

THE ROLE OF THE ISLAMIC COMMUNITY OF KOSOVO DURING THE YEARS 1989-1992

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Abstract

The goal of this study is to discuss the contribution made by the Islamic Community of Kosovo between 1989 and 1992. During this time, Kosovo underwent a number of significant developments, and the aforementioned religious institution was a part of them. This institution was able to successfully implement a number of positive actions for the Kosovo's Albanian population through its efforts. Therefore, this religious community played an important role as a participant in several popular organizations that were taking place in Kosovo, such as: the Demonstrations of 1989, the Reconciliation Movement 1990-1992, etc. Therefore, the influence of this religious institution, along with many other actors, has been of special importance for the Albanian people of Kosovo during the aforementioned period.

Keywords: contribution, Islamic Community, Kosovo 1989-1992, reconciliation, mistreatment.

Introduction

Kosovo, in its journey for independence, has been making efforts for a long time. However, the efforts to form an independent state took more concrete forms of organization from the end of the 80s and the beginning of the 90s of the last century, when the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia began.

In this direction, the Islamic Community of Kosovo and its institutions have played a big role. Especially worth mentioning is the 'Alaudin' Madrasah in Pristina, which has had a significant impact on this process.

The Albanian people of Kosovo together with the Islamic religious leadership, in addition to other actors, in all situations were an organized movement, who have made a great resistance to prevent the assimilation and total disappearance of the Albanian people.

Therefore, this paper is of interest to better understand the role of this Islamic religious institution in relation to the important processes that Kosovo was going through during those years.

Research methodology

In this paper we will use a number of different methodologies. Thus, we will apply the historical method, the method of induction and deduction, the method of studying individual cases, etc.

Expected results

From the results discussed, we can say that the influence of the Islamic Community of Kosovo was very important in relation to the processes that Kosovo went through during the years 1989-1992.

All the achieved results will be discussed in different aspects, such as historical, diplomatic, etc., in which case we will present their objective interpretation.

Sacrifice of the 'Alaudin' Madrasa during the years 1989 - 1992

In the 1950s, the Islamic community of Kosovo felt the lack of religious educational activity, and made continuous efforts to correct this issue. Since there was no elementary, secondary or high religious school, then it was requested from the Provincial Executive Council to grant permission to open such a school. Therefore, with the decision no. 29503 dated 26.06.1949 consent is given to the establishment of a Lower Education Religious Madrasah in Pristina. (*Kasumi, 1988: 128-129*)

Madrasa 'Alaudin' (*Rukiqi, 1997: 4-8*)²² in Pristina continued its lessons until 1962, when it was transformed into a middle-ranking religious school. (*Shkodra, 2002: 51*) From the school year 1962/1963 to the school year 1983/1984, this madrasa taught 5-year curriculum to high school students. Since the 1984/1985 school year, this institution has been teaching 4-year curriculum (*Malsiu, 2006: 13*), and as such the Madrasa continues to this day.

Many generations were educated in this religious and national school hearth, which made a great contribution for Kosovo. The fate of Madrasa 'Alaudin' is constantly closely connected with the fate of the people of Kosovo (*Islamic Knowledge*²³, 1992, no. 37: 2)²⁴. "Where the people are, we are too," declared Dr. Rexhep Boja, the Chairman of the Islamic Community of Kosovo in an interview given in the magazine "Kosovarja", in November 1990. (*Boja, 2003: 31*) The Madrasah as an educational, religious and scientific institution, experienced the suppression of the constitutional position of Kosovo by Serbia in 1989, in which case its students and teachers opposed it, defending this institution. (*Malsiu, 2006: 14*) It was always at the service of the people (*Statovci, 1991: 25*), especially from 1989 (*Rukiqi, 1997: 6-7*)²⁵ onwards, where it became a symbol of Albanian resistance. "The 80s and the beginning of the 90s (*Mehdiu, 2000: 28-32*)²⁶ will mark Kosovo's legal confrontation with the Yugoslav regime. This confrontation would lead to the forceful undoing of all the legal institutions that were in Kosovo, starting from the highest bodies and ending with the destruction of the children's nurseries", said the Mufti of Kosovo Naim Tërnavë in front of those present at the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the Madrasah. (*Shkodra, 2002: 51*)

After the reoccupation of Kosovo by Serbia, in March 1989 (*Malcolm, 2001: 358-359*), schools, faculties and dormitories were closed. In the Madrasah, professors held classes, lectures and exercises with students. (*Malsiu, 2006: 14; Basha, 2009: 31*) However, after the violent removal of Albanian students from their dormitories, March 1989, the Madrasa of Pristina will be the one that will open its doors, housing more than 210 Albanian students, providing free food and accommodation, during the end of the semester - school year. (*Pirra, 1998: 76; Osmani, 1991: 38; Qorolli, 1996: 43; Rukiqi, 1997: 7*)

²²The Madrasa got this name in 1962, according to the builder of the Mosque located in the courtyard of the Madrasa.

²³It is a monthly religious, scientific and cultural magazine, published by the Islamic Community of Kosovo.

²⁴In the premises of the 'Alaudin' Madrasah in Prishtina, the Islamic Charitable Association 'Sami Frashëri' was located and operated, which was within the framework of the Islamic Community for Kosovo in Prishtina, which had its branches in Europe as well. This association helped with material resources: the Hospital of Gjakova, Skenderaj, Glllogovci, the Academy of Sciences and Arts, the Albanological Institute, the independent Education Unions, all the primary and secondary schools of Pristina, Podujeva, Gjilan, Ferizaj, of Mitrovica as well as all the councils of the Islamic Communities in Kosovo. The latter distributed the material means across the country in order to cover every part of Kosovo. From the funds collected by this association, 10 individuals were helped for their medical expenses abroad, as well as many others, poisoned, injured and with various chronic diseases.

²⁵The madrasa supported the Kosovar miners in 1989. It participated in the organized strike of the students of the University of Pristina in 1989, in the May 25 hall in Pristina.

²⁶From 1990 onwards, the Madrasa was transformed into a nursery for various meetings for the needs of the Albanian and Islamic people, where consultations, meetings, scientific symposia, solemn and commemorative academies etc. were held.

These days were vacation days for the staff of the Madrasa, considering it was Ramadan time and usually the Madrasah had a break during that period. However, the staff continued to work for the sake of the students expelled from their dormitories. Although these were difficult times, the Madrasah's hospitality was great for the deportees. Here we would like to mention only one case, where Tush Kabashi from Peja, a fourth-year student of the Faculty of Law, was placed in room 107 of the Madrasa dormitory (This student belonged to the Christian faith, but this did not prevent the Madrasah to accommodate him because they were all part of the same people) ; Gazmend Shehu from Rahovec, third year student of the Faculty of Law; as well as Musa Berisha from Rugova in Gjakova, a third-year student. " *The conditions are good, above all levels of the dormitories. The willingness of this Madrasa to accommodate us should be greatly appreciated* ", said among other things the students interviewed by RTP. (*Osmani, 1991: 38*) From 1989 onwards, the Madrasa opened its doors (*Statovci, 1991: 2*), offering generosity, hospitality, and brotherly care to all those who had set themselves the task of liberating Kosovo. In this same year (1989) the 'Alaudin' Madrasa gave its first martyrs, Mustafa Veselin, who was killed on 27.03.1989 ²⁷ and Muhamed Biqkun, who was killed on 01.08.1991 (*Malsiu, 2006: 14; Osmani, 1991: 57; Shkodra, Mehmeti & Gashi, 2010: 53-59; Sahiti, 1991: 47-49; Halimi, 1991: 48-49; Rukiqi, 1997: 7*).

The Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo, the Institute of Albanology, the Institute of History, the Ministry of Education, the Independent Union of Trade Unions of Kosovo, political parties and many other associations at the level of the Republic, found unsparing support from the Madrasa in the days when they were violently taken out of their homes into the streets (*Shkodra, 2002: 52*). The Amphitheater of the Madrasah was crowned with many diverse activities, with the aim of helping the Albanian resistance against the violence that was being exercised on the vulnerable people of Kosovo. Not only from Kosovo but also from different parts of the Albanian lands, the brightest minds of our nation passed through this institution. (*Shkodra, 2002: 52*) In it were held registration exams, subject exams and even diploma defenses (*Islamic Knowledge, no. 37: 2*) ²⁸, master's and doctorate degrees and scientific seminars and symposia were held in the Madrasa (²⁹*Malsiu, 2006: 15*), as well as meetings of an organizational and political nature (*Dituria Islame, 1992, no. 37: 2*) ³⁰, a total of 1230. Also, all political parties held their founding assemblies in the Madrasa, as well as held election assemblies. Then many films were shown about the violence practiced in Kosovo (*Shkodra, 2002: 52*), as well as many other manifestations of a religious and national character (*Dituria Islame, 1992, no. 37: 2*) ³¹. There, on 21.06.1993, the drama "The Snakes of Blood" by Adem Demaçi was shown (*Dituria Islame, 1993: 50*) ³², as well as other shows. (*Islamic Knowledge, 1992, no. 37: 2*) ³³

²⁷The students and teachers, led by the director of the madrasa, took an active part in all those great student and popular demonstrations during 1989 and the beginning of 1990 in defense of the autonomy of Kosovo.

²⁸In the premises of this religious-educational institution during these days, 5 engineers graduated from the University of Pristina, 2 in construction, 2 in mechanical engineering and 1 electrical engineer.

²⁹During the 1991/92 school year, when the Serbian occupier blocked all Albanian educational institutions in Kosovo, the Madrasa, in addition to solidarity with other schools, opened its doors and organized the registration of students of the University of Pristina, organized the holding of exams for several faculties such as Philology, Philosophy, Law, Economics, Technical, Mechanical, Construction, Electrotechnical and Mathematical-Natural Sciences.

³⁰In these difficult times, in addition to the education of young people, the Madrasa was the host of many gatherings that were related to religious and national issues. Hosted and organized the meeting with the Belgian Minister of Minorities. The Assembly of Independent Trade Unions of Kosovo as well as that of the LDK was held in the premises of this hearth of knowledge. In the premises of this Madrasa, the Association of High School Teachers was founded, which was later transferred to LASH "Naim Frashëri".

³¹Various events were also organized in the Madrasah, such as the celebration of 28th November (Flag Day), March 11, 1981, etc.

³²This drama was prepared by the Independent Amateur Theater "Hasan Prishtina" from Vushtrria. The work was directed and dramatized by Xhemajl Cecelia, who was given the greatest help in the preparation of the play by the Council of the Islamic Community of Vushtrria, enabling them to do the preparations freely in its premises.

³³"Poetic table" was organized by the Association of Madrasa students in cooperation with the Forum of young creators.

The Serbian forces with tanks surrounded the Madrasah for three days in a row, because all the preparations for the constitution of the Parliament of Kosovo, which was scheduled to be held on June 23, 1992, were made there (*Osmani, 1992: 2; Qorolli, 1996: 43*). The Madrasa 'Alaudin' in Pristina, in addition to the great contribution that it showed during this period, it has had an extremely large role in the following years, and especially in the years 1997-1999, where during this period there were 87 students who joined the ranks of the KLA, where 14 of them were killed (*Shkodra, 2002: 52*). However, according to the monograph published by the Council of the Islamic Community of Kosovo in 2010, the number of those killed reached 37 martyrs which this institution gave to this land. (*Shkodra, Mehmeti & Gashi, 2010*) So, this religious institution with a deep Islamic and patriotic feeling, was boldly entering the new national history as a temple of faith in God and the freedom of the Albanian nation.

The Islamic Community of Kosovo and the Albanian People's Movement for Reconciliation and Feuds

In the history of peoples, there are social movements which have had an important role in their efforts for social and national liberation. One such movement of historical importance for Albanians is *the Movement for the Reconciliation, Wounds and Feuds*, which started on February 2, 1990 and ended on May 17, 1992. (*Basha, 2009: 24*). To this movement for nationwide reconciliation incepted by the youth was joined by many muslim preachers, not hesitating at all. (*Mustafa, 1997: 36*)

The Islamic Community of Kosovo, as if the country wanted it, from the beginning of the Movement will be a strong supporter of the movement for forgiveness. The preachers were the ones who joined the movement without having to wait for any permission to act from the governing bodies - the Presidency of the Islamic Community of Kosovo, or the presidencies of the Councils in the municipalities. (*Pirraku, 1998: 75*)

A view from the Bubavec Reconciliation Assembly, where many muslim preachers were also participants Imams supported by their institution, in this case the Islamic Community of



Kosovo, supported this initiative because the Islamic sources - the Qur'an³⁴ and the Hadith³⁵ do not prohibit personal initiatives for the benefit of the good, freedom and the humanity. In fact, according to the prophet Muhammad, it is higher in rank even than voluntary fasting³⁶,

³⁴The holy book of Muslims.

³⁵The words of the prophet Muhammad.

³⁶Fasting is the third pillar of the Islamic faith and means abstaining from food, drink and sexual intercourse from dawn to sunset.

voluntary ³⁷prayer ³⁸and charity ³⁹ the one who "*reconciles between two conflicted parties*". (*Pirraku, 1998: 77*)

In every place where gatherings were held for the reconciliation between the entangled, the presence of imams was crucial. In most cases, the mosque facilities were also used for this purpose.⁴⁰



Efforts to reach a reconciliation in a Mosque in Northern Dukagjin

The contribution of Imams in this direction is so great that it is required to publish many books in this aspect. However, we will mention here only some of their main activities.

The imams of the six Mosques of Central Drenica did not hesitate to join the Reconciliation Council in Gllgovac, which on February 20, 1990 reached the first reconciliation in Kraikova. The participation of the Imams gave this gathering the dimensions of a grand meeting. Mulla Muhamet Paçarizi, who was active in the Reconciliation Council for the Municipality of Suhareka, together with other members, on February 26, 1990, achieved successful reconciliation between the inhabitants in the village of Neperbishte. March 11, 1990 dawned with the formation of the Reconciliation Council in the region of Llap (Podujevë). Among the active members was Mulla Muhamet Demiri. This council achieved the reconciliation of two families. The Reconciliation Council for the Municipality of Rahovec also had the respected imam Mulla Sabahudin Kollari in its fold. This council had raised Rahovec and Anadrin to achieve success in reconciliation in the village of Bellacerk. (*Pirraku, 1998: 41-64*) On March 17, 1990, the Reconciliation Council in the Opoja region achieved the first reconciliation in the village of Kuklibeg. In this Council, the muslim preachers who made a great contribution were: Mulla Enver Baftiu, Mulla Resul Rexhepi and Mulla Refki Isufi. On the same day, the Reconciliation Council for the region of Mitrovica reached the reconciliation of two families and that in the yard of the Waqf ⁴¹. Imam Mulla Asllan Murati was also active in this council. (*Pirraku, 1998: 66-67*)

The day of March 18, 1990, came with the formation of the Reconciliation Council for the Morava region. This Council also had its own sub-councils. The sub-council of Gjilan had the great activist Mulla Rifat Jashari, while the sub-council of Kamenica had the distinguished

³⁷Voluntary act, non-obligatory by God.

³⁸The second pillar of the Islamic religion, the daily prayer that believers of the Islamic faith do.

³⁹It is voluntary alms that the rich give to the poor.

⁴⁰For example the courtyard of the Mosque for the region of Shala and Bajgora would be called the "*Lawn of Reconciliation*".

⁴¹Property that the owner donates for social services.

activist Mulla Idriz Dermaku.⁴²The reconciliation council for the municipality of Shtime held its assembly in the neighborhood of the town, called "Petrović."⁴³On March 19, 1990, Mulla Beqir Dauti, a distinguished activist of this area, together with his friends, organized the first popular gathering for the promotion of reconciliation in the region of Shtime.

On March 26, 1990, the reconciliation council in Gollap organized a popular gathering in the " *Lugu i Urtakut* " neighborhood of Marec, to promote a reconciliation and several other feuds. Also present was Mulla Idriz Kakrruki⁴⁴, who, after succeeding in reconciling some conflicts and feuds in Marec, labeled the place where the meeting was held as "*Çukat e Pajtimi*". (*Pirraku*, 1998: 89). In the Dukagjin region, on April 19, 1990, two grand gatherings were held to promote the reconciliation of enmities, in the yard of two Catholic churches. However, the activists of the Islamic Community of Kosovo were not prevented from participating in this gathering. On behalf of the Council of the Islamic Community of Peja, the 15,000 participants in this promotion of reconciliation were greeted by Mulla Xhevat Kryeziu⁴⁵, an activist of this Council. (*Pirraku*, 1998: 119). Also, Mulla Xhevat Kryeziu, Imam of the Bubavec Mosque, on April 26, 1990, on the day of the Great Eid,⁴⁶organized the Bubavec Assembly in the courtyard of his Mosque. Mulla Xhevat not only informed the public about the activity, but also called them to participate in this gathering from April 23, 1990, through this letter: " *On the 26th of this month, a large popular gathering will be held in Bubavec, Malisheva, in which, as will be expected, the hand of reconciliation will be extended by a large number of enmity families. This case will arouse great interest in the population of this side of Llapusha. Blood feuds belong only to the past.* " was the call for participation made to the population through the newspaper "Rilindja" dated April 23, 1990. (*Pirraku*, 1998: 131)

So, after the Eid prayers in the Mosques of Llapusha, Dukagjin, but also in many parts of Kosovo, the streets were covered with people who went to Bubavec, mainly in the courtyard of the Mosque, which was too small to accommodate them considering there were around 100,000 participants. On this day, even the neighborhoods were filled with people. The greatest honor was given to this gathering by the participation of Dr. Rexhep Boja⁴⁷, who headed the Ulema delegation. (*Pirraku*, 1998: 132)

⁴²He was also the Chairman of the sub-council of Kamenica.

⁴³The "Petroviq" neighborhood is a former Serbian-Montenegro colony formed during the 20s, and now it is inhabited by Albanians.

⁴⁴He was a member of the Presidency of the Central Council.

⁴⁵He is the chairman of the Reconciliation Council for the municipality of Malisheva.

⁴⁶Eid al-Fitr.

⁴⁷Chairman of the Meshiat of the Islamic Community of Kosovo.

Reconciliation in the Mosque of Bubavec



The day of April 29, 1990, marked another activity for Kosovo in its northeastern part. In Shala of Bajgora, right in the courtyard of the Bara Mosque, more than 20,000 people of different ages and genders promoted the reconciliation of seven families. The Mosque of Bara seemed to float among the thousands of people. That day the Minaret looked Magnificent. Several young men and women with national flags in their hands were standing in its balcony. ⁴⁸Mulla Asllan Murati also greeted this magnificent assembly ⁴⁹, who began the speech with the words: " *In the name of God* " and ended the speech with a shout: " *Hey, Isa Be, come out of the Tower, come, come, look at these men!*" *The men of Drenica and Shala have gathered to put an end to the blood feud!* "On this day, there was also a great gathering in Eastern Kosovo, where 25,000 people gathered in the Field of Reconciliation from Morava, Presheva, Bujanoc, Kumanovo and other parts of Kosovo and Macedonia. In this grand gathering, the Islamic Community of Kosovo was represented by Idriz Dermaku (*Pirraku, 1998: 137-138*).

" *The work that you are doing was done by the Prophets* ⁵⁰*and this is a deed that the Qur'an commands every person to do* ⁵¹*....! To unite the people in the face of danger, when they are threatened with extermination, is a work that God will reward, and the nation has to remember for life. May God bless you who are working for the reconciliation of the nation, and may God reward those who forgive the blood of their dearest, for the Freedom of reoccupied Kosovo....!* ", said, among other things, the President of the Islamic Community of Kosovo, Mulla Jetish Bajrami, greeting the activists of the Movement and those who reconciled, at a lunch organized by the Presidency of the Islamic Community of Kosovo and the Madrasa 'Alaudin' of Pristina, which he organized as a sign of support for the Reconciliation Movement. (*Pirraku, 1998: 152*). From May 26, 1990, the Polac Mosque, which was the temple of Albanian culture in Drenica and host of the Reconciliation Assembly, attended by over 1000 people, was named " *Reconciliation Mosque* " ⁵²by the Reconciliation Council for the Drenica region. (*Pirraku, 1998: 197*)

⁴⁸The place which was used for calling the Azan - the announcement of the believers about the beginning of the prayer time.

⁴⁹He was the initiator of the Reconciliation Movement in Mitrovica, member of the Reconciliation Council and chairman of the Council of the Islamic Community in Mitrovica.

⁵⁰Prophets are God's chosen people.

⁵¹Holy Book of Muslims.

⁵²This is also the name of the Mosque of Dumnica of Llap, where on June 23, 1990, where four feuds were resolved.

In addition to the reconciliations that were being carried out in Kosovo and other areas inhabited by Albanians in Eastern Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro, the Presidency of the Reconciliation Council, in which Mulla Xhevat Kryeziu was also present, from July 20 to August 14 In 1990, they officially stayed in the USA ⁵³at the invitation of the National Cultural Club " *Hope* " from Brooklyn, New York, where they managed to reconcile some conflicts there as well. (*Pirraku, 1998: 258*). Activists of the Reconciliation Council, among whom was Mulla Idriz Kakrruki, on October 10, 1990, carried out activities in Basel and Zurich. And from October 25, 1990, they moved to Germany at the invitation of the " *Kosovo* " Club to act in Dusseldorf and Osnabryk. From the second half of September 1990, the activists of the Skenderaj Reconciliation Council - for Northern Drenica were more active than the others who after great efforts achieved four reconciliations, which they promoted in the Mosque of the village of Llausha on September 28, 1990. (*Pirraku, 1998: 300-304*)



Preachers: "Professor Mark, God bless your path...!"

Chronicle of activities held at the Madrasa 'Alaudin' in Pristina

"*A good friend is known in difficult days* " - the proverb says. For humane, solidarity and patriotic activities, the 'Alaudin' high school, in its journey, has witnessed a sensational history, especially when dealing with national issues. (*Qorolli, 1996: 43*). These activities of the Madrasah exceed all the noble and patriotic virtues which are characteristics of the Albanian people, especially in difficult times. It is enough to mention only two cases which were more characteristic. The first case is the activity that the Madrasa showed with the students of the University of Pristina in 1990, as well as the second case is the night of June 23, 1992 (*Qorolli, 1996: 47*). But it didn't stop there. The madrasa was also the center of many other events. When all the doors of the institutions were closed for activities of a national character, the Madrasa was the one that opened them. It welcomed people with open arms like brother to brother, and in such a way it showed its nobility. The gatherings held in the 'Alaudin' high school are the best indicator that this institution had a busy agenda of various gatherings of national and religious nature.

⁵³*Their departure did not hinder the popular movement for reconciliation, which achieved several pardons in different parts of Kosovo, with the greatest commitment of the coordinator Dr. Muhamed Pirraku, who added commitment in cooperation with the Reconciliation councils.*

Muslim religious leaders, targets of mistreatment by the Serbian police

Religious leaders in the civilized world are held in high regard by society. They enjoy immunity. You can't imagine that the police can approach them and disturb them, especially at night in their homes. This rule did not apply to the Serbian "legal state" in Kosovo, which could do whatever it wanted, and they could beat, imprison, kill, etc. anyone, and finally label the victims with terrorism. (*Islamic Knowledge, 1993, no. 44: 3*) Even though the Meshiat of the Islamic Community of Kosovo opposed and strongly raised its voice against the actions that the Serbian police did against the religious leaders in Kosovo, this action did not stop. The Islamic Community of Kosovo informed the international Islamic organizations, such as: the Islamic Conference, the World Islamic League and other international institutions, about the events that happened every day in Kosovo, as well as about the mistreatment of religious leaders. (*Islamic Knowledge, 1993, no. 44: 3*)

There are many cases of mistreatment, nevertheless, here we will mention some of the most important, such as: on 23.02.1990 in the village of Osdrin the imam of Jabllanic e Madhe of Peja, Sadri ef. Zekaj, was cruelly mistreated and beaten.⁵⁴ Together with the congregation⁵⁵, they were going to the head office⁵⁶ in the village of Osdrin. In addition to the physical beating of the imam, his scarf was also⁵⁷ torn by the police forces who were provoking the innocent. (*Islamic Knowledge, 1992, no. 35: 32*) Also, in those days, the Meshiat of the Islamic Community of Kosovo was informed about other cases of mistreatment of believers by the Serbian police in the region of Peja. Thus, the Chairman of the Council of the Islamic Community of Peja, Nexhmedin ef Hoxha, was barbarically mistreated. The Imam of the village of Kosonic was raided without any reason. The imam of the village of Labusha also suffered physical torture. The interior of the "Kurshumli" mosque in Peja was barbarically destroyed during the raid by the Serbian police. During the informative conversation at the police station, the muezzin⁵⁸ of the Kapeshnica mosque was called. (*Ditura Islame, 1992, no. 35: 39*) On 20.09.1990, Mulla Muhamet Dermaku, imam in the village of Shipashnica e Eperme, advanced in age (63 years old), was the target of abuse. This village was once the target of Serbian police attacks. The police entered his house around 5 o'clock in the morning while the Imam was praying the morning prayer and started mistreating the whole family. Mulla Muhamet Dermaku was mistreated in front of his family members, sometimes laying him on his back and sometimes hitting him. After they send him to the police station, they start insulting him by cursing his Albanian mother, religion, God, Ibrahim Rugova, etc. After several hours of mistreatment, they left him on the street in the village of Hadonovc, which is 15 km from the village of Shipashnica. (*Morina, 1990: 43*)

On 27.09.1991, the President of the Islamic Community of Yugoslavia, H. Jakup ef. Selimoski with associates stayed for a visit in Kosovo. That day they participated in a demonstration organized in the mosque of Hadum in Gjakova. With the reasoning that they have organized a referendum for independence, the police arrests H. Jakup Selimoski and his associates, the Chairman of the Meshiat of the Islamic Community of Kosovo, Dr. Rexhep Boja, the President of the Assembly of the Islamic Community of Kosovo, Miftar Hajdin, the President of the Ulema Association, Nexhat Ibrahim, the Director of the "Alaudin" Madrasa in Prishtina, Qemajl Morin, as well as the Presidents of the Islamic Communities in Prizren, Peja, Vushtria, Kumanovo, Gjakova and forty other muslim preachers and guests. (*Islamic Knowledge, 1991,*

⁵⁴Hoxha or preacher, religious leader of the Muslims.

⁵⁵Group of people who gather in a mosque to perform a religious rite.

⁵⁶It is a tradition that is held in cases of death, where family and friends express condolences to the family and relatives of the deceased.

⁵⁷Religious symbol that the Imam, the religious leader, carries on his head.

⁵⁸He helps the Imam and is the guardian of the Mosque.

no. 30-31: 6-7)⁵⁹This time, Mulla Enver Rexhepi, Imam in " *Dare Mahalla*" of Gjakova was added to the long line of tortured, insulted and condemned by the Serbian "legal state". In addition to the abuse the imam⁶⁰ was also criminally punished for raising two fingers in the form of the letter 'V'. (*Osmani, 1991: 58*) On 11.03.1992 at around 9:40 a.m., the Serbian police forcefully entered the building of the Council of the Islamic Community in Prizren. They browsed some Islamic magazines and newspapers, and the entire facility did not escape without being checked under the pretext of regular checks in public facilities. The check lasted for 40 minutes, and the police left without giving even a single explanation of the purpose. (*Sokoli, 1992: 33*)

It was announced that on 23.06.1992 in the 'Alaudin' Madrasa in Pristina, the meeting of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo will be held, which will be a continuation of the organization of free multi-party elections which will be held on May 24 of that year. On the night of June 22, 1992, the police arrested many activists they suspected of having a hand in the affair.⁶¹ In Gjilan, the director of the Madrasah, Qazim Qazimi, was arrested, who was allegedly accused of having groups of saboteurs stationed in the Madrasah who intend to start an armed conflict in Kosovo.

On June 23, 1992, at 03:00 after midnight, over 150 armed policemen, supported by two armored cars and two other vehicles, attacked the Madrasah, holding its director Qazim Qazim hostage. Upon entering the object, the police, who now had the director as a hostage, also took the receptionist, Jakup Gashi. On this occasion, they began to break the furniture of the director's office, the school cash register, the teachers' office, the doors of the classrooms and the doors of the dormitory rooms. The witnesses said that inside the Madrasa, Serbian songs were playing, alcohol was being consumed, and snipers were stationed on the third floor. This siege of the Madrasah lasted for 3 days, until the police commander gave the keys to the Madrasah to the Meshiat of the Islamic Community⁶². The damage was considerable (*Osmani, 1992: 2*). The provocations of the Serbian invading forces did not stop. They constantly provoked the villagers at different times of the day and night. So, on 24.08.1992 after midnight, around 03:00 in the morning, a group of armed soldiers entered the village of Pirane in the Municipality of Prizren and started shooting with firearms, while singing Chetnik songs. During the shooting, the village Mosque was also damaged: its windows were broken and its facade was damaged. (*Sertolli, 1992: 33*) / On 02.04.1993, at the intersection of Pejë-Rozhajë-Mitrovica, the Serbian police stopped the wedding party's bus and mistreated them. Among the wedding guests was Mulla Muhamet Lipa⁶³, who, in addition to being mistreated and beaten by the Serbian police, was also forced to eat the " *Bujku* " newspaper. (*Islamic Knowledge, 1993, no. 49: 33*) On 04.07.1993 at 06:00 in the morning without warning and without any official document, about 30 armed police forcefully entered the house of 73-year-old Mulla Ragip. Breaking the doors of the house and demolishing the furniture, they abused the family members of Mulla Ragip. Although he was advanced in age, he did not escape without mistreatment. All this was done under the pretext that the meeting of the "alternative" was held in his house, where they discussed the event that happened at a checkpoint in Pejeme on 03.07.1993, where a bomb exploded around midnight. (*Islamic Knowledge, 1993, no. 50: 4*)

⁵⁹There were many reactions to such an arrest, such as: HINA agency - informs in Albanian and Croatian; KMDLNJ- also presents the case in Moscow; "Muslimanski glas" - weekly; Messiah of the Islamic Community of Kosovo; The students and collective of the high school "Alaudin" in Pristina; Association of Ulema; Alija Izetbegović - Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina; Dr. Fehmi Agani – vice president of LDK; Muslim Association "Proporod"; Meshiat of Islamic Communities in Sarajevo, Skopje, Titograd...; Councils of Islamic Communities in Prizren, Gjilan... Novi Pazar... etc.

⁶⁰The Serbian press called this muslim preacher a nationalist, fundamentalist, jihadist.

⁶¹The organization of holding the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo.

⁶²This delegation consisted of Naim Tërnavë, Resul Rexhepi, Qazim Qazimi and Omer Musolli.

⁶³It is the tradition of the Albanian people that the Imam leads the people in every wedding ceremony or even funeral ceremony.

Large Serbian police forces arrested in Prizren the highest functionaries of the Council of the Islamic Community in Prizren. Miftar ef. Hajdini, the president of the Assembly of the Islamic Community of Kosovo, Nexhat ef. Ibrahim, chairman of the Association of Ulema for Kosovo and Feti Isaku, Imam in Prizren, this time they were targeted by the Serbian police. (*Islamic Knowledge, 1992, no. 44: 34; Islamic Knowledge, 1993, no. 44: 3*)/ The Serbian police provoked Albanians with the sole pretext of inciting the population, even through Islamic religious facilities. On 23.04.1993, the congregation of the mosque in the village of Sopite of Suhareka was severely provoked; four crosses were drawn on the door of the mosque with letters S (C) in the middle as abbreviations of SPO, SPS and the word "Srbija" in Cyrillic letters. (*Islamic Knowledge, 1993, no. 49: 33*) On 13.08.1993 at around 17:10, over 30 armed policemen entered inside elementary school " *Mixheni* " in Mitrovica ⁶⁴and arrested 37 people, among whom was the Mayor of the Council of the Islamic Community of Mitrovica, Asllan ef. Murat. Those arrested were brutally mistreated at the police station. Among many questions, the preacher was asked if the Islamic Community of Kosovo had a hand in this commemorative organization. (*Islamic Knowledge, 1993, no. 51: 34*) Faik ef. Murat, Imam in the Mosque of Desivojca in Kamenica, on 21.12.1995 together with his family was ill-treated by the Serbian police. The motivation of the mistreatment was his son Faiku's escape from the army. (*Islamic Knowledge, 1996, no. 76: 57*)

These and other cases of mistreatment were among the most diverse, with which the Serbian police put pressure on the religious leaders in Kosovo.

Conclusion

Through this paper, we can conclude that the Islamic Community of Kosovo has had a great constructive influence in relation to the various developments that the people of Kosovo were going through during the years 1989 onwards. For the state of Kosovo, many of the preachers, the students of the Faculty of Islamic Studies, and even the young students of the Madrasa contributed by engaging to the maximum of their forces. Therefore, their contribution to the defense of their homeland should be appreciated and valued.

Therefore, we can rightly say that the Islamic Community of Kosovo with its institutions has been a co-participant in many positive processes that have influenced the liberation and removal of the occupying Serbian forces from the territory of Kosovo.

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⁶⁴During this moment, the commemorative demonstration for the patriot Hasan Prishtina was being held.

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