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Nationalism, Social Movement Theory and the Grass Roots Movement of Kosovo Serbs, 1985–1988

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The mid-1980s witnessed the rise of grass roots protest in Kosovo, a peripheral region of socialist Yugoslavia. In contrast to the 1981 demonstrations, the interaction with the authorities unfolded largely without violence, and instead of Kosovo Albanians the protesters were now Kosovo Serbs.¹ The grass roots movement emerged in 1985 and rapidly spread among Serbs in Serbia's autonomous province with a Kosovo Albanian majority. In the summer of 1988 the movement triggered a wave of mobilisation across Serbia and Montenegro, which ended with Kosovo Albanian protests in late 1988 and early 1989. The movement has so far escaped the attention of scholars and journalists alike. For some, the movement was only an empty media fabrication of Slobodan Milošević in his drive to power in 1987 and 1988. For others, the grass roots protest, though genuine, had little impact on political developments in Yugoslavia in the 1980s, which were dictated by communist and dissident elites.²

The argument offered in this article consists of two parts. In the historical part I provide evidence that the grass roots mobilisation of Kosovo Serbs predated the rise to power of Milošević and that, despite interaction, and sometimes co-operation, with the authorities the movement remained an autonomous political factor. I also show that the grass roots movement had a disproportionate impact on political developments in Yugoslavia in the late 1980s. Partly under the impact of the movement's activities, long-

existing divisions within and among political elites, including factional struggle within Serbia's leadership and conflict among leaders of republics and autonomous provinces, turned into an open conflict. Moreover, the movement's action opened the socialist regime for other non-state actors, which resulted in mobilisation across Serbia and Montenegro. Finally, the movement left a legacy of protest politics that affected strategies of subsequent challenger groups in the region.

In the theoretical part of the argument I show that the rise, development and outcomes of nationalist movements cannot be fully explained without insights from social movement theory. Although I acknowledge the important role of ethnic grievances and national identities, I employ the concepts of social movement theory to demonstrate the central place of political context and the dynamics of contention in understanding nationalist movements. I provide evidence that the Kosovo Serb movement emerged and developed largely in response to changes in political context and within a political environment that was, in comparison with other socialist party-states in Eastern Europe, the least unfavourable to challenger groups. I also show that the development and outcomes of the movement largely depended on its protest strategies and the movement's temporal location in a broader wave of mobilisation. Consequently, I argue that nationalist movements should be studied primarily as a species of social movements.

The rise and fall of the grass roots movement of Kosovo Serbs

In late October 1985 a petition from a large group of Kosovo Serbs was sent to both the federal and Serbia's communist leadership. They expressed their grievances

about intimidation of, and discrimination against, Kosovo Serbs, and asked for the protection of their human rights and the establishment of law and order. They pointed out that Kosovo was becoming increasingly 'ethnically clean' of Serbs, accused the provincial government of tacit approval of forced migration of Serbs out of Kosovo and demanded that the federal and Serbia's authorities bring that trend to a halt. The petitioners also insisted that their demands be at once put on the agenda of the federal and Serbia's assemblies. The petition was a success. About 2000 people signed it straight away and by April 1986 the number of signatories had multiplied several times, which was much more than anybody had expected.³

In the early 1980s Kosovo Serbs had voiced their grievances through institutions in vain. When it became apparent that the appeals were ignored, they shifted their efforts to building pressure from the grass roots. In 1985 a small group of political outsiders from Kosovo Polje, a suburb of Pristina with a Serb majority, started mobilising support among Kosovo Serbs for contentious action in order to put pressure on the authorities to take their problems seriously.⁴ The success of the October 1985 petition was partly a result of this initiative. Despite a resolute rejection of the demands and threats to organisers from the authorities, there was no immediate persecution, which encouraged the protesters to press their claims again. On a freezing winter morning in late February 1986 a group of 95 people, many of whom were in peasant garb, turned up outside the Federal Assembly in Belgrade. These were informally selected representatives of Kosovo Serbs from 42 towns and villages from all parts of the autonomous province and they demanded to speak to the federal leadership. In the following meeting with top officials

they spoke at length about their problems and cited examples of mistreatment and discrimination.⁵

In the mid-1980s the communist party (called the League of Communists) was still firmly in control of all levers of power and this was the first major demonstration of discontent after the 1981 demonstrations of Kosovo Albanians. The authorities took the threat seriously and arrested one of the organisers in early April. The tactics backfired. The arrest only alarmed Kosovo Serbs and brought them together in defiance of the authorities. They promptly organised protests outside the house of their arrested leader and within three days the number of protesters, coming from various parts of the autonomous province, rose to a few thousand. Ivan Stambolić, Serbia's party leader, visited Kosovo Polje without delay and insisted that the party would solve the problems but that protesters should not listen to Serb nationalists, meaning informal leaders of the movement. Stambolić, however, failed to calm the protesters and, although their leader had already been released from prison, about 550 Kosovo Serbs, led by 80 year-old farmer Boža Marković from Batusi, showed up in Belgrade on the following morning. At the meeting with the highest federal and Serbia's officials many people took the floor to voice their grievances about inter-ethnic inequalities and the lack of safety for Kosovo Serbs.⁶

The key event in 1986 occurred on 20 June, a few days before the party congress, when several hundred Kosovo Serbs set off for central Serbia in tractors and cars. Feeling under increasing pressure from Kosovo Albanians and provoked by a few recent inter-ethnic incidents, Serb farmers from Batusi, a village near Kosovo Polje, decided to collectively move out of Kosovo in protest. They left all their property untouched and

planned to set up a tent city somewhere in central Serbia. In this way they wanted to create an emergency situation which the authorities could not ignore. As their feelings fitted well the prevailing mood of Kosovo Serbs, some living in Metohija, in the eastern part of the province, promptly joined the protest. Since the police had already blocked most roads between eastern and central parts of Kosovo, many people, including 70 and 80 year olds and children, proceeded on foot through woods and meadows. After a long march they reached Kosovo Polje, where local protesters joined the group. Just outside Kosovo Polje several high-ranking party officials tried to persuade people to return to their homes but the protesters did not listen. In the end, a cordon of police blocked the road and did not let the protesters go further. After several hours people gave up and quietly returned to their homes.⁷

The demands of the movement were at first limited to issues related to law and order and inter-ethnic inequality, and were largely stated in terms of the official discourse. Protesters pointed to mistreatment of Serbs by the Kosovo Albanian majority in Kosovo, including killings, attacks, destroyed crops, seized property and various forms of discrimination based on ethnicity. Since they believed that local and Kosovo party officials deliberately avoided enforcing the law when it came to the rights of Serbs, they demanded their resignations and threatened to collectively leave Kosovo in protest. As divisions within and among officials of the federation, Serbia and Kosovo grew, the demands evolved towards constitutional issues. Between 1967 and 1974 there had been a major shift towards decentralisation in Yugoslavia: Kosovo and Vojvodina, earlier little more than administrative regions of Serbia, were granted a status similar to that of federal units and Serbia effectively lost jurisdiction in these parts of its territory. Since Kosovo

Serbs believed that Kosovo's officials were not able, or did not want, to enforce the law when it came to the rights of Serbs, they asked that Kosovo should be brought back under the jurisdiction of Serbia's authorities. They also demanded that consociational arrangements be put in place to give the minority population a say in ruling the province.⁸

By late 1986 the movement came close to representing a majority of Serbs in Kosovo. Its main feature was its grass roots composition, because the managerial elite, intellectuals and professionals were largely co-opted by the party. A solid network of activists in towns and villages inhabited by Serbs was rapidly emerging although formal organisations could not be formed. Before the June march the public responses of federal, Serbia's and Kosovo officials were all alike. After the show of commitment to proceed with disruptive action, however, the federal and Serbia's leaderships were somewhat less inclined to refuse to listen to what the protesters were saying. Disputes between Serbia's and Kosovo's officials grew ever more frequent and increasing publicity was given to the movement's demands and protest actions. Leaders of the movement continually appealed to and asked for support from federal and Serbia's officials but were still without influential allies within the leadership. This was to change with the rising influence of Milošević within Serbia's leadership.

In the early 1980s Milošević, head of the largest Yugoslav bank, entered the higher party ranks in Serbia. He advanced rapidly within the top leadership, following in the steps of his political mentor and close friend Stambolić, and in 1986 became Serbia's party leader.⁹ In April 1987 Milošević paid his first official visit to Kosovo and dropped in to Kosovo Polje. Quite unexpectedly, he faced a crowd of several thousand protesters who passionately chanted 'We want freedom, we want freedom!'. In the chaos that

ensued the police started beating protesters with truncheons while they responded by throwing stones at policemen. Milošević then ordered the police to stop beating people and asked the protesters to maintain order themselves, which was accepted with ovations, and the meeting with their representatives continued until early morning. At the end, Milošević delivered a speech, in most part a typical speech of a high-ranking party official. His description of the problem and the need to address it, however, were cast in stronger language than was generally accepted by senior party-state officials.¹⁰

Kosovo Serbs had never before turned out to protest in such numbers and the whole country was shocked by televised scenes of the police beatings of old farmers, workers and housewives, and their stories of suffering. Moreover, never before had a high-ranking party official publicly condemned the police and expressed his solidarity with demonstrators. Milošević's stance in turn provoked criticism in the party and triggered open conflict between two factions within Serbia's leadership. The cleavage within the leadership had existed since early 1986 when Stambolić sidelined some politicians from Tito's old guard and installed his protégé Milošević as Serbia's party leader. The move, at the time seen as an overwhelming victory for Stambolić, swiftly provoked strong resistance among his opponents, who now supported Milošević in an attempt to preserve their influence. The latter seized the opportunity and gradually established an independent power base. While not interested in the Kosovo problem before 1987, Milošević exploited it in the intra-party conflict. He believed that the Kosovo crisis, along with other pressing political and economic problems, could be resolved only if the party was united in embracing the course of action set by its leadership. The more inclusive approach of Stambolić and others did not fit into the

picture and the showdown between the two factions in September 1987 ended with Milošević's takeover.¹¹

These developments turned the fortunes of the movement. Acceptance of some of the movement's demands by Serbia's party leader increased the movement's visibility and protected its organisers from repression by federal and Kosovo officials. The protest organisers established contact with Milošević's emissaries and provided suggestions on how to establish law and order in the province.¹² The downside was that the protesters needed to proceed with caution in order not to lose their influential ally. Milošević thus gained influence over the protesters but this often did not translate into actions on the ground. The protest organisers by no means intended to stop collective action until their demands had been fully addressed and at times took action contrary to Milošević's advice. In other cases they followed his instructions but were outvoted, or just ignored, in loose public meetings by other movement activists. Milošević in turn exploited the grass roots mobilisation for his own ends and often provoked activists to publicly denounce his opponents.¹³

Having Serbia's party leader for an ally, however, did not alter the situation on the ground. Owing to the substantial autonomy of Kosovo, Milošević could only appeal to political leaders of the autonomous province to implement the party's policy on Kosovo, which they often chose to ignore. In response, the movement's organisers launched another petition and sent a large delegation to the federal and Serbia's assemblies in May 1988.¹⁴ They warned that if there were no rapid improvements in the security situation thousands of Serbs would collectively leave Kosovo in protest. Milošević in turn demanded that the organisers prevent a mass exodus and warned them that the party

would regard it as counter-revolution.¹⁵ Fearing the prospect of losing an influential ally and unable to calm people down, the movement's organisers decided to stage a demonstration in Novi Sad, the administrative centre of Vojvodina, instead. In this way they wanted to let off steam and thereby reduce discontent among activists and supporters of the movement but also to protest against the leadership of Vojvodina, Serbia's other autonomous province, and its veto on constitutional changes that would bring the two provinces back under the jurisdiction of Serbia's authorities.¹⁶

On 9 July several hundred Kosovo Serbs turned up in Novi Sad and marched to the city centre, defying the police, again against the advice of Milošević.¹⁷ A large crowd of locals gathered spontaneously in their support and, despite unsuccessful attempts by the police to prevent them joining the protest, demanded the resignation of Vojvodina's top officials. The demonstration revealed that popular support for the leadership was minimal and encouraged the movement's organisers to initiate more protests in Vojvodina. Local protesters then took over and attention shifted from the demands of Kosovo Serbs to the general discontent of the local population with their leaders. A wave of protests swept the province and the provincial leadership resigned in early October after being faced with a two-day protest of more than 100,000 people in Novi Sad.¹⁸

In late August and early September the tide had spread to Montenegro and central Serbia. People went onto the streets to declare their support for Kosovo Serbs, rally against local power holders and support Milošević, who was quick to back popular mobilisation. In Serbia, more than three million people attended the rallies. In Montenegro, after initial rallies from August to October to which the authorities responded by repression, protests became overwhelming in January 1989 and the

leadership resigned. In November 1988 Kosovo Albanians initiated protests against the purge of Kosovo's officials, which turned into a general strike in late February 1989. Although the protests were suppressed in March this was the beginning of a decade-long non-violent struggle by Kosovo Albanians.¹⁹ As the protests moved from Kosovo to other parts of Serbia and Montenegro, the movement of Kosovo Serbs gradually lost momentum. That their demands were now on the agenda of the government removed reasons for protest for most supporters of the movement and triggered conflict among its organisers. Milošević, who had now secured popular support, co-opted one of the organisers and forced others to either leave Kosovo or withdraw from public life.²⁰

Ethnic grievances and national identities

Nationalism studies offer important tools for the study of nationalist mobilisation. Students of nationalism often highlight the sources of nationalist mobilisation and the power of collective identities to sustain collective action. One version of this approach puts emphasis on ancestral ethnic hatreds as the main source and glue of nationalist movements. Another stresses the central place of grievances that arise from inter-ethnic inequalities and memories of earlier conflicts, and national identities.²¹ In this section I acknowledge the contribution of the latter version of this approach and show that grievances rooted in historical ethnic antagonisms and contemporary inter-ethnic inequalities shaped mobilisation of Kosovo Serbs, and that the movement's survival partly depended on the power of national identity to keep protesters together in times of uncertainty. I show, however, that these factors do not account for the timing and

dynamics of nationalist movements and that political factors need to be taken seriously. As political scientists who study nationalism are mainly concerned with the relationship between various institutional settings and ethnic competition and various macro-political strategies of ethnic conflict regulation,²² in the following section I employ tools of social movement theory to explain the emergence and dynamics of nationalist movements.

The modern history of Kosovo, a mixed Albanian–Serb region, can be read partly as a history of ethnic antagonisms.²³ Serbs and Albanians had long lived as peaceful neighbours and often co-operated in the struggle against the Ottomans. Major sources of antagonism were differences in religion, in the context of the policy of discrimination against the Christian population that the Porte increasingly employed in the strategically important western fringes of the empire, and mutually exclusive nationalist goals of Albanians and Serbs in the second half of the nineteenth century. Ethnic tensions were exacerbated in the last decades of Ottoman rule, when Serbs suffered in the chaos during the decline of the empire, then in pre-war Yugoslavia, where Kosovo Albanians were discriminated against, and during World War II, when Serbs were terrorised by Italian and German-sponsored militant Albanian groups.

The policy of the communist party towards Kosovo was a part of its broader approach to the national question. Before the war, struggle against the Serbian-style centralisation was a major task of the party, which under the influence of the Comintern at times extended to support for self-determination of ethnic groups, including minorities. Aware of the hostility of Kosovo Albanians towards the new regime, the communist leadership sought their co-operation. The new government granted a degree of autonomy to Kosovo, banned Serb settlers from returning to the region after being expelled during

the war, opened Albanian-language schools, encouraged cultural emancipation of Kosovo Albanians and increasingly financed development of the backward region.²⁴ Some administrative restrictions on the rights of Kosovo Albanians remained for security reasons since Albania strongly supported the Soviet bloc against Yugoslavia in 1948, and Serbs remained disproportionately represented in the regional government and security apparatus.

In the 1967–1974 constitutional reforms Kosovo and Vojvodina were granted status similar to that of federal units and Serbia effectively lost jurisdiction in these parts of its territory. Since most excesses of the security apparatus, which were underscored as the main reason for dismantling the centralised state, had occurred in Kosovo, and some thought this to be associated with disproportionate representation of Serbs, a policy of positive discrimination was introduced to change the ethnic composition of the public sector. With the shift to decentralisation and a relaxation of the strategy of suppression of the politicisation of ethnicity, few restraints on Kosovo's political elite remained. The new ethnic composition of elites and employees in the huge public sector, coupled with decision making based on majority voting, swiftly turned the trend towards emancipation of Kosovo Albanians into full-scale domination over other ethnic groups. Various forms of inter-ethnic inequality were compounded by the lack of legal protection for Kosovo Serbs.²⁵ On the whole, while winners and losers changed over time, the politics of inter-ethnic inequality remained an important feature of political life in the region. From the perspective of a disadvantaged ethnic group the only way to escape a subordinate position was political action, which over the course of history meant wars and uprisings,

parliamentary initiatives and party building, struggles within the communist party and, ultimately, popular protest.

Regarding the grievances of Kosovo Serbs, they faced a rapidly changing ethnic composition in the population of the region, part of which was caused by steady migration of Serbs out of the province. While the proportion of Kosovo Albanians and Serbs in the population remained relatively stable in the period between 1948 and 1961 (68.5–67.1% and 27.5% respectively), in the following two decades the proportion of the former increased from 67.1% to 77.4% and that of the latter decreased from 27.5% to 14.9%,²⁶ and continued to decline throughout the 1980s. Critical to the changes in ethnic composition of the population were demographic factors, the most important of which was a much higher rate of population growth of Kosovo Albanians than of Kosovo's non-Albanian population. This was the result of an extremely high birth rate among the former, by far the highest in Europe, and a steadily decreasing death rate attributable to improving health care services and the increasing share of young people in the Kosovo Albanian population. In turn, the main causes of the extremely high birth rate were underdevelopment and traditional characteristics of Kosovo Albanian society, especially the subordinate position of women.²⁷

The decreasing absolute numbers of Serbs and their shrinking territorial dispersion were caused by emigration. The 1981 Yugoslav census listed around 110,000 Serbs from Kosovo living in other parts of Yugoslavia, of whom 85,000 had left the province between 1961 and 1981.²⁸ By the late 1980s an additional 25,000–30,000 had left Kosovo. In other words, nearly a third of Kosovo Serbs had moved out of the autonomous provinces since 1961. The findings of a survey conducted in 1985–86 among

Serbs who had left Kosovo indicated that most left because of pressure on the basis of ethnicity. This included verbal pressure, pressure related to property, violence, trouble at work and inequalities in the public sector. What also emerged from the survey was that there was a clear territorial pattern of emigration largely resulting from the level of pressure and inequalities. The latter was inversely related to the proportion of Serbs in a settlement, and the critical point for a major increase in the pressure was if the Serb section of the population in a settlement dropped below 20–30%. This finding was compatible with evidence from the Yugoslav census that there was a strong trend towards emigration of Serbs from settlements where they accounted for a minority of less than 30% of the population.²⁹ Therefore, the decreasing proportion of Serbs in a settlement led to a sharp increase in pressure and inequalities, which in turn resulted in emigration.

This finding points to the relative weight of various factors in causing emigration. Low-level pressure on Serbs as a minority group existed in the whole post-war period. This included insults, injuries and damage to property and religious and cultural monuments.³⁰ That the number of complaints about intimidation sharply increased after the mid-to late-1960s, coinciding with a major political change towards the increased autonomy of Kosovo, indicates the role of the authorities in these developments. While open discriminatory policies were generally, though not always, avoided, most cases of intimidation and discrimination occurred because of the absence of legal protection for Kosovo Serbs. This in turn triggered a sharp increase in low-level intimidation on the ground. The latter was fostered, in addition to demographic pressure, by the consequences of the only partial modernisation of Kosovo Albanian society. The firm grip of traditional moral codes loosened under the pressure of modernisation while

national romanticism within this context brought about growing intolerance towards the minority population.

Ethnic grievances were the main source of the grass roots mobilisation of Kosovo Serbs. The sources of protest, however, do not account for the timing and dynamics of mobilisation. The evidence from this case shows that nationalist movements do not emerge in response to an increase in the level of ethnic grievances. The level of inequalities facing Kosovo Serbs peaked in the 1970s but there were no protests at the time. In the mid-1980s their position was slowly improving but protests broke out nonetheless owing to a political context less antagonistic to collective action by this group. Similarly, the 1981 demonstrations of Kosovo Albanians were not preceded by an increase in the level of ethnic grievances. In fact, the protests erupted in a period more favourable to this ethnic group than any other after World War II.

Another way to assess the relationship between ethnic grievances and the origins of nationalist mobilisation is to shift the focus from the level of grievances to the aggrieved group members' perception of their position and feasible remedies for it. A social condition needs to be recognised as unjust or intolerable and deserving of corrective action in order to have any potential for mobilisation and it is collective action frames that shape grievances into broader and more resonant claims.³¹ Indeed, in contrast to the earlier period, in the mid-1980s Kosovo Serb activists identified the problem as that of inter-ethnic inequality and the lack of security for Kosovo Serbs. They redefined their position as unjust, allocated blame for it to Kosovo's party leadership and developed discourse related to human rights and, later, constitutional change, which set the stage for a broad mobilisation of Kosovo Serbs. However, it remains unclear why the framing of

ethnic grievances was successful in the mid-1980s and not in the previous decade. To explain the origins of nationalist mobilisation one must look beyond ethnic grievances.

An important factor that conditions the survival of social movements in the face of opposition from political elites and other groups is the power of collective identities to provide links among activists and supporters that survive isolated episodes of collective action. Unlike many other social movements, contemporary nationalist movements need not build such an identity from scratch, as it is already available in the form of national identity. The resilience of nationalist movements in comparison with other movements comes from the presence of an emotional bond similar to that connecting members of a family, which is largely absent in other large social groups.³² The absence of formal organisations, which would normally impede the expansion of a movement, was compensated in the case of the Kosovo Serb movement by this emotional glue linking its activists and supporters.

Kosovo, in history and epic, has been an important marker of national identity for the Serbs.³³ For one thing, Kosovo was the heartland of the medieval Serbian polity and culture, the territory that still houses the most important historical and religious monuments of the Serbs. For another, the Kosovo legend has long served as a source of resistance to foreign rule and as a tool for preservation of ethnic and national identity. The legend, partly based on a medieval battle with the Ottomans (1389), says that the Serbian Duke Lazar chose martyrdom as a sacrifice for Serbia rather than servitude. It was created soon after the battle and had a central place in the evolving oral epic tradition of the Serbs during the following centuries. It served as a source of spiritual strength and determination to resist Ottoman rule and, in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, as

inspiration for revenge and national liberation of the Serbs.³⁴ The grass roots movement's activists and supporters saw their current problems only as the last step in the long history of struggle for survival in the region and drew inspiration for their activities from battles that had been fought, in history or legend, by their ancestors. This also partly explains why so many of them were prepared to take the risks linked with collective action in a repressive political context. References to this abound in their appeals³⁵ despite the movement organisers' efforts to downplay this aspect for tactical reasons, to avoid being labelled counterrevolutionaries. In short, ancestral ethnic hatreds can hardly explain nationalist mobilisation. Grievances that arise from inter-ethnic inequalities and memories of lapsed conflicts as well as national identities account for the intensity of feelings involved in nationalist mobilisation and continuing support for collective action once it is under way. These factors, however, fail to explain the timing and dynamics of nationalist movements. For one thing, it remains unclear why the framing of ethnic grievances occurs on some occasions but not others. For another, mobilisation at times produces unexpected and unintended outcomes, in this case a disproportionate impact by a small peripheral movement on the political process at the centre. This indicates that we need an approach that is more sensitive to political factors. As political scientists who study nationalism are primarily concerned with politics that unfolds within institutions, I will look into the linkages between institutional and contentious politics and the resulting political dynamics.

Political opportunities and repertoires and cycles of collective action

Students of social movements and contentious politics have so far largely ignored contentious collective action related to nationalism.³⁶ Contemporary research on the former, however, has much to offer to the understanding of nationalist mobilisation. In this section I employ the concepts of social movement theory, including those of political opportunities and repertoires and cycles of collective action, to demonstrate the decisive role that political context and the dynamics of contention play in the emergence, development and outcomes of nationalist movements. I show how the Kosovo Serb movement emerged and developed largely in response to changes in opportunities and in a political environment that was the least unfavourable to challenger groups in Eastern Europe. I also show that the broadening, survival and outcomes of the movement largely depended upon forms of action employed in protest and the movement's temporal location in a broader protest cycle.

Political opportunities

The concept of political opportunities consists of dimensions of a movement's political environment that provide incentives for collective action by affecting people's expectations for success or failure.³⁷ It includes relatively stable aspects of a movement's political environment and changes in opportunities.³⁸ Regarding the former, cross-national studies of collective action in contemporary Western democracies show that some states are more open to challenger groups than others according to the criteria of state structure and the state's prevailing strategies towards collective challenges. The

impact of state structure is a function of territorial and functional decentralisation, since decentralisation, as opposed to centralisation, implies multiple points of access for challenger groups.³⁹ Consequently, the states that are more likely to invite collective action are federations and states with extensive regional and local government and those featuring higher autonomy of branches of government and functional bodies.

From the early 1970s Yugoslavia featured a highly decentralised political structure. A high level of decentralisation was in part the consequence of the introduction of Soviet-style national federalism after World War II. The creation of federal units and within them a party cadre based on titular nationality was the means of expansion of control over the politicisation of ethnicity.⁴⁰ While the central state and party organs remained firmly in charge during the first two decades after the war, the Yugoslav leadership transferred considerable powers to federal units in the late 1960s and early 1970s and the 1974 Constitution ended up as an uneasy mix of federal and confederal arrangements. Another source of the Yugoslav decentralisation drive was a local version of communist ideology, which was hostile to the idea of the state. In an attempt to distance themselves from the Soviet model after the break with Stalin, the Yugoslav leaders introduced workers' self-management. The concept was later extended to the polity and social services, resulting in a high level of functional decentralisation. The concept of self-management was also directly tied to the territorial dimension of decentralisation and, as a result, Yugoslavia ended up with a highly decentralised political structure, including a weak centre, powerful federal units, a high level of local autonomy and a large number of official organisations and associations.

The decentralised political structure provided multiple targets for challenger groups, many of which did not exist in other socialist party-states, and resulted in the multiplication of elites. This in turn potentially opened space for conflict among leaders from different layers of the party-state and the emergence of allies of challenger groups. Prominent members of the Kosovo Serb movement were therefore able to shift the targets of their action strategically from local officials to the Kosovo authorities, and from Serbia's to the federal leadership, according to changing political opportunities. As Kosovo officials ignored a number of local initiatives by Kosovo Serbs in the mid-1980s, the emerging movement turned to the federal authorities. Two years later, feeling that their demands had not been fully addressed at the federal level, the movement activists increasingly focused on Serbia's leaders. Having gained their support, they targeted officials of the autonomous provinces in 1988. Such a gradual strategy could hardly have worked in a centralised non-democratic state and a more confrontational approach would have provoked immediate suppression of the movement. Also, slight variation in verbal responses by authorities at various levels to early protests from Kosovo Serbs gradually evolved into different strategies to contain the spread of protest and ended in sharp institutional conflict.

The state's prevailing strategy towards challenger groups may be inclusive, that is, assimilative and facilitative of their entry into the polity, or exclusive, and its general strategy towards challengers may differ from its strategy regarding particular issues.⁴¹ East European socialist party-states were very exclusive and repressive towards any collective challenges in comparison with democracies and even many non-democratic states in other regions. Although the Yugoslav party-state was less exclusive and

repressive than most in Eastern Europe, all attempts to extend the scope of protest outside narrow dissident circles, or to raise questions about the national question outside official discourse, were suppressed. This strategy was not without loopholes. Strong connection with the masses, rooted in the popular-based National Liberation Movement (1941–45), and emancipation of all ethnic groups featured high on the list of legitimising claims of the party. As a result, while there were strict limits to ideological dissidence, party-state officials could not easily dismiss appeals for fair treatment of a minority group, especially when it came from the grass roots. With respect to the stable dimensions of political opportunity, therefore, Yugoslavia provided a less unfavourable political context for collective challenges than any other East European state and this applied especially to non-ideological protest by grassroots groups.

Regardless of the actual configuration of stable dimensions of political opportunity, ordinary people in most periods lack resources to seriously contest the power of political elites and only changes in opportunities may reduce this imbalance of resources and trigger collective action. Changes in opportunities include shifts in political alignments, divisions within and among elites and the emergence of allies of potential challenger groups. Breakdowns of long-standing coalitions of political elites and interest groups and elite conflicts encourage potential challengers with few internal resources to initiate protest and push parts of the elite to look for allies outside the polity.⁴² From the perspective of marginal groups, elite allies can provide organisational expertise or offer protection from repression, which is essential as challengers have access to few internal resources in non-democratic states.⁴³

In the last years of Tito's rule political stability in Yugoslavia rested on a political arrangement that emerged between 1972 and 1974, following the purges of reformist politicians. The loosening of a federal structure from the late 1960s and early 1970s was partly compensated, and the co-operation of regional elites achieved, through increasing role of the party in society and over state organs and Tito's direct involvement in decision making. In this period Tito reasserted his role of the supreme arbiter in political struggles within republics and those among regional elites. Leadership succession, namely the death of Tito in 1980 and generational change in Serbia's leadership in the early 1980s, sent tremors through the political system and undermined previously stable informal political alignments at the federal level and triggered divisions within and among political elites. While leadership turnover lacked routinisation in all socialist party-states, Tito did not leave a successor and Yugoslavia's loose institutional structure effectively prevented the emergence of a new leader. Owing to long-delayed changes in leadership the succession also involved a rotation in political generations, just like in other East European party-states.⁴⁴ Technocrats from the coming generation were much less bound by ideological restraints and, when fractional conflict reappeared, many looked for support from social actors outside the party-state.

Recurrent fractional elite conflict was one of the important features of the politics of socialist party-states. Owing to the loose federal structure of Yugoslavia, the main outbursts of elite power struggle occurred within federal units. As the firm grip of ideology loosened, the conflicts within and among political elites of federal units became more frequent and observers outside the party-state became increasingly aware of the divisions. Only after repeated signals of the mounting pressure from Serbia's and the

federal party leadership on Kosovo's officials in the first half of the 1980s to address the concerns of Kosovo Serbs did some groups take the risk of initiating collective action. Later on, the movement's organisers continued to exploit even the slightest disagreements within and among political elites. As the division grew within Serbia's leadership in 1987 the movement activists extended their demands beyond the official discourse. After signs of crisis in relations between leaders of Serbia and its autonomous provinces in 1988, they extended protests to Vojvodina and central Serbia, thus provoking a wave of mobilisation across Serbia and Montenegro.

An important change in political opportunities was the shift in party policy towards Kosovo in the early 1980s as a consequence of the 1981 Kosovo Albanian demonstrations. The scale of protests surprised the authorities and raised fears of the emergence of a major separatist movement. In response the federal leadership unleashed severe repression of the militant groups and initiated a re-evaluation of its earlier policy towards Kosovo based on non-interference in internal affairs of the autonomous province. To justify the change of political course the federal leadership purged Kosovo's leadership, pointed to excesses of Albanian nationalism and acknowledged inequalities facing the non-Albanian population. Kosovo Serb protesters exploited this opportunity and initially stated their demands largely within the official discourse.

This partly explains why the early protests by the movement were not immediately suppressed and why the authorities were sensitive to its demands early on. Within this general framework, the federal and Serbia's leaders had a more inclusive strategy towards the movement while Kosovo's officials, directly engaged in the

suppression of Kosovo Albanian separatist groups, were much less ready to deal softly with any challenges.

The emergence of allies in the mid-1980s provided resources to the Kosovo Serb grass roots groups to initiate and expand protest. Protest organisers kept close contact with reporters from Belgrade media located in Kosovo and occasionally consulted several dissident intellectuals from Belgrade and uninfluential delegates in the federal and Serbia's assemblies about various issues. They sought information about relations within and among political elites and their possible reactions to protest actions as well as advice on strategy and tactics.⁴⁵ Without the moderating influence of their allies, the protesters might have opted for radical solutions and, consequently, faced repression. The rise of Milošević to power also turned the fortunes of the movement as their protests were accepted as legitimate and prominent activists were shielded from repression. While seeking advice from various quarters, the movement organisers made decisions on strategy and tactics on their own. They firmly believed that people at the grass roots understood their problems best and were therefore able to make appropriate decisions.⁴⁶

Leadership succession and generational change also brought about the partial relaxation of repressive rules and regulations and increased space for political debates. In Serbia technocrats of the coming generation led by Stambolić gradually replaced members of Tito's old guard and younger Kosovo Albanian politicians, led by Azem Vllasi, entered the higher ranks of a highly conservative Kosovo leadership. In short, during Tito's rule the authority of the aging president, stable political alignments and the absence of major elite divisions and elite allies effectively discouraged potential challenger groups. The expansion of political opportunities in the early 1980s, including

the collapse of old political alignments, mounting elite conflict and the change of party policy towards Kosovo, increased the salience of a highly decentralised political structure and thus helped transform the potential for mobilisation of Kosovo Serbs into collective action.

Repertoires and cycles of collective action

The survival, expansion and outcomes of social movements, including nationalist ones, partly depend upon forms of action employed in protest. Protest strategies shape responses of political elites and other opponents and affect the level of popular support for challenger groups. Unlike democracies, which by definition tolerate a degree of contentious claim making, non-democratic states rarely tolerate popular protest. As a result, moderate forms of action, which are less likely to invite repression than confrontational ones, acquire special importance in non-democratic states. Moderate protest strategies and, especially, deliberate avoidance of violence open a limited space for interaction with a non-democratic regime without repression and this in turn may encourage potential supporters to join activities of an emerging movement.⁴⁷

Organisers of the Kosovo Serb movement opted for a moderate and gradual strategy from the very beginning. They exploited official procedures of the decentralised system and held frequent public meetings under the veil of the people's front (called the Socialist Alliance of Working People) in towns and villages where Serbs constituted a substantial part of the local population. Having in mind the nature of the regime, the creation of a formal organisation was not an option and the semi-official character of public meetings to some extent protected protest organisers from repression.

Simultaneously, the protesters wielded non-institutional means to make their demands more credible before the party leadership. Lacking resources that come with formal organisation, the emerging network of activists in towns and villages inhabited by Serbs utilised inter-ethnic incidents as focal points to mobilise popular support and mount pressure on the authorities.⁴⁸ From 1986 they organised small demonstrations or public meetings of the people's front across Kosovo after assaults on Serbs by Kosovo Albanians or other extreme examples of insecurity or discrimination. This revealed that costs of protest in the ageing socialist regime were not as high as had been generally believed and encouraged potential supporters to join the activities.

The movement organisers deliberately avoided violence and were determined to open a limited space for interaction with the authorities excluding repression. The only violent encounter occurred during the visit of Milošević to Kosovo Polje in 1987, when representatives of Kosovo Serb protesters were prevented from entering the public meeting with Serbia's party leader. Likewise, very few movement activists demanded that the federal and Serbia's authorities address their problems by repressing Kosovo Albanians. The movement's organisers, in particular, believed that a police state, even with the intention of protecting Kosovo Serbs, would only aggravate the security situation for their community in the long term.⁴⁹ That intentions and actions of Kosovo Serb protesters were often misinterpreted and seen only in retrospect through the prism of Milošević's post-1989 repressive policies towards Kosovo Albanians partly stems from confusing the strategic use of non-violent methods with principled non-violence, such as pacifism. While non-violent methods may be used out of deep religious or moral convictions, most practitioners of non-violence all over the world have used it for

pragmatic reasons, as the most effective tool to bring about political or social change within a particular context.⁵⁰ That the movement organisers embraced non-violence for strategic reasons and did not reject repressive policies against Kosovo Albanians in principle but rather out of consideration of their negative consequences led some to believe that the movement somehow covertly demanded repression.

The concept of repertoire of collective action implies the existence of a relatively limited, and culturally constrained, set of forms of action that people can choose from at a particular point in time and adapt to their immediate circumstances in the interaction with opponents. Continuity overtime rather than huge leaps in innovation of new forms of action is to be expected.⁵¹ Unsurprisingly, the forms of action that Kosovo Serb protesters employed initially, such as petitions and delegations, were those that their non-state allies had already practised. Priests and monks of the Serbian Orthodox Church had employed petitions to draw the attention of the authorities and the general public to the concerns of Kosovo Serbs, while dissident intellectuals had protested in this way against non-democratic practices of the regime. Likewise, a few delegations of Kosovo Serbs had visited federal and Serbia's officials in the early 1980s before the emergence of the movement.⁵² On the other hand, the choice of forms of action was shaped by the creative action of the movement's leadership. The novelty of delegations sent since 1986 was that they were designed to make their demands known to the general public as much as to the party leadership. After the arrest of one of the movement leaders in April 1986 a three-day long street demonstration was organised in response. Two months later, a large group of protesters set off on a protest march and threatened to collectively leave Kosovo. Two years later, having obtained powerful allies, the movement organisers opted for more

confrontational tactics, deliberately provoking Vojvodina's leadership to use repression and thus open itself to criticism from the public and republican elites.

The Kosovo Serb movement made a disproportionate impact on the subsequent political developments largely because its activists unintentionally initiated a broader mobilisation cycle. Cycles of contention, or phases of intensive conflict throughout a society, include diffusion of collective action, invention of new forms of contention, a combination of organised and unorganised participation, the creation of new action frames and intensive interaction between authorities and challengers.⁵³ The impact of a movement on subsequent challenger groups largely depends on its temporal location within a cycle of contention. As an initiator movement the Kosovo Serb movement expanded political opportunities for others. Early protests by the movement in Vojvodina turned long-standing divisions among elites of republics and autonomous provinces into an open institutional conflict, breaking the public image of a unified political elite and reducing the capacity of the state for repression. The success of the movement in bringing its demands onto the government's agenda pointed out the advantages of collective action to various challengers and its protests provided models of action for similar, unrelated and opposing groups. Consequently, subsequent protests included issues concerning inter-ethnic relations, constitutional changes, accountability of political elites, expansion of political participation and higher wages. A small peripheral movement such as that of Kosovo Serbs could have such a disproportionate impact only at the beginning of a broader wave of mobilisation, when no other group employed contentious action. Kosovo Albanian protests of late 1988 and early 1989, despite a large number of participants, did not have such an immediate impact on the centre of Yugoslav politics

simply because they unfolded late in the cycle, when Serbia and Montenegro had already been in turmoil.

In addition to immediate outcomes, the movement of Kosovo Serbs left a legacy that shaped strategies of similar and unrelated challenger groups in the following decade. This particularly affected strategies of popular protest in some of the few remaining Serb enclaves in Kosovo in the wake of the 1999 Kosovo war. While demanding physical protection from KFOR and UNMIK and showing determination to remain in Kosovo, activists of the new movement have employed old repertoires, including petitions, delegations, protest marches and demonstrations, and developed new ones, such as road blockades and violent interaction with both international protection forces and their Kosovo Albanian rivals. There was also a substantial cross-fertilisation of tactics, or 'learning from the enemy', in the late 1980s. Following the example of the Kosovo Serb movement, early protests by Kosovo Albanians featured non-violent repertoires and their demands were stated in terms of the official discourse.

Apart from the tactics, the mutual impact of collective action of Kosovo Serbs and Albanians was largely indirect. Collective action of challenger groups from the two communities did not occur simultaneously and they affected one another by influencing the political process at the centre, that is, by triggering changes in power relations among federal, Serbia's and Kosovo authorities. As a consequence of the 1981 Kosovo Albanian demonstrations, Kosovo's officials lost bargaining power in relations with federal and Serbia's leaders which, along with other changes in opportunities, opened some space for collective action by Kosovo Serbs. Another round of redistribution of power among the elites of republics and autonomous provinces followed the 'anti-bureaucratic revolution'

of 1988, which was initiated by the Kosovo Serb movement. The prospect of constitutional change in Serbia and the circumscribing of powers of autonomous provinces, along with other factors, opened space for collective action by Kosovo Albanians.

In short, changes in political opportunities, including unstable political alignments, divisions within and among political elites and the emergence of allies, increased the salience of Yugoslavia's highly decentralised political structure and the sensitivity of the party leadership to the concerns of Kosovo Serbs and thus opened up space for limited protest in the mid-1980s. Moderate strategies of grass roots activists secured the survival and entrenchment of the movement among Kosovo Serbs and their sustained protests had a considerable impact on subsequent political developments. The movement's action expanded political opportunities for other groups, provided models of action for new arrivals and left a lasting legacy of protest politics in the region. The emergence, development and outcomes of nationalist movements can therefore hardly be explained without insights from social movement theory, particularly without the focus on how stable and changing elements of the political context condition the emergence and dynamics of collective action and why such action often produces quite unexpected outcomes.

Conclusion

The advantages of combining insights from social movement theory and nationalism studies should now be apparent. The study of nationalist movements requires

a closer look into the substantive content of the issues involved, that is, grievances that arise from inter-ethnic inequalities and memories of earlier conflicts, and national identities. These factors account for the intensity of feelings and continuing support for contentious action once it is under way but fail to explain the timing and dynamics of nationalist movements. For this reason, the study of the origins and trajectories of nationalist movements requires insights from social movement theory. Changes in political opportunities within a particular configuration of state structure and state strategies condition the emergence and dynamics of collective action. Whether incipient nationalist movements survive the interaction with political elites and sustain popular support partly depends on their protest strategies. Like other social movements, nationalist movements rarely appear in isolation and often develop together with other movements and unorganised participation, forming cycles of contention. Consequently, nationalist movements should be studied as a species of social movements.

Too often students of Yugoslavia have focused on ethnic grievances and primordialist or instrumentalist attitudes of elites and counter-elites and ignored political context and dynamics of contention. The findings from this article suggest that stable and changing dimensions of political context, mobilisation and the interaction of non-state actors and political elites played an important role in shaping political developments in Yugoslavia in the late 1980s. It appears that unintended outcomes of the Kosovo Serb movement, including diffusion of contention to various groups, inclusion of new actors in the political process and changing state–society relations that took place only in a part of the country, had a destabilising impact upon the loose federal structure of socialist Yugoslavia. It may well be that a nationalist discourse became politically significant at

the centre only as a product of the political process of disintegration of the socialist regime and the dynamics of contention in a multi-ethnic state.

Notes

1 In statistical yearbooks of socialist Yugoslavia this population was listed under the categories of Serbs and Montenegrins. Unlike in parts of Montenegro, however, Serb and Montenegrin identities have not been seen in Kosovo as mutually exclusive. Kosovo Montenegrins refer to the latter to indicate their geographical origin and Montenegrin pride in centuries-long resistance to the Ottomans, and to the former as a more inclusive identity shared with all Serbs. At the time Montenegrins made up less than 15% of this section of Kosovo's population.

2 For the former view see Tim Judah, *Kosovo: War and Revenge* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 48, 52–53; Sabrina Ramet, *Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia, 1962–1991* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1992), pp. 227–231; and Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History* (New York, New York University Press, 1998), pp. 339–343. For the latter view see Dejan Jović, 'The Break-up of Elite Ideological Consensus: The Prelude to the Disintegration of Yugoslavia', PhD thesis, University of London, 2000. The only exception to this trend has been a book by the Zagreb journalist Darko Hudelist, *Kosovo: bitka bez iluzija* (Zagreb, Centar za informacije i publicitet, 1989).

3 The petition was published in the Belgrade literary magazine *Književne novine* under the heading ‘*Zahtevi 2016 stanovnika Kosova*’, 15 December 1985.

4 Kosta Bulatović, Boško Budimirović, Miroslav Šolević and, later, Bogdan Kecman, who had earned the respect of their fellow citizens by repeatedly insisting in public that the party did not prevent inter-ethnic inequalities, took advice from Zoran Grujić, a university professor, and Dušan Ristić, a disgraced Kosovo politician.

5 See transcripts of the speeches of Kosovo Serbs at the meeting in ‘*Šta su Kosovci rekli u Skupštini*’, *NIN*, 23 and 30 March and 6 and 13 April 1986.

6 For detailed eyewitness accounts of the events see Miloš Antić, ‘*Kako odmršiti čvor: Kosovopoljski dnevnik*’, *Borba*, 12 April 1986; and Marko Lopušina, ‘*Ostajte ovde: Kosovo Polje—dnevnik događaja*’, *Intervju*, 11 April 1986.

7 For eye witness accounts see T. Milić, ‘*Potresna ispovest Batušana*’, *Politika*, 3 April 1986; and Branislav Peterman, ‘*Seoba koje nije bilo*’, *Politika Ekspres*, 22 June 1986.

8 See transcripts of the speeches of Kosovo Serbs at the meeting with federal officials in the Federal Assembly in Belgrade on 26 February 1986 in ‘*Šta su Kosovci rekli u Skupštini*’ and those at the meeting with Milošević and Kosovo officials in Kosovo Polje on 24 April 1987 in ‘*Šta je ko rekao u Kosovu Polju: stenografske beleške razgovora u noći 24. i 25. IV 1987*’, *Borba*, 8, 9–10 and 11 April 1987.

9 Milošević succeeded Stambolić at the helm of the Belgrade party branch in 1984 and then, two years later, in the post of President of Serbia’s Central Committee. He soon obtained a reputation as a committed economic reformer but also a strong hand when it came to dissident intellectuals. From 1986, when he became Serbia’s party

leader, Milošević was slowly taking control over the party thanks to the support of opponents of Stambolić, who was now President of Serbia. For information on Milošević's career before 1982 and his family background see Slavoljub Djukić, *Između slave i anateme: politička biografija Slobodana Miloševića* (Belgrade, Filip Višnjić, 1994), pp. 13–20, 27–28.

10 See the detailed eyewitness account in Slavko Ćuruvija & Miloš Antić, 'Incident odložio početak razgovora', *Nedeljna Borba*, 25–26 April 1987; Slavko Ćuruvija, 'I on se tresao kao prut', *Borba*, 19 January 1993; and Slavko Ćuruvija, 'Jutro kad je okrenut list', *Borba*, 20 January 1993. For transcripts of all 78 speeches given at the meeting see 'Šta je ko rekao u Kosovu Polju'.

11 A series of interviews conducted by the author with leading Serbia's politicians of the period, including Dragoslav Draža Marković, Boško Krunic, Špiro Galović, Danilo Marković, Vaso Milinčević and Milenko Marković (Belgrade and Novi Sad, August 2000). See also Milošević's speeches at the plenary sessions of Yugoslavia's and Serbia's central committees held on 26 June 1987 and 9 July 1987 respectively, in Slobodan Milošević, *Godine raspleta* (Belgrade, BIGZ, 1989), pp. 152–161.

12 Interviews with Boško Budimirović, Miroslav Šolević and Bogdan Kecman, the protest organisers, by the author (Belgrade, 15 and 17 July 2001 and 29 August 2000, respectively). See also interview with Dušan Ristić in Miloš Antić, 'Srbija nema rešenje za Kosovo', *Borba*, 11 February 1993.

13 On the former point, Milošević, for example, insisted in vain that the organisers cancel the demonstration during the session of Yugoslavia's Central Committee in May 1987. On the latter point, in October 1987 Milošević provoked

protests by thousands of Serb women from Kosovo against Fadil Hoxha, the foremost Kosovo Albanian leader and a member of Tito's old guard, in order to purge Kosovo's leadership.

14 Petition from 50,509 Kosovo Serbs sent to the federal and Serbia's governments in May 1988 (unpublished material, a copy in the author's possession).

15 Interview with Mićo Šparavalo, an activist from Uroševac who was leading the delegation of 20 representatives of Kosovo Serbs at the meeting with Milošević in Belgrade on 17 June, in Sava Kerčov, Jovo Radoš & Aleksandar Raič, *Mitinz i u Vojvodini 1988. godine: radjanje političkog pluralizma* (Novi Sad, Dnevnik, 1990), pp. 243–244.

16 Serbia's leadership had long insisted on the constitutional changes since the decentralisation introduced between 1968 and 1974 amounted to the disintegration of Serbia's political and economic space. After the 1981 demonstrations of Kosovo Albanians, Kosovo's officials were under strong pressure from federal party and state organs and it was the (mostly Serb) leadership of Vojvodina that principally obstructed the constitutional changes. The movement's activists therefore concluded that pressure should be put on the latter.

17 The decision to organise the demonstration was made at a public meeting of the people's front in Kosovo Polje on 24 June 1988. At the meeting Milošević's emissaries insisted this was a bad idea but were scoffed at and ridiculed by the audience. See the eyewitness account in Slavko Ćuruvija, 'Ustav se ne menja pritiscima', *Borba*, 2–3 July 1988.

18 For a wealth of primary material on mobilisation in Vojvodina, including interviews with organisers and participants, a selection of archival material and plentiful cross-sectional data, see Kerčov et al., *Mitinzi u Vojvodini 1988. godine*.

19 For a selection of archival material and local newspaper articles related to the events in Montenegro see Vlado Strugar, *Velika buna Crne Gore 1988–1989* (Belgrade and Nikšić, *Književne novine and Univerzitetska riječ*, 1990). For details on protests by Kosovo Albanians in late 1988 and early 1989 see Djordje Jevtić, *Bitka za Kosovo* (Priština, *Novi svet*, 1995) and Blerim Shala, *Kosovo: krv i suze* (Ljubljana: ZAT, 1990), although the books have pro-Serb and pro-Kosovo Albanian bias respectively. For more information on non-violent resistance by Kosovo Albanians to repression by Serbia's government in the 1990s see Denisa Kostovicova, 'Parallel Worlds: Response of Kosovo Albanians to Loss of Autonomy in Serbia, 1989–1996', Research paper, Keele European Research Centre, 1997; and Howard Clark, *Civil Resistance in Kosovo* (London, Pluto Press, 2000).

20 Bogdan Kecman founded 'Božur', an organisation aiming for the return of Serbs to Kosovo and garnering support for Milošević among Kosovo Serbs, while Miroslav Šolević was advised to leave Kosovo with his family, as he could not be guaranteed safety. Several prominent activists of the movement later supported Milošević's policies towards Kosovo.

21 Ancestral ethnic hatreds are a recurring theme in a great many journalistic accounts of nationalist mobilisation. For the latter version see Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1985), pp. 95–228; and Anthony Smith, *National Identity* (London, Penguin Books, 1991).

22 See for example Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, pp. 291–684; and John McGarry & Brendan O’Leary (eds.), *The Politics of Ethnic Conflict Regulation* (London, Routledge, 1993).

23 For an introduction to Albanian–Serb relations in Kosovo since 1840 see Dušan Janjić, ‘National Identity, Movement and Nationalism of Serbs and Albanians’, in Dušan Janjić & Shkelzen Maliqi (eds.), *Conflict or Dialogue: Serbian–Albanian Relations and Integration of the Balkans* (Subotica, Open University and European Civic Centre for Conflict Resolution, 1994), pp. 117–176. For more information on the history of the region see Alex Dragnich & Slavko Todorovich, *The Saga of Kosovo: Focus on Serbian–Albanian Relations* (Boulder, East European Monographs, 1984); Miranda Vickers, *Between Serb and Albanian: A History of Kosovo* (London, Hurst Company, 1998); Malcolm, *Kosovo*; and Dimitrije Bogdanović, *Knjiga o Kosovu* (Belgrade, SANU, 1985).

24 In contrast, members of other ethnic minorities that collaborated with the enemy during the war, including Germans, Italians and Hungarians, were systematically expelled from the country. Janjić, ‘National Identity, Movement and Nationalism of Serbs and Albanians’, p. 134.

25 It is difficult to establish the scale of inter-ethnic inequalities in this period as the issue was an official taboo in Yugoslavia. After 1981 credible evidence from official reports emerged that provided insight into the forms and pervasiveness of the inequalities. See for example excerpts from the report of the working group of the Federal Assembly, created to investigate complaints by Kosovo Serbs, on the meeting with federal and Serbia’s leaders in Belgrade on 26 February 1986, in ‘Tačno i netačno: nijesu Albanci, no

nepravda', Intervju, 11 April 1986. The evidence should be distinguished from propagandistic attempts by Milošević's regime to create justification for discriminatory policies against Kosovo Albanians after 1989. For information on Milošević's propaganda see Popović et al., *Kosovski čvor*; and Aleksandar Nenadović, "'Politika" u nacionalističkoj oluji', in Nebojša Popov (ed.), *Srpska strana rata: trauma i katarza u istorijskom pamćenju* (Belgrade, Republika, 1996), pp. 583–609.

26 The share of the two ethnic groups in the population of the region was calculated from the figures of the post-war censuses; see *Jugoslavija 1918–1988: statistički godišnjak* (Belgrade, Savezni zavod za statistiku, 1989), p. 48.

27 For more information see Srdjan Bogosavljević, 'A Statistical Picture of Serbian–Albanian Relations', in Janjić & Maliqi (eds.), *Conflict or Dialogue*, pp. 17–29 at pp. 20–22; Marina Blagojević, 'Iseljavanje sa Kosova', in Popov (ed.), *Srpska strana rata*, pp. 232–264 at pp. 235–242; Hivzi Islami, 'Demographic Reality of Kosovo', in Janjić & Maliqi (eds.), *Conflict or Dialogue*, pp. 30–53 at pp. 31–32; and Srdja Popović, Ivan Janković, Vesna Pešić, Nataša Kandić & Svetlana Slapšak, *Kosovski čvor: drešiti ili seći?* (Belgrade, Hronos, 1990), pp. 12–14.

28 See Bogosavljević, 'A Statistical Picture of Serbian–Albanian Relations', p. 23. For information about shrinking territorial dispersion of Kosovo Serbs see figures from the Yugoslav census in Ruža Petrović & Marina Blagojević, *The Migrations of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo and Metohija: Results of the Survey Conducted in 1985–1986* (Belgrade, SANU, 1992), pp. 82–85.

29 Petrović & Blagojević, *The Migrations of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo and Metohija*, pp. 85–92, 100–104, 111–173. For detailed migrants' accounts of

inter-ethnic inequalities see Julie A. Mertus, *Kosovo: How Myths and Truths Started a War* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, University of California Press, 1999), pp. 122–132; and Milorad Djoković, *Kosmetski dosije: ispovesti i sudbine prognanih Kosovaca* (Belgrade, Dosije, 1990), pp. 5–99.

30 For detailed information see ‘Excerpts from the Archive of the Holy Bishop’s Council of the Serbian Orthodox Church, 1945–1986’, in Živorad Stojković (ed.), *Zadužbine Kosova: spomenici i znamenja srpskog naroda* (Prizren and Belgrade, Eparhija Raško-prizrenska, Bogoslovski fakultet, 1987), pp. 793–838.

31 David Snow & Robert Benford, ‘Master Frames and Cycles of Protest’, in Aldon Moris & Carol McClurg Mueller (eds.), *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 133–155 at p. 137.

32 Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, pp. 55–92; Smith, *National Identity*, pp. 1–42; and Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 74–76.

33 The history of the region has also shaped the identity of Kosovo Albanians in important ways. See Vickers, *Between Serb and Albanian*.

34 Thomas Emmert, *Serbian Golgotha: Kosovo, 1389* (New York, East European Monographs, 1990).

35 See, for example, ‘Šta su Kosovci rekli u Skupštini’ and ‘Šta je ko rekao u Kosovu Polju’.

36 Exceptions to this trend are Mark R. Beissinger, ‘How Nationalisms Spread: Eastern Europe Adrift the Tides and Cycles of Nationalist Contention’, *Social Research*,

63, 1, 1996, pp. 97–146; and Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow & Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001).

37 William A. Gamson & David S. Meyer, 'Framing Political Opportunity', in Doug McAdam, John McCarthy & Meyer Zald (eds.), *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 275–290.

38 The research interest of scholars studying political opportunities ranges from the impact of different institutional arrangements on the structure, extent and success of protest politics to the role of shifts in informal power relations and political institutions in the rise and development of social movements. For the former approach see Peter K. Eisinger, 'The Conditions of Protest Behavior in American Cities', *American Political Science Review*, 67, 1, March 1973, pp. 11–28; Herbert Kitschelt, 'Political Opportunity Structures and Political Protest: Anti-Nuclear Movements in Four Democracies', *British Journal of Political Science*, 16, January 1986, pp. 57–85; and Hanspeter Kriesi, 'The Political Opportunity Structure of New Social Movements: Its Impact on Their Mobilization', in Craig J. Jenkins & Bert Klandermans (eds.), *The Politics of Social Protest: Comparative Perspectives on States and Social Movements* (London, UCL Press, 1995), pp. 167–198. For the latter approach see Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (New York, Random House, 1978); Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930–1970* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1982); and Sidney Tarrow, *Democracy and Disorder: Protest and Politics in Italy, 1965–1975* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989). For the integration of the two perspectives see

Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, 2nd edition (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 71–90.

39 Kriesi, ‘The Political Opportunity Structure of New Social Movements’, p. 171.

40 Philip Roeder, ‘Soviet Federalism and Ethnic Mobilization’, *World Politics*, 43, 2, January 1991, pp. 196–233.

41 For the former point see Kriesi, ‘The Political Opportunity Structure of New Social Movements’, p. 174; for the latter see Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, p.83.

42 Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, pp. 78–79. See also Charles D. Brockett, ‘The Structure of Political Opportunities and Peasant Mobilization in Central America’, *Comparative Politics*, 23, 3, April 1991, pp. 253–274; and Guillermo O’Donnell & Philippe C. Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions About Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

43 Brockett, ‘The Structure of Political Opportunities and Peasant Mobilization in Central America’, p. 258.

44 Valerie Bunce, *Subversive Institutions: The Design and the Destruction of Socialism and the State* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 58–59.

45 Interviews with Boško Budimirović, Miroslav Šolević and Bogdan Kecman by the author.

46 Interviews with Boško Budimirović and Miroslav Šolević by the author. See also recollections of Dobrica Ćosić in Slavoljub Djukić, *Čovek u svom vremenu: razgovori sa Dobricom Ćosićem* (Belgrade, Filip Višnjić, 1989), pp. 302–303.

47 For more information on non-violent protest in non-democratic states see articles in *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 33, 2, June 2000.

48 Interviews with Boško Budimirović, Miroslav Šolević and Bogdan Kecman by the author.

49 See, for example, the interview with Drago Samardžić, a prominent activist of the movement, in *Hudelist, Kosovo*, pp. 209–210. There were mounting demands for the strong hand of the state after demonstrations by Kosovo Albanians in February and March 1989 but by then the movement had already disintegrated.

50 Peter Ackerman & Christopher Kruegler, *Strategic Nonviolent Conflict: The Dynamics of People Power in the Twentieth Century* (Westport, Praeger, 1994), p. 5.

51 Charles Tilly, ‘Contentious Repertoires in Great Britain, 1758–1834’, in Mark Traugott (ed.), *Repertoires and Cycles of Collective Action* (Durham and London, Duke University Press, 1995), pp. 15–42 at pp. 26–27, 30.

52 Petition from a group of priests and monks of the Serbian Orthodox Church in April 1982, ‘Apel za zaštitu srpskog življa i njegovih svetinja na Kosovu’, in *Kosovo: prošlost i sadašnjost* (Belgrade, Medjunarodna politika, 1989), pp. 337–342. For more information on the delegations of Kosovo Serbs from the early 1980s see excerpts from the diary of a leading Serbia’s politician in the 1970s and early 1980s in Mirko Djekić, *Upotreba Srbije: optužbe i priznanja Draže Markovića* (Belgrade, Besede, 1990), pp. 209–210.

53 Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, p. 142.