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TAPON, Francis

## Debunking Kosovo's Demographic Myths

Adapted from *The Hidden Europe: What Eastern Europeans Can Teach Us*

### I GOT HERE FIRST

Eastern Europeans are obsessed with the idea of who-got-here-first. In fact, most humans care about this idea too. This belief is so widespread that we apply it to our everyday lives. For example, imagine walking into a café or movie theater and telling someone to move seats because you want to sit where he's sitting. Or telling a camper to move so you can camp in his spot. It's culturally unacceptable to make such requests because there's an unspoken law that whoever got to a territory first has slightly more rights than whoever comes later.

We get this from animals. Lions spray a territory to tell other lions, "This is my land and I got here first, so don't mess with me." Humans and nations piss around their land and tell their neighbors, "Hey dude, anything that stinks like me is mine."

The problem is that, unlike most animals, humans like to transfer these privileges to their children. Thus, we inherit rights, land, property, whereas the offspring of most animals have to start from scratch.

Eastern Europeans (and many other humans) like to pursue this inheritance logic to the extreme. They not only draw connections with their grandparents, but also with faceless ancestors, even though the genetic and cultural connection is weak or nonexistent. By drawing a continuous line, you can walk into a café and tell someone, "Get off my seat. My great-great grandfather used to sit there."

*We seem to crave privilege, merited not by our works, but by our birth. — Carl Sagan, astronomer*

As an Albanian named Elton Çausi told me, "Albanians, like most people in the Balkans, are obsessed with who was here first. Greeks, Macedonians, Albanians, Serbs, and Croatians all care about this issue. Albanians want Greeks to compensate us for land that they took that was once ours. But they say that we have land that was once theirs!"

Kosovars bring up ancient history even when you don't expect it. For example, I asked Fatmir Bajrami, the Cameraman Supervisor for a Kosovar TV station, what he thought of Serbs. Instead of talking about modern-day Serbs, he said, "Well, they're descendents of slaves. They came out of Russia and are still trying to live on this land."

He made it sound like Serbs are recent Balkan immigrants, yet Serbs have been in the Balkans for 1,500 years. At what point are you a native and no longer an immigrant? And why should that matter anyway?

Unfortunately, it matters in the Balkans, especially in Kosovo. Kosovars debate ancient history as if it happened yesterday. Few Eastern Europeans are as obsessed about old history as Kosovars. Therefore,

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to understand Kosovo we have to study its history deeply, especially its demographic history, not because it truly matters, but because Kosovars think it does.

Serb origins are clearer than Albanian origins. In 2006, *The Journal of Human Genetics* studied the DNA of 20 Slavic populations and placed “the earliest known homeland of Slavs in the middle Dnieper basin [in Ukraine].”<sup>1</sup> Slavs showed up in Balkans around 650 AD. It’s not clear where Albanians came from, although it’s probable that Albanians were roaming around the Balkans before Serbs. It’s ironic that Europeans make such a big deal about their differences. Of all the continents, none is as genetically homogeneous as Europe.<sup>2</sup>

### IS KOSOVO SERBIA?

The Serbian nationalist mantra is “Kosovo is Serbia!” If Latinos living in Florida declared their state’s independence, then we’d probably have Americans shouting, “Florida is America!”

Is Kosovo Serbia? All sane Serbs admit that for at least the last 25 years, Kosovo has been over 80 percent Albanian. Thus, the Serb claim over Kosovo is based on political and demographic history, not on recent ethnographic statistics.

The boldest Serbs will claim that (until recently) Kosovo has “always” been dominated by Serbs. Let’s turn back the clock and see how true that assertion is. Serbs often say that Kosovo is the “cradle of their civilization.” This is a myth. The earliest Serbian state was born and developed north and northwest of Kosovo (in present-day southern Serbia and Montenegro) around the eleventh century. By the time Serbia moved its power center to Kosovo, it had been out of its cradle for over 300 years. This grown-up Serbia ruled its medieval kingdom from Kosovo for 250 glorious years. During that time, they left their mark by building numerous monasteries and churches. Therefore, while Kosovo is not the cradle of Serbia’s civilization, it is (in the words of Serbian academic Predrag Simić) “an area that sublimes the collective identity of the Serbian people just as Jerusalem does, for instance, for the Jewish nation.”<sup>3</sup>

Regardless of Serb feelings, the cold reality is that Serbs dominated Kosovo for only the last third of their first 800 years in the Balkans. Before the Serbs, Bulgarians also held Kosovo for about 250 years.<sup>4</sup> However, Bulgarians don’t use their historical ties to Kosovo to make modern-day territorial claims. So why do Serbs insist that “Kosovo is Serbia”? To answer that, we need to run through the next six centuries.

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1 Krzysztof Rębała et al., “Y-STR variation among Slavs: evidence for the Slavic home- land in the middle Dnieper basin,” *Journal of Human Genetics*, Volume 52, Number 5 (Springer Japan: ISSN 1434-5161 (Print) 1435-232X (Online)) May, 2007.

2 Oscar Lao et al, “Correlation between Genetic and Geographic Structure in Europe,” *Current Biology*, Volume 18, Issue 16, 1241-1248, August 26, 2008. <http://cell.com/current-biology/retrieve/pii/S0960982208009561>

3 Predrag Simic, *The Kosovo and Metohija Problem and Regional Security in the Balkans* (Institute of International Politics and Economics, Belgrade, 1995) p. 1.

4 Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History* (HarperPerennial edition, New York, 1999) p. 41.

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### THE BATTLE OF KOSOVO IN 1389

Believe it or not, Serbs put a lot of significance into a battle that happened over 600 years ago. The Battle of Kosovo in 1389 involved tens of thousands of Serbs and Turks. For Serbs, the Battle of Kosovo symbolizes three things. First, the honor of dying for your beliefs: "I'd rather be a Serb Christian martyr than become a Turkish Muslim." That patriotic theme echoes in today's Serbian nationalist rhetoric. Second, the battle also symbolizes what happens when Serbs are not united: they lose. The third symbol is that the battle marks Serbia's fall from glory.

What's surprising is that the last two symbols are somewhat mythological. The first myth is that the Turks decisively won the Battle of Kosovo. The battle was a tie: both armies lost their leaders and suffered heavy casualties. The difference is that the Serbian army was effectively depleted, whereas the Turks could eventually mount another army that ultimately did the Serbs in.

The second myth is that the Battle of Kosovo marks Serbia's fall from glory. If you had to pick the year when Serbia's empire ended, you might pick 1355 (Tsar Dušan's death, which led to the empire's fragmentation) or 1459 (when Serbia completely surrendered to the Turks). You wouldn't pick 1389, especially since the Battle of Kosovo was a tie. It was folklore that made the Battle of Kosovo a bigger deal than it was in reality.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, the Turks effectively conquered Kosovo soon after 1389 and would control it until 1912.

So let's look at the Kosovo scoreboard during the 1,000-year period from 912 to 1912. Bulgaria and Serbia each controlled Kosovo for about 250 years, while the Turkish Empire had it for about 500 years. Therefore, what's more correct: "Kosovo is Serbia" or "Kosovo is Turkey"?

Sure, the Turks were occupiers, but how long does you have to occupy a land before it's considered "yours"? Americans have been "occupying" lots of Native American land for only about 200 years. Is it not ours? Should we say "Dalmatia is Croatia" or "Dalmatia is Italy"? How about "Vojvodina is Serbia" versus "Vojvodina is Hungary"?

### UNRAVELING KOSOVO'S DEMOGRAPHIC HISTORY

Albanians have myths too. Some believe that Kosovo has been an autonomous entity since ancient times. Not exactly. Kosovo was a province within the Turkish Empire, but certainly not an autonomous one. In 1868, it became a *vilayet* (political district), but not an autonomous one.

Moreover, some believe that Albanians have "always" been the majority in Kosovo. However, Noel Malcolm, British author of *Kosovo: A Short History*, argues that this is "simply not credible." If it were true, then most of Kosovo's town names would be Albanian, but they're not—they're mostly Slavic.<sup>6</sup> Sorry, Albanian dreamers, Serbs were the majority in Kosovo throughout the Middle Ages.

What happened after the Turks moved in is less clear. During the five centuries of Turkish rule, many Serbs in Kosovo did not want to (or could not) live under the Turkish Empire, so they migrated north.

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<sup>5</sup> Krzysztof Piątkowski, "On the Kosovo Myth," *Cultural Identity and Ethnicity in Central Europe* (Jasiellonian University, Cracow) Editor Czelau Robotyck, pp. 85-95.

<sup>6</sup> Noel Malcolm, p. 57.

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When these migrations happened and how great they were is disputed. Nevertheless, what is clear is that vast numbers of Serbs settled around Belgrade, Vojvodina, and Hungary during the Turkish period. By the time the Turks fled the Balkans in 1912, Serbia's cultural core was no longer in Kosovo, it was centered around Belgrade.

I asked most Serbians I met, "What percentage of Kosovars were Serbian a century ago?" Most Serbs, even those who had no chauvinism, guessed between 60 to 90 percent.

That's a myth. For example, between 1877 and 1880, an English geographer, a French geographer, and a English-German geographer each independently drew ethnographic maps of Kosovo. They all agreed that Kosovo was mostly made up of Albanians and that Serbs only dominated the northern tip (which they still do today).<sup>7</sup> In the 1890s, Austrians concluded that the majority of Kosovars were Muslims.<sup>8</sup> In 1906, British journalist H. Brailsford estimated Kosovo was one-third Serb and two-thirds Albanian. German scholar Gustav Weigand found that Serb presence in Kosovo towns ranged from 10 to 40 percent (with Albanians making up the balance). In fact, Serbia's own 1912 census estimated that only 25 percent of Kosovo was Serb Orthodox.

These facts are hard for Serbs to accept today because they've been taught that Serbs have always dominated Kosovo and that Albanians just showed up yesterday. The propaganda claims Serbs were the majority in Kosovo until 1945, when, in the post-WWII confusion, Albanians sneaked into Kosovo and reproduced like rabbits on Viagra.

### SERB RECOLONIZATION OF KOSOVO

Like Serbs today, Serbs in 1913 couldn't accept reality. Having been disconnected from Kosovo for 500 years, they imagined that it hadn't changed much demographically, but their own surveys disproved that. Therefore, they attacked Pristina in 1913 and, according to their revised survey, claimed that no Albanians lived there. Still, in 1915, a Russian journalist remarked that half of the town was

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<sup>7</sup> All three maps are viewable online under the "Balkans" article in Wikipedia: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balkans>. In case the maps are no longer available, here is a description. In 1877, Edward Stanford, an Englishman, produced a map that shows Albanians dominating everything south of Pristina (with a smattering of Turks). Like an inverted pyramid, Serbs fan out just north Pristina towards the towns of Mitrovica and Leskovac. In 1877, a French geographer was also doing an ethnic map of the Balkans. In Kosovo, you'll see that four ethnicities lived there: Albanians, Turks, Serbs, and Bulgarians. Western Kosovo has more Albanians and Turks than Slavs; however, Serbs are clearly a minority also in Eastern Kosovo (where Bulgarians and Turks made up the majority). Like a big "C", Albanians concentrate around Pristina. A corridor of Albanians stretch from Pristina all the way to Niš. It's also interesting to note that Greeks dominated population in what is now southern Albania and that Albanians were still a major presence in Northwestern Macedonia like it is today. Ernst Georg Ravenstein, an English-German geographer, drew an ethnographical map of "Turkey in Europe" in 1880. It clearly shows how Albanians are the majority in Kosovo. It also shows how Albanians took over most of southern Albania, and it split its modern-day southern tip with Greeks.

<sup>8</sup> If you omit the non-Kosovo areas from their census and count 10,000 Gypsies as Muslims, then 72 percent of Kosovars are Muslims in the 1890s. Source: *Detailbeschreibung des Sandžaks Pleolje und des Vilajets Kosovo* (Vienna, 1899), pp. 80-1.

Albanian. A year after that, a Bulgarian census found 11,486 Albanians in Pristina (over two-thirds of the city).<sup>9</sup>

Since denying reality didn't work, Serbians tried to colonize Kosovo. In 1914, the Serbian government offered at least 11 hectares (27 acres) plus many other benefits to each Serb family that would move to Kosovo. After WWI, more colonists participated thanks to additional incentives, such as free land, free one-way transportation to the land (including your livestock and building materials), agricultural subsidies, and interest-free loans.<sup>10</sup> About 70,000 colonists moved to Kosovo, accounting for 10 percent of the population. A Serb official celebrated the "success" because he reported that Serb demographics rose from 24 percent in 1919 to 38 percent a decade later.<sup>11</sup> Even if we believe this Serb official's figures, they're far less than the 60 to 90 percent figure that many Serbs believe.

Foreign surveyors and Yugoslavia itself documented that Albanians were the majority in Kosovo throughout the 1920s and 1930s. In 1921, Yugoslavia's first census said that two-thirds of Kosovo was Albanian.<sup>12</sup> A few years later, an Italian surveyor estimated 700,000 Albanians were in Yugoslavia and a Romanian geographer in 1931 said there were 800,000.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, assuming that at least half of these Yugoslav Albanians were in Kosovo (where else would they be?), then that indicates that most of Kosovo was Albanian in the 1920s. Yugoslavia's 1931 census said 60 percent of Kosovars were Albanian (and a third were Slav). In conclusion, all surveys, including Serbian-Yugoslav ones, estimate that in the first half of the twentieth century, Serbs were less than a third of Kosovars; most of the rest were Albanians.

This is the opposite of what many Serbs believe today. In the Serb fantasy, Serbs were Kosovo's majority from the Middle Ages until the 1940s. The fable claims that Croats, Germans, and Albanians combined to liquidate the Serbs, thereby bringing them down as a percentage of the population. It also claims that for some mysterious reason Tito discouraged Serbs from returning to Kosovo and encouraged Albanians to leave totalitarian Albania and fill in the Kosovo vacuum. Tens of thousands of Serbs certainly left Kosovo during the 1940s, mostly because of the war. Still, if such a population reversal happened in the 1940s, then Yugoslavia's 1948 and 1953 censuses certainly didn't reflect that. They both indicated that Kosovo was about 27 percent Serb/Montenegrin and 68 percent Albanian, which is similar to the figures we saw for the previous 50 years.<sup>14</sup>

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9 Serbian census noted in L. Rushiti, *Rrethanat politiko-shoquerore në Kosovë 1912-1918* (Pristina, 1981), p. 71. Russian report in S. Kolea, "Les Massacres serbes," *AOBDIA*, 2nd ser., no. 6 (Nov 25, 1918), p. 49

10 M. Larnaude, "Un village de colonisation en Serbie du sud," *Annales de géographie*, vol 39 (1930), pp. 320-4.

11 Djordje Krstić, *Kolonizacija u Južnoj Srbiji* (Sarajevo, 1928), p. 81.

12 M. Vučković and G. Nikolić, *Stanovništvo Kosova u razdoblju od 1918 do 1991* (Munich, 1996), p. 79

13 A. Baldacci, *Studi Speciali Albanesi*, vol. 1 (Rome, 1932-7), p. 273. N. Popp, "Minori- tatea Româno-Albaneză din Jugoslavia," *Buletinul Societății Regale Române de Geografie*, vol. 50 (1931), p. 365

14 The rest was 1.3% Muslim and 3.6% Montenegrin. Source: *The 1918-1988, Statistical Summary of Yugoslavia* published in 1991 by government in Belgrade, p. 207. In 1981, Kosovo was 13.3% Serbian, 77.5% Albanian, 3.7% Muslim, 0.2% Montenegrin. J. Reuter, *Die Albaner in Jugoslawien* (Munich, 1982), pp. 54-70.

The demographics finally began to tip toward Albanians in the 1970s. They grew from being 67% of the Kosovars to 77%, according to the 1981 Yugoslav census (Serbs shrank to 13.2%).<sup>15</sup> By the 1991 census, the estimated ratio was 82% Albanian and 11% Serb.<sup>16</sup> Today, Kosovo is about 90% Albanian.

So let's summarize the last 1,000 years of Kosovo's demographics. In the Middle Ages, Kosovo was mainly Serb. At some point during the Turkish period, Serbs became a minority. It's not clear when that happened. My best guess is that it happened in the 1800s because that's when different censuses start to contradict each other on who held the majority. What's clear is that by 1900, Serbs were definitely the minority in Kosovo, making up between 25 to 33 percent of the population. Moreover, they remained at roughly that level until the 1970s, when they began their decline to roughly 10 percent.<sup>17</sup>

Now the obvious question is why?

### DO ALBANIANS HAVE 11.5 CHILDREN?

On the one hand, the reason Kosovo's demographics changed is simple: many Serbs left Kosovo and Albanians were having more babies than the Serbs who stayed behind. On the other hand, both of these facts have a not-so-simple story behind them.

For instance, the Albanian reproductive rate was (and still is) relatively high, but not as outrageously high as many Balkanians claim. In 1953, for every 1,000 people there were 38.5 live births in Kosovo. That compares to 35 in Macedonia and Bosnia, 28 in Montenegro, and about 23 in the remaining republics. By 1988, the rates had fallen nearly in half everywhere, except Kosovo, which only saw a 25 percent decline.<sup>18</sup>

Why?

First, infant mortality rates were highest in Kosovo and Macedonia. While other republics lowered their infant mortality rates around 90 percent, Kosovo (and Macedonia) only lowered them by about 62 percent, partly because Kosovars had the fewest doctors per capita in Yugoslavia. In 1953, Macedonians had twice as many doctors per capita than Kosovo; the other republics had four to five times more. By 1988, nearly all the republics (including Macedonia) had at least twice as many doctors per inhabitant

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15 "Albanians had made up nearly two-thirds of the province's population for the past 100 years, but jumped to 78 percent in 1981 and 90 percent in 1991." John R. Lampe, p. 332

16 M. Vučković and G. Nikolić, *Stanovništvo Kosova u razdoblju od 1918 do 1991* (Munich, 1996), p. 108. Albanians boycotted the 1991 census, but considering Albanians were about 90% of Kosovo in 1999, it's realistic to assume that they were over 80% in 1991.

17 According to Yugoslavia's official government statistics, in 1961 two-thirds of Kosovo inhabitants were Albanians and 23.5% were Serbians. By 1981, it was 77.5% Albanian, 13.3% Serbian. By 1991, it was 80/20 and by 2001 it was 90/10. *Jugoslavija, 1918-1988, Statistički godišnjak*. Belgrade, Savezni zavod za statistiku, 1989, pp. 160-66. Also, "The National Composition of Yugoslavia's Population, 1991," *Yugoslav Survey* 1. 1992, pp. 3-24.

18 The numbers changed to 29 in Kosovo, 18.5 in Macedonia, about 15.5 in Montenegro and Bosnia, and roughly 13 in the remaining republics.

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than Kosovo had.<sup>19</sup> In Yugoslavia's planned economy, Kosovars blamed Belgrade for not allocating more doctors to their region.

Moreover, Kosovo's economy was Yugoslavia's least developed and most rural. Thus, like most rural and undeveloped places, people have more babies than average. Today, Kosovo is still largely rural and poorly developed compared to its neighbors, which partly explains why its birthrate remains higher than average.

Balkanians become comically irrational when talking about Albanian reproductive feats. Consider Aleksandar Svetozarević, a proud young Serbian from Niš. On his Facebook page, he has photos of himself waving the Serbian flag in a soccer stadium, Moscow's Red Square, and Zagreb's main square. His father was a military officer. While I hosted him in Slovenia, I asked him to rate Tito and Milošević on a one to 10 scale. His answers were the opposite of what most Serbians said. He gave Tito a three and Milošević a nine, even though "Milošević was a spy for the US."

When I asked him if he knew Kosovo's fertility rate (the average number of children a woman has), without hesitation and with supreme confidence, he said, "11.5." This was in line with the eight-to-20 estimate that most Balkanians repeatedly claimed. At first I thought they were joking, but they usually weren't. This figure is totally wrong about Albania, but does it apply to Kosovo?

When I asked Aleksandar to prove the 11.5 figure, he spent 20 minutes surfing Serbian websites without any success, but he kept insisting that it was true. When I showed him UN and CIA data indicating that Niger was the only country in the world that had fertility in the rate over seven, he maintained that the average Albanian woman in Kosovo had 11.5 children. The fact that the world's average is less than 2.5 also didn't persuade him.

When I asked him what was the largest Albanian family he had ever found in his trips to Kosovo, he said, "I once met a family with eight children!" I said, "So you're saying that the average family has 11.5 children, yet the largest you've ever seen was not even close to that average." He shrugged.

When I showed American estimates that Kosovo had moderate fertility rates, he said that you "can't trust American statistics because they have an interest in the region."

When I showed him UN estimates that were similar, he said, "But how can they know that? The Albanians boycotted the 1991 census and all the censuses after that. So there are no official numbers. No one can know."

I said, "Yet you seem to have no trouble believing the 11.5 figure that you found once and can't seem to find again. Think: Europeans don't reproduce anywhere close to that rate—not even Africans do."

He said, "Albanians are not Europeans, they're Muslims."

Of course. Anyway, I finally figured out where he might have gotten his 11.5 number. It's a low estimate for the number of births per 1,000 Kosovars. That statistic is often called the *birthrate*. It's easy to see how someone can confuse *birthrate* with *fertility rate* (which measures the average number of children

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19 The source of the socio-economic indicators from 1953 to 1988 is Dijana Pleština, *Regional Development in Communist Yugoslavia: Success, Failure, and Consequences* (Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 1992) p. 1980-81.

a woman produces). What's ironic is that Kosovo's 2011 birthrate is probably much higher than 11.5—the Population Reference Bureau estimates that it's 21.

To put a birthrate of 21 into perspective, in 2011 Niger had the world's highest birthrate (50), Monaco had the lowest (7), and the 2011 world average was 17.5. Kosovo's birthrate was roughly equal to India and twice that of Serbia (9.2) and Albania (12.2). Kosovo's birthrate today is almost half of what it was in 1953 (as we saw above, it was 38.5 in Kosovo and 23 in Serbia proper).

After pointing all this out and debating for one hour, Aleksandar finally conceded that "maybe" the average Albanian doesn't have 11.5 children, but he still assured me that "they definitely have a lot of babies."

### HOW MANY KIDS DO ALBANIANS REALLY HAVE?

The allegedly "sky-high" Albanian reproduction rate is one of the best examples of widespread Balkan hyperbole. Still, there is a bit of truth to it: Albanians pump out babies faster than anyone in Europe. According to the US State Department, the average female Kosovar has 2.9 children. The Population Reference Bureau says 2.5 is a more accurate estimate. Either way, it's Europe's highest fertility and roughly twice Serbia's depopulating 1.39 rate.<sup>20</sup>

Whereas most Eastern European countries are depopulating, Albania and Kosovo (along with Greece and Macedonia) are still growing. In fact, Kosovo's net population growth rate is 1.4 percent, which is the highest in Europe and is similar to India's rate. Therefore, while Kosovo's growth rates are slightly above average on the global scale, because they're around twice as high as its depopulating neighbors, it seems like they're having 11.5 children.

Aleksandar later admitted, "Serbs in Kosovo have a lot more children than Serbs in Central Serbia and Vojvodina." This has also been true throughout the last century. In fact, in the 1950s, Serb Kosovars had a higher population growth rate than Albanians (2.7% vs. 2.1%) partly because Serb infant mortality was lower than the Albanian one. By 1981, the average Serb Kosovar had 3.4 children versus roughly 4.7 children that Albanian Kosovars had. There was also a big disparity between rural Albanians (6.7 children) and urban Albanians (2.7).<sup>21</sup> Finally, the Serb abortion rate was higher than the Albanian rate. In 1989, 68 percent of Serb pregnancies were aborted.<sup>22</sup> In 2011, it's 23 percent (which is the same as

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20 [http://www.prb.org/Datafinder/Geography/Summary.aspx?region=214&region\\_type=2](http://www.prb.org/Datafinder/Geography/Summary.aspx?region=214&region_type=2) As of 2011, Kosovo still hasn't taken an official census. Current unofficial estimates for its fertility rate range from 2.5 to 2.9. Doubling Serbia's 1.39 rate gives us 2.78, which is in the middle of the estimates. Also consider birthrate estimates: Niger 51, Kosovo 21, Albania 15, Serbia 12. This also implies Kosovars produce almost twice as many babies as the depopulating Serbians.

21 M. Roux, *Les Albanais en Yougoslavie: minorité nationale, territoire et développement* (Paris, 1992), pp. 151-3.

22 Lidija Andolšek, ed. by Paul Sachdev, "Yugoslavia," *International Handbook on Abortion* (Greenwood Press, New York, 1988), pp. 495-504. Rada Drezgic, "The politics of abortion and contraception," *Sociologija*, 46(2), 2004, pp. 97-104. "Health Statistical Yearbook of Republic of Serbia 2008," Institute of Public Health of Serbia, 2009, <http://www.batut.org.rs/uploads/pub2008.pdf>. Good summary: <http://www.johnstonsarchive.net/policy/abortion/ab-serbia.html>

America's rate). Meanwhile, Bosnia and Kosovo, countries with heavy Muslim populations, have abortion rates of less than five percent.<sup>23</sup>

Kosovo's baby boom has made it Europe's youngest country—the average Kosovar is 26 years old. Only 23% of Kosovars are retired; in Croatia, 57% are. Their youth is evident in the streets; about 27% of Kosovars are under 15 years old.

In conclusion, one reason why the Albanian population surged in Kosovo after 1970 was that they pumped out more babies than Serbs. Unfortunately, the Balkan tendency to hyperbole facts has made this issue a much bigger deal than it really is. Today, Kosovo's fertility rate continues to decline. Now let's move onto the second reason for why Kosovo went from 66% Albanian throughout most of the last century to 80% in 1991.

### WHY SERBS LEFT KOSOVO

In the preface of *The Migration of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo and Metohija*, the Serbian authors reasonably estimate that between 1961 and 1987, about 100,000 Serbs left Kosovo. There are two reasons why they left. First, some Albanians were harassing them. Albanians often deny this and they may point to a survey done in the 1980s that showed that less than 0.1 percent of Serbs blamed Albanians for wanting to go out of Kosovo.<sup>24</sup> These results are laughable and reek of a pro-Albanian bias.

On the other hand, it's hard to find an objective poll on this issue. In the 1980s, the Serbian Academy of Sciences interviewed 500 Serb households to learn why they had left Kosovo. About 41 percent said that "indirect pressure" from Albanians was a reason, while 21 percent cited direct pressure (e.g., verbal abuse, material damage, and personal injury).<sup>25</sup>

The truth probably lies somewhere between these two biased surveys. One indication that implies that ethnic tension existed is that two-thirds of Serb *émigrés* came from mixed areas in Kosovo; heterogeneous regions are more prone to ethnic tensions than homogeneous regions.<sup>26</sup> Still, most of the harassment were misdemeanors and petty crimes; official government statistics showed that rape and murder in Kosovo were below the Yugoslav average.<sup>27</sup>

The other reason for the Serb exodus was that Kosovo was stuck in the Stone Age. Throughout the last century, Kosovo was Yugoslavia's retarded child. All the other Yugoslav regions would donate

23 <http://www.johnstonsarchive.net/policy/abortion/mapyugoabrate.html> Map of abortions percentages in ex-Yugoslavia.

24 H. Islami, "Demografski problemi Kosova I njihovo tumačenje," in S. Gaber and T. Kuzmanić, eds., *Zbornik Kosovo — Srbija — Jugoslavia* (Ljubljana, 1989), pp. 39-66.

25 R. Petrović and M. Blagojević, *The Migration of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo and Metohija: Results of the Survey Conducted in 1985-1986* (Belgrade, 1992), pp. 110 and 179. The Serbian Academy of Sciences is the same outfit that produced the 1986 Memorandum, which is filled with misleading statements, which calls into question their 500-person survey.

26 To learn more about post-WWII migrations read Ruža Petrović, *Migracije u Jugoslaviji i etnički aspekt* (Migration in Yugoslavia and the ethnic aspect). Belgrade, Istraživački izdavački centar, 1987. Also, Silva Meznarić, *Osvajanje prostora — prekrivanje vremena, migracije umjesto razvoja* (Conquering space and obscuring time: Migration in place of development). Zagreb: Sociološko društvo Hrvatske, 1991.

27 John R. Lampe, p. 332.

money and resources to help Kosovo catch up. On a per capita basis, Kosovo received up to four times more aid than Bosnia, Montenegro, and Macedonia.<sup>28</sup> Despite that assistance, Kosovo was always light-years behind.

For example, Slovenia has maintained a similar-sized population as Kosovo, but in 1988, Slovenia accounted for 18 times more of Yugoslavia's output.<sup>29</sup> Kosovo's 1990 unemployment rate was four times higher than Croatia's and six times higher than Slovenia's.<sup>30</sup> In 1952, Slovenia's per capita GDP was three times higher than Kosovo, but today it's 14 times higher.<sup>31</sup> In 1953, only 2.4 percent of Slovenians were illiterate versus a staggering 62.5 percent of Kosovars. By 1988, 18 percent of Kosovars were still illiterate.<sup>32</sup> Perhaps by 2015, Kosovo's literacy rate will finally approach Slovenia's 1953 rate.

As TV spread in the 1970s, Kosovars realized just how backwards they were. Those who could go north, did. Making the cultural transition from Kosovo to Belgrade, Zagreb, and Novi Sad was easier for a Serb than for an Albanian. Thus, Serbs were more likely to leave Kosovo.

To blame Albanian harassment as the main or only cause for the Serb exodus ignores the fact that Bosnia also saw a net outflow during the same period. Those migrating Bosnians also went to Yugoslavia's most prosperous regions. Kosovo had the highest percentage decrease in people because it had the weakest economy. In fact, from 1971 to 1981, 45,000 Albanians left Kosovo too. Everyone was leaving Kosovo because its economy stunk.

Some Serbs still insist that during the Tito era, Albanians committed "genocide" against the Serbs. So what's more likely and logical: (a) that Tito, whose all-seeing eye uncovered and crushed all types of nationalism and protests, somehow ignored Albanians kicking Serb ass and that Serbs didn't complain to Tito about it, and if they did, Tito ignored them, even though Serbs were a far more important political base than the Albanians; or (b) that Serbs left on their own because Kosovo's economy was horrendous.

Another way to think about it: if Kosovo's economy had been similar to Vojvodina's economy, would all those Kosovars have left? If Kosovo was better than the rest of Yugoslavia, then Serbians (and even Slovenians) would have migrated *to* Kosovo.

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28 Neven Borak, Table 71, p. 258. Kosovo got 84 billion dinars, while Bosnia (45.5 billion), Montenegro (17 billion), and Macedonia (21 billion) got much less. On a per capita basis, that translates into these respective amounts: 42, 11, 28, and 10.

29 Neven Borak, Table 67, p. 256. In 1988, Slovenia was producing 20% of Yugoslavia's output compared to Bosnia-Herzegovina 12%, Croatia 25%, Montenegro 2%, Kosovo 1.1%, Serbia 23%, Vojvodina 9.5% (Greater Serbia was about 33%).

30 Neven Borak, p. 212. Unemployment 1952 Yugoslavia 0.4%, 1990 7.8%. In 1990, Kosovo 12.6%, Serbia 8.3%, Croatia 4.6%, Slovenia 2.2%

31 Neven Borak, p. 212. GDP per capita in thousands of dinars based on the worth of the dinar in 1972, 1952 Kosovo 1.6, Serbia 3.4, Croatia 4.1, Slovenia 6.1. And then in 1990, Kosovo 3.35, Serbia 16.1, Croatia 19.4, Slovenia 30.8.

32 Dijana Pleština, *Regional Development in Communist Yugoslavia: Success, Failure, and Consequences*. Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 1992, p. 1980-81

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Francis Tapon's mother is from Chile and his father is from France. They met in San Francisco thanks to a slow elevator. His brother, Philippe Tapon, is the author of two novels. His family spoke Spanish at home, unless an English swear word was necessary.

Francis was born in San Francisco, California where he attended the French American International School for 12 years. Native French teachers convinced him that France is the coolest country in the universe. He is fluent in English, French, and Spanish. He struggles with Italian, Portuguese, Slovenian, and Russian. If you point a gun to his head, he'll start speaking other languages too.

He earned a Religion Degree with honors from Amherst College. He also has an MBA from Harvard Business School. After Harvard, he co-founded a robotic vision company in Silicon Valley. Then he decided to change his life forever.

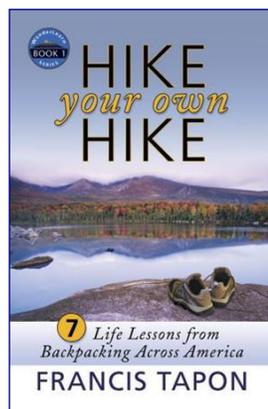
In 2001, he sold the little he had to hike the 3,000 km Appalachian Trail. Then, after consulting for Hitachi, he visited all 25 countries in Eastern Europe in 2004. He consulted at Microsoft before hiking the 4,200 km Pacific Crest Trail in 2006. In 2007, he became the first person to do a round-trip on the Continental Divide Trail—a seven-month journey spanning 9,000 km. In 2008-2011, he visited over 40 European countries, but focused on revisiting all the Eastern European ones. In 2009, he climbed up Mont Blanc and walked across Spain twice (once by traversing the Pyrenees from the Mediterranean Sea to the Atlantic Ocean, and then by hiking El Camino Santiago). He's backpacked over 20,000 kilometers (12,500 miles) and traveled to over 80 countries.

He is the author of *Hike Your Own Hike: 7 Life Lessons from Backpacking Across America*. This book can be also ordered at: <http://francistapon.com/shop>. He is donating half of his book royalty to America's three major scenic trails.

*The Hidden Europe: What Eastern Europeans Can Teach Us* is his second book of his WanderLearn Series, was published as ebook on December 12, 2011, and as hardcover on March 4, 2012.

Currently he is visiting (according to his plan) every country in Africa and is going to write a book about that in 2016. His goal is to wander to all 193 countries of the world, see what we can learn from them, and share it with everyone.

Francis' website is <http://FrancisTapon.com>



## OUR AUTHORS

ARDEN-WONG, Lyndon

Mr. Arden-Wong is associated with the Department of Ancient History, Faculty of Arts, Macquarie University, Australia. His areas of interest include Architectural History, Early Medieval And Medieval Settlement (Archaeology), Tang Dynasty, Inner Asian History, Early Medieval China History, Inner Asian Art and Archaeology.

FARKAS, Flórián

Mr. Farkas was born in 1967 in Kolozsvár/Cluj/Klausenburg. He holds a M.Sc. degree from Technical University of Budapest, Hungary and Ecole Normale Superieure de Cachan, France and an MBA degree from Henley Management College, UK. Since 1992 he is living in the Netherlands. He cofounded the Foundation Mikes International in 2001 in The Hague, the Netherlands.

KISAMOV, Norm

Born and educated in Moldova, Mr. Kisamov spent a 40-year carrier as an industrial automation engineer. He emigrated from Russia to the USA in 1978, when the USA patronized immigration of educated people from Russia. For the last 15 years, he was the webmaster of the site <http://turkicworld.org>, which serves as a non-commercial, educational publishing outlet for the Turkologists who could not propagate their studies in Russia and whose works were unknown to the Western world. He has translated a number of Turkological books to English, most of them were posted at that site, a few were published in Russia, in post-Soviet countries, and one was supposed to be published in Germany. Mr. Kisamov was assisting the writers as a volunteer. In his 15 years of working with various aspects of Turkology, he has amassed a significant collection of Turkisms cited by various authors, who were pointing out Turkisms in English and/or Germanic languages. Tracing and verifying etymologies of the cited lexemes, he encountered numerous other cognates, which led him to assemble a draft of the article that is published abridged in this issue, and unabridged as Supplement. By that time, the volume of the lexicon far exceeded accepted criteria formulated to discern random borrowings from genetic kinship. Mr. Kisamov is not a linguist, nor does he pretend to be a scholar. However, with some kind help from the sites contributors, he was able to systemize and organize his collection, and prepare etymological comments. His interest in Turkic history arose quite accidentally, but it quickly riveted him, he was growing into it for the last 25 years, and still, after a quarter century of reading and translating, he has only scratched the surface. Previously, he has authored a couple of articles on Turkological subjects related to the Scythian history.

MIRABILE, Paul

After having travelled and worked for many years in Africa and in Europe, Mr. Mirabile enrolled at the University of Vincennes-Saint-Denis, Paris VIII where he obtained his doctoral thesis in 1986 in mediaeval History, literature and linguistics: *La Genèse de la Chanson de Roland: la Théorie de l'Entonnoir* under the direction of Bernard Cerquiglini. Since then he has taught languages and literature, philology and History either at universities or secondary schools in Turkey, South India, China, Ireland and Russia whilst doing research on the Mediaeval Eurasian Koine. He has contributed articles and essays on mediaeval History, religions and philosophy in *Stratégique* (F.E.D.N), *Contrastes*, *Liber Mirabilis*, *Nietzsche-Studien*, *Journal of Armenian Studies*, *Journal of Dravidic Studies*, *Armenian International Reporter*, *La Chine au Présent*, *Al Amanecer* (Istanbul: Judio-Spanish journal), *Chasse-Marée* and in university reviews in China and Russia. He is currently teaching in Istanbul.

SARBASSOVA, Guldana Aktaevna

Studied Social Sciences at A. Yassawi International Kazakh-Turkish University (Kazakhstan, 2006), and at Middle East Technical University (Turkey, 2008); then earned a Ph.D. degree at the Kazakh Academy of Science, Institute of Linguistics named after A. Baitursunoglu (Kazakhstan, 2011). She is currently working as a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

TAPON, Francis

- ✚ Author of *The Hidden Europe: What Eastern Europeans Can Teach Us*, which is his second book of his WanderLearn Series; it was published as ebook on December 12, 2011, and as hardcover on March 4, 2012.
- ✚ Author of *Hike Your Own Hike: 7 Life Lessons from Backpacking Across America*.
- ✚ Has visited all 25 Eastern European countries at least twice and has traveled there nonstop for 3 years.
- ✚ Has traveled to over 80 countries, walked across America 4 times, backpacked over 12,500 miles in the mountains, and was a finalist in the California Outdoors Hall of Fame.
- ✚ He's been covered in *The New York Times Magazine*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *San Jose Mercury News*, *Backpacker Magazine*, TGO (The Great Outdoors) Magazine in the UK, *New Mexico Magazine*, and others. He's been interviewed on radio stations and podcasts.
- ✚ [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) & Lincoln Mercury selected him as the best example of someone who is fulfilling the dream of traveling the world, and produced a video profile on him.

- ✚ His dad is French, his mom is Chilean, and he was born in San Francisco. Speaks several languages. He has never owned a TV, chair, table, couch, bed, or rocket ship.
- ✚ Has a BA in Religion from Amherst College and an MBA from Harvard Business School.