the Serbian regime.[97] The Serbian authorities reacted with police raids, political trials and extreme brutality. Between March and October 1998 almost 2,000 Albanians were killed, many houses, shops, and schools were destroyed, and almost 400,000 Albanian civilians were forced to leave their homes.[98] Faced with the flow of refugees into neighbouring countries, and fearing a spill over from the Kosovo war, the international community scheduled negotiations between Albanians and Serbs in February at Rambouillet in France. In the face of continuing Serb violence and only with Albanians having signed the peace deal, on the 24th of March 1999, NATO launched the first air strikes against targets in Kosovo, and later in Serbia. After 78 days of continuous NATO air campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), on the 10th of June 1999, the Yugoslav Army representatives and NATO signed the

[94] Kostovicova, 2005, p. 117.

[95] Pratt, Suzana, "Gjakmarrja: Albanian Blood Feuds and Restorative Applications of Traditional Justice," GAPS Conference submission, 2013, p. 13; https://www.academia.edu/4654081/Gjakmarrja_Albanian_Blood_Feuds_and_Restorative_Applications_of_Traditional_Justice (25.04.2016).

[96] See Clark, Howard, "Nonviolent Struggle in Kosovo," *War Resisters' International*, 1 January 2001; http://www.wri-irg.org/nonviolence/nvse16-en.htm (25.04.2016).

[97] Calic, p. 28.

[98] See for instance several October 1998 issues of the Kosovo daily newspaper in Albanian, Koha Ditore, and reports from the UNHCR office in Prishtina issued during this period.

Military-Technical Agreement on the withdrawal of the Yugoslav troops from Kosovo, which ended the war.[99]

It should be mentioned that during the period of the armed conflict of 1998-1999, Albanians have continued to emphasize the secular character of Albanian nationalism and sought to prevent representation of the Albanian identity to the West as Muslim. No Kosovo Albanian political group or guerrilla has identified itself with religious affiliations.[100] The KLA leaders were aware that an eventual embrace of Islam would seriously undermine western international support for their insurgency. Therefore, the ideology of KLA was almost entirely the one of Albanian nationalism, with emphasis on Albanian ethnicity, nationalist aspirations and culture. Moreover, due to strong ethnic homogenization and mobilization of Albanians since 1989, the KLA was able to easily isolate itself from the foreign ideas of Islamic fundamentalists from Saudi Arabia who came to Kosovo in small numbers to infiltrate the KLA ranks.[101] Such reality has among others been evidenced by the Newsweek journalist Stacy Sullivan who wrote "In the two years that I covered the conflict in Kosovo, never once did I see the mujahedeen fighters I saw in Bosnia, or hear KLA soldiers even allude to any kind of commitment to Islam."[102]

The above arguments were basically fully supported by all persons that were interviewed as part of this research. According to Fatmir Sejdiu, the period of the 1990s in Kosovo is one of general homogenization of Albanians as self-defence against extreme Serbian nationalism that intended complete dismantling of the Albanian ethnicity in Kosovo. Sejdiu points out that the revival of the Serbian nationalism evolved around three main pillars: (1) The Serbian Orthodox Church; (2) The Serbian Academy of Sciences; and (3) The official political establishment. Such nationalism aimed at imposing Serb domination both in Yugoslavia and Kosovo. Sejdiu suggests that Albanians in Kosovo responded with a wide national platform that encompassed all aspects of life through an independent parallel system. Under the leadership of LDK, Albanians during this period organized themselves politically (elections, referendum etc.) and socially (education, health, arts and culture). The key features of the Albanian nationalism were non-violence, pro-Western orientation and general unification of Albanians regardless of their religious and social background. Later, concerns that non-

[99] Benson, p. 177.
[100] Merdjanova, 2013, p. 44.
[101] Perrit, Henry H., Kosovo Liberation Army: The Inside Story of an Insurgency, University of Illinois Press, 2008, p. 29.
[102] Totten, Michael J., "Kosovo's Moderate Muslims: The world's newest country is a model of tolerance," The Wall Street Journal, 30 December 2008; http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB123059201269240805 (25.04.2016).

violent resistance will not yield the desired results, led Albanians to gradually engage in an armed resistance.[103]

Similarly, Albin Kurti believes that the period during 1989-1999 was the period when all Albanians were like prisoners; they had equality but did not have freedom; and Serbia was the guardian of that jail that kept all Albanians imprisoned, oppressed and tortured. Such conditions of equality without freedom according to Kurti led to wide popular and social solidarity that strengthened the Albanian national identity, since Serbia discriminated Albanians for their ethnicity and not for being an engineer or a doctor. The Albanians underwent a total, massive and general oppression just because of their ethnic identity. Kurti points out that such reality contributed to the revival of the Albanian nationalism and led to an unprecedented ethnic and social homogenization. At the same time, Albanians started building the institutions of the Republic of Kosovo through several acts such as the Constitutional Declaration in July 1990, the referendum on independence in September 1991, and general elections in May 1992. According to Kurti, the process of homogenization was immensely precipitated by the creation of an alternative parallel educational system, from elementary to university level. Moreover, Kurti is convinced that all these developments enormously galvanized the ethnic identity among Albanians to the extent that the famous saying "the Albanians' faith is Albanianism!" became much stronger than before. Nevertheless, he also points out that religion, both Muslim and Catholic, has strongly supported these developments. Imams and priests were jointly involved in all activities, from lectures in mosques and political meetings in madrasas, to the involvement of Don Lush Gjergji and Rexhep Boja in reconciliation of blood feuds. Actually, Kurti believes that blood feuds reconciliation, though often underestimated or at least rarely mentioned, has played a crucial role in the process of homogenization.[104]

The representatives of the religious communities more or less share the same opinion about the developments during the period of 1989-1999. According to Mufti Naim Ternava, interfaith relations among Albanians in Kosovo have been excellent both during the period of peaceful resistance as well as throughout the armed struggle. These relations were in full harmony with the proclaimed objectives of the peaceful platform of the Albanians, and have evolved accordingly during the period of the armed resistance. Ternava explains that the Islamic Community of Kosovo and the Catholic Church have jointly coordinated their positions for the good of the country and the state. He considers such stance as an understandable one, since despite different religions,

[103] Interview with Fatmir Sejdiu, Former President of Republic of Kosovo and Former President of LDK, Prishtina, 10 February 2016.

[104] Interview with Albin Kurti, Former President of Vetëvendosja Party and Member of the Kosovo Parliament, 04 April 2016.

Albanians in Kosovo belong to the same nation/people. In such circumstances, all Albanians rallied around a higher common goal that has clearly side-lined religious differences.[105] On the other hand, for Don Shan Zefi, the Chancellor of the Diocese of Kosovo, the years 1989-1999 represent a golden period of both national and religious unification of the ethnic Albanians in Kosovo. Zefi believes that during this period, unification, tolerance and humanity among Albanians have reached the highest point possible. Such a period, though extremely difficult and dire, was at the same time a period of pride and strengthened national consciousness among all Albanians regardless of their religious affiliation.[106] Finally, Femi Cakolli, the Pastor of the Protestant Church, also believes that the period 1989 and 1999 represents one of the most prominent ones in the history of Albanians in Kosovo. He points out that the process of ethnic homogenization was possible only through a committed and coordinated engagement of renowned intellectuals (Gazmend Zajmi, Anton Çetta), politicians (Ibrahim Rugova, Fehmi Agani) and religious leaders (Nik Prelaj and Rexhep Boja) from all religions. According to Cakolli, it is impressive how Albanians managed to successfully confront oppressive measures of the Serbian regime during this period, despite the lack of proper institutions, police and funds. Moreover, they managed to downplay the Serbian propaganda that tried to portray them as Muslim fundamentalists by promoting their European Identity and rallying around Catholic symbols and figures.[107]

The interviewed representatives of academia have further reinforced the argument that the period between 1989 and 1999 represents a golden period of ethnic homogenization and inter-religious cooperation among Albanians in Kosovo. According to Xhabir Hamiti[108], this period is characterized with excellent inter-religious relations among Albanians in response to hegemonic policies of Serbian authorities and Orthodox Church that fully supported such discriminatory policies. Throughout these years of classical occupation of Kosovo by Serbian regime, Albanians have shown their ethnic unity as never before. They have shown to the international community that regardless of their religious background, they were all unified against the Serbian occupation. Hamiti points out that the unity of Muslim and Catholic religious leaders, both during the years of the non-violent resistance as well as during the armed conflict, represents an extraordinary example of inter-religious cooperation. These religious

[105] Interview with Dr. Naim Ternava, President of the Islamic Community of the Republic of Kosovo, Prishtina, 24 March 2016.
[106] Interview with Dr. Don Shan Zefi, Episcopal Chancellor of Catholic Church in Kosovo, Prizren, 31 March 2016.
[107] Interview with Dr. Femi Cakolli, Pastor of Evangelical Protestant Church in Kosovo, Prishtina, 17 March 2016.
[108] Interview with Dr. Xhabir Hamiti, Professor of the University of Islamic Studies in Kosovo, Prishtina, 10 March 2016.

leaders merit the highest recognition for their colossal contribution to the common national interest. On the other hand, Anton Berishaj also points out that differently from other countries in the region, in Kosovo, the interfaith communication between the Muslim and Catholic Albanians has traditionally been very good. The years of crises and the common danger from the Serbian rule have contributed to bringing them even closer together during the period of 1989-1999. During these years, the renowned figures of the Catholic Church, such as Father Nikë Prela and Father Lush Gjergji, have been heavily involved in different activities of the Albanians in the interest of their common goal. In addition, according to Berishaj, the Muslim and Catholic officials in Kosovo have traditionally cooperated in order to overcome any issues that could eventually contribute to the worsening of the inter-religious relations.[109]

In view of the above, it is clear that during this period Kosovo Albanians have achieved an unprecedented level of ethnic, religious and social homogenization in their struggle for liberation. Faced with an opponent whom they perceived to be genocidal, Albanians led by LDK opted for non-violent resistance as an option for national survival. While religion was throughout this period marginalized by political and intellectual elites, leaders of the religious communities in Kosovo have actively cooperated with these elites and other relevant structures in advancing the position of Kosovo and the Albanians. As it will be shown in the following chapter, after the war, instead of the homogenization of all strata of the society, Kosovo will witness social fragmentation and the rise of religiosity.

III.2. 1999-2008: International Administration, social fragmentation and the rise of religiosity

Following the end of the war in Kosovo, on the 10th of June 1999 the Resolution 1244 of the UN Security Council, established the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) that aimed to administer Kosovo without prejudging its external status.[110] For the first time in history, the UN was given an unprecedented mandate, both in scope and structural complexity, to replace the role of the state. Resolution 1244 gave rise to UNMIK, and called upon it to: perform basic civilian administrative functions, promote the establishment of substantial autonomy and self-government in Kosovo, facilitate a political process to determine Kosovo's future status, coordinate humanitarian and disaster relief of all international agencies, support the reconstruction of key infrastructure, maintain civil law and order, promote human rights and assure the

[109] Interview with Anton Berishaj, Professor at the University of Prishtina, Prishtina, 10 February 2016.

[110] "Administration and Governance in Kosovo: Lesson learned and lessons to be learned," Pristina-Geneva: Kosovar Institute for Policy Research and Development, June 2005, p. 1.

safe and unimpeded return of all refugees and displaced persons to their home in Kosovo.[111] All in all, in terms of scope and ambition, UNMIK's mandate was almost unprecedented by the standards of previous UN field operations. Not only was it given the authority to assume full interim administrative responsibility over the territory of Kosovo, it was also assigned a central political role in settling the conflict.[112]

On the other hand, the immediate challenges in Kosovo were too many. Thousands of Albanian villages were burned or shelled and nearly 40 percent of all residential houses in Kosovo were heavily damaged or completely destroyed by the end of the war.[113] There were more than one million refugees or displaced persons in desperate need for homes or temporary shelters before the onset of winter. The need for humanitarian and emergency aid was also immense since over 900,000 people needed regular food provision and protection against significant outbreaks of disease. Amidst such an overall chaotic and dire situation, after ten years of delay as compared to other former communist countries, another process started taking place in Kosovo. Namely, a resurgence of religiosity in post-communist countries in Europe represents an expected process following the fall of communism. Suppressed by the previous regime, religion in former communist countries finally found a way to make itself visible and reinvent its position in the new emerging social context. Though delayed due to a ten year period of struggle for liberation, after the war the resurgence of religiosity started in Kosovo as well.

With vast majority of Kosovo Albanians being Muslim, it is understandable that Islam was the most resurgent religion during this period. In order to understand the process of the revival of the Islam in Kosovo, at this point it is important to analyse the way the Muslim religious sphere was organized in former-Yugoslavia, and the consequences that such organisation has had for the Albanian Muslims in Kosovo. Initially, it should be mentioned that the tolerant nature of Kosovo Albanians' Islam is mainly ascribed to different influences such as the Ottoman legacy of religious tolerance, strong Sufi tradition as well as observance of the Hanafi School of law.[114] Islam had reached the Balkans between the 15th and 17th centuries when many Sufi *tariqas* spread in the newly conquered lands of the Ottoman Empire. Sufi Islam was represented by a number of *tariqas* (religious brotherhoods) and though most of the Sufi orders in the region fall within the Sunni realm, they have retained many heterodox beliefs and

[111] United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1244, 1999.

[112] Yannis, Alexandros, "The UN as Government in Kosovo," *Global Governance* 10, 2004, p. 67.

[113] "UNHCR Shelter Verification: Agency Coverage," UNHCR GIS Unit, Pristina, Kosovo, 9 November 1999.

[114] Hanafism was the historically predominant Islamic legal system during the Ottoman Empire that among others allowed taking into account popular customs in the religious practice; see Iseni, 2009, p. 7.

practices.[115] These Sufi orders with their "unorthodox" practices often bridged doctrinal gaps between Christianity and Islam through adoption of local beliefs into reformulated theology. Such practices were uniquely local and showed openness towards both Christian practices and various folk customs. Accordingly, Albanians have traditionally practiced Islam in a way rather unique to the region, with practices that included a synthesis of a number of local forms of spiritual traditions. Such traditions throughout time have evolved into complex rituals in which among others Muslims and local Christians often shared the same sanctuaries.[116]

Clearly, socialist Yugoslavia inherited a rather heterogeneous Muslim population that was engaged in various and diverse religious practices. Consequently, the main aim of Yugoslav authorities was to effectively put the entire Muslim populations' spiritual life under the control of a single institution by erasing its plurality. Therefore, the Muslim religious sphere was put under the management and control of a single religious authority - Yugoslavia's Islamic Community based in Sarajevo.[117] According to Blumi, the practices of Sufi orders throughout Kosovo with their spiritual tolerance were the primary target of the state-sponsored Islam in the country. Accordingly, the first act of the Islamic community of Yugoslavia was to ban all unsanctioned Muslim institutions in an attempt to establish complete and unchallenged control over religious practices throughout the country. As a result, in 1952 all activities of Sufi orders were banned, while their traditional *tekkes* were closed down. In parallel, the imams trained by Yugoslav Islamic Community tried to draw Albanian Muslims away from Sufi independent and localized *tekkes* by preaching a religious doctrine that insisted on "unity" among Muslims and dissolution of ethnic loyalties.[118]

On the other hand, Iseni claims that these repressive policies that primarily targeted the non-Slav and non-Sunni communities were also associated with aggressive processes of secularization and modernization. Such processes, coupled with the centralization of the Islamic religious sphere have contributed to a radical marginalization of religion in general and of the Muslim religious clergy in particular.[119] Moreover, rapid emancipation and secularization of the population contributed to the spread of atheism not only among the political and intellectual elite, but to the major part of the urban population as well. Consequently, Islam was reduced only to the private sphere ceremonies such as

[115] Merdjanova, 2013, p. 6.
[116] Blumi, Isa, "Political Islam among the Albanians: Are the Talibans coming to the Balkans?," Policy Research Series, Paper #2, Prishtina: KIPRED, 2005, p. 2.
[117] Iseni, 2009, p. 8.
[118] Blumi, Isa. "Religion and Politics among Albanians of Southeastern Europe," in *Religion and Politics in Central and Southeastern Europe: Challenges since 1989*, ed. Sabrina P. Ramet, New York: Palgrave, 2014, p. 290.
[119] Iseni, 2009, p. 8.

worship practices, annual religious feasts and wedding and death ceremonies.[120] Nevertheless, rural Albanian Muslims in Kosovo have vigorously resisted these Yugoslav centralizing efforts, and thus despite repression, Sufi orders have successfully survived. Throughout this period Sufi orders in rural Kosovo have actively addressed the centralizing efforts of Sarajevo, while at the same time attracting many believers from the urban areas as well.[121]

Following the favourable constitutional changes in 1974, these underground Sufi networks created an association of Sufi (Dervish) orders (Bashkësia e Rradhëve Dervishe Islame Alijje - BRDIA) which was led by Shaykh Xhemali Shehu of the Rufai *tekke* based in Prizren. Though immediately vilified by the Islamic leaders in Sarajevo, BRDIA quickly managed to become a cultural force in Kosovo's public life since its institutions attracted high number of Albanian Muslims. Consequently, some 126 Sufi *tekkes* throughout Kosovo representing 50,000 dervishes joined the BRDIA by 1984, while in 1998 its membership grew to 100,000 members.[122] Such revival of popular Sufism in Kosovo during 1970s and 1980s was according to Duijzings "an example of the classic antagonism between orthodox Islam and heterodox Sufi orders." In addition, this antagonism also contained an ethnic dimension – the one related to the animosity between the Albanian *sheikhs* and Islamic Community in Yugoslavia dominated by the Bosnian Muslims.[123] Furthermore, the construction of popular Sufism as a specific form of the Albanian Islam has also contributed to the overall enhancement of the Albanian ethnic identity in Kosovo. Accordingly, such a process involved what Merdjanova calls "a double strategy of ethno-religious differentiation: *vis-a-vis* the Orthodox Serb-dominated political establishment, on the one hand, and the Serbo-Croatian-speaking Bosnian Muslim establishment, on the other."[124]

Not surprisingly, these Sufi orders that for centuries represented the foundation of the Albanian society in Kosovo were specifically targeted by the Milošević regime during the war in Kosovo. Obviously, the Serbian nationalist regime was eager to forever eliminate Kosovo Sufi communities that played a crucial role in maintaining rural Kosovar society resistance to Belgrade hegemony. Therefore, their centuries-old mosques and

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[120] Mehmeti, Jeton,"Faith and Politics in Kosovo: The Status of Religious Communities in a Secular Country," in *The Revival of Islam in the Balkans: From Identity to Religiosity*, ed. Arolda Elbasani and Olivier Roy, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, p. 68.

[121] Blumi, "Religion and Politics among Albanians of Southeastern Europe," 2014, p. 291.

[122] It should be mentioned that BRDIA was in 1977 recognized by the Yugoslav authority as an independent religious community, despite objections by the Islamic leadership in Sarajevo; see Blumi, Isa, "Albanians' Islam[s]," in *Handbook for European Islam*, ed. Jocelyne Caesari, New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, pp. 485-486.

[123] Duijzings, 2000, p. 107.

[124] Merdjanova, 2013, p. 44.

madreses were fiercely destroyed, while Sufi *shaykhs* were mercilessly eliminated.[125] It should be mentioned that the influence of these Sufi *shaykhs* and their *tekkes* on rural society was also crucial for the "anti-Islamic" stance of Albanians during the war of 1998–1999. Indeed, despite the killings, massacres and huge destruction (especially of Muslim religious objects) throughout the conflict, it seems that religion had remained relatively marginalized among Kosovo Albanians immediately after the end of the war. A survey commissioned by the Kosovo Forces (KFOR) and conducted by the Gallup organisation found that Kosovo Albanians were moderately religious, with only 5.8 percent of Kosovo Albanians attending religious ceremonies such as Friday jumaa (Muslims) or Sunday mass (Catholics) regularly during the day. Another 12.2 percent attended such ceremonies several times a month, while 28.9 percent replied to do that only several times a year.[126]

However, as it will be shown below, though delayed due to a ten year period of struggle for liberation, Kosovo would soon witness the religious revival, especially Islam, similar to all post-communist countries. Causes for such resurgence of religiosity in Kosovo were both internal and external. Internally, the revival of religion was an expected process in a place that has experienced many decades of communist atheism. The collapse of communism has inevitably triggered a process of radical transformation and redefinition of the place of religion in all former communist countries, including the Balkans. The presence of both Islam and Christianity became visible and pronounced in all public spheres, from personal lives to society at large, including politics. At the same time, religious communities gained new opportunities for religious and cultural revitalization as well as for political mobilization.[127] On the individual level, confronted with grave political crisis, conflict as well as permanent social and economic insecurity, numerous individuals in the Balkan countries turned to religion.[128]

In Kosovo itself, the process of religious revival after 1999 was a result of multiple internal interacting factors. The consequences of war created multiple conditions that were at play during the first years after 1999, which provided fruitful bases for the religiosity of the society. To begin with, the societal disorientation, high poverty, weak economy and political void made Kosovo fertile ground for the resurgence of the

[125] According to Blumi, the leaders of the Sufi orders were primary targets of Serbian forces from the very beginning of the offensive in July 1998. As a result, very important leader of the Dervish community and *shaykh* of the Halveti tekke in Rahovac, Shaykh Mujedin, was murdered by Serbian police while praying; see Blumi, "Religion and Politics among Albanians of Southeastern Europe," 2014, p. 292.
[126] International Crisis Group, "Religion in Kosovo," *ICG Balkans Report* N° 105, Pristina/Brussels, 31 January 2001, p. 2.
[127] Merdjanova, 2013, p. xiv.
[128] Blumi, "Albanians' Islam[s]," 2014, p. 493.

religion.[129] Immediately after the war, the situation in Kosovo was chaotic, while public administration was virtually non-existent. The entire Kosovar society was rapidly exposed to a variety of competing ideas, both more liberal as well as more conservative ones. Kosovo war-ravaged population was exposed to different international faith-based organizations that have mushroomed throughout the country after the war. Under the guise of humanitarian aid, such organizations have ruthlessly exploited the poverty and fragmented social conditions of Kosovar Albanians, especially in rural areas, and seriously disrupted cultural hegemony of these communities.[130] In addition, UNMIK and the international community in general were busy with humanitarian and inter-ethnic issues, and therefore paid little or no attention to the activities of different faith based humanitarian organization. Similarly, without any reliable intelligent structures and control of financial transactions, it was very difficult to follow activities of such organizations.

In addition, during this period, the democratic changes have enabled the development of new links between Kosovo and the rest of the Muslim world, thus favouring the renewal of different religious activities. Different publishers were able to translate, print and distribute religious Islamic literature throughout Kosovo. New mosques and religious schools were opened, different re-Islamization movement started operating throughout Kosovo, while Kosovo students began to increasingly attend various Islamic universities in the Muslim world. [131] All these factors have undoubtedly contributed to the revival of Islam and its massive proliferation among Kosovo Albanians. Most importantly, once a non-disputable issue about the Islamic model in Kosovo as a unique traditional model was slowly changing after the war as well.

On the other hand, with the collapse of communism, the Islamic Community of Kosovo has also started to slowly rebuild its institutional and social infrastructure. Prior to the war, some 560 mosques were registered with the Islamic Community of Kosovo. The Islamic Community also administers the *madrese* Alauddin, which since it was opened in 1951, has served as a professional secondary school for some 2,000 graduates. In 1992, a Faculty of Islamic Studies - that gradually developed into an important centre of Muslim religious life - was opened in Prishtina.[132] During the war, numerous Islamic facilities, including virtually all Islamic libraries and archives were destroyed by Serb forces. Among others, 218 mosques were destroyed, homes of 302 imams were devastated, while 16 imams were killed and 15 were missing or imprisoned. Sufi lodges

[129] Kursani, Shpend, "Report inquiring into the causes and consequences of Kosovo citizens' involvement as foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq," Kosovar Center for Security Studies. April 2015, p. 59.
[130] Blumi, 2005, p. 2.
[131] Bougarel, Xavier, "The New Balkan Islam," *Regional Issues*, ISIM Newsletter, No.6, 2000, p. 32.
[132] Merdjanova, 2013, p. 44.

and Islamic schools including their archives and libraries were also targeted. Kosovo's largest and oldest Bektashi *tekke* in Gjakova was burned together with 2,000 rare books and 250 manuscripts from its library.[133]

After the war, the Islamic Community of Kosovo undertook various attempts to improve its role in the social and political life in the country. Among others, it tried to increase the presence of Islam in post-war public space and social life of Kosovo through the revitalization and extension of its network of mosques and other religious organizations. Accordingly, since 1999, the ICK has through different funding channels reconstructed 113 war-damaged mosques and built another 175 new ones.[134] Currently, the Islamic Community operates through its independent organizational and administrative infrastructure in accordance to its own constitution. Its 27-member assembly elects the head of ICK, who also serves as the mufti. Through its hierarchical system consisting of 26 local councils, ICK manages all religious duties in Kosovo, including the overseeing of some 660 mosques. In addition, it has separate departments for publications, women, youth, and charitable donations.[135]

After the war, the Faculty of Islamic Studies has also continued to promote traditional Islam and managed to attract Albanian students from Kosovo and other parts of the Balkans. Although the legal status of religious communities is not yet properly regulated in Kosovo, graduates' diplomas of the Faculty were accepted and recognized by the Ministry of Education of Kosovo. However, in terms of the curriculum, with the exception of Arabic language and a couple of Islamic philosophy courses, only courses in the traditional Islamic disciplines of Koran recitations are offered by this faculty. Such a reality has made this Faculty the least open to non-religious courses of all the Islamic faculties in the Balkans.[136] Interestingly enough, the curriculum also does not contain a single course about the national history of Albanians. If throughout the 1990s the Faculty promoted traditional Islam with a strong emphasis on the Albanian national belonging, after the war, it has gradually marginalized ethnicity in favour of religious values.[137] Moreover, the lack of any subjects related to Albanian history also represents part of a continuing denial of the past, especially the Christian one, by the Kosovo Islamic Community. It is precisely such denial of the past that refuses to acknowledge historic Albanian Christian roots that often fuels inter-religious intolerance and radicalization.

[133] International Crisis Group, "Religion in Kosovo," 2001, p. 14.
[134] Blumi, "Albanians' Islam[s]," 2014, p. 504.
[135] Mehmeti, 2015, p. 77.
[136] Blumi, "Albanians' Islam[s]," 2014, p. 502.
[137] "Curriculum of Islamic Studies," The Faculty of Islamic Studies, Prishtina, 2016.

Externally, the revival of Islam in Kosovo was mainly influenced by Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States on the one hand, and Turkey, on the other. As already explained, after the war, numerous and various international faith-based organizations proliferated the country under the guise of the humanitarian aid. Of those, the most "active" ones were different Arab charity groups, especially the Saudi Arabian ones. The Saudi Arabian organizations operating under the umbrella of the Saudi Joint Committee for the Relief of Kosovo and Chechnya (SJCRKC) were not interested in rebuilding the Kosovo local "unorthodox" Islam practices. Instead they promoted a universalistic Islam in a form of aggressive *Salafism* (Wahhabism). Their primary aim was to control the population's spiritual life, to politicize Islam and to encourage intolerance towards secularism and religious plurality in Kosovo. In short, their aim was to transform the Albanians' traditional/cultural relationship to religion by introducing a political and conservative Islam. Not surprisingly, the traditional heterodox Sufi orders in rural communities were the primary targets of these organizations. Such "new" Islam intended to erase the six century long Ottoman heritage and abandon the plural and liberal practice of Albanian Islam. Moreover, it sought to weaken the Albanian national feeling based on language and a pro-Western attitude that was dominant in Kosovo by strengthening the intra-Albanian Muslim solidarity. [138]

Accordingly, they diverted all their money to establishing mosques and schools that would promote a universalistic rather than a local form of Islam. During the restoration, these organizations have destroyed mosques with an Ottoman architecture in order to rebuilt new ones in an Arabic style. It is estimated that faith-based aid agencies from the Middle East have invested around $800 million in Kosovo, mainly in rural areas.[139] These organizations have not only monopolized the provision of food and health supplies to the Kosovo poor Albanian population in devastated rural areas, but they have provided religious education for Kosovo's children. The Islamic Endowment Foundation (IEF) that operates under the umbrella of the SJCRKC, has admitted to have supported the construction of more than 30 specialized Koranic schools in Kosovo's rural areas since 1999.[140] With enormous financial resources at their disposal, these Saudi Arabian organizations have also encouraged the training of young Albanian imams in the neo-Salafist spirit in Saudi Universities, mostly the Medina. In addition, they have translated into Albanian religious books closer to their version of Islam and have distributed them for free. Obviously such substantial investments aimed at changing the perception of Islam among Kosovo Albanian Muslims community, while at the same time trying to take control over Islamic institutions in the country.[141]

[138] Iseni, 2009, p. 10.
[139] Blumi, "Albanians' Islam[s]," 2014, p. 488.
[140] Blumi, 2005, p. 15.
[141] Iseni, 2009, p. 10.

Unfortunately, although aware that their assistance often came attached with both ideological and political strings, the Kosovo Islamic Community found it difficult to compete with the influence of those financially robust transnational Islamic foundations and charities.[142]

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However, these publicly displayed aggressive and radical activities have not gone unnoticed in Kosovo. First warnings about the infiltration of fundamentalist activists into Kosovo came as early as December 1999 by the Kosovapress news agency founded by the KLA. In an extremely critical statement it declared that "For more than a century civilised countries have separated religion from the state... [However,] we now see attempts not only in Kosovo but everywhere Albanians live to introduce religion into public schools... Supplemental courses for children have been set up by foreign Islamic organisations that hide behind assistance programs… It is time for Albanian mosques to be separated from Arab connections."[143] Similarly, the head of the Islamic Community of Kosovo, Rexhep Boja, has angrily responded to the behaviour of the ultra-orthodox Saudi agencies by noting that "Albanians have been Muslims for more than 500 years and they do not need outsiders [Arabs] to tell them what the proper way to practice Islam is."[144] The radical public activities of the Saudi organizations were also condemned by the predominantly secular-minded Kosovo Albanian political elites, religious communities as well as media and Kosovo intellectuals. The vast number of mosques built with international Islamic organizational money was seen by Kosovo politicians and citizens as harmful to their vision of a modern Albanian identity that is primarily "European" and "Western."

Especially after attacks of 11th of September 2001 in USA, the tremendously increased "anti-Islamic" discourse in Europe and USA has had a noticeable impact on Kosovo Albanians as well. Accordingly, whatever acts by external Saudi Arabian radical networks were perceived by Kosovo political and intellectual elite as a direct attack on their pro-European and pro-Western political vision.[145] As in other Balkan states, Kosovo was also actively engaged in expelling individuals and shutting down organizations suspected for promoting Islamic radicalism that were seen as a threat to the country's national security.[146] As a result, these initially very public and mainstream operations of Saudi groups went under-ground. Exposed to huge criticism from all segments of the Kosovar society, they adopted a much more cautious approach and silently moved their operations to poor rural parts of Kosovo. Instead of targeting the

[142] Merdjanova, 2013, p. 68.

[143] International Crisis Group, "Religion in Kosovo," 2001, p. 6.

[144] Deliso, Christopher, *The Coming Balkan Caliphate: The Threat of Radical Islam to Europe and the West*, Westport and London: Praeger Security International, 2007, p. 55.

[145] Blumi, "Albanians' Islam[s]," 2014, p. 509.

[146] Merdjanova, 2013, p. 70.

Kosovo's entire society, they disappeared from the radar of the Kosovo elite and concentrated on a largely unemployed, impoverished and marginalized segment of Kosovo society.[147] However, as we will see in the following chapter, these Wahhabi networks will soon resurface much more aggressively in Kosovo's scenery once they have established a quiet role among politically, economically and socially alienated rural population of Kosovo.

Turkey, on the other hand, has always served as a religious marker and role model for the Muslims living in the Balkans. Until the end of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire has for more than four centuries ruled the region and has undoubtedly shaped its religious landscape. Ever since, due to geographic proximity, historical links as well as religious and cultural affinities, Turkey was traditionally able to exercise strong impact on local Muslims in the Balkans. After the end of the Cold War, Turkey's access to these Muslim populations became easier than ever before.[148] However, until the late 1990s Turkey's presence in the region was mainly focused on the domain of the official politics that was greatly constrained by the secularist and Kemalist religious outlook of the Turkish Republic. The official foreign policy was mainly positioned in the context of international organizations, while the country's diplomatic representatives interacted only with state agencies or ethnic Turkish organisations that were acting on a pan-Turkish nationalist platform. The religious assertiveness of Turkey in the region directly corresponds to the domestic ideological and political developments that resulted in a new foreign policy paradigm. Particularly important in this direction is the revalorization of Islam as a key reference point in Turkish national identity.[149]

Initially it was Turgut Özal, the former Prime Minister and President, who initiated the shift away from isolationist Kemalism towards a more historical and pro-Ottoman approach. Ismail Cem, Turkey's Foreign Minister of the late 1990s and early 2000s, took such an approach a step further by insisting that "if Turkey is to become a country that matters in the world, it first has to embrace its past as an imperial power and to engage with its immediate neighbourhood."[150] Accordingly, the Ottoman legacy previously ignored and even rejected by the traditional secularist and Kemalist political elites, was rearticulated and turned into a discursive tool for the re-evaluation of regional history. The Ottoman Empire was re-conceptualized into a model of a multi-religious and multi-ethnic tolerant pluralistic entity. Such image was then propelled into domestic

[147] See Blumi, "Religion and Politics among Albanians of Southeastern Europe," 2014, p. 294.
[148] Merdjanova, 2013, p. 76.
[149] Öktem, Kerem, "New Islamic actors after the Wahhabi intermezzo: Turkey's return to the Muslim Balkans," paper presented at the conference "After the Wahhabi Mirage: Islam, Politics, and International Networks in the Balkans," European Studies Centre, Oxford University, June 2010, p. 22.
[150] Öktem, 2010, p. 23.

and regional public discourses to serve new political necessities.[151] When the Islamist Justice and Development Party came to power in 2002, its new mode of engagement in the region significantly widened the scope of the country's regional influence. At the same time, the Ottoman Empire, religious legacies and partners in Muslim communities were accordingly recognized as legitimate. Through close cooperation with religious networks and charities from Turkey, Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu introduced a new political model that reached out into the micro-level of community organisations and grassroots politics.[152] As a result, during the last decade Turkey has become "a most influential Muslim actor in Southeast Europe, both in terms of formal foreign policy and the low politics of religious networks and brotherhoods."[153]

Kosovo has traditionally maintained close links with Turkey, especially on a family and individual level. As already mentioned, tens of thousands of Muslim Albanians have moved to Turkey as part of enforced emigration during both the kingdom and socialist Yugoslavia. Since then, most of Kosovo Albanians have remained in close contact with their family members living in Turkey. After the fall of communism, the role of Turkey in the entire Balkans has expanded enormously, both through its formal governmental agencies and through Turkish Islamic networks. Similarly, since 1999, Kosovo has established a very good relationship with Turkey, while trying to maintain an Islamic model similar to that of secular Turkey. It should be mentioned that there were four areas of particular importance through which Turkey has established its political and religious influence in Kosovo and the entire Balkans: (1) the Turkish development agency (TIKA); (2) the Presidency of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet*); (3) the intellectual and political networks around Ahmet Davutoğlu; and (4) Islamic grassroots organizations, such as the Gülen movement and Islamic brotherhoods.[154]

Established during Turgut Özal's Presidency as an instrument for proactive foreign policy, TIKA has since supported different projects in the Balkans that boosted cultural cooperation. In Kosovo it has restored several mosques and other sites related to the Ottoman rule that were destroyed during the war.[155] In addition, it has supported more than 400 projects in the fields of health, agriculture and education. Among others, Turkish-run hospitals and clinics sponsored by TIKA also offer affordable health care to Kosovo citizens.[156] On the other hand, the Presidency of Religious Affairs represents

[151] Merdjanova, 2013, p. 77.
[152] Öktem, 2010, p. 23.
[153] Merdjanova, 2013, p. 76.
[154] Fazlic, Hasim, "Islam in the successor states of Former Yugoslavia - Religious changes in the post-communist Balkans from 1989-2009," PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham, 2011, p. 170.
[155] Merdjanova, 2013, p. 78.
[156] Philips, David, "Turkey's Islamist Agenda in Kosovo," *The World Post*, 29 December 2015; http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-l-phillips/turkeys-islamist-agenda-i_b_8891634.html (20.05.2016).

the government body in charge of all religious matters of the country's Muslim majority with the mandate "to carry out religious affairs pertaining to faith, worship and moral principles, to inform society on religion and to administer places of worship."[157] With around 80,000 employees and an enormous budget, *Diyanet* is most probably the world's largest and most centralized Muslim religious organization. While it has also supported the reconstruction of mosques in Kosovo, as symbolic leader of the Muslim communities of the Balkans, *Diyanet* has mainly supported the infrastructure and capacity building of the official Islamic Communities. In addition to organizing seminars and courses for officials and teaching staff of religious institutions, *Diyanet* also organizes and hosts the Eurasian and Balkan Councils.[158]

Nevertheless, the most important legacy of the Turkish influence is related to educational activities. Among others, such activities included scholarships for the study of Islamic theology at Turkish universities, financial support to local religious schools as well as translation and distribution of religious literature.[159] The overall amount of the Turkish aid to the nations earlier ruled by Ottoman Empire has continuously increased from $US85 million in 2002 to $US967 million in 2010, with the total amount of aid for this period reaching almost $US5 billion.[160] Only in successor states of former Yugoslavia, *Diyanet* granted full scholarships to some 400 students to study religious subjects in Turkey every year. The total number of such scholarships for the whole region including Bulgaria, Romania, Albania and Greece is more than 1000.[161] In Kosovo such number was 195, while within the "Great Student Project" of the Ministry of Education another 100 students are admitted annually to study in Turkish universities.[162] In addition, a number of educational institutions initiated and generously supported by Turkish *neo-Sufi* networks were established in the Balkans. The driving force behind all these businessmen-intellectuals networks came from the Turkish *neo-Sufi* movements - Suleymanc and Nurcu. They have established several secular colleges with thousands of students throughout the Balkans that follow the curriculums of their host states. However, their activities have also involved religious education through reading circles and Koran courses. The most active in the region has undoubtedly been the Gülen movement - a global network of primary and secondary schools, universities, charities, radio and TV stations, newspapers, lobbying groups and

[157] For more details about the *Diyanet* mandate and activities see more at http://www.diyanet.gov.tr (20.05.2016).
[158] Fazlic, 2011, p. 172.
[159] It should be mentioned that publications of the *Diyanet* Foundation mainly include introductory manuals on Islamic doctrine and practice often adopted for children, produced in high quality, illustrated appealingly and translated and revised by leading religious scholars; see Öktem, 2010, p. 33.
[160] For details see Merdjanova, 2013, pp. 78-79.
[161] Fazlic, 2011, p. 172.
[162] Öktem, 2010, p. 33.

business initiatives - inspired by the teachings of Fethullah Gülen, a Turkish theologian and activist.[163]

The transformed geopolitical situation and increased security concerns after 9/11 have further facilitated the proliferation of Turkish Islamic actors in the region. On the one hand, the flow of funds and actors from the Arab world to the Balkan region decreased due to the intensified scrutiny of Islamic activities by respective states. On the other hand, Western countries, especially the US, saw Turkey's "moderate" Islam in the Balkans as a counterbalance against potential "radical" influences from the Arab countries.[164] In addition, the Turkish approach in the Balkans has been quite different from the attitudes of *Wahhabi* organizations. Organizations from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries challenged local Islamic institutions and traditional practices by imposing an alien Islam to the Balkans. Instead, Turkish organizations, especially governmental agencies, supported the existing Islamic Communities and strengthened their infrastructure through a number of initiatives. Accordingly, Turkey has recently been viewed not only as "a secular Muslim nation," but also as "a moderate Islamic player," that can contribute to further development of moderate Islam in the region.[165] Being seen as having historically shared common religious and cultural bonds, Turkish state and non-state actors in the Balkans have been welcomed by both the international community and the local population. Their extensive engagement and strengthened bonds between Turkey and the Balkan Islamic Communities, have on the other hand, cultivated a closer identification between Turkish Islam" and "Balkan Islam."[166] Such influences were also quite visible in Kosovo, and have considerably contributed to rapid Islamization of Kosovo since 1999.

Politicians, religious community leaders and representatives of academia that were interviewed as part of this research essentially agree with the phenomenon of the revival of religion, Islam in particular, though they offer different explanations regarding factors that have contributed to that process. Agim Çeku, for instance, maintains that the period 1999-2008 is above all characterized by overwhelming international administration implemented by UNMIK. Internally, Çeku claims that tensions were created between two opposing wings – the peaceful and the war one. Such reality has in turn enabled penetration of organizations from the East that under the veil of humanitarian aid promoted political agendas in Kosovo. The main agenda of this organization was imposing an Islam that was different from the traditional one in Kosovo. To achieve this aim, together with humanitarian activities, those mainly Arab

[163] Fazlic, 2011, p. 171.
[164] Merdjanova, 2013, p. 77.
[165] Fazlic, 2011, p. 168.
[166] Merdjanova, 2013, p. 80.

NGOs have imposed religious elements such as mosques, religious schools and wearing of the hijab. Çeku believes that in parallel to all these activities, these organizations have also actively recruited Kosovo citizens that would promote their aims. Lack of proper institutions immediately after the war, is one of the reasons that according to Çeku has contributed to this phenomenon. On the one hand, Kosovo lacked its own institutions, while on the other hand, UNMIK and other international organizations have underestimated activities of these faith-based organizations. As a result, things have at least initially simply gotten out of control. Though the Kosovo Islamic Community has warned and appealed against activities of such NGOs, it could not achieve much due to lack of financial resources and legal competences. At the same time, Çeku points out that the fact that the security sector in the country was weak has also contributed to such a reality.[167] On the other hand, Albin Kurti maintains that the revival of religion in Kosovo after the war is a result of different factors. Firstly, he points out that during the war 218 mosques were burned and destroyed by Serbian forces. This was part of Belgrade's propaganda to convince the international community that it is not killing Albanians, but radical Muslims. Nevertheless, according to Kurti, for the first time Albanians felt they were being targeted not only as Albanians, but as Muslims as well. For Kurti, it was normal that such actions would trigger a reaction after the war – if 218 mosques were destroyed, at least as much will have to be rebuilt. A second factor that has contributed to the rise of religiosity in Kosovo according to Kurti is linked with international administration of Kosovo after the war. Such administration came in with neoliberal policies that promoted the materiality of life, individualism of life, chaos and anarchy. As a kind of reaction, and even compensation, Kurti claims that some citizens in Kosovo have paradoxically turned towards religion and praying. Finally, Kurti points out that, social conditions, such as unemployment, injustice and corruption, have also contributed to the revival of religion in Kosovo. Moreover, Kurti believes that loss of moral and professional values, such as knowledge and professionalism, has also influenced Kosovars' shift towards religion and spiritual values.[168] Similarly, Ramush Haradinaj, believes that if during socialist Yugoslavia religion existed only in the margins of the society, after the collapse of communism it has returned in Kosovo as part of the identity as in all former communist countries. After 1999, religion according to Haradinaj served as the first consolation for pains that Kosovars suffered during the war. During this period, the way religion was practiced was influenced by globalizing trends disseminated by internet and by various Islamic movements that have penetrated Kosovo.[169]

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[167] Interview with Agim Çeku, Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo, Former Minister of Security Forces of Kosovo and Member of the Kosovo Parliament, Prishtina, 07 April 2016.

[168] Interview with Albin Kurti.

[169] Interview with Ramush Haradinaj, Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo, President of AAK Party and Member of the Kosovo Parliament, Prishtina, March 2016.

Naim Ternava believes that the Kosovo Islamic Community has continued cooperation and coordination with other religious communities, especially the Catholic one, during the period of international administration as well. Despite damages of their infrastructure during the war, Ternava maintains that KIC has continued its contribution for the benefit of the country and its citizens. However, in addition to new possibilities for the religious communities, the period after the war according to Ternava also brought new challenges to the country. Different religious organizations and NGOs that came under the veil of humanitarian aid, also engaged in religious propaganda, both Islam and Christian. Nevertheless, Ternava is convinced that such propaganda did not influence their relation with the Catholic community, and that KIC has continued its cooperation with Eparchy to jointly protect Kosovo youth from such influences.[170] According to Don Shan Zefi, on the other hand, during this period national identity and homogenization among Albanians in Kosovo has gradually faded as compared to 1989-1999. This has especially become visible some years after the war, when enthusiasm about liberation and improved living conditions has faded as well. Nevertheless, he claims that relations among different religious communities have remained good, though with a lower level of cooperation. Still, Zefi believes that perhaps the Kosovo Islamic Community should have reacted more strongly against certain signs of radicalization among Kosovo Muslims.[171] Somewhat similarly, Driton Krasniqi, points out that during the period 1999-2008, Kosovo has witnessed the first signs of religious radicalism. While according to him, the first signs of such radicalization were visible even before the war, open and porous Kosovo borders after the war enabled proliferation of different missionaries who invested enormous amounts of money for religious revival. During this period, Krasniqi maintains that some 400 new mosques have been built and loads of scholarships for studies in universities in the Middle Easte countries were awarded.[172]

Xhabir Hamiti agrees that after the war, Kosovo was flooded by various humanitarian organizations that under the veil of support for Kosovo citizens also engaged in intensive religious activities and propaganda. These organizations embarked on a fierce competition for domination over impoverished citizens of Kosovo. Hamiti claims that UNMIK did nothing to prevent this reality, and even registered and officialised such organizations without any criteria or prior scrutinization.[173] On the other hand, Anton Berishaj, points out that after 1999 Kosovar citizens war exposed to an “overdose” of Oxidentalism, i. e. music, culture, clothes, food, etc. If you add to this also the “feeling”

[170] Interview with Naim Ternava.
[171] Interview with Dr. Don Shan Zefi.
[172] Interview with Driton Krasniqi, President of Kosovo Protestant Evangelical Church, Prishtina, 19.04.2016.
[173] Interview with Dr. Xhabir Hamiti.

that Kosovars were “liberated’ by the West, then orientation towards religion as a kind of reaction is understandable. Berishaj maintains that since these individuals were unable to establish such a reaction as an opposition towards USA and the West, they turned to the East. Berishaj believes that such a reaction, among others, wanted to show to Westerners that we as people have existed before 1999 as well. Such a phenomenon was mainly witnessed among Kosovars that were not ready to accept such immense Westernization of the society, and in response turned towards the East. In addition, Berishaj is convinced that satanization is not something that Islam needs, on the contrary there are some other circles that need such satanization of Islam. Moreover, according to Berishaj, the latest movements in the Muslim world such as radical organizations and “Arab springs” have not brought anything good to Islam.[174]

It is clear that the combination of internal and external factors interplaying together after 1999 has played an important role in increasing religiosity, particularly Islam, throughout Kosovo. As a result, after the war the importance of religion continuously increased among Albanians in Kosovo. For instance, the share of people stating that religion plays an important role in their lives has risen from 67.9 percent in 2006, to 89.5 percent in 2009. Similarly, the share of people who attend religious services in Kosovo has increased from 28 percent in 2006, to 44.2 percent in 2009.[175] Such signs have also become quite visible publicly, with religious objects mushrooming throughout the country in recent years. More than 200 new mosques have been built in Kosovo since 1999, while in Prishtina the number has almost doubled, from 13 in the year 2000, to 25 in 2016.[176] While the revival of religion has generally been a process witnessed in all former communist countries, in the following chapter it will be shown that some of the already mentioned internal and external factors have contributed to religious radicalization and identity shifts in Kosovo.

[174] Interview with Dr. Anton Berishaj.
[175] Blumi, "Albanians’ Islam[s]," 2014, p. 493.
[176] “Në Kosovë janë 750 xhami, BIK-u thotë se veç 2 i ka jashtë mbikëqyrjes,” Koha Ditore, 23 May 2016; http://koha.net/?id=27&l=114757 (23.05.2016).

III.3. 2008 - Present: Independence and the emergence of religious extremism

After 15 rounds of hard negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia, on March 2007 President Ahtisaari put forward his proposal about the future status of Kosovo.[177] Since the proposal was vehemently opposed by both Serbia and Russia, Kosovo's authorities prepared to make a declaration of independence as part of a process closely coordinated with the international community. Consequently, on 17th of February 2008, the Kosovo assembly adopted a declaration of independence "in full accordance with the recommendations of U.N. Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari." It declared Kosovo to be a democratic, secular, and multi-ethnic republic and fully accepted the obligations for Kosovo under the Ahtisaari plan. Accordingly, among newly independent Kosovo's first acts was acceptance of an EU rule-of-law mission (known as EULEX) to provide support and oversight in the security and judicial sectors, and an International Civilian Representative who would oversee the implementation of the Ahtisaari plan and act as the EU's Special Representative in Kosovo. Both EULEX and the special representative possessed a range of executive powers, though in neither case did they reach the level of authority that UNMIK and its chief have enjoyed earlier.[178]

The period since declaration of independence is of exceptional importance for the topic under discussion since it entails several cross-cutting important factors. Firstly, independence of Kosovo meant that Kosovar political elite, especially the government had both an increased authority as well as responsibility in dealing with all important issues in the country. Secondly, the declaration of independence formalized the beginning of the process of the creation of the new Kosovar identity for Kosovo Albanians. Such process, on the one hand tended to weaken the traditional historic Albanian identity of Kosovo Albanians, while on the other, as it will be shown below, it provided additional manoeuvring space for strengthening of the religious (Muslim) identity. Thirdly, the declaration of Kosovo independence coincided with the global expansion of radical Islamic networks, the so-called Arab Spring and the creation of the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). These factors coupled together have created a reality, which has in turn, resulted in radicalization and extremism of certain layers of Muslim Albanians in Kosovo.

A study by KIPRED about political Islam has as early as 2005, warned about first signs of radicalization amongst Muslim Albanians in rural Kosovo. According to the paper, various international faith-based organizations operating throughout the country under

[177] United Nations, "Report of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Kosovo's Future Status," S/2007/168, 26 March 2007.
[178] Tansey, Oisín, "Kosovo: Independence and Tutelage," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 20, No. 2, April 2009, p. 159.

the guise of humanitarian aid attempted at spreading religious and social values that do not have a tradition in Kosovo. KIPRED claimed that the main argument for the acceptance of foreign Muslim organisations and their beliefs was the failure of the international community to provide housing, food and education to local population in rural Kosovo. The paper cautioned that activities of these organisations linked to political forces that are not bound to local interests might soon create a Kosovar identity which will be hardly controlled by political forces based in Prishtina or the region. Moreover, the study rightly predicted that an eventual war somewhere in the "Islamic world" in ten years from now would seriously challenge the loyalties of Muslim Albanians in Kosovo.[179] Unfortunately, the newly created Kosovo institutions and its political elite manifested similar negligence towards Islam radicalization as they international counterparts in the time the paper was written.

Having in mind the secular character of the Albanian nationalism explained earlier, it came as no surprise that Article 8 of the Constitution of Kosovo, adopted on 15th of June 2008, defined Kosovo a secular state and neutral in matters of religious beliefs. On the other hand, Article 24 prevents any discrimination on grounds of religion, while Article 38 guarantees the freedom of belief, conscience and religion. Still, paragraph 4 of the same article warns that "freedom of manifesting religion, beliefs and conscience may be limited by law if it is necessary to protect public safety and order or the health or rights of other persons." Similarly, Article 40 states that the "freedom of expression can be limited by law in cases when it is necessary to prevent encouragement or provocation of violence and hostility on grounds of (…) religion."[180] Clearly, the Constitution on the one hand defines Kosovo as a secular state neutral to religion, while on the other, guarantees the freedom of belief and religion as well as freedom of expression. Still, as demonstrated above, the Constitution foresees limitations on all these freedoms in cases when public safety and order is jeopardized or when it is necessary to prevent encouragement or provocation of violence and hostility on grounds of religion. Accordingly, the newly founded institutions of Kosovo were obliged to react on any public display of "hate speech" that encourages or provokes violence and hostility on grounds of religion. However, new Kosovo institutions and political parties, being too busy with gaining recognition of the independence of the newly created state, have for quite some time underestimated and ignored the emergence of religious extremism in the country.

Initial public signs of radicalization were visible in June 2010, when protests, against the decision of the Ministry of Education to ban headscarves in public elementary and secondary schools of Kosovo. Protests attracted considerable media attention both

[179] For details see Blumi, 2005, pp. 13-14.
[180] "The Constitution of Kosovo," Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo, Prishtina, 15 June 2008.

locally and internationally, while protesters threatened to resort to violence and even block roads.[181] Similar signs of Muslim resentment were witnessed after the official opening of the new Catholic Cathedral in Prishtina named after Mother Theresa on 5th of September 2010. Although the cathedral was lauded by President Sejdiu as a symbol of Albanian religious tolerance, its walls were in few days covered in degrading graffiti and flyers. Such denigrating graffiti were also written across a number of walls of different buildings in Prishtina.[182] Afterwards, street protests demanding a location for a new city-centre mosque in Prishtina were stepped up by a newly created movement called "Bashkohu." Though the organizers denied accusations that the protest was against the cathedral, they complained that Catholics, despite being a small minority in Kosovo, when it comes to obtaining permits for places of worship are more privileged than the majority Muslims.[183]

Later, during the electoral campaign of the first parliamentary elections in independent Kosovo that were held in December 2010, the Justice Party (PD),[184] promoted Sharia values, while "The New Kosovo Coalition," (AKR) of which the Justice Party was member, promised to introduce religious instruction and allow headscarf (hijab) in public schools.[185] After AKR joined the government coalition, the Justice Party, proposed two amendments to the Kosovo Constitution on pre-university education. Though officially the first amendment intended to prohibit discrimination against Muslims in school, in fact it was meant as a measure that favoured girls wearing the headscarf. The second amendment was about the introduction of religious education in the public schools of Kosovo. It should be mentioned that these changes were also publicly supported by the Kosovo Islamic Community. In August 2011, the Kosovo Assembly rejected these two amendments, however, especially the second one with a very narrow margin of 43 to 39.[186] Obviously, such a narrow margin of the vote result was clear indication of sympathies of individual parliamentarians from a wide range of parties with non-secularism and religious practices on social grounds. Again, the decision of the Assembly was met by fierce protests in the streets of Prishtina organized by Justice

[181] Bytyci, Fatos, "Headscarf ban upsets devout Muslims in Kosovo," *Reuters*, 24 June 2010; http://in.reuters.com/article/idINIndia-49612120100624 (04.06.2016).
[182] Erebara, Gjergj, "Kosovo's New Cathedral Stirs Muslim Resentment," *Balkan Insight*, 04 October 2010; http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/albanians-vie-for-religious-sites (05.06.2016)
[183] Blumi, "Albanians' Islam[s]," 2014, p. 505.
[184] The Justice party was founded in 2004 and has initially presented itself as politically conservative but not openly as a religious party. However, since this electoral campaign it has been increasingly viewed as a religious Islamist party.
[185] Berishaj, Anton, "Religion and Politics in Kosovo," in Gorana Ognjenović and Jasna Jozelić eds. *Politicization of Religion, the Power of State, Nation, and Faith: The Case of Former Yugoslavia and its Successor States*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, p. 208.
[186] Schwartz, Stephen, "Kosovo Bans Islamic Headscarf and Religious Instruction in Public Schools," *The Weekly Standard*, 07 September 2011; http://www.weeklystandard.com/kosovo-bans-islamic-headscarf-and-religious-instruction-in-public-schools/article/592759 (04.06.2016).

Party, Kosovo Islamic Community and several Muslim faith-based NGOs. While KIC has declared that it does not support street protests, it has insisted on the right of Muslim believers for schooling, employment and representative location of the central city mosque.[187]

As the matter of fact, the Kosovo Islamic Community has since independence been regularly accused for contributing to the radicalization of Islam in Kosovo. Since it was considered as an institution that should defend traditional Islam, KIC has since the end of the war in 1999 been a target of foreign radical activists. As explained earlier, such attempts were initially curtailed by KIC Mufti Rexhep Boja who wanted to keep Saudi Arabia faith-based organizations outside his institution. However, after his replacement in 2003, it seems that control over KIC has been an on-going battle between moderate and radical Muslim imams. As a result, within KIC itself two main opposed groups have been established – the radical and the more traditional one. The group of imams with radical interpretation of Islam is led by several more prominent figures such as Dr. Shefqet Krasniqi, Fadil Sogojeva and Mazllam Mazllami. On the other hand, the more traditional group that has openly questioned the motivations of faith-based charity groups and foreign religious practices imported to Kosovo among others includes Xhabir Hamiti, Mullah Osmani, Idriz Bilalli and Avni Sinani.[188] It should be mentioned that without a legal status and no bank account of its own, KIC's annual estimated budget between 5.5 to more than 6 million euros, has gone through personal pockets or personal bank accounts of only few individuals within the community. Consequently, both its budget as well as its activities were vulnerable to manipulation and abuse. Moreover, lack of financial transparency and accountability has resulted in some imams receiving uncontrolled funds from the Gulf States to build their own mosques.[189] Such practices have clearly enabled Wahhabi organizations to penetrate into KIC's ranks and radicalize it from inside. The more moderate imams have in several occasions criticized Mufti Naim Tërnava for his links with radical organizations and toleration of foreign influences. For instance, Imam Osman Musliu has criticized Ternava for not standing up against Wahhabism and even warned that the Wahhabi imams would soon take control of more mosques in Kosovo.[190] The fact that some of the more radical imams within KIC were arrested for inciting hatred and recruiting for terrorism indicates that at least some individuals in KIC have been engaged in spreading radical Islam in the country.

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[187] Shehu, Bekim, "Besimtarët myslimanë në Kosovë vazhdojnë protestat për përfshirjen e lëndës së fesë në arsim dhe për ndërtimin e një xhamie të madhe," *Deutche Welle*, 08 September 2011; http://www.dw.com/sq/besimtar%C3%ABt-mysliman%C3%AB-n%C3%AB-kosov%C3%AB-vazhdojn%C3%AB-protestat-p%C3%ABr-p%C3%ABrfshirjen-e-l%C3%ABnd%C3%ABs-s%C3%AB-fes%C3%AB-n%C3%AB-arsim-dhe-p%C3%ABr-nd%C3%ABrtimin-e-nj%C3%AB-xhamie-t%C3%AB-madhe/a-15371935 (06.06.2016).

[188] Blumi, "Albanians' Islam[s]," 2014, p. 497.

[189] Kursani, 2015, p. 98.

[190] Blumi, "Albanians' Islam[s]," 2014, p. 497.

Meanwhile, the underground and far from the public activities of different Wahhabi organizations in rural parts of Kosovo have started to yield the desired results. The traditional Sufi *tekkes* in rural parts of Kosovo were replaced with mosques and schools that continued the spread of foreign Islam values amongst Kosovo's Muslim population. Over a period since independence, foreign Muslim faith-based organizations have managed to build a broad base of local representatives that allowed them to pursue their agenda without the need to be physically present in Kosovo. Key players of such networks are the local Imams who have been educated in the countries of origin of these organisations. Upon return, they have on the one hand managed to establish a movement of loyal followers as well as utilize certain mosques for their radical teachings. On the other hand, these imams even became politically active by linking up with Kosovo's Muslim parties and by creating fractions in the Islamic Community of Kosovo.[191] Soon after, these networks were engaged in acts of physical intimidation against moderate locally educated clerics as well as underprivileged groups such as women. For instance, in 2008, several masked men have beaten Xhabir Hamiti, a professor of Islamic studies in Prishtina, for his on-going critique of the Wahhabis. Likewise, in January 2009, a group belonging to the followers of the more radical imams has brutally beaten Imam Osman Musliu in front of a mosque in a village in central Kosovo for criticizing Naim Tërnava, the head of the Islamic Community of Kosovo, for not standing up against Wahhabism.[192] Yet, in 2014 another moderate Imam, Zuhdi Hajzeraj of Fahtali Mosque in Peja who had made statements critical of a fundamentalist Islam, received several death threats and reportedly an attempt was made to run him over with a car.[193] At the same time, these radicalized imams also became very active publicly by openly challenging secular laws and utilizing hate speech against both moderate Muslims as well as individuals belonging to other religions. If during 1989-1999, world-wide acknowledged Albanian historic prominent figures such as Scanderbeg and Mother Teresa were displayed as part of national pride, after 2008 they were publicly denounced and attacked.[194] In January 2014, a statue of Mother Teresa in Mitrovica South was knocked down twice over the period of 24 hours. Indicatively, after the incident, the so-called "Muslim Youth Forum" declared it was "delighted," and "prayed that all her statues would be downed."[195]

[191] Basha, Dimal, "Globalization and the Rise of Salafism in Kosovo. How Gulf Countries Spearheaded a Transnational Advocacy Network that is Challenging a New Democracy," The New School University, Master of Arts Thesis, 2013, p. 65.
[192] See Blumi, "Albanians' Islam[s]," 2014, pp. 496-497.
[193] Later, Hajzerzaj has attributed the increase of religious extremism in Kosovo to funding from fundamentalists in Arab countries; see "Kosovo International Religious Freedom Report for 2014," United States Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, 2014, p. 8.
[194] Berishaj, 2014, p. 204.
[195] "Kosovo International Religious Freedom Report for 2014," p. 10.

These internal processes have externally coincided with increased global trends of the so-called transnational Islam. Such universalistic and de-culturing forms of Islam were primarily disseminated by the charitable and propaganda activities of different Middle Eastern organizations. However, transnational Islamic movements, migratory dynamics and diaspora networks, pilgrimage as well as cultural and educational links have also played an important role. As a result, we have witnessed the emergence of transnational Islamic networks, predominantly influenced by organizations such as the Muslim Brotherhood, Al Qaeda and recently ISIS, which engaged in spreading a particular religious ideology across the globe. In the Balkans similarly, these trends have contributed to direct interchange of ideas and practices of a growing number of Muslims with coreligionists from the wider Muslim world. Again, Muslim immigrants from the Balkans to Western Europe and students in Islamic educational institutions in different Muslim countries have played significant roles in transmitting the transnational Islam in their countries of origin. Undoubtedly, foreign Islamic aid, as already explained, has been additional important source of transnational influence especially after the wars.[196] In such a context, the transnational Islam operates in an on-going tension with the existing national and ethnic loyalties. On the ideological level, it pushes local Muslims in the Balkans and Kosovo to shift their loyalties from nation and ethnicity to universal Islam. On a more radical side, it indoctrinates new generations of international and regional *jihadists* to join the ranks of Islamic extremists'.[197]

The transnational Islam was further facilitated by the so-called "Arab Spring" - the democratic uprisings that evolved independently and spread throughout the Arab world in 2011. The movement first started in Tunisia in December 2010, but it quickly spread in Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. These unrests resulted in a change of authoritarian regimes in Tunisia, Egypt and Yemen, and also triggered a military intervention by NATO that ousted the Libyan leader from power.[198] Nevertheless, these changes have also created a power vacuum and chaos that enabled resurgence of Islam as well as emergence of different sectarian and often radical Islamic groups throughout these countries. As a result, a reality was created that, as Bradley puts it, enabled Islamists to "hijack" these Middle East revolts.[199] On the other hand, the similar unrest that started in Syria, instead of ousting the dictatorial regime of Bashar al-Assad, transformed it into a full-fledged civil war that has been going on since 2011. Moreover, it led to the creation of the so-called ISIS - a Salafi

[196] For more details see Merdjanova, 2013, pp. 51-59.
[197] For a detailed explanation about Transnational Islamic networks see Gul, Imtiaz, "Transnational Islamic Networks," International Review of the Red Cross, Vol. 92 No. 880, December 2010, pp. 899-923.
[198] Toby Dodge eds., "After the Arab Spring: Power Shift in the Middle East?," IDEAS Report, London School of Economics, May 2012, p. 64.
[199] For a thorough explanation about this topic see Bradley, John R., After the Arab Spring: How Islamists Hijacked The Middle East Revolts, St. Martin's Press, 2012.

jihadist militant group that follows an Islamic fundamentalist, Wahhabi doctrine of Sunni Islam. ISIS considers itself the "Islamic Caliphate" (a theological empire) and currently controls vast parts of territory in western Iraq and eastern Syria. During 2013, ISIS has consolidated and strengthened both its structure and its capabilities. Accordingly, its recruitment has also intensified with ISIS fighters and recruiters calling on Muslims from all around the world to join them in their just cause.[200] Such calls were for quite some time completely ignored by the government, political parties and wider society in Kosovo. As it will be shown below, such reality will change only after Kosovo Albanian Muslims started joining ISIS in big numbers as foreign fighters.

Actually, the attitude of Kosovo institutions and its political elite towards Islam in general and its radicalization in Kosovo in particular has been at least ambiguous. On the one hand, Kosovo politicians have been careful to distance themselves from Islam as part of their pro-European and pro-Western political vision. Constitution as well as the rest of legislation has been drafted on secular basis and in close cooperation with Western partners. Institutions, as already explained, have been committed and determined in sanctioning any radical calls for introduction of religious instruction and headscarf in public schools. However, on the other hand, both institutions and political parties failed to react to ever increasing public displays of Islam radicalization despite legal obligation to do so. Radical Muslim Imams and other individuals have repeatedly used hate speech in public discourse, from TV debates to printed media and social networks. Imams like Shefqet Krasniqi, Irfan Salihu and Zekeria Qazim have repeatedly in public used denigrating language against members of other religious communities, moderate Muslims, women and even Albanian national heroes and renowned individuals.[201] However, institutions have for years remained silent and have not reacted to such hate speeches that have openly incited national, religious or ethnic hatred. Similarly, the institutions have licenced a TV channel “Peace TV” directed by a hard-line Islamist preacher Zakir Naik. This TV channel broadcasts 12-hour daily program in the Albanian language that includes interviews in with Kosovo Muslim figures under the influence of hard-line Wahhabism. According to Irfan Al-Alawi, international director of the Centre for Islamic Pluralism and executive director of the Islamic Heritage Research Foundation, “Peace TV” is well known world-wide for its hard-line interpretations of Islam and insults directed at members of other religions and moderate Muslims. Although Al-Alawi has warned that its entry in Kosovo represents an additional tool for radical Islamists and

[200] Kursani, 2015, p. 18.

[201] For instance, Shefqet Krasniqi, the imam of the city’s Grand Mosque, has among others made hateful remarks about Mother Theresa by declaring that despite being considered the outstanding Albanian personality in recent history, she was in “the middle of hell, deep,” because she was not Muslim. Furthermore, Krasniqi asserted that notwithstanding her celibacy the Albanian nun “could have all the men she wanted.” Irfan Salihu well-known in Kosovo for his stridently conservative views, has on the other hand, delivered a speech in his mosque in Prizren in which he accused Kosovar Albanian women of being “prostitutes” and urged their husbands to abandon them.

their financiers, mainly from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states, to establish a foothold among Europe's indigenous Balkan Muslims,[202] Kosovo institutions have not taken any measures in this direction. Such negligence and policy of impunity by Kosovo institutions against individuals and organizations inciting religious and ethnic hatred has undoubtedly further contributed to the encouragement of Islamic radicalism in the country.

Although all main Kosovo political parties are secular, they have in general also failed to address the increasing signs of radicalization among Albanian Muslims in Kosovo. Apart from Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK) that has openly denounced such public displays, other political parties have been rather silent in this direction. Indeed, the AAK leader Ramush Haradinaj and other party officials have often raised their voice against Islamic radicalism.[203] Unfortunately, most of other major political parties have flirted with such radical groups in order to secure electoral support. Otherwise, it would hardly be explainable how the Justice Party with a rather modest backing manages to be part of the government twice in a row. Or even more interestingly, why has the PDK as the strongest party in Kosovo decided to enter a pre-electoral coalition with such a tiny political party.[204] Furthermore, as the leading partner in all three coalition governments of Kosovo since independence, PDK certainly bears the biggest responsibility for negligence of Kosovo institutions towards individuals and organizations inciting religious and ethnic hatred. Self-Determination (VV) party on the other hand, has started its leaning towards radical Islam in 2011 when its MPs supported introduction of religious instruction and headscarf in public schools proposed by Justice Party.[205] Such provenience became even clearer when the party refused to back its own female MP – Alma Lama - against threats and intimidation by radical imams and individuals. Soon after, Lama parted with VV and openly declared that the influence of Wahhabis and the Muslim Brotherhood represents political suicide for Kosovo.[206] Finally, even LDK – once a moderate and secular party that has always championed religious tolerance –

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[202] Al-Alawi, Irfan, "Extremists Establish Foothold in the Balkans," *Gatestone Institute*, 24 September 2012); http://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/3360/kosovo-peace-tv (06.06.2016).

[203] For instance, AAK MPs were among the strongest opponent of introduction of religious instruction and headscarf in public schools. See Schwartz, 2011.

[204] Justice Party has in its first parliamentary elections in 2004 won tiny 1 percent of the popular vote and only 1 out of 120 seats. In next elections in 2010, as part of coalition of "New Kosovo Alliance" its number of MPs has increased to three. In last elections in 2014 as part of pre-electoral coalition with PDK it again won only one seat. However, despite these modest results, PD has managed to be part of the government since 2010, holding one minsterial and other executive positions

[205] It should be mentioned that though VV in principle, supported the proposal, it conditioned it with additional debate about the curriculum of religious instructions insisting that it should focus on the history of the religion and not on its practice; see Berishaj, 2014, p. 209.

[206] Lama has afterwards also been insulted by her former party associates and even received death threats by Muslim radicals. For details se Schwartz, Stephen, "Radical Islam's Intimidation in Kosova: The Attempt to Destroy Alma Lama, Gatestone Institute, 5 March 2014; http://www.islamicpluralism.org/2360/radical-islam-intimidation-in-kosova (08.06.2016).

has started showing signs of flirting with elements of political Islam in Kosovo. Namely, during electoral campaign of last local elections held in November 2013, Lutfi Haziri, the vice-president of LDK and candidate for the mayor of Gjilan, declared support for allowing the wearing of items of religious clothing for girls in public schools. Moreover, after becoming a mayor, Haziri entered into a coalition with Justice Party and gave them the post of the Municipal Health Director as well as some other committee positions within Municipal Assembly.[207]

The radicalization of Kosovo Muslim Albanians initially caught the attention of Kosovo institutions and wider public when the first death of an Albanian foreign fighter in Syria was reported.[208] The alarm was already set when on 29th of July 2014 Lavdrim Muhaxheri posted photographs of himself decapitating a Syrian soldier and called upon fellow Kosovo Muslims to join the war in Syria against the regime of Bashar al-Assad and other "infidels".[209] When it was reported that Kosovo has the highest number of foreign fighters per capita in the world, until then dormant institutions of Kosovo were forced to act.[210] Accordingly, in August 2014 police searched 60 locations throughout Kosovo and arrested 40 Kosovar citizens suspected to have participated in terrorism in Iraq and Syria. It was reported that the arrests were carried out in accordance with the Kosovo Penal Code to safeguard constitutional order and security in the country.[211] Until January 2015 some 80 people were arrested under similar charges including a number of influential radical imams.[212]

As a reaction to the relatively high number of Kosovo foreign fighters, in March 2015, Kosovo's parliament adopted a "Law on Prohibition of Joining Armed Conflicts outside State Territory" that makes it a crime to "organize, recruit, lead or train persons or group of persons with the aim of joining or participating in a foreign army or police in any form of armed conflicts outside Kosovo." related to encouragement to join or participate in

[207] See for instance "Lutfi Haziri: Unë kryetar, vajzat me shamia në shkollë," *Portalb*, 08 November 2013; http://portalb.mk/21659-lutfi-haziri-une-kryetar-vajzat-me-shamia-ne-shkolle/ (08.06.2016). Also see "Edhe Partia e Drejtësisë merr një drejtorat, Labinotë Demi në krye të shëndetësisë," *RajoniPress*, Agjencia Rajonale e Lajmeve, 30 January 2014; http://rajonipress.com/shfleto-artikujt.php?id=19044 (08.06.2016).

[208] The first foreign fighter from Kosovo to be killed in recent conflict in Syria was Naman Demolli from Prishtina; see Kursani, 2015, pp. 17-18.

[209] It has been reported that Lavdrim Muhaxheri had worked for the Kosovo Islamic Community in Kacanik and has even claimed to control the appointment of the imam at the Central Mosque in Kacanik. For more details see Schwartz, Stephen "ISIS and the Kosovar Albanians," *The Huffington Post*, 12 October 2014; http://www.huffingtonpost.com/stephen-schwartz/isis-and-the-kosovar-alba_b_5670061.html (08.06.2016).

[210] According to police sources total number of Kosovars fighting abroad reached 232 by January 2015 of which based on available information 34 were killed; see Kursani, 2015, p. 24.

[211] Ibid.

[212] Kursani, 2015, p. 29.

foreign conflicts. The law stipulates that engagement in foreign conflicts can be punished with a prison sentence from 5 up to 15 years.[213] Later in September 2015, the Office of the Prime-Minister of Kosovo also prepared a *"Strategy on Prevention of Violent Extremism and Radicalization Leading to Terrorism 2015-2020"* as well as an Action Plan for the implementation of that strategy.[214] It seems that such measures have yielded certain results since only 16 additional Kosovars have gone to Syria during January-March 2015 and none during 2016.[215] Nevertheless, a documentary by Gazeta Express entitled "The Black Camps" sent a clear message to Kosovo institutions and wider society about the complexity and seriousness of radical Islam in the country. The documentary revealed that ISIS and Al Nusra have been training future recruits in two camps near a small town of Vitija. It showed that many Kosovars have been trained in these facilities prior to joining ISIS in Syria and Iraq.[216] Questions have been raised though, how did these camps remain unnoticed in a tiny Kosovo with somewhat more than 10,000 square kilometres and only few kilometres away from the biggest US military camp of Bondsteel.

Just two weeks after, the article "How Kosovo Was Turned Into Fertile Ground for ISIS" of the respected American daily newspaper "The New York Times," has further electrified the already heated atmosphere in Kosovo. While the article probably appeared with certain delay compared to the reality in Kosovo, it starkly reminded both Kosovo authorities as well as the international community about a long road ahead in fighting religious extremism and radicalism in Kosovo. According to New York Times, during a two-year investigation the police has identified 314 Kosovars — including two suicide bombers, 44 women and 28 children — who have joined ISIS as foreign fighters. The investigation revealed that Kosovars were radicalized and later recruited by a group of extremist imams and secretive associations funded by Saudi Arabia and other Arab gulf states. The funding of such activities utilized an obscure network of donations that included charities, private individuals as well government ministries. The article cited Fatos Makolli, the director of Kosovo's counterterrorism police, who claimed

[213] "Law on Prohibition of Joining Armed Conflicts Outside State Territory," Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo, Prishtina, 15 March 2015.
[214] *"Strategy on Prevention of Violent Extremism and Radicalization Leading to Terrorism 2015-2020"* Office of the Prime-Minister, Republic of Kosovo, September 2015.
[215] It should be mentioned that certain number of Kosovars were caught by the authorities in their attempt to join the war in Syria; see see Kursani, 2015, p. 26. See also "Sivjet asnjë kosovar nuk i është bashkuar ISIS-it," *Kohanet*, 28 April 2016; http://koha.net/?id=27&l=110663 (08.06.2016).
[216] **"**Videoja e plotë e dokumentarit "Kampet e Zeza,"" *Gazeta Express*, 08 May 2016; http://www.gazetaexpress.com/lajme/videoja-e-plote-e-dokumentarit-kampet-e-zeza-zonaexpress-197806/ (08.06.2016).

that extremist clerics and groups "promoted political Islam" by spending a vast amounts of money in different programs targeting mainly young and vulnerable people.[217] Finally, "Country Reports on Terrorism 2015" that was just released by the United States Department of State has also confirmed the growing threat of violent Islamist extremism in Kosovo, funded mainly from foreign organizations that preach extremist ideologies. The Report has also emphasized that lack of capacity and sufficient budget represent main challenges for Kosovo's government fight against violent extremism and has urged close U.S. engagement in support of the government.[218] Obviously the issue of religious extremism in Kosovo represents a serious problem that is far from being a quick-fix one. Its successful eradication will undoubtedly require long commitment and coordinated action of all relevant governmental and nongovernmental actors in Kosovo.

In relation to religion and identity shifts among Albanians in Kosovo, the creation of the new Kosovar identity represents another important consequence of the Kosovo independence. Kosovo Albanians who have for centuries nurtured a strong Albanian national identity after independence have been confronted with somewhat confusing reality. Having accomplished their own political project of independent Kosovo, they were suddenly exposed to divergent loyalties. Obviously, as a new independent state, Kosovo faced the challenge of forging a secular national identity that can overcome ethnic and religious divisions. As a result, symbols of the new state such as flag and national anthem were shunned from any Albanian national symbols of the past. However, rebranding of Kosovo has inevitably had a de-nationalizing impact on Kosovo Albanians. Unfortunately, instead of viewing the Kosovo state identity and the Albanian identity as complementary, political debates in Kosovo have often portrayed them as exclusive. This has in turn, weakened the traditional historic Albanian identity of Kosovo Albanians, especially among the young ones. The created ideological vacuum has provided additional manoeuvring space for strengthening of the religious (Muslim) identity at the expense of ethnic identity, and eventual radicalization of certain number of Kosovo Albanian Muslims. Kosovo institutions and major political parties have failed to reconcile Kosovar identity with the Albanian and religious identity of Kosovo Albanians. As a consequence, the loyalty of Kosovo Albanians has since independence slowly shifted from Albanianism and Kosovo state, to a religious identity with emergence of elements of radical Islam.[219]

Agim Çeku believes that signs of radicalism can be traced to early activities of faith based organizations from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries that have exposed

[217] Gal, Carlotta, "How Kosovo Was Turned Into Fertile Ground for ISIS," The New York Times, 21 May 2016.
[218] "Country Reports on Terrorism 2015," United States Department of State Publication, Bureau of Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism, June 2016.
[219] These arguments will be supported by the analysis of the opinion polls bellow.

Kosovo Muslims to the new concept of Islam as opposed to the traditional one. Today, Kosovo as a state has taken its responsibilities since it is clear that religious radicalism represents a serious threat. Such radicalism is foreign to Kosovo traditional Islam and as such unacceptable for our reality. In addition, it threatens Kosovo's security and it overshadows its future perspectives. According to Çeku, unfortunately, due to the negligence of state institutions, such radicalism has managed to spread in many parts of Kosovo. Çeku also explains that while before independence, mosques throughout Kosovo were basically empty, today they more than overcrowded. The phenomenon is even more disturbing since such radical groups are primarily targeting young people in Kosovo. Since 2010 Kosovo has joined the coalition against religious extremism and radicalism and has started taking measures for tackling such phenomena within its borders. These measures have been intensified, especially after the number of Kosovo volunteers fighting for religious cause increased considerably.[220]

In terms of eventual identity shifts between religion and ethnicity, Çeku believes that today an increasing number of Kosovo citizens identify themselves first with the religion and then with ethnicity. Nevertheless, he maintains that religion in Kosovo is still less important than in Serbia and Croatia, especially when it comes to decision-making. He is also convinced that increased religiosity has still not jeopardized Albanian ethnic identity, since Kosovo continues to be known as a country with Albanian majority and not Islam majority. Nevertheless, Çeku insists that Kosovo institutions must react against any radical activities that endanger secular character of the state. In the past, institutions have carefully followed and noticed activities of such radical groups, but have failed to react. According to Çeku, one of the reasons why institutions remained passive was to not create a negative image of Kosovo in front of our Western partners.[221]

In regard to internal and external factors that have contributed to the emergence of religious public agendas including radicalism, Çeku believes that key internal factors were negligence and passivity of the international institutions after the war in 1999 and lack of proper capacities to deal with such challenges. On the other hand, Çeku points to foreign faith-based international organization with political agenda as main external factors that have contributed to the emergence of radicalism in Kosovo. Nevertheless, he also believes that global developments, especially the open conflict between religious radicalization and western values, have also contributed to this phenomenon. Overall, Çeku is convinced that external factors have contributed more to the emergence radicalism in Kosovo than the internal ones. Since Islam in Kosovo has traditionally been much more European than the Eastern one, the Arab countries have

[220] Interview with Agim Çeku.
[221] Ibid.

infiltrated certain radical elements to weaken Kosovo's ties with USA and Western Europe. According to Çeku, among others, this is also the reason why some of the Arab countries have still not recognized the independence of Kosovo.[222]

On the other hand, Albin Kurti believes that in terms of religiosity, the period after independence represents a simple continuation of the reality before 2008. However, what is crucial, according to him, is that after the declaration of independence governmental political parties have declared the project of the national cause as complete. However, citizens' immediate enthusiasm after independence was soon replaced with a dire reality of poverty, nepotism and corruption. Logically, if the national cause is a done thing, while citizens enjoy no freedom and can hardly feed themselves – religion comes as an alternative choice. Such reality has also been complemented by global processes that have inevitably affected Kosovo as well. On the one hand, NATO intervention in Kosovo that was perceived by Kosovars as a "divine intervention" with biblical dimension has increased faith among Kosovars. It does not mean that it has immediately increased the religiosity, since there is a difference between faith and religion. On the other hand, after 11 of September 2001, US has made Kosovo part of its global project of securing support from countries with majority Muslim population. Similarly to Turkey, as part of Bush's doctrine, Kosovo was labelled a country with "Muslim people who want to live in peace." Kurti believes that such differentiation between "good" Muslims who want to live in peace, and "bad" Muslims who want to live in war, has in turn contributed to overall global resurgence of Islam. It has however also contributed to divisions among Muslims in Kosovo in "soft" against "tough", "true" against "false" as well as "moderate" against "radical".[223]

Nevertheless, Kurti does not believe that increased religiosity of Kosovo society has had an impact on national/ethnic identity, but rather he claims that something else has happened. National identity has been weakened by politics, and then people have turned towards religion. Thus, the strengthening of religious identity has not undermined the national one, rather the national one has been weakened by declaring the completion of the national project, and then certain individuals have turned towards religion for spiritual and emotional compensation. According to Kurti, such tendencies as well as the tendency to "kosovarize" Albanians in Kosovo, have instead of creating a Kosovar identity only weakened the Albanian identity and created a manoeuvring space for other influences. On the other hand, Kurti considers that failure of Kosovo institutions to react against statements by religious leaders who incite religious hatred is a result of, as he calls it, a gentleman agreement between Kosovo Intelligence Service (SHIK) and Bondsteel. On the one hand, SHIK would provide valuable information to Americans so

[222] Ibid.
[223] Interview with Albin Kurti

they could arrest 2-3 Pakistani radicals at the airport. On the other, Americans would support them in their struggle against opposition parties, earlier LDK and nowadays VV. Individuals within SHIK are interested to have limited radicalism in Kosovo in order to be able to prove themselves to the Americans. However, Kurti believes that these individuals are playing with fire, since if there is no radicalism, their contracts would not be extended. Accordingly, now and then they announce public information about radical groups in Kosovo. In regard, to religious education, Kurti confirms that VV is against it as such. However, VV supports learning about different religions, but only in high schools and not in elementary ones as well. In that case youngsters would learn about the history of religion, especially its social, cultural and philosophic dimensions. In addition, Kurti insists that such teaching should not be conducted by imams and priests, and should not be western-centric, but should include other religions such as Buddhism, Confucianism etc.[224]

In terms of internal and external factors that have contributed to the emergence of religious public agendas including radicalism, Kurti claims that neoliberalism, as a form of radical transition from socialism to capitalism, has instead of capitalism brought feudalism to Kosovo. Feudalism then, according to him is a system in which different religions have flourished. Moreover, Kurti insists that although Kosovars have cell phones and internet, actual forms of kinship and nepotism by governmental officials have returned Kosovo to Middle Ages. And Middle Ages, contrary to modernity that identifies with the science, nation, state and secularity, it is characterized with religiosity. On the other hand, Kurti also believes that Islam is changing in the entire world, and therefore Kosovo cannot be an exception in that direction. Obviously, globalization has an enormous impact worldwide, and in our case it influences more Kosovo than the other way around. Nowadays, Kosovo imams study in different places, from Egypt and Turkey, to Saudi Arabia and Iraq. While studying in different countries their mind-set is transformed, and then they transmit such transformation to their followers. Nevertheless, Kurti doubts that religion could endanger ethnic identity of Albanians, since he agrees with the Albanian revivalist Fan Noli that “Albanians are pagans with three religions.” The reasons why Albanians have converted so often from one religion to another, is because they do not take religion seriously. If that is the case, then according to Kurti, current religious groups should not be considered as a danger, because again Albanians will not take them seriously.[225]

Fatmir Sejdiu considers strengthening of the Christian community in Kosovo as one of the key prerequisites for religious harmony and tolerance. Therefore, he believes that state institutions should react with maximum responsibility against all public acts that

[224] Ibid.
[225] Ibid.

incite religious hatred. In addition, the state should be an important factor in building the profile of Kosovo citizens in accordance to the historic tradition and contemporary trends at the same time. Sejdiu maintains that while politicians may be religious themselves, they should partner with false elements that promote convictions that contrary to the secular state of Kosovo. Moreover, institutions and political parties should avoid hidden alliances with radical elements that promote religious practices that are foreign to Kosovo citizens.[226]

Finally, according to Ramush Haradinaj, ever since 1999 the practicing of religion in Kosovo started to be influenced by globalizing trends through social networks and different Islamic groups that have proliferated in the country. These trends have intensified even more after the independence in 2008 among other due to the lack of legislative framework and negligence of Kosovo institutions. Such reality has made Kosovo a fertile ground for activities of different Islam radical groups. Nevertheless, Haradinaj believes that Albanian identity is built on such strong foundations that it cannot be shaken by religious influences. While at a surface sometimes it may look that it is changing, those variations are just seasonal. Nevertheless, Haradinaj warns that one should be careful of radical Islam groups, which though unable to endanger the substance of the Albanian identity, might eventually distort it. Albanians have traditionally nurtured an Albanian Islam, which is more liberal than even the so-called European one, and such Islam deals with spiritual and life values and not with the Islamic Law – Sharia. It would be very sad if such valuable form of faith is replaced with a different more radical one, since it is precisely this form of tolerant Islam that makes Albanians unique, and that has a direct impact on our national identity. In this context, Haradinaj believes that political parties with religious character are damaging for Kosovo since they were misused by Islam radical groups including the Muslim Brotherhood. Similarly, he is convinced that there is no need to introduce religious education in public schools of Kosovo, as this can be abused by the radical Islam groups; instead religion could be studied within civic education.[227]

In regard to introduction of religious instruction in public schools, Sejdiu maintains that religious education should be presented from a different context of civic education by promoting the philosophy of peace and human values. Otherwise, such religious teaching could be misused for the promotion of some other foreign agendas, especially having in mind which circles in Kosovo have launched and supported such ideas. On the other hand, when discussing internal and external factors that have contributed to the emergence of religious public agendas including radicalism, Sejdiu is convinced that presence of any external factor in Kosovo would be impossible with internal support. In

[226] Interview with Fatmir Sejdiu.
[227] Interview with Ramush Haradinaj

that direction, he insists that every state has its sovereign right to care for its own security and the safety of its citizens. Therefore, state institutions, especially the security ones, should act adequately against any threat of radicalism. Information about increasing number of Kosovo Albanian Muslims that went to Syria as foreign fighters are worrisome and should be taken seriously. Finally, in terms of public discourse related to the correlation between religious and ethnic affiliation of Albanians in Kosovo, Sejdiu considers that right now Kosovo is in a great need for a religious approach that roots itself into traditional religious practices. Such practices have for centuries inserted their religious influence, but have not damaged the national unity among Albanians. Otherwise, Sejdiu is afraid that Kosovo citizens may become pray of foreign religious organizations that promote radical religious practices.[228]

In terms of internal and external factors that have contributed to the emergence of religious public agendas including radicalism, Haradinaj explains that although Islamic religious radicalism has originated outside Kosovo, it has its interest in Kosovo. Kosovo emerged from the war with economic difficulties and political uncertainty about its future among others due to non-recognition by five EU member states and Serbia. This reality has affected certain parts of Kosovo citizens since integrative processes and equal treatment of Kosovo as a state are very important factors for fighting Islamic radicalism. Unfortunately, according to Haradinaj nowadays Kosovo, as the rest of the world, in addition of having to cope with Islamic radicalism, it is also confronted with "Islamist fighters." Internally, Haradinaj believes that Kosovo institutions with their negligence have created a policy of impunity towards radical religious leaders who make public statements inciting religious hatred. Politicization of the judiciary and flirting of political parties with such radical groups for the purpose of increasing their support base have facilitated their unpunished public exposure. Haradinaj is convinced that dogmas thrive much more successfully in countries like Kosovo with weak and corrupted institutions.[229]

Naim Ternava, on the other hand, believes that despite the right orientation of religious communities and their commitment to nurture divine teachings, promotion of peace, tolerance and religious understanding, as well as commitment to educate and ennoble the population, after independence some factors have contributed in the appearance of a narrower and more extreme religious principles. There are several factors that have led to such interpretations leading to extremism, ranging from undefined legal status of the religious communities and infiltration of foreign associations, to penetration of literature without any criteria through internet and social networks. In terms of the role of religious communities in Kosovo in relation to the Albanian identity, Ternava states that religious communities have contributed to the formation and enhancement of the

[228] Ibid.
[229] Ibid.

identity of Kosovo citizens with the divine, human and civilizational principles. In that manner the religious community has by ennobling Kosovo citizens additionally shaped and complemented their identity. On the other hand, in regard to the role of religious communities in a secular state, Ternava considers that the role of religious communities in Kosovo is regulated by the Constitution which while it guarantees freedom of religion, it has not resolved the legal status of religious communities.[230]

In terms of the idea for introduction of religious education in Kosovo's educational system, Ternava points out that KIC has in several occasions explained its position regarding this issue. KIC is engaged to introduce religious instruction in public schools of Kosovo because it is convinced that this would contribute to proper education of Kosovo youngsters, away from influences of any foreign ideology. Moreover, such step according to Ternava, would ensure that children are educated in a proper and religious way, in the spirit of tolerance and understanding. When it comes to public discourse related to the correlation between religious and ethnic affiliation of Albanians in Kosovo, Ternava considers that such political discourse is often ambiguous, confusing and not well formulated. He finds reasons for such situation in the fact that religion in Kosovo is still viewed through the premises of the past that treat religion as something secondary. However, Ternava claims that such approach has recently started to change and is hopeful that times have come for a discourse in which religion is treated as it deserves. He asserts that one should not confuse religion with ethnicity, but rather view religion as an element that is supportive of ethnicity and the entire population, that should in turn ensure that religious communities and religion in general receive their merited position in the society.[231]

In the words of Don Shan Zefi, the Catholic Church in Kosovo has always supported national identity of the Albanians, because in any public display its representatives have presented themselves as Albanians with Catholic religion. Similarly, during every sermon in churches and religious school it is emphasized that we are Albanians of Catholic confession. Zefi also confirms that the relationship of their community with KIC has traditionally been good and continues to be like that. He also claims that only after KIC realized that actual forms of Islamic radicalism, wahhabism and terrorism, are damaging inter-religious relations and cooperation, KIC have through its official statements condemned such acts. Nevertheless, Zefi admits that although being highly respected by many Albanian Muslims, especially intellectuals and students, he has also been threatened by radical Islamists because of his religious background. Moreover, Zefi admits of being confused to certain level since during Serbian rule he was

[230] Interview with Naim Ternava.
[231] Ibid.

threatened by Serbian authorities for his Albanian nationalistic activities, while nowadays that is happening because of his religious affiliation.[232]

In regard to introduction of religious education in public schools, Zefi has pointed out that in principle, the Catholic Church is not against religious instruction in schools. However, being aware of so many problems that the country is facing currently, he believes that for the time being it is better, both for the state and for the nation, to keep religious instruction inside religious communities. Such reasoning is further enforced by the fact that Albanians, contrary to most of the nations, are affiliated to three different religions. Therefore, Zefi concludes that in Kosovo, religion has its own place that is separate from the state, and since public schools are under state jurisdiction, religious instruction should only be part religious communities. As a form of compromise, the Catholic Church has according to Zefi proposed that religion in schools be taught laic history teachers, and not imams and priests.[233]

In terms of public discourse related to the correlation between religious and ethnic affiliation of Albanians in Kosovo, Zefi considers that religion in Kosovo is being politicized, mainly for political gains and financial reasons. He maintains that Albanians greed for money and power has contributed radicalism in Kosovo politics. Moreover, according to Zefi, because of political gains and maintenance of power, major political parties enter into unprincipled coalitions even with such political parties that should be banned by constitution. Instead, such Islamic parties that denigrate the most prominent personalities of the Albanian nation are tolerated and institutions remain silent. Zefi is convinced that such negligence and silence by responsible institutions is damaging for both Kosovo state as well as Albanian identity. On the other hand, regarding external factors that have contributed to Islamic radicalism in the country, Zefi points out to different geopolitical and geostrategic reasons, but to hidden Islamic agendas of countries like Saudi Arabia, Iran and Turkey. In the case of Turkey, Zefi is convinced that as long as that country is led by the current Islamic political party that promotes more religious than other issues, Kosovo will witness increased Turkish influence on its traditional Islam.[234]

On the other hand, similarly to Kurti, Fehmi Cakolli believes, that reasons why certain individuals in Kosovo turned towards religion are linked with their disappointment after independence. Namely, after huge expectations, people realised that independence does not necessarily improve their standard of living, does not produce for more electricity and it does not solve their unemployment problems. In such situation of public

[232] Interview with Don Shan Zefi.
[233] Ibid.
[234] Ibid.

social and economic discontent, Cakolli explains that it is normal for people to turn towards religion. However, the problem begins when these individuals are manipulated by foreign radical organizations through promotion of religious values that were unknown to Kosovars before. Cakolli is convinced that the entire iconography displayed during protests requesting introduction of religious instruction and headscarf in public schools is not typical for Kosovo, but rather an imported one. Activities of these organizations together with further disappointment of citizens due to corruption and crime have slowly radicalized certain number of Kosovo Albanian Muslims. As evidence for such reality Cakolli mentions public denigrating and offensive statements about Scanderbeg, Mother Theresa and the city cathedral.

In terms of the role of religious communities in Kosovo, Cakolli points out that while it is clear that every community is interested in spreading its religion, the Protestant Church believes that laicism represents the only arrangement that guarantees equality of all religious communities. He also believes that in a secular state one should be more careful with public display of religious symbols. According to Cakolli, nowadays contrary to practices in a secular state, certain individuals in the name of democracy and human rights, utilize public spaces such as governmental offices, universities, schools, libraries, dormitories for praying. Such practices are supported and encouraged by different radical Islamic organizations including some individuals within KIC itself. Cakolli explains that his community is against introduction of religious education in public schools since it may be abused by organizations and individuals with radical religious agendas. In addition, he claims that such religious instruction would only divide children on religious basis, a reality that would have negative impact especially on children belonging to minority religions. Cakolli believes that even without such religious education the religious tolerance has sufficiently deteriorated, and that his son has already received death threats in his school.[235]

In regard to internal and external factors that have contributed to the emergence of religious public agendas including radicalism, Cakolli points out that Kosovo is not an isolated island and is therefore susceptible to foreign global influences. Global transnational Islam networks have also had an impact in Kosovo and contributed towards radicalism. However, Cakolli claims that such aggressive policies are triggered among others by conversion of large number of Muslims worldwide into Christianity. As a reaction to such trends radical Islam transnational networks tend to intimidate Muslims through violence and chaos as witnessed recently by ISIS. Internally, Cakolli believes that political parties are the most important factor that has contributed to radicalism. He points out those major political parties have basically introduced political Islam in Kosovo by constantly flirting with radical groups in order to make political gains. As

[235] Interview with Femi Cakolli.

evidence, Cakolli mentions the creation of the Islamic Justice Party and cooperation of PDK and other political parties with this entity.[236]

Finally, Cakolli also commented on a public discourse related to the correlation between religious and ethnic affiliation of Albanians in Kosovo. According to him, the Albanians in Kosovo are every day becoming more and more religious, but less and less Albanians. Cakolli maintains that the level of Albanianism is rapidly decreasing in Kosovo, and that even during the communism Albanians were more Albanians than they are today. He explains that in Kosovo the enemy of radical Islam is not Christianity, but rather the secular state and Albanian nationalism. Accordingly, activities of Islam radicals are oriented towards weakening of these two elements. Hundreds of young Kosovars are studying in Turkey, Saudi Arabia and other Muslim countries. In Kosovo religious symbols are more visible than ever. In addition to Facebook and other social networks, young Albanian Muslims walk proudly through city streets with the inscription "Proud to be a Muslim" printed on their T-shirts. According to Cakolli this is an open reaction and provocation to the famous Albanian national phrase "Proud to be an Albanian" and a clear evidence that radical Islam in Kosovo is in an open conflict with Albanian secularism and nationalism.[237]

Xhabir Hamiti offered his academic perspective according to which, immediately after independence in 2008, Kosovo was mainly preoccupied with configuring and structuring of its new state and international advancement of its statehood. Being preoccupied with statehood and positioning of Kosovo in the international arena, Kosovo institutions have initially neglected the issue of religious propaganda of rigid extremism and radicalism. As a result, foreign radical faith based organizations in cooperation with certain individuals inside Kosovo we able to freely operate throughout the country. Such negligence and apathy of to state authorities towards the increase of religious hate speech has continued until Kosovar volunteers started participating in the wars of Syria and Iraq as part of ISIS and other radical Islam factions. Additional problem in this direction, according to Hamiti, was the unregulated legal position of religious communities in Kosovo and lack of support for more traditional and moderate imams within KIC by the state authorities. These two factors have over the years left space for different individuals and groups to manipulate Kosovo citizens in the name of religion. In addition, of often pushing those citizens towards extremism, Hamiti believes that these radical elements have also contributed to a very negative image of Kosovo in relation to the civilized world.[238]

[236] Ibid.
[237] Ibid.
[238] Interview with Xhabir Hamiti.

In terms of the role of religious communities in Kosovo in relation to the Albanian identity, Hamiti is convinced that religious communities are obliged to put their religious instruction in service of the country and the nation, since after all their members are made of sons and daughters of this country. However, if these communities work in favour of different foreign agendas, then they cannot claim to represent either the Albanian identity or the God, since God also recognizes nations. Hamiti points out that religious affiliation has in the past never stripped Albanians of their national identity, despite many attempts throughout history by others to achieve exactly that. On the other hand, when it comes to the role of religious communities in a secular state like Kosovo, Hamiti first of all believes that religious communities are not a state within a state, but are rather part of the society that constitutes the state. Accordingly, religious communities should not be an obstacle for the advancement of Kosovo and its European democratic values. However, Kosovo as a secular state should guarantee religious rights and freedom to all its citizens, and should also treat all religious communities in the society equally. In turn, religious communities should be at the service of the believers and stay away from political involvement.

Hamiti has also expressed his opinion about the internal and external factors that have contributed to the emergence of religious public agendas including radicalism. According to Hamiti such contributing factors among others consist of: (a) Chaotic situation after the war in Kosovo; (b) The difficult economic and social situation; (c) Instability and political fragility of the country; (d) Lack of proper vigilance of state decision-making factors towards religious movements with foreign religious and political agendas; (e) Indifference and silence of the traditional religious communities against religious propaganda by radical and extreme elements; (f) The lack of legal regulation and existence of a legal vacuum about the responsibilities and rights of religious communities within the state; (g) Negligence and open-door policy towards many foreign associations and organizations with religious and political agenda.[239]

Finally, when it comes to public discourse related to the correlation between religious and ethnic affiliation of Albanians in Kosovo, Hamiti considers that religious communities, especially KIC as the biggest one, should be committed to sustainability, stability and development of the country and society, and should not develop religious agendas that aim domination over members of other communities. Therefore, all communities should nurture elements that serve common interests of the nation and the future of the country. Hamiti is convinced that our national and religious identity is fruitful only when we are together both in good as well as bad times, and whenever there is a need to defend our society and our homeland. After all, we are brothers of the same blood, we share the same nation and a language, while religious affiliation is a free

[239] Ibid.

choice and individual value of each of us that should be valued and respected. Therefore, according to Hamiti, calls to return to the religious identities of the past serve neither our present nor our future.[240]

Although himself a Catholic, Anton Berishaj insists that he does not feel threatened by different Islamic radical groups in Kosovo since they represent only a tiny minority of the Kosovo society. According to his perception based on his own analysis, the percentage of Kosovo population prone to radicalism is not bigger than 3 percent, which certainly should not be worrisome. Nevertheless he admits that increased religiosity and especially religious radicalism may jeopardize traditionally good inter-religious relations among Albanians in Kosovo. In terms of eventual identity shifts among Albanians in Kosovo from ethnic to religious one, Berishaj believes that one should start with the question what is Albanian identity. He reminds that religion was the marginalized and the suffocated part of the Albanians' identity. Albanian revivalists have promoted a notion according to which the more you are Muslim or Christian, the less you are an Albanian. However, Berishaj considers that nowadays such claims are irrelevant and unnecessary for Albanians.

It is clear that a number of different internal and external factors have since the war in 1999 contributed to increased role of religion among Albanians in Kosovo. As a result, inter-religious relations have shifted from societal homogenization and religious cooperation during 1989-1999, through fragmentation and increased religiosity during 1999-2008, to radicalization after the independence in 2008. Unfortunately, Kosovo institutions and society at large have for quite some time neglected public signs of Islam radicalization in the country. Only when Muslim Albanians from Kosovo started in great numbers joining ISIS in Syria and Iraq as foreign fighters, the dormant Kosovo institutions started to act. Several radical individuals have been imprisoned and sentenced, while additional legislative measures have been enacted. Still, as illustrated by the recent article in New York Times and State's Department report on Terrorism, the situation is complex and far from satisfactory. Especially since, due to a combination of different external and internal factors, the loyalty of Kosovo Albanians has since independence slowly shifted from Albanianism and Kosovo state, to an exclusive ethno-religious identity with elements of radical Islam.

[240] Ibid.

IV. THE ANALYSIS OF THE PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

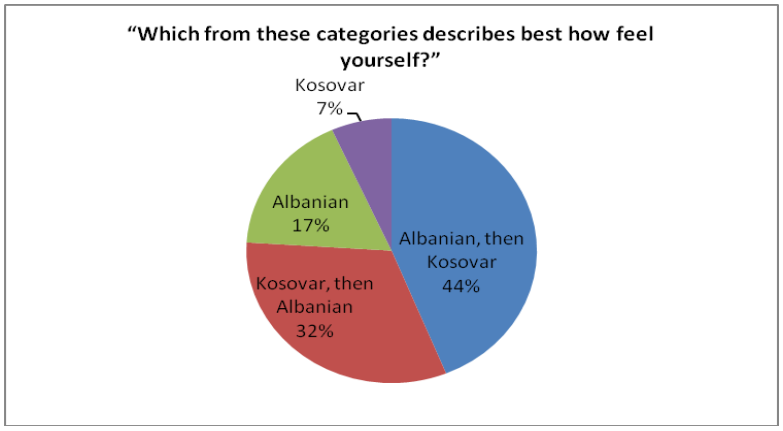
In order to test the findings of its qualitative research, and to complement them with quantitative data, KIPRED has as part of this project also conducted a public opinion survey. It encompassed an initial review of the relationships between Albanian and Kosovar, and Albanian and religious identities, as well as socio-religious distances among the Kosovo Albanians. The public opinion survey was conducted by UBO Consulting, a company contracted by KIPRED, during the period February – March, 2016, with 1,000 respondents from all the regions of Kosovo. These respondents did include 720 Albanian Moslems (488 non-practising, and 232 practising ones), and 280 Albanian Christians (118 non-practising and 162 practising ones). The sample of respondents was not divided based on the proportion of Moslems and Christians among Kosovo Albanians, in order to obtain a clearer view on identity issues within the Christian community.

With an aim of identifying the relationship between the Albanian and Kosovar identity, that is, of ethnic and state identity, the question posed to respondents was "Which from these categories describes best how feel yourself?", with the options expressed by following answers: a) Albanian, then Kosovar; b) Kosovar, then Albanian; c) Albanian; d) Kosovar. In the following analysis, we will use the expressions cumulative Albanian identity to denote the respondents identified with the answers a) and c), and cumulative Kosovar identity to denote the respondents identified through the answers b) and d).
For identifying the relationship between the Albanian and religious identity, that is the level of religiosity of the ethnic identity, the question posed to respondents was "Which from these categories describes best how you feel yourself?", with the options expressed by following answers: a) Moslem/Christian, then Albanian; b) Albanian, then Moslem/Christian; c) Moslem/Christian; and d) Albanian. In the following analysis, we will use the expression cumulative religious identity to denote respondents identified with the answers a) and c).

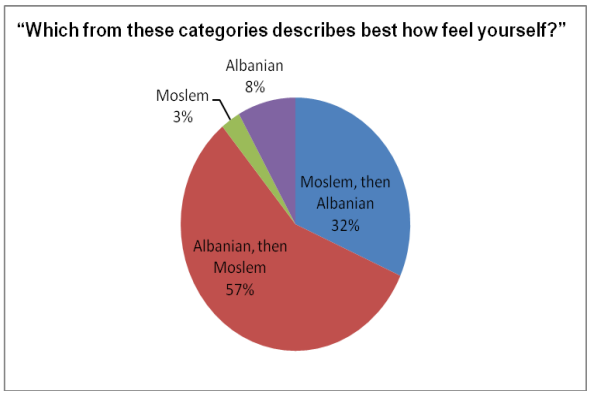
Meanwhile, the socio-religious distance between Moslem and Christian Albanians was measured with the application of the Bogard's social scale, and, in this case, the question posed to respondents was "How far goes the closeness you feel with Albanians of other religion", where the options provided were given in the following answers: a) I would accept marriage with one of them; b) I would accept to have them as very close friends; c) I would accept to work in the same office with them; d) I would accept to have them as my neighbours; e) I would accept only to talk with them; f) I would prefer to don't have them as my neighbours; g) I would prefer to don't have any of them in my state. In the following analysis, we will use the expression positive cumulative distance to denote respondents identified with answers a), b), c), and d) –

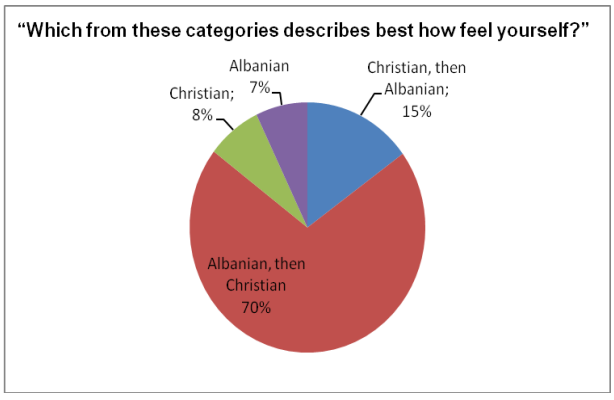
which reflect the Boards distance from 1 up to 4, the expression negative cumulative distance to denote the respondents identified with answers e), f), and g) – which reflect the distance from 5 up to 7, and the expression extreme intolerance to denote respondents identified with the answer g).

The results of the research show that 65.6% of the respondents identify with the Albanian cumulative identity, and this identity is for 22.4% higher than the Kosovar cumulative identity, with which 34.4% of the respondents identify themselves.



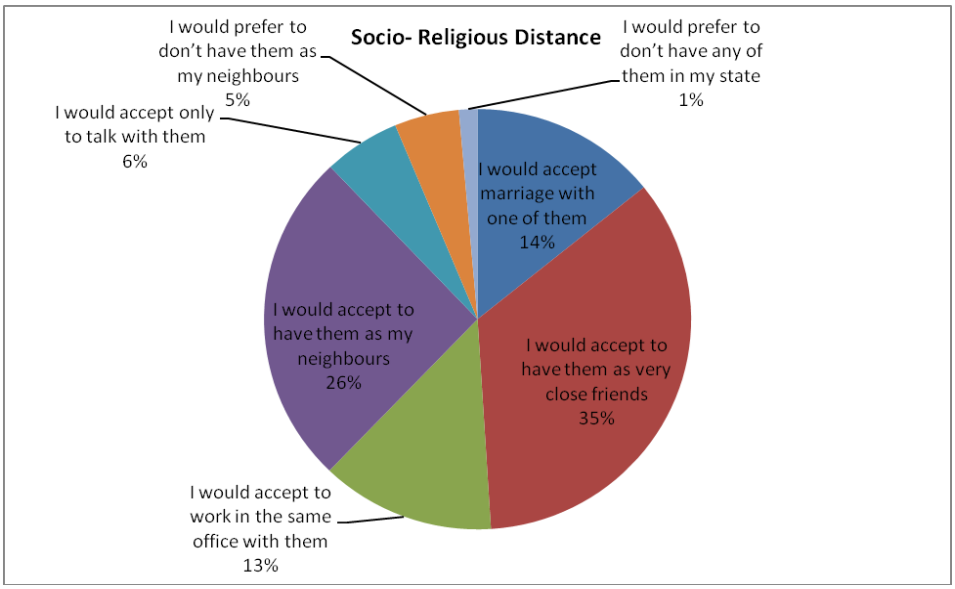
As far as the level of religiosity of the identity is concerned, the results show that this level among Moslem Albanians is higher than among Christian Albanians. The cumulative religious identity among Albanian Moslems (those who feel as Moslems first, and then as Albanians, together with those who feel as Moslems only) was expressed by 34.5% of the respondents, and among the Albanian Christians (those who feel as Christians first, and then as Albanians, together with those who feel as Christians only) was expressed by 22.1% of the respondents.



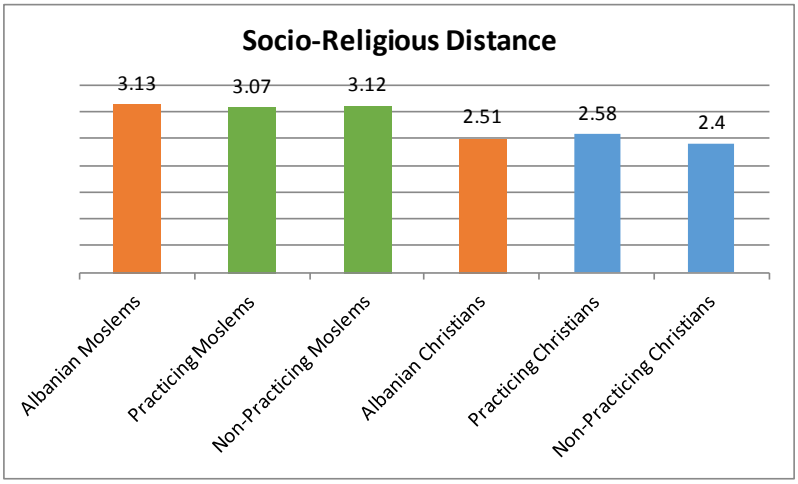


Also, there is a quite negative trend as far as the socio-religious distance is concerned, where 5.8% of the respondents would accept only to talk with Albanians of other religion, 4.8% of them prefer to don't have them as neighbours, and 1.4% prefer to don't

have any of them living in Kosovo. Hence, there are 12% of the respondents who have negative cumulative religious distance, a fact that reveals pronounced socio-religious intolerance among the Kosovo Albanians.



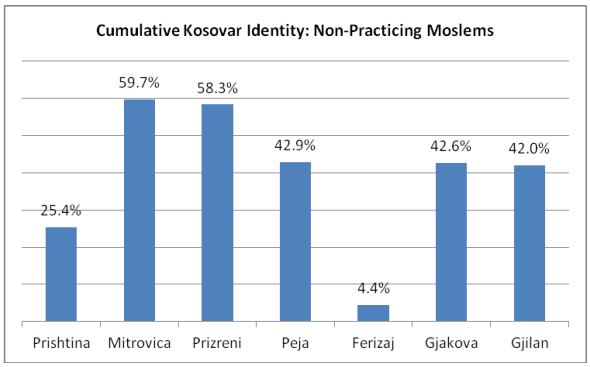
The findings of the research show that, on the one hand, the overall socio-religious distance among Moslems (SD= 3.13) is higher than that of Christians (SD=2.51), as well as that the socio-religious distance among practising Moslems (SD=3.07) is lower than that of non-practising ones (SD-3.12), and on the other, the socio-religious distance among the practising Christians (SD=2.58) is higher than that among the non-practising ones (SD=2.40). Also, the negative socio-religious distance among the Christian Albanians is lower than that of the Moslem Albanians, in spite of the fact that Christians are minority. Among the Moslem Albanians, 84.9% of them have positive socio-religious distance, 15.1% have negative one, and 1.7% of them express extreme intolerance; meanwhile, 95.7% of Christian Albanians have positive religious distance, 4.3% of them have negative one, and 0.7% express extreme intolerance.

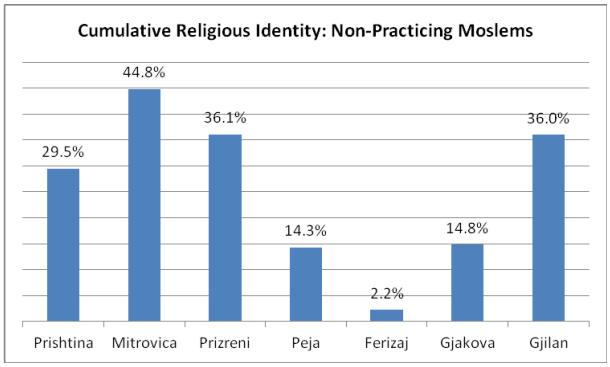


Here we should emphasize a very interesting fact that the practicing Moslem Albanians express higher positive socio-religious distance, and lower negative distance and extreme intolerance, than the non-practising Moslem Albanians. Among the non-practising Moslem Albanians, positive distance is 84.0%, and negative distance is shown by 16% of the respondents, where 1.6% of them express extreme intolerance. Meanwhile, among the practising Moslem Albanians, positive distance is expressed by 86.6% of them, and the negative one by 13.4%, where extreme intolerance is expressed by 1.7% of the respondents. On the other hand, the trends among the Christian practising and non-practising Albanians are similar, and they are more positive than those among the practising and non-practising Moslem Albanians. Thus, among the practising Christian Albanians, the positive distance is 96.6%, negative 3.4%, and extreme intolerance is expressed by 0.0% of the respondents; meanwhile, among the practising Christian Albanians, the positive distance is 95.1%, negative 4.9%, and extreme intolerance is expressed by 1.2% of the respondents.

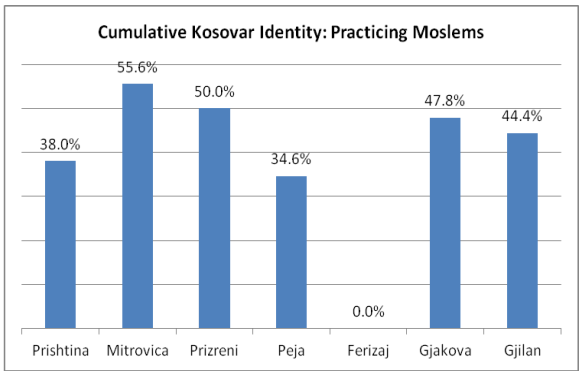
The conducted research has also revealed interdependence between the ethnic religiosity and Kosovar identity, in relation with the regions of Kosovo and with the age of the respondents.

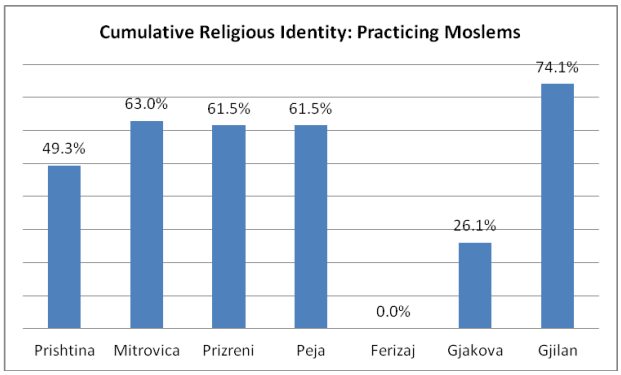
In relation with the other regions of Kosovo, the non-practising Albanian Moslems of the region of Mitrovica and Prizren have the highest level of the Kosovar cumulative identity, where the figures are 59.0% and 58.3% of the respective respondents, and these have, as well, the highest level of the religious cumulative identity, with the respective figures 44.8% and 36.1%; after these two regions comes the region of Gjilan, with 36.0% of the respondents.



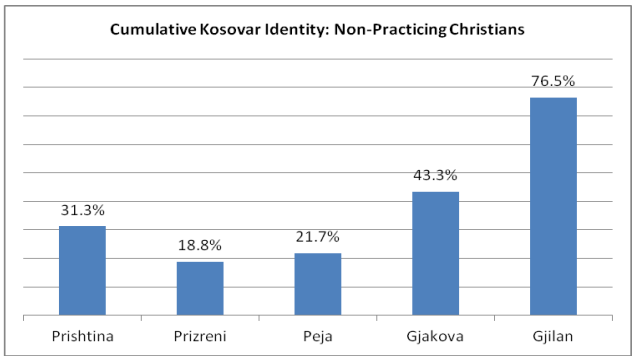


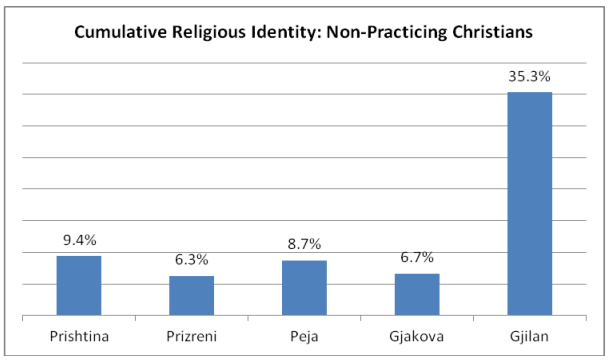
A similar trend can be seen among the practising Albanian Moslems, where the highest Kosovar cumulative level is registered in the regions of Mitrovica and Prizren, with 55.6% and 50.0% of the respective respondents; meanwhile, the highest religious cumulative identity is in the region of Gjilan, 74.1%, of Mitrovica, 63.0%, and of Prizren and Peja, 61.5% of the respective respondents.





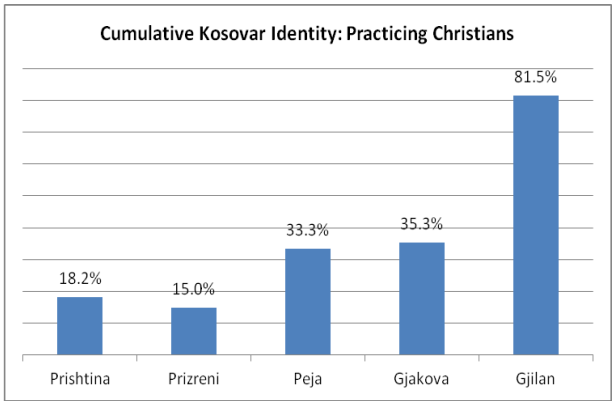
On the other hand, among the non-practising Albanian Christians, the highest level of cumulative Kosovar identity is in the region of Gjilan, with 76.5%, and of Gjakova, with 43.3% of the respondents; meanwhile, the highest level of religiosity – of cumulative religious identity – is in the region of Gjilan, with 35.3% of the respondents.

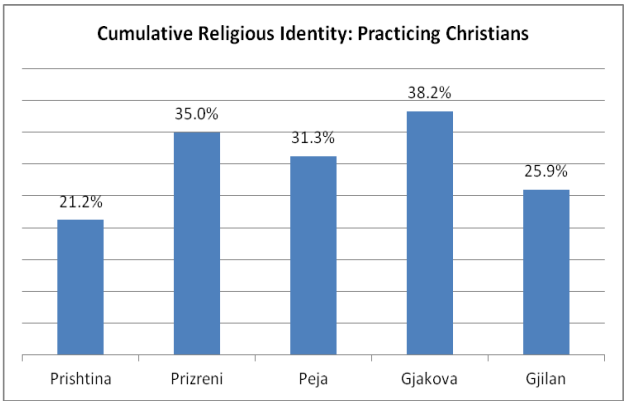




Also, among the practising Albanian Christians, the highest level of the Kosovar cumulative identity is in the region of Gjilan, with 81.5% of the respondents, and the

highest level of religiosity – the cumulative religious identity – is in the region of Gjakova, with 38.2% of the respondents.





As far as the age is concerned, among both, the non-practising and practising Moslems, the highest level of Kosovar cumulative identity is recorded in the age-groups under 24 years, with 54.7% and 47% of the respondents respectively, and 25-34 years, with 41.0% and 45.8% of the respondents respectively. Meanwhile, the highest level of religiosity – the cumulative religious identity – among the non-practising Moslem Albanians, is for the age-groups 25-34 years with 33.6%, above 65 years with 33.3%, and under 24 years with 29.5% of the respondents, and among the practising ones, the age-groups under 24 years with 50.3%, 35-44 years with 51.35%, and 25-34 years with 49.2% of the respondents. An interesting fact here is that the highest extreme intolerance among the non-practising Moslem Albanians is for the age-group under 24 years with 4.1% of the respondents, and for the practising ones, it is for the age-group 25-34 years, with 3.4% of the respondents.

Among the Christian Albanians, there was no interdependence among the age-groups in relation with the Kosovar identity and the level of ethnic religiosity. The highest level of the cumulative Kosovar identity among the non-practising Christians is for the age-groups 35-44 years with 57.1%, and 45-54 years with 55.6% of the respondents, and among the practising Christians, the age-group 55=64 years with 57.1% of the respondents. On the other hand, among the non-practising Christian Albanians, the highest level of religiosity (cumulative religious identity) is for the age-group 55-64 years with 40.0%, and, among the practising ones, the age-groups 35-44 years with 50.0%, as well as 45-54 years with 38.1% of the respondents. Also, another very interesting finding is that among the non-practising Christian Albanians there is no extreme intolerance, whilst among the practising ones, the age-group with the highest level of extreme intolerance is the one 35-44 years with 4.5% of the respondents.

Yet another interesting result of the research is the relation between the years of education with the level of the cumulative religious identity of the Kosovo Albanians. Among the non-practising Moslems, the highest religiosity (cumulative religious identity) is among the persons with 5-8 years of education with 41.8%, as well as among those with 9-12 years of education with 27.7% of the respondents. Meanwhile, among the practising Moslems, the highest religiosity is that of the persons with more than 13 years of education with 54.2% of the respondents. On the other hand, among the non-practising Christian Albanians, the highest religiosity is among the persons with 5-8 years of education with 20.0% of the respondents, and those with under 4 years of education with 50.0% of the respondents.

A very important finding of the research is that the region of Prishtina shows up as the one with the highest negative distance among both, Moslem and Christian Albanians, and the region of Gjakova shows up as the region with the highest level of extreme intolerance. The highest negative socio-religious distance among the non-practising Moslem Albanians is in the region of Mitrovica with 43.3%, and of Prishtina, with 22.1% of the respondents, and the highest extreme intolerance is in Gjakova with 3.8% of the respondents. Among the practising Moslems, the regions of Mitrovica and of Gjilan have the highest negative socio-religious distance with 18.5%, followed by the region of Prishtina with 18.3%, meanwhile the highest extreme intolerance is in the region of Gjakova with 4.3% of the respondents. Among the non-practising Christians, the highest negative socio-religious distance is in the regions of Prishtina with 6.3% and of Gjilan with 5.9% of the respondents, and among the practising ones, negative distance is noticed only in the region of Gjakova, with 23.5% of the respondents, with extreme intolerance among 5.9% of them.

The results of the research further indicate that the standard of living is not a determinant of, either religious cohabitation, or religious intolerance. Among the non-practising Albanian Moslems, the highest negative socio-religious distance is registered among those who report monthly income above 1,201€, with 24.25% of the respondents, and with 3% of the extreme intolerance among them; then come those with the income between 601-750€, with 22.6% of the respondents, and with 3.2% of extreme intolerance, and, after them those who have no income at all, with 22.2% of respondents, and with 3.7% of extreme intolerance. Meanwhile, among the practising Moslems, the highest negative socio-religious distance have those with income between 901-1,200€, with 25% of respondents, and with 12.5% of extreme intolerance, then those with income above 1,201€, between 301-450€, 0-150€, all of them with 20% of respondents, and the later with 10% of extreme intolerance among them. On the other hand, among the non-practising Christians, the highest negative socio-religious distance is among those with income between 301-450€ with 12.5% of the respondents,

meanwhile, among the practising ones the highest negative socio-religious distance is among those who have no income, with 31.8% of the respondents, who record a 4.5% of extreme intolerance.

At the end, we conclude that this research has revealed some very interesting phenomena, and has opened a number of issues that can be fully explained only with further investigation. In this aspect, the priority issues that require further research are those of the relationship between the trends of the increase of religiosity with those of Kosovar identity, from the pointviews of age, the level of education, as well as of regions; the accord or clash between the ethnic Albanian and Kosovar identity; the absence of relationship of socio-religious intolerance with the levels of the standard of living and of education, as well as the reasons of socio-religious intolerance between Moslem and Christian Albanians in the regions of Mitrovica, Prishtina, Gjilan, and Gjakova.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

The understanding of development of the secular nature of the Albanian ethnic identity represents a starting point for analysing the impact of religion on ethnic identity shifts of Kosovo Albanians, who, during the last century, have persistently nurtured secularity and religious cohabitation as an instrument of self-defensive nationalism.

The process of the Albanian national awakening (Rilindja Kombëtare) started as an elite phenomenon or as a top-down cultural movement. In addition to its lateness, the Albanian nationalism had another specific feature as compared to other Balkan peoples – it was secular in its origins and character. There were several important intertwined factors that shaped the Albanian nationalism and contributed to both, its lateness, and secularism. Firstly, in the case of Albanians, the religion was divisive, rather than a unifying factor. In fact, the non-existence of a unitary religion was an important element that had a significant impact on the lateness and secularity of Albanian nationalism. While in the case of other Balkan nationalisms, religion as a factor of unification of the populations, played a positive role in the development of nationalism, in the Albanian case it certainly had a divisive role. Since both, the Ottoman Empire, and its neighbours insisted to divide Albanians according to their religious lines, for the Albanian revivalists it was crucial to overcome the religious division by opting for a secular Albanian national identity based on "cultural and linguistic unity." Therefore, secularity – first being Albanian, accompanied with religious cohabitation, became the key feature of the Albanian nationalism.

During almost 90 years of Yugoslav/Serbian rule, the Albanian nationalism in Kosovo continued to be secular in its nature. Such a reality paved the way for a new Albanian nationalism in Kosovo and structured its collective references as self-defence of their ethnic identity, which was opposed to religiosity that has been used as an instrument for assimilation. The process of disintegration of former Yugoslavia and struggle for independence (1989-1999) marked the strongest social homogenization of Kosovo Albanians. The key features of the Albanian nationalism during this time were pro-Western orientation and general unification of Albanians regardless of their religious and social background. Also, leaders of the religious communities in Kosovo have actively cooperated with political elites and other relevant structures in advancing the position of Albanians and Kosovo.

Nevertheless, after the liberation and instalment of the UN Administration, similarly to other post-communist countries, the resurgence of religiosity started in Kosovo as well. The new circumstances have inevitably triggered a process of radical transformation and redefinition of the place of religion. The presence of both Islam and Christianity

became visible and pronounced in all public spheres, from personal lives, to society at large, including politics. At the same time, religious communities gained new opportunities for religious and cultural revitalization as well as for political mobilization.

In Kosovo itself, the process of religious revival after 1999 was a result of multiple internal and external interacting factors. The consequences of war created multiple conditions that were at play during the first years after 1999, which provided fruitful bases for the religiosity of the society. To begin with, the societal disorientation, high poverty, weak economy and political ambiguity, turned Kosovo into a fertile ground for the resurgence of the religion. The entire Kosovar society was rapidly exposed to a variety of competing ideas, which were simultaneously, more liberal, as well as more conservative. Kosovo war-ravaged population was exposed to different international faith-based organizations with radical agendas that have mushroomed throughout the country after the war. Under the guise of humanitarian aid, such organizations have ruthlessly exploited the poverty and fragmented social conditions of Kosovar Albanians, especially in rural areas, and seriously disrupted cultural traditions of these communities. In addition, UNMIK and the international community, in general, paid little or no attention to the activities of different faith based “humanitarian organizations”. Furthermore, without any reliable intelligent structures and control of financial transactions, it was very difficult to follow activities of these organizations. Besides, since the legal status of religious communities remained undefined, they have operated without any public accountability in terms of organization and finances. Moreover, in spite of the fact that the Faculty of Islamic Studies has continued to promote traditional Islam, namely “Hannifin Sunni School”, however, in terms of the curriculum, with the exception of Arabic language and a couple of Islamic philosophy courses, only courses in the traditional Islamic disciplines of Qur’an recitations are offered by this faculty. Such a reality has made this Faculty the least open to non-religious courses of all the Islamic faculties in the Balkans, thus, detaching students from local history and traditions.

In addition, during this period, the democratic changes have enabled the development of new links between Kosovo and the rest of the Muslim world, thus favouring the renewal of different religious doctrines. Thus, the revival of Islam in Kosovo was mainly influenced, on one hand, by the organizations of Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States, and Turkey, on the other. While their primary aim was to control the population’s spiritual life, to politicize Islam and to encourage intolerance towards secularism in Kosovo, the specific objective of the most of the Middle East organizations was to introduce and strengthen the radical Islam, which also caused frictions within Islamic Community of Kosovo. Moreover, they sought to weaken the Albanian national feeling based on language and a pro-Western attitude that is dominant in Kosovo, by strengthening the intra-Albanian Muslim solidarity at the expense of secular ethnic

identity. Consequently, once a non-disputable issue about the model of Islam in Kosovo, as a unique traditional model, after the war gradually started to change, and with it the secular ethnic identity of Kosovo Albanians and their religious cohabitation.

The period since the Declaration of Independence is of exceptional importance for the topic under discussion, given that it entails several cross-cutting important factors. Firstly, independence of Kosovo meant that Kosovar political elite, especially the government, had both an increased authority, as well as responsibility in dealing with all important issues in the country. Secondly, the Declaration of Independence formalized the beginning of the process of the creation of the new Kosovar identity for Kosovo Albanians. Such a process provided additional manoeuvring space for strengthening of the religious (Muslim) identity. Thirdly, the Declaration of Kosovo Independence coincided with the global expansion of radical Islamic networks, the so-called Arab springs, and the creation of the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). These factors juxtaposed together created a reality that, in turn, resulted in radicalization and extremism of certain layers of Muslim Albanians in Kosovo.

The attitude of Kosovo institutions and of its political elite towards political Islam, in general, and its radicalization in Kosovo, in particular, has been, to say at least, ambiguous. On the one hand, Kosovo politicians have been careful to distance themselves from political Islam as part of their pro-European and pro-Western political vision. Constitution as well as the rest of legislation has been drafted on secular basis and in close cooperation with Western partners. However, on the other hand, both institutions and political parties failed to react to the increase of public displays of Islam radicalization despite their legal obligation to do so. Such negligence and policy of impunity by Kosovo institutions against individuals and organizations inciting religious and ethnic hatred has undoubtedly further contributed to the encouragement of Islamic radicalism in the country, and to the distortion of the secular character of Albanian ethnic identity and religious cohabitation.

Although all main Kosovo political parties are secular, they have in general also failed and were not willing to address the increasing signs of radicalization among Albanian Muslims in Kosovo. Apart from Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK) that has openly denounced such public displays, other political parties have been rather silent in this direction. Unfortunately, most of other major political parties have flirted with such radical groups in order to secure electoral support.

In relation to religion and identity shifts among Albanians in Kosovo, the emergence of the new Kosovo national identity represents another important consequence of the Kosovo independence. Kosovo Albanians who have for centuries nurtured a strong

Albanian national identity, were after independence confronted with somewhat confusing reality. Having accomplished their own political project of independent Kosovo, they were suddenly exposed to divergent loyalties. Obviously, as a new independent state, Kosovo faced the challenge of forging a secular national identity that can overcome ethnic and religious divisions. As a result, symbols of the new state such as flag and national anthem were shunned from any Albanian national symbols of the past. However, rebranding of Kosovo has inevitably had a de-nationalizing impact on Kosovo Albanians. Unfortunately, instead of viewing the Kosovo state identity and the Albanian identity as complementary, political debates in Kosovo have often portrayed them as exclusive. This has in turn, weakened the traditional historic Albanian identity of Kosovo Albanians, especially among the youngsters. The ideological vacuum created in this way, provided an additional manoeuvring space for the strengthening of the religious (Muslim) identity, at the expense of ethnic identity, and eventual radicalization of certain number of Kosovo Albanian Muslims. Kosovo institutions and major political parties have failed to reconcile Kosovar identity with the Albanian one, as well as the religious identities with secular ethnic identity of Kosovo Albanians. As a consequence, the loyalty of Kosovo Albanians has since independence slowly shifted from Albanianism and Kosovo state, to a religious identity, with the emergence of elements of radical Islam.

These findings are supported by the results of the opinion polls that clearly indicate a major identity shift of Kosovo Albanians from the secular ethnic identity to religious ethnicity. As far as the level of religiosity of the identity is concerned, the results show that this level among Albanian Moslems is higher than among Albanian Christians. In addition, the overall socio-religious distance among Moslems is higher than that of Christians. Also, the negative socio-religious distance among the Albanian Christians is lower than that of the Albanian Moslems, in spite of the fact that Christians are minority. An interesting fact here is that the highest extreme intolerance among the non-practising Albanian Moslems is for the age-group under 24 years, while for the practising ones it is for the age-group 25-34 years. Thus, this fact indicates that the generation that has grown up or has achieved maturity after the liberation of Kosovo is the most targeted by the extremism.

On the other side the research shows that there is no clear correlation between level of education and religiosity. Furthermore, the results of the research indicate that the standard of living is not a determinant of, either religious cohabitation, or religious intolerance and extremism. These results seriously challenge the socio-economic paradigm of explaining religious intolerance and extremism. Instead, the ideological paradigm, as documented also by the qualitative research, certainly proves to be the explanatory framework for significant social and identity shifts among Kosovo

Albanians, namely from secular ethnic identity and religious cohabitation into a rapid ethnic religiosity and gradually increasing religious intolerance and extremism.

The most concerning fact inferred from these findings is the projection that if the current trend of de-secularisation of the ethnic identity of Kosovo Albanians continues in the next two decades with the same pace, in Kosovo may easily emerge three new sub-national identities, namely, Muslim Albanians, Christian Albanians and (old)Albanians. This would undoubtedly mark the end of Albanianism as we know it, and with it, the end of secular and pro-western Kosovo as well.

Recommendations:

- The government institutions and political leaders should re-introduce a joint public discourse that will promote the secular identity and religious cohabitation among Kosovo Albanians, and the accord between the ethnic Albanian and Kosovar identity, which are the most natural and efficient tools in dealing with political religiosity, radicalism and extremism.
- Since the secular character of ethnic identity of Kosovo Albanians coincides with the modern European values and the Constitution of Kosovo, it should not be seen as a danger by International Community to the building of a cohesive multi-ethnic country; in contrary, it has to be considered as the most valuable asset for safeguarding of its secular constitutional order.
- The Justice System of Kosovo should swiftly implement the Legal Framework (Penal Code) on hate speech, regarding the religious and ethnic hatred, as well as extremist preaching.
- The Law on Religious Communities should be adopted as soon as possible, which should address their place in the secular Constitutional order of Kosovo, as well as their financial accountability, including the out-law of Koranic Schools.
- The Faculty of Islamic Studies of Kosovo should include in its curricula the subjects of Comparative Religions, the History of Albanian People and Kosovo, and the History of State and Albanian Law, in order to avoid the educational patterns of denial of the religious and national past, as well as for nurturing inter-religious cohabitation.
- The curricula of secondary schools should introduce the course on the History of cultural and religious identities in Kosovo, namely Roman Catholicism, Christian Orthodoxy, Islam and Protestantism, in order to strengthen the mutual understanding and religious cohabitation in the country. The syllabus and the respective texts should be commissioned by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, to be drafted by a top ranking international university in this field.

- Prishtina should re-adjust its relations with Ankara regarding religious influence and the undermining of secularism of Kosovo Albanians and of Kosovo state. Turkey should understand that friendly relations with Kosovo can be developed in a healthy manner only by respecting the secular ethnic identity of Kosovo Albanians, as well as their historical interpretation of the past.

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ANNEX 2: Opinion Polls

Frequencies:

Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Albanian, then Kosovar	439	43.9	43.9	43.9
	Kosovar, then Albanian	321	32.1	32.1	76.0
	Albanian	173	17.3	17.3	93.3
	Kosovar	67	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	1000	100.0	100.0	

Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Muslim, then Albanian	228	22.8	31.7	31.7
	Albanian, then Muslim	413	41.3	57.4	89.0
	Muslim	20	2.0	2.8	91.8
	Albanian	59	5.9	8.2	100.0
	Total	720	72.0	100.0	
Missing	999	280	28.0		
Total		1000	100.0		

Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Christian, then Albanian	42	4.2	15.0	15.0
	Albanian, then christian	197	19.7	70.4	85.4
	Christian	21	2.1	7.5	92.9
	Albanian	20	2.0	7.1	100.0
	Total	280	28.0	100.0	
Missing	999	720	72.0		
Total		1000	100.0		

How close you feel to Albanians with different religion?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I would accept marrying one of them	142	14.2	14.2	14.2
	I would accept to be close friends with one of them	348	34.8	34.8	49.0
	I would accept to work in the same office with one of them	132	13.2	13.2	62.2
	I would accept them as neighbours	257	25.7	25.7	87.9
	I would only accept to speak to them	58	5.8	5.8	93.7
	I would prefer not to be neighbours with them	49	4.9	4.9	98.6
	I would prefer there would be none of them in my country	14	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	1000	100.0	100.0	

Religion:

Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

Religion		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Muslim	Albanian then Kosovar	327	45.4	45.4	45.4
	Kosovar then Albanian	233	32.4	32.4	77.8
	Albanian	108	15.0	15.0	92.8
	Kosovar	52	7.2	7.2	100.0
	Total	720	100.0	100.0	
Christian	Albanian then Kosovar	112	40.0	40.0	40.0
	Kosovar then Albanian	88	31.4	31.4	71.4
	Albanian	65	23.2	23.2	94.6
	Kosovar	15	5.4	5.4	100.0
	Total	280	100.0	100.0	

Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

Religion		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Muslim	Muslim then Albanian	228	31.7	31.7	31.7
	Albanian then Muslim	413	57.4	57.4	89.0
	Muslim	20	2.8	2.8	91.8
	Albanian	59	8.2	8.2	100.0
	Total	720	100.0	100.0	
Christian	Christian then Albanian	42	15.0	15.0	15.0
	Albanian then Christian	197	70.4	70.4	85.4
	Christian	21	7.5	7.5	92.9
	Albanian	20	7.1	7.1	100.0
	Total	280	100.0	100.0	

How close you feel to Albanians with different religion?

Religion		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Muslim	I would accept marrying one of them	85	11.8	11.8	11.8
	I would accept to be close friends with one of them;	232	32.2	32.2	44.0
	I would accept to work in the same office with one of them	99	13.8	13.8	57.8
	I would accept them as neighbours	195	27.1	27.1	84.9
	I would only accept to speak to them	51	7.1	7.1	91.9
	I would prefer not to be neighbours with them	46	6.4	6.4	98.3
	I would prefer there would be none of them in my country.	12	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	720	100.0	100.0	
Christian	I would accept marrying one of them	57	20.4	20.4	20.4
	I would accept to be close friends with one of them	116	41.4	41.4	61.8
	I would accept to work in the same office with one of them	33	11.8	11.8	73.6
	I would accept them as neighbours	62	22.1	22.1	95.7
	I would only accept to speak to them	7	2.5	2.5	98.2
	I would prefer not to be neighbours with them	3	1.1	1.1	99.3
	I would prefer there would be none of them in my country	2	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	280	100.0	100.0	

Practicing and non-practicing:

Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

Religion (for Albanians only)		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	Albanian then Kosovar	219	44.9	44.9	44.9
	Kosovar then Albanian	166	34.0	34.0	78.9
	Albanian	71	14.5	14.5	93.4
	Kosovar	32	6.6	6.6	100.0
	Total	488	100.0	100.0	
Muslim (practice prayers)	Albanian then Kosovar	108	46.6	46.6	46.6
	Kosovar then Albanian	67	28.9	28.9	75.4
	Albanian	37	15.9	15.9	91.4
	Kosovar	20	8.6	8.6	100.0
	Total	232	100.0	100.0	
Non-practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	Albanian then Kosovar	48	40.7	40.7	40.7
	Kosovar then Albanian	35	29.7	29.7	70.3
	Albanian	26	22.0	22.0	92.4
	Kosovar.	9	7.6	7.6	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0	
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	Albanian then Kosovar	64	39.5	39.5	39.5
	Kosovar then Albanian	53	32.7	32.7	72.2
	Albanian	39	24.1	24.1	96.3
	Kosovar	6	3.7	3.7	100.0
	Total	162	100.0	100.0	

Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

Religion (for Albanians only)		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	Muslim, then Albanian	128	26.2	26.2	26.2
	Albanian then Muslim	291	59.6	59.6	85.9
	Muslim	10	2.0	2.0	87.9
	Albanian then Muslim	59	12.1	12.1	100.0
	Total	488	100.0	100.0	
Muslim (practice prayers)	Muslim, then Albanian	100	43.1	43.1	43.1
	Albanian then Muslim	122	52.6	52.6	95.7
	Muslim	10	4.3	4.3	100.0
	Total	232	100.0	100.0	
Non-practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	Christan then Albanain	7	5.9	5.9	5.9
	Albanain then Christian	88	74.6	74.6	80.5
	Christian	7	5.9	5.9	86.4
	Albanian	16	13.6	13.6	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0	
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	Christan then Albanain	35	21.6	21.6	21.6
	Albanain then Christian	109	67.3	67.3	88.9
	Christian	14	8.6	8.6	97.5
	Albanian	4	2.5	2.5	100.0
	Total	162	100.0	100.0	

How close you feel to Albanians with different religion?					
Religion (for Albanians only)		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	I would accept marrying one of them	67	13.7	13.7	13.7
	I would accept to be close friends with one of them	148	30.3	30.3	44.1
	I would accept to work in the same office with one of them	61	12.5	12.5	56.6
	I would accept them as neighbours	134	27.5	27.5	84.0
	I would only accept to speak to them	31	6.4	6.4	90.4
	I would prefere not to be neighbours with them	39	8.0	8.0	98.4
	I would prefere there would be none of them in my Country.	8	1.6	1.6	100.0
	Total	488	100.0	100.0	
Muslim (practice prayers)	I would accept marrying one of them	18	7.8	7.8	7.8
	I would accept to be close friends with one of them	84	36.2	36.2	44.0
	I would accept to work in the same office with one of them	38	16.4	16.4	60.3
	I would accept them as neighbours	61	26.3	26.3	86.6
	I would only accept to speak to them	20	8.6	8.6	95.3
	I would prefere not to be neighbours with them	7	3.0	3.0	98.3
	I would prefere there would be none of them in my country	4	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	232	100.0	100.0	
Non- practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	I would accept marrying one of them	32	27.1	27.1	27.1
	I would accept to be close friends with one of them	41	34.7	34.7	61.9
	I would accept to work in the same office with one of them	17	14.4	14.4	76.3
	I would accept them as neighbours	24	20.3	20.3	96.6
	I would only accept to speak to them	1	.8	.8	97.5
	I would prefere not to be neighbours with them	3	2.5	2.5	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0	
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	I would accept marrying one of them	25	15.4	15.4	15.4
	I would accept to be close friends with one of them	75	46.3	46.3	61.7
	I would accept to work in the same office with one of them	16	9.9	9.9	71.6
	I would accept them as neighbours	38	23.5	23.5	95.1
	I would only accept to speak to them	6	3.7	3.7	98.8
	I would prefere there would be none of them in my country	2	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	162	100.0	100.0	

Gender:

Gender * Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

% within D1. Gender

Religion (for Albanians only)			Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?				Total
			Albanian, then Kosovar	Kosovar, then Albanian	Albanian	Kosovar	
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	Gender	Male	46.3%	32.1%	16.7%	4.9%	100.0%
		Female	43.4%	36.0%	12.4%	8.3%	100.0%
	Total		44.9%	34.0%	14.5%	6.6%	100.0%
Muslim (practice prayers)	Gender	Male	42.9%	29.3%	21.8%	6.0%	100.0%
		Female	51.5%	28.3%	8.1%	12.1%	100.0%
	Total		46.6%	28.9%	15.9%	8.6%	100.0%
Non-practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	Gender	Male	50.6%	22.8%	22.8%	3.8%	100.0%
		Female	20.5%	43.6%	20.5%	15.4%	100.0%
	Total		40.7%	29.7%	22.0%	7.6%	100.0%
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	Gender	Male	39.0%	23.4%	31.2%	6.5%	100.0%
		Female	40.0%	41.2%	17.6%	1.2%	100.0%
	Total		39.5%	32.7%	24.1%	3.7%	100.0%

Gender * Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

% within D1. Gender

Religion (for Albanians only)			Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?				Total
			Muslim/Christian, then Albanian	Albanian, then Muslim/Christian	Muslim/Christian	Albanian	
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	Gender	Male	25.2%	60.2%	.8%	13.8%	100.0%
		Female	27.3%	59.1%	3.3%	10.3%	100.0%
	Total		26.2%	59.6%	2.0%	12.1%	100.0%
Muslim (practice prayers)	Gender	Male	40.6%	54.1%	5.3%		100.0%
		Female	46.5%	50.5%	3.0%		100.0%
	Total		43.1%	52.6%	4.3%		100.0%
Non-practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	Gender	Male	6.3%	78.5%	3.8%	11.4%	100.0%
		Female	5.1%	66.7%	10.3%	17.9%	100.0%
	Total		5.9%	74.6%	5.9%	13.6%	100.0%
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	Gender	Male	20.8%	67.5%	10.4%	1.3%	100.0%
		Female	22.4%	67.1%	7.1%	3.5%	100.0%
	Total		21.6%	67.3%	8.6%	2.5%	100.0%

Gender * How close you feel to Albanians with different religion?

% within D1. Gender

Religion (for Albanians only)			How close you feel to Albanians with different religion?							Total
			I would accept marrying one of them	I would accept to be close friends with one of them	I would accept to work in the same office with one of them	I would accept them as neighbours	I would only accept to speak to them	I would prefer not to be neighbours with them	I would prefer there would be none of them in my country	
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	Gender	Male	14.6%	32.1%	15.0%	23.6%	6.1%	7.7%	.8%	100.0%
		Female	12.8%	28.5%	9.9%	31.4%	6.6%	8.3%	2.5%	100.0%
	Total		13.7%	30.3%	12.5%	27.5%	6.4%	8.0%	1.6%	100.0%
Muslim (practice prayers)	Gender	Male	8.3%	42.1%	16.5%	20.3%	6.8%	3.0%	3.0%	100.0%
		Female	7.1%	28.3%	16.2%	34.3%	11.1%	3.0%		100.0%
	Total		7.8%	36.2%	16.4%	26.3%	8.6%	3.0%	1.7%	100.0%
Non-practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	Gender	Male	24.1%	36.7%	16.5%	17.7%	1.3%	3.8%		100.0%
		Female	33.3%	30.8%	10.3%	25.6%				100.0%
	Total		27.1%	34.7%	14.4%	20.3%	.8%	2.5%		100.0%
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	Gender	Male	23.4%	39.0%	13.0%	20.8%	2.6%		1.3%	100.0%
		Female	8.2%	52.9%	7.1%	25.9%	4.7%		1.2%	100.0%
	Total		15.4%	46.3%	9.9%	23.5%	3.7%		1.2%	100.0%

Age:

Age (Binned) * Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

% within D2. Age (Binned)

D Religion (for Albanians only)			Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself? Albanian then Kosovar	Kosovar then Albanian	Albanian	Kosovar	Total
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	Age (Binned)	<= 24	42.5%	38.4%	15.8%	3.4%	100.0%
		25 - 34	33.6%	41.4%	11.7%	13.3%	100.0%
		35 - 44	54.7%	23.3%	14.0%	8.1%	100.0%
		45 - 54	55.6%	25.0%	16.7%	2.8%	100.0%
		55 - 64	50.0%	36.4%	11.4%	2.3%	100.0%
		65+	41.7%	25.0%	33.3%		100.0%
	Total		44.9%	34.0%	14.5%	6.6%	100.0%
Muslim (practice prayers)	Age (Binned)	<= 24	38.6%	37.3%	14.5%	9.6%	100.0%
		25 - 34	37.3%	35.6%	16.9%	10.2%	100.0%
		35 - 44	51.3%	30.8%	15.4%	2.6%	100.0%
		45 - 54	52.0%	8.0%	20.0%	20.0%	100.0%
		55 - 64	76.5%		23.5%		100.0%
		65+	88.9%	11.1%			100.0%
	Total		46.6%	28.9%	15.9%	8.6%	100.0%
Non- practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	Age (Binned)	<= 24	46.8%	25.5%	27.7%		100.0%
		25 - 34	41.5%	31.7%	14.6%	12.2%	100.0%
		35 - 44	28.6%	35.7%	14.3%	21.4%	100.0%
		45 - 54	11.1%	44.4%	33.3%	11.1%	100.0%
		55 - 64	40.0%	20.0%	40.0%		100.0%
		65+	100.0%				100.0%
	Total		40.7%	29.7%	22.0%	7.6%	100.0%
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	Age (Binned)	<= 24	40.7%	33.3%	20.4%	5.6%	100.0%
		25 - 34	34.0%	37.7%	26.4%	1.9%	100.0%
		35 - 44	63.6%	18.2%	18.2%		100.0%
		45 - 54	28.6%	33.3%	33.3%	4.8%	100.0%
		55 - 64	14.3%	42.9%	28.6%	14.3%	100.0%
		65+	60.0%	20.0%	20.0%		100.0%
	Total		39.5%	32.7%	24.1%	3.7%	100.0%

Age (Binned) * Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

% within D2. Age (Binned)

D Religion (for Albanians only)			Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?				Total
			Muslim/Christian, then Albanian	Albanian, then Muslim/Christian	Muslim/Christian	Albanian	
Non-practicing Muslims (don't pray)	Age (Binned)	<= 24	27.4%	61.6%	2.1%	8.9%	100.0%
		25 - 34	31.3%	55.5%	2.3%	10.9%	100.0%
		35 - 44	23.3%	60.5%	2.3%	14.0%	100.0%
		45 - 54	25.0%	52.8%	1.4%	20.8%	100.0%
		55 - 64	13.6%	77.3%	2.3%	6.8%	100.0%
		65+	33.3%	50.0%		16.7%	100.0%
	Total		26.2%	59.6%	2.0%	12.1%	100.0%
Muslims (practice prayers)	Age (Binned)	<= 24	50.6%	47.0%	2.4%		100.0%
		25 - 34	45.8%	50.8%	3.4%		100.0%
		35 - 44	43.6%	48.7%	7.7%		100.0%
		45 - 54	32.0%	60.0%	8.0%		100.0%
		55 - 64	23.5%	70.6%	5.9%		100.0%
		65+	22.2%	77.8%			100.0%
	Total		43.1%	52.6%	4.3%		100.0%
Non-practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	Age (Binned)	<= 24	8.5%	74.5%	2.1%	14.9%	100.0%
		25 - 34	2.4%	78.0%	9.8%	9.8%	100.0%
		35 - 44	7.1%	85.7%		7.1%	100.0%
		45 - 54	11.1%	66.7%		22.2%	100.0%
		55 - 64		20.0%	40.0%	40.0%	100.0%
		65+		100.0%			100.0%
	Total		5.9%	74.6%	5.9%	13.6%	100.0%
Practicing Christians (that attend mass in the church)	Age (Binned)	<= 24	24.1%	66.7%	5.6%	3.7%	100.0%
		25 - 34	13.2%	77.4%	7.5%	1.9%	100.0%
		35 - 44	31.8%	50.0%	18.2%		100.0%
		45 - 54	33.3%	57.1%	4.8%	4.8%	100.0%
		55 - 64	14.3%	71.4%	14.3%		100.0%
		65+		80.0%	20.0%		100.0%
	Total		21.6%	67.3%	8.6%	2.5%	100.0%

Age (Binned) * How close you feel to Albanians with different religion?

% within D2. Age (Binned)

Religion (for Albanians only)			How close you feel to Albanians with different religion?							Total
			I would accept marrying one of them	I would accept to be close friends with one of them	I would accept to work in the same office with one of them	I would accept them as neighbours	I would only accept to speak to them	I would prefer not to be neighbours with them	I would prefer there would be none of them in my country	
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	Age (Binned)	<= 24	20.5%	34.2%	8.9%	22.6%	6.8%	2.7%	4.1%	100.0%
		25 - 34	13.3%	28.9%	18.8%	25.0%	6.3%	7.8%		100.0%
		35 - 44	8.1%	33.7%	7.0%	30.2%	4.7%	15.1%	1.2%	100.0%
		45 - 54	11.1%	26.4%	9.7%	36.1%	6.9%	8.3%	1.4%	100.0%
		55 - 64	11.4%	22.7%	22.7%	31.8%	6.8%	4.5%		100.0%
		65+		25.0%	8.3%	25.0%	8.3%	33.3%		100.0%
	Total		13.7%	30.3%	12.5%	27.5%	6.4%	8.0%	1.6%	100.0%
Muslim (practice prayers)	Age (Binned)	<= 24	8.4%	43.4%	18.1%	19.3%	6.0%	3.6%	1.2%	100.0%
		25 - 34	10.2%	37.3%	16.9%	15.3%	13.6%	3.4%	3.4%	100.0%
		35 - 44	12.8%	23.1%	17.9%	33.3%	10.3%		2.6%	100.0%
		45 - 54		32.0%	20.0%	32.0%	8.0%	8.0%		100.0%
		55 - 64		35.3%	5.9%	52.9%	5.9%			100.0%
		65+		33.3%		66.7%				100.0%
	Total		7.8%	36.2%	16.4%	26.3%	8.6%	3.0%	1.7%	100.0%
Non-practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	Age (Binned)	<= 24	25.5%	38.3%	12.8%	17.0%	2.1%	4.3%		100.0%
		25 - 34	14.6%	34.1%	17.1%	34.1%				100.0%
		35 - 44	64.3%	21.4%	14.3%					100.0%
		45 - 54	33.3%	44.4%	11.1%	11.1%				100.0%
		55 - 64	20.0%	40.0%	20.0%			20.0%		100.0%
		65+	50.0%			50.0%				100.0%
	Total		27.1%	34.7%	14.4%	20.3%	.8%	2.5%		100.0%
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	Age (Binned)	<= 24	22.2%	46.3%	5.6%	20.4%	5.6%			100.0%
		25 - 34	17.0%	49.1%	9.4%	20.8%	1.9%		1.9%	100.0%
		35 - 44	9.1%	31.8%	13.6%	36.4%	4.5%		4.5%	100.0%
		45 - 54	4.8%	52.4%	19.0%	23.8%				100.0%
		55 - 64		57.1%		28.6%	14.3%			100.0%
		65+	20.0%	40.0%	20.0%	20.0%				100.0%
	Total		15.4%	46.3%	9.9%	23.5%	3.7%		1.2%	100.0%

Residence:

Residence * Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

% within D12. Residence

D Religion (for Albanians only)			Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?				Total
			Albanian then Kosovar	Kosovar then Albanian	Albanian	Kosovar	
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	Residence	Urban	44.6%	31.5%	17.9%	6.0%	100.0%
		Rural	45.1%	35.5%	12.5%	6.9%	100.0%
	Total		44.9%	34.0%	14.5%	6.6%	100.0%
Muslim (practice prayers)	Residence	Urban	45.5%	23.8%	19.8%	10.9%	100.0%
		Rural	47.3%	32.8%	13.0%	6.9%	100.0%
	Total		46.6%	28.9%	15.9%	8.6%	100.0%
Non-practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	Residence	Urban	38.6%	35.1%	24.6%	1.8%	100.0%
		Rural	42.6%	24.6%	19.7%	13.1%	100.0%
	Total		40.7%	29.7%	22.0%	7.6%	100.0%
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	Residence	Urban	40.5%	26.6%	30.4%	2.5%	100.0%
		Rural	37.8%	39.0%	18.3%	4.9%	100.0%
		Don't Know	100.0%				100.0%
	Total		39.5%	32.7%	24.1%	3.7%	100.0%

Residence * Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

% within D12. Residence

Religion (for Albanians only)			Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?				Total
			Muslim/Christian, then Albanian	Albanian then Muslim/Christian	Muslim/Christian	Albanian	
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	Residence	Urban	22.8%	60.3%	3.3%	13.6%	100.0%
		Rural	28.3%	59.2%	1.3%	11.2%	100.0%
	Total		26.2%	59.6%	2.0%	12.1%	100.0%
Muslim (practice prayers)	Residence	Urban	47.5%	48.5%	4.0%		100.0%
		Rural	39.7%	55.7%	4.6%		100.0%
	Total		43.1%	52.6%	4.3%		100.0%
Non-practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	Residence	Urban	1.8%	73.7%	8.8%	15.8%	100.0%
		Rural	9.8%	75.4%	3.3%	11.5%	100.0%
	Total		5.9%	74.6%	5.9%	13.6%	100.0%
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	Residence	Urban	19.0%	64.6%	13.9%	2.5%	100.0%
		Rural	24.4%	69.5%	3.7%	2.4%	100.0%
		Don't Know		100.0%			100.0%
	Total		21.6%	67.3%	8.6%	2.5%	100.0%

Residence * How close you feel to Albanians with different religion?

% within D12. Residence

Religion (for Albanians only)			How close you feel to Albanians with different religion?							Total
			I would accept marrying one of them	I would accept to be close friends with one of them	I would accept to work in the same office with one of them	I would accept them as neighbours	I would only accept to speak to them	I would prefer not to be neighbours with them	I would prefer there would be none of them in my country	
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	Residence	Urban	17.9%	34.2%	14.7%	24.5%	4.9%	2.2%	1.6%	100.0%
		Rural	11.2%	28.0%	11.2%	29.3%	7.2%	11.5%	1.6%	100.0%
	Total		13.7%	30.3%	12.5%	27.5%	6.4%	8.0%	1.6%	100.0%
Muslim (practice prayers)	Residence	Urban	9.9%	33.7%	14.9%	28.7%	8.9%	3.0%	1.0%	100.0%
		Rural	6.1%	38.2%	17.6%	24.4%	8.4%	3.1%	2.3%	100.0%
	Total		7.8%	36.2%	16.4%	26.3%	8.6%	3.0%	1.7%	100.0%
Non-practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	Residence	Urban	36.8%	29.8%	14.0%	15.8%		3.5%		100.0%
		Rural	18.0%	39.3%	14.8%	24.6%	1.6%	1.6%		100.0%
	Total		27.1%	34.7%	14.4%	20.3%	.8%	2.5%		100.0%
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	Residence	Urban	13.9%	44.3%	13.9%	21.5%	3.8%		2.5%	100.0%
		Rural	17.1%	48.8%	6.1%	24.4%	3.7%			100.0%
		Don't Know				100.0%				100.0%
	Total		15.4%	46.3%	9.9%	23.5%	3.7%		1.2%	100.0%

Family income:

(Family Income) * Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

% within (Family Income)

D Religion (for Albanians only)		Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?				Total
		Albanian, then Kosovar	Kosovar, then Albanian	Albanian	Kosovar	
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	0 - 150 euro	62.5%	25.0%	12.5%		100.0%
	151 - 300 euro	47.1%	45.1%	7.8%		100.0%
	301 - 450 euro	47.6%	32.4%	9.5%	10.5%	100.0%
	451 - 600 euro	44.6%	34.9%	12.0%	8.4%	100.0%
	601 - 750 euro	41.9%	43.5%	12.9%	1.6%	100.0%
	751 - 900 euro	42.2%	13.3%	35.6%	8.9%	100.0%
	901-1200 euro	45.5%	21.2%	33.3%		100.0%
	Over 1201 euro	45.5%	21.2%	24.2%	9.1%	100.0%
	No income	48.1%	40.7%		11.1%	100.0%
	Refuse/PP	30.3%	54.5%	6.1%	9.1%	100.0%
		44.9%	34.0%	14.5%	6.6%	100.0%
Muslim (practice prayers)	0 - 150 euro	30.0%	35.0%	15.0%	20.0%	100.0%
	151 - 300 euro	71.9%	21.9%	6.3%		100.0%
	301 - 450 euro	42.0%	30.0%	20.0%	8.0%	100.0%
	451 - 600 euro	56.6%	26.4%	9.4%	7.5%	100.0%
	601 - 750 euro	26.1%	43.5%	26.1%	4.3%	100.0%
	751 - 900 euro	50.0%	31.3%	6.3%	12.5%	100.0%
	901-1200 euro	12.5%	25.0%	37.5%	25.0%	100.0%
	Over 1201 euro	20.0%	20.0%	60.0%		100.0%
	No income	66.7%	16.7%		16.7%	100.0%
	Refuse/PP	42.1%	26.3%	21.1%	10.5%	100.0%
		46.6%	28.9%	15.9%	8.6%	100.0%
Non-practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	0 - 150 euro			100.0%		100.0%
	151 - 300 euro		100.0%			100.0%
	301 - 450 euro	50.0%	25.0%	12.5%	12.5%	100.0%
	451 - 600 euro	70.0%	10.0%	20.0%		100.0%
	601 - 750 euro	45.8%	33.3%	12.5%	8.3%	100.0%
	751 - 900 euro	53.3%	26.7%	13.3%	6.7%	100.0%
	901-1200 euro	7.1%	50.0%	28.6%	14.3%	100.0%
	Over 1201 euro	18.2%	31.8%	50.0%		100.0%
	No income	58.3%	33.3%		8.3%	100.0%
	Refuse/PP	60.0%	10.0%	10.0%	20.0%	100.0%
		40.7%	29.7%	22.0%	7.6%	100.0%
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	0 - 150 euro	50.0%			50.0%	100.0%
	151 - 300 euro	66.7%		33.3%		100.0%
	301 - 450 euro	52.4%	28.6%	14.3%	4.8%	100.0%
	451 - 600 euro	50.0%	22.2%	27.8%		100.0%
	601 - 750 euro	41.2%	23.5%	23.5%	11.8%	100.0%
	751 - 900 euro	25.9%	37.0%	33.3%	3.7%	100.0%
	901-1200 euro	38.1%	42.9%	19.0%		100.0%
	Over 1201 euro	19.0%	47.6%	33.3%		100.0%
	No income	60.0%	20.0%	20.0%		100.0%
	Refuse/PP	40.9%	36.4%	18.2%	4.5%	100.0%
		39.5%	32.7%	24.1%	3.7%	100.0%

(Family Income) * Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

% within (Family Income)

Religion (for Albanians only)		Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?				Total
		Muslim/Christian, then Albanian	Albanian then Muslim/Christian	Muslim/Christian	Albanian	
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	0 - 150 euro	25.0%	62.5%	6.3%	6.3%	100.0%
	151 - 300 euro	31.4%	68.6%			100.0%
	301 - 450 euro	16.2%	74.3%		9.5%	100.0%
	451 - 600 euro	24.1%	62.7%	3.6%	9.6%	100.0%
	601 - 750 euro	22.6%	67.7%	3.2%	6.5%	100.0%
	751 - 900 euro	40.0%	24.4%	4.4%	31.1%	100.0%
	901-1200 euro	15.2%	45.5%	3.0%	36.4%	100.0%
	Over 1201 euro	36.4%	42.4%		21.2%	100.0%
	No Income	55.6%	44.4%			100.0%
	Refuse/PP	21.2%	66.7%	3.0%	9.1%	100.0%
		26.2%	59.6%	2.0%	12.1%	100.0%
Muslim (practice prayers)	0 - 150 euro	45.0%	55.0%			100.0%
	151 - 300 euro	50.0%	46.9%	3.1%		100.0%
	301 - 450 euro	36.0%	58.0%	6.0%		100.0%
	451 - 600 euro	28.3%	69.8%	1.9%		100.0%
	601 - 750 euro	52.2%	39.1%	8.7%		100.0%
	751 - 900 euro	62.5%	31.3%	6.3%		100.0%
	901-1200 euro	37.5%	37.5%	25.0%		100.0%
	Over 1201 euro	60.0%	40.0%			100.0%
	No Income	33.3%	66.7%			100.0%
	Refuse/PP	63.2%	36.8%			100.0%
		43.1%	52.6%	4.3%		100.0%

(Family Income) * Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

% within (Family Income)

Religion (for Albanians only)		Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?				Total
		Christian then Muslim	Albanian then Christian	Christian	Albanian	
Non-practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	0 - 150 euro		100.0%			100.0%
	151 - 300 euro		100.0%			100.0%
	301 - 450 euro	12.5%	75.0%	12.5%		100.0%
	451 - 600 euro	10.0%	90.0%			100.0%
	601 - 750 euro		87.5%	4.2%	8.3%	100.0%
	751 - 900 euro	6.7%	73.3%		20.0%	100.0%
	901-1200 euro	14.3%	71.4%		14.3%	100.0%
	Over 1201 euro	4.5%	40.9%	18.2%	36.4%	100.0%
	No Income		91.7%		8.3%	100.0%
	Refuse/PP	10.0%	80.0%	10.0%		100.0%
		5.9%	74.6%	5.9%	13.6%	100.0%
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	0 - 150 euro	100.0%				100.0%
	151 - 300 euro		66.7%	33.3%		100.0%
	301 - 450 euro	33.3%	52.4%	14.3%		100.0%
	451 - 600 euro	16.7%	77.8%	5.6%		100.0%
	601 - 750 euro	23.5%	70.6%	5.9%		100.0%
	751 - 900 euro	18.5%	66.7%	7.4%	7.4%	100.0%
	901-1200 euro	9.5%	85.7%		4.8%	100.0%
	Over 1201 euro	14.3%	71.4%	9.5%	4.8%	100.0%
	No Income	30.0%	60.0%	10.0%		100.0%
	Refuse/PP	27.3%	59.1%	13.6%		100.0%
		21.6%	67.3%	8.6%	2.5%	100.0%

(Family Income) * How close you feel to Albanians with different religion?

% within (Family Income)

Religion (for Albanians only)		How close you feel to Albanians with different religion?							Total
		I would accept marrying one of them	I would accept to be close friends with one of them	I would accept to work in the same office with one of them	I would accept them as neighbours	I would only accept to speak to them	I would prefer not to be neighbours with them	I would prefer there would be none of them in my country	
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	0 - 150 euro	31.3%	18.8%	12.5%	25.0%	12.5%			100.0%
	151 - 300 euro	15.7%	19.6%	15.7%	35.3%	3.9%	5.9%	3.9%	100.0%
	301 - 450 euro	12.4%	36.2%	9.5%	32.4%	6.7%	2.9%		100.0%
	451 - 600 euro	9.6%	21.7%	15.7%	36.1%	10.8%	6.0%		100.0%
	601 - 750 euro	16.1%	32.3%	9.7%	19.4%	9.7%	9.7%	3.2%	100.0%
	751 - 900 euro	15.6%	35.6%	11.1%	17.8%	4.4%	13.3%	2.2%	100.0%
	901-1200 euro	15.2%	45.5%	9.1%	21.2%		9.1%		100.0%
	Over 1201 euro	12.1%	33.3%	18.2%	12.1%	6.1%	15.2%	3.0%	100.0%
	No Income	3.7%	18.5%	29.6%	25.9%		18.5%	3.7%	100.0%
	Refuse/PP	18.2%	36.4%		30.3%	3.0%	9.1%	3.0%	100.0%
		13.7%	30.3%	12.5%	27.5%	6.4%	8.0%	1.6%	100.0%
Muslim (practice prayers)	0 - 150 euro	5.0%	25.0%	30.0%	20.0%	5.0%	5.0%	10.0%	100.0%
	151 - 300 euro	6.3%	37.5%	9.4%	37.5%	6.3%	3.1%		100.0%
	301 - 450 euro	6.0%	28.0%	16.0%	30.0%	20.0%			100.0%
	451 - 600 euro	13.2%	30.2%	22.6%	28.3%	3.8%	1.9%		100.0%
	601 - 750 euro	8.7%	43.5%	13.0%	17.4%	4.3%	8.7%	4.3%	100.0%
	751 - 900 euro	6.3%	43.8%	25.0%	25.0%				100.0%
	901-1200 euro		62.5%		12.5%	12.5%		12.5%	100.0%
	Over 1201 euro	20.0%	40.0%	20.0%			20.0%		100.0%
	No Income		33.3%		50.0%		16.7%		100.0%
	Refuse/PP	5.3%	57.9%	5.3%	15.8%	15.8%			100.0%
		7.8%	36.2%	16.4%	26.3%	8.6%	3.0%	1.7%	100.0%
Non-practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	0 - 150 euro	50.0%		50.0%					100.0%
	151 - 300 euro		100.0%						100.0%
	301 - 450 euro	37.5%	37.5%	12.5%			12.5%		100.0%
	451 - 600 euro	20.0%	30.0%	20.0%	30.0%				100.0%
	601 - 750 euro	20.8%	45.8%		29.2%		4.2%		100.0%
	751 - 900 euro	46.7%	20.0%	20.0%	13.3%				100.0%
	901-1200 euro		71.4%	21.4%	7.1%				100.0%
	Over 1201 euro	31.8%	18.2%	9.1%	31.8%	4.5%	4.5%		100.0%
	No Income	33.3%	25.0%	16.7%	25.0%				100.0%
	Refuse/PP	30.0%	30.0%	30.0%	10.0%				100.0%
		27.1%	34.7%	14.4%	20.3%	.8%	2.5%		100.0%
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	0 - 150 euro	50.0%			50.0%				100.0%
	151 - 300 euro				100.0%				100.0%
	301 - 450 euro	9.5%	52.4%		38.1%				100.0%
	451 - 600 euro	33.3%	38.9%	11.1%	16.7%				100.0%
	601 - 750 euro	5.9%	64.7%	5.9%	23.5%				100.0%
	751 - 900 euro	18.5%	37.0%	11.1%	29.6%			3.7%	100.0%
	901-1200 euro	9.5%	61.9%	9.5%	19.0%				100.0%
	Over 1201 euro	14.3%	57.1%	23.8%	4.8%				100.0%
	No Income	40.0%	60.0%						100.0%
	Refuse/PP	4.5%	22.7%	13.6%	27.3%	27.3%		4.5%	100.0%
		15.4%	46.3%	9.9%	23.5%	3.7%		1.2%	100.0%

Education:

Years of Education: * Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

% within D3. Years of Education:

Religion (only for Albanians)			Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?				Total
			Albanian, then Kosovar	Kosovar, then Albanian	Albanian	Kosovar	
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	Years of Education:	<= 4	44.4%	33.3%	22.2%		100.0%
		5 - 8	53.7%	32.8%	10.4%	3.0%	100.0%
		9 - 12	51.5%	30.7%	13.4%	4.3%	100.0%
		13+	33.1%	38.7%	17.1%	11.0%	100.0%
	Total		44.9%	34.0%	14.5%	6.6%	100.0%
Muslim (practice prayers)	Years of Education:	<= 4	33.3%		66.7%		100.0%
		5 - 8	57.6%	21.2%	6.1%	15.2%	100.0%
		9 - 12	50.8%	27.4%	14.5%	7.3%	100.0%
		13+	34.7%	36.1%	20.8%	8.3%	100.0%
	Total		46.6%	28.9%	15.9%	8.6%	100.0%
Non- practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	Years of Education:	<= 4	100.0%				100.0%
		5 - 8	60.0%	10.0%	20.0%	10.0%	100.0%
		9 - 12	41.5%	32.1%	15.1%	11.3%	100.0%
		13+	34.0%	32.1%	30.2%	3.8%	100.0%
	Total		40.7%	29.7%	22.0%	7.6%	100.0%
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	Years of Education:	<= 4	25.0%	25.0%	50.0%		100.0%
		5 - 8	33.3%	33.3%	28.6%	4.8%	100.0%
		9 - 12	40.6%	32.8%	21.9%	4.7%	100.0%
		13+	41.1%	32.9%	23.3%	2.7%	100.0%
	Total		39.5%	32.7%	24.1%	3.7%	100.0%

Years of Education: * Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

% within D3. Years of Education:

Religion (only for Albanians)			Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?				Total
			Muslim/Christian, then Albanian	Albanian then Muslim/Christian	Muslim/Christian	Albanian	
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	Years of Education:	<= 4	22.2%	66.7%		11.1%	100.0%
		5 - 8	38.8%	55.2%	3.0%	3.0%	100.0%
		9 - 12	27.3%	57.1%	.4%	15.2%	100.0%
		13+	20.4%	64.1%	3.9%	11.6%	100.0%
	Total		26.2%	59.6%	2.0%	12.1%	100.0%
Muslim (practice prayers)	Years of Education:	<= 4		100.0%			100.0%
		5 - 8	39.4%	54.5%	6.1%		100.0%
		9 - 12	40.3%	54.8%	4.8%		100.0%
		13+	51.4%	45.8%	2.8%		100.0%
	Total		43.1%	52.6%	4.3%		100.0%
Non- practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church))	Years of Education:	<= 4		100.0%			100.0%
		5 - 8	20.0%	80.0%			100.0%
		9 - 12	3.8%	73.6%	9.4%	13.2%	100.0%
		13+	5.7%	73.6%	3.8%	17.0%	100.0%
	Total		5.9%	74.6%	5.9%	13.6%	100.0%
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	Years of Education:	<= 4	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%		100.0%
		5 - 8	52.4%	42.9%		4.8%	100.0%
		9 - 12	17.2%	68.8%	12.5%	1.6%	100.0%
		13+	16.4%	74.0%	6.8%	2.7%	100.0%
	Total		21.6%	67.3%	8.6%	2.5%	100.0%

Years of Education: * How close you feel to Albanians with different religion?

% within D3. Years of Education:

Religion (only for Albanians)			How close you feel to Albanians with different religion?							Total
			I would accept marrying one of them	I would accept to be close friends with one of them	I would accept to work in the same office with one of them	I would accept them as neighbours	I would only accept to speak to them	I would prefer not to be neighbours with them	I would prefer there would be none of them in my country	
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	Years of Education:	<= 4	22.2%	33.3%	11.1%	11.1%		22.2%		100.0%
		5 - 8	4.5%	14.9%	9.0%	44.8%	3.0%	20.9%	3.0%	100.0%
		9 - 12	14.3%	28.6%	12.6%	28.1%	7.4%	7.4%	1.7%	100.0%
		13+	16.0%	38.1%	13.8%	21.0%	6.6%	3.3%	1.1%	100.0%
	Total		13.7%	30.3%	12.5%	27.5%	6.4%	8.0%	1.6%	100.0%
Muslim (practice prayers)	Years of Education:	<= 4		66.7%		33.3%				100.0%
		5 - 8		24.2%	12.1%	51.5%	9.1%	3.0%		100.0%
		9 - 12	8.9%	37.1%	16.1%	21.8%	10.5%	4.0%	1.6%	100.0%
		13+	9.7%	38.9%	19.4%	22.2%	5.6%	1.4%	2.8%	100.0%
	Total		7.8%	36.2%	16.4%	26.3%	8.6%	3.0%	1.7%	100.0%
Non- practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church))	Years of Education:	<= 4		50.0%		50.0%				100.0%
		5 - 8	60.0%	20.0%	10.0%	10.0%				100.0%
		9 - 12	17.0%	39.6%	9.4%	32.1%		1.9%		100.0%
		13+	32.1%	32.1%	20.8%	9.4%	1.9%	3.8%		100.0%
	Total		27.1%	34.7%	14.4%	20.3%	.8%	2.5%		100.0%
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	Years of Education:	<= 4	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%					100.0%
		5 - 8	4.8%	33.3%	9.5%	47.6%	4.8%			100.0%
		9 - 12	10.9%	51.6%	12.5%	25.0%				100.0%
		13+	20.5%	46.6%	6.8%	16.4%	6.8%		2.7%	100.0%
	Total		15.4%	46.3%	9.9%	23.5%	3.7%		1.2%	100.0%

Region:

Region: * Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

% within Region:

Religion (for Albanians only)			Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?				Total
			Albanian, then Kosovar	Kosovar, then Albanian	Albanian	Kosovar	
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	Region:	Prishtina	53.3%	17.2%	21.3%	8.2%	100.0%
		Mitrovica	40.3%	53.7%		6.0%	100.0%
		Prizreni	37.0%	56.5%	4.6%	1.9%	100.0%
		Peja	35.7%	40.5%	21.4%	2.4%	100.0%
		Ferizaj	93.3%	2.2%	2.2%	2.2%	100.0%
		Gjakova	13.0%	37.0%	44.4%	5.6%	100.0%
		Gjilan	46.0%	20.0%	12.0%	22.0%	100.0%
	Total		44.9%	34.0%	14.5%	6.6%	100.0%
Muslim (practice prayers)	Region:	Prishtina	36.6%	22.5%	25.4%	15.5%	100.0%
		Mitrovica	40.7%	51.9%	3.7%	3.7%	100.0%
		Prizreni	34.6%	46.2%	15.4%	3.8%	100.0%
		Peja	50.0%	34.6%	15.4%		100.0%
		Ferizaj	100.0%				100.0%
		Gjakova	21.7%	43.5%	30.4%	4.3%	100.0%
		Gjilan	44.4%	22.2%	11.1%	22.2%	100.0%
	Total		46.6%	28.9%	15.9%	8.6%	100.0%
Non-practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	Region:	Prishtina	37.5%	21.9%	31.3%	9.4%	100.0%
		Prizreni	62.5%	18.8%	18.8%		100.0%
		Peja	60.9%	17.4%	17.4%	4.3%	100.0%
		Gjakova	26.7%	36.7%	30.0%	6.7%	100.0%
		Gjilan	23.5%	58.8%		17.6%	100.0%
	Total		40.7%	29.7%	22.0%	7.6%	100.0%
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	Region:	Prishtina	39.4%	15.2%	42.4%	3.0%	100.0%
		Prizreni	70.0%	15.0%	15.0%		100.0%
		Peja	54.2%	31.3%	12.5%	2.1%	100.0%
		Gjakova	23.5%	29.4%	41.2%	5.9%	100.0%
		Gjilan	11.1%	74.1%	7.4%	7.4%	100.0%
	Total		39.5%	32.7%	24.1%	3.7%	100.0%

Region: * Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?

% within Region:

Religion (only for Albanians)			Which of these categories describe best what you consider yourself?				Total
			Muslim/Christian, then Albanian	Albanian then Muslim/Christian	Muslim/Christian	Albanian	
Non-practicing Muslim (don't pray)	Region:	Prishtina	29.5%	54.1%		16.4%	100.0%
		Mitrovica	44.8%	55.2%			100.0%
		Prizreni	34.3%	61.1%	1.9%	2.8%	100.0%
		Peja	11.9%	73.8%	2.4%	11.9%	100.0%
		Ferizaj	2.2%	93.3%		4.4%	100.0%
		Gjakova	5.6%	42.6%	9.3%	42.6%	100.0%
		Gjilan	32.0%	52.0%	4.0%	12.0%	100.0%
	Total		26.2%	59.6%	2.0%	12.1%	100.0%
Practicing Muslim (does pray)	Region:	Prishtina	46.5%	50.7%	2.8%		100.0%
		Mitrovica	63.0%	37.0%			100.0%
		Prizreni	61.5%	38.5%			100.0%
		Peja	57.7%	38.5%	3.8%		100.0%
		Ferizaj		100.0%			100.0%
		Gjakova	13.0%	73.9%	13.0%		100.0%
		Gjilan	59.3%	25.9%	14.8%		100.0%
	Total		43.1%	52.6%	4.3%		100.0%
Non-practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	Region:	Prishtina	3.1%	62.5%	6.3%	28.1%	100.0%
		Prizreni	6.3%	93.8%			100.0%
		Peja	4.3%	91.3%	4.3%		100.0%
		Gjakova	3.3%	73.3%	3.3%	20.0%	100.0%
		Gjilan	17.6%	58.8%	17.6%	5.9%	100.0%
	Total		5.9%	74.6%	5.9%	13.6%	100.0%
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	Region:	Prishtina	15.2%	75.8%	6.1%	3.0%	100.0%
		Prizreni	30.0%	65.0%	5.0%		100.0%
		Peja	25.0%	68.8%	6.3%		100.0%
		Gjakova	17.6%	52.9%	20.6%	8.8%	100.0%
		Gjilan	22.2%	74.1%	3.7%		100.0%
	Total		21.6%	67.3%	8.6%	2.5%	100.0%

Region: *How close you feel to Albanians with different religion?

% within Region:

Religion (for Albanians only)			How close you feel to Albanians with different religion?							Total
			I would accept marrying one of them	I would accept to be close friends with one of them	I would accept to work in the same office with one of them	I would accept them as neighbours	I would only accept to speak to them	I would prefer not to be neighbours with them	I would prefer there would be none of them in my country	
Non-practicing Muslim (does not pray)	Region:	Prishtina	21.3%	43.4%	4.1%	9.0%	1.6%	17.2%	3.3%	100.0%
		Mitrovica	19.4%	3.0%	13.4%	20.9%	17.9%	22.4%	3.0%	100.0%
		Prizreni	8.3%	17.6%	25.9%	42.6%	3.7%	1.9%		100.0%
		Peja	19.0%	50.0%	2.4%	26.2%	2.4%			100.0%
		Ferizaj	4.4%	35.6%	8.9%	51.1%				100.0%
		Gjakova	9.3%	29.6%	9.3%	37.0%	9.3%	1.9%	3.7%	100.0%
		Gjilan	8.0%	42.0%	18.0%	18.0%	14.0%			100.0%
	Total		13.7%	30.3%	12.5%	27.5%	6.4%	8.0%	1.6%	100.0%
Practicing Muslim (does pray)	Region:	Prishtina	15.5%	45.1%	7.0%	14.1%	9.9%	5.6%	2.8%	100.0%
		Mitrovica	7.4%	11.1%	29.6%	33.3%	7.4%	11.1%		100.0%
		Prizreni	11.5%	38.5%	34.6%	7.7%	3.8%		3.8%	100.0%
		Peja	3.8%	46.2%	11.5%	30.8%	7.7%			100.0%
		Ferizaj		40.6%	9.4%	50.0%				100.0%
		Gjakova		39.1%	13.0%	30.4%	13.0%		4.3%	100.0%
		Gjilan	3.7%	18.5%	25.9%	33.3%	18.5%			100.0%
	Total		7.8%	36.2%	16.4%	26.3%	8.6%	3.0%	1.7%	100.0%
Non-practicing Christian (does not attend mass in a church)	Region:	Prishtina	46.9%	37.5%	3.1%	6.3%		6.3%		100.0%
		Prizreni	62.5%	25.0%	12.5%					100.0%
		Peja	13.0%	26.1%	4.3%	56.5%				100.0%
		Gjakova	13.3%	33.3%	36.7%	13.3%		3.3%		100.0%
		Gjilan		52.9%	11.8%	29.4%	5.9%			100.0%
	Total		27.1%	34.7%	14.4%	20.3%	.8%	2.5%		100.0%
Practicing Christian (that attend mass in the church)	Region:	Prishtina	21.2%	60.6%	9.1%	9.1%				100.0%
		Prizreni	60.0%	40.0%						100.0%
		Peja	10.4%	50.0%	4.2%	35.4%				100.0%
		Gjakova		26.5%	23.5%	26.5%	17.6%		5.9%	100.0%
		Gjilan	3.7%	51.9%	11.1%	33.3%				100.0%
	Total		15.4%	46.3%	9.9%	23.5%	3.7%		1.2%	100.0%