

## THE DESTINY OF ROMANIES FROM KOSOVO

UDC 314.745.22/.24:323.15(=914.99)(497.115)

**Jovan Živković**

Faculty of Philosophy, Priština

**Abstract.** *The solution of the problem that is indicated in the very title of the paper does not stress any of the already known points of view. Therefore, in order to proceed to the presentation of some of these points of view, we must clearly define the Romanies' status. In this way we will start dealing with an even greater problem, namely the status of the Gypsies.*

*What must be done first is to undertake serious categorization of the sufferings at Kosovo. We must be aware that unless there is some significant improvement in the process of recording the Romanies' sufferings there as well as of taking care of them, we are not going to witness anything else but further hypocrisy of the official formative field of the system*

**Key Words:** *Authoritarianism, Totalitarianism, Exodus, Sufferings, Xenophobia, Discrimination*

*"The public in Serbia must once again rise against all sorts of chauvinism, intolerance, discrimination and racism."  
Academician Miloš Macura<sup>1</sup>*

The present fate of the Romanies from Kosmet can be observed from two perspectives, namely, by pointing to the basis from which the present exodus of the Kosmet Romanies springs from and by the very presentation of the numbers that clearly bespeak, even at least in fragments, the extent as well as the character of their present sufferings.<sup>3</sup> The second aspect of the analysis of the actual Romanies' position comprises,

---

Received November 10, 2000

<sup>1</sup> The statement made by the academician Miloš Macura to the newspaper "Danas", February, 22, 2000, regarding the passive attitude of the official authorities towards the unfavorable position of the Romanies and to the prohibition of the Romanies' children enrollment into Serbian schools. The academician M. Macura made this statement as the member of the SASA Commission for the study of the Romanies' life and customs.

<sup>3</sup> That the fate of the Romanies from the Kosmet region is tragic can be further con-firmed by the statement made by Sinte Romany Roze who, after paying a visit to the region, said that "the Romanies from Kosovo are tragic victims of murders, kidnappings and fire-settings, that is, they are exposed to systematic persecution on the part

first of all, the data about the number of the Romanies who lived at Kosmet before the war as well as the data about the number and the place where they are located now having the status of the "temporarily dislodged persons" not only in Serbia and Montenegro but in Macedonia and Italy as well. The basic difficulty that has emerged in our research is a small number of available official data which is another problem in itself since the official authorities (if any official statistics is done) do not submit the data to any type of the humanitarian organization let alone present them to the public. In the last part of the paper the kinds of suffering are categorized since it is not possible to get to any overall data except for the tellings of immediate witnesses or those who themselves were to some extent victims of the violence.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE MERGING OF THE AUTHORITARIAN MENTAL STRUCTURE  
AND THE TOTALITARIAN TYPE OF GOVERNMENT

The tendency to stress the merging of authoritarianism and totalitarianism, as stated in the above-given subtitle, tries to present the way in which these characteristics of the existence of both the Serbian and the Albanian ethnicities, after the retreat of the Serbian authorities, each in its own way, make the same mistake (?) in trying to co-settle the status of the Kosmet Romanies by pushing them aside to such an extent that it can be said that that their position has taken on the characteristics of segregation (by the Serbs) and genocide (by the Albanians).

The tragic fate of the Kosmet Romanies is inseparable from the mentality of the majority ethnicity that determines the character of the social community in whose environment this minority ethnic population lives and works. When the most recent conflicts on the Serbian territory are regarded including the enforced migration ones, then it is, primarily, the question of the mentality (characterology) of the Serbs who themselves did not know what to do with their worldview, that is, what direction of social development they should take and what contemporary general values they should practice. Pointing to the cultural milieu as a questionable matrix that the nature and characterology of the Serbs is built upon, it is the dominant preoccupation with the "Great Serbia" ethnic nationalism which should be taken into consideration first since it is the one that has replaced a contemporary attitude towards the world. Namely, the fact that the Serbian ethnicity has failed to incorporate itself into the world remaining within the limits of a closed community - even when it is, in some opinions, only an implication of the political official sphere launched by the *Constitution of Serbia* dating 1990<sup>4</sup> and the *Act On*

---

of Albanian nationalists." (From Dejan Marković, "Kosovski Romi u Nemačkoj," *Helsinki povelja*, 25/2000, p. 21).

<sup>4</sup> The legal act such as the Constitution of Serbia which the government will boast with as an example of the greatest possible "wisdom" regarding the issue of respecting the world standards for national minorities represents a set of principles and rules that are, due to the simulation of the value standards, at the same time the abuse of the understanding of the human, ethnic and minority rights. Such simulation of the minorities' protection on the part of the state bodies regarding the issues that are of essential importance for the minorities themselves represents a negative example to such an extent that it can be said that it made a step backwards regarding the previous, just as much unfortunate solutions. A critical view of the Constitution from 1990 see in Биљана Ковачевић-Вучо, "Косовска криза и људска права", *Људска права*, 1-2/98, p. 7-13.

*Limiting Transfer of the Unmoveable Property*<sup>5</sup> (as if politics were a separate and, from other factors, an independent spiritual entity) - represents the proof that politics is not, as a special social activity, exclusively guilty for Serbian detachment from the new approaches and concepts of the state organization especially in view of its present existence as a totalitarian type of government. The insistence on the supposed care about Serbianism as well as appeals to its myths additionally affirmed the Serbian version of ethnocentrism in the last decade. Such a negative civilization approach to life is set up in a special way especially among the Serbs from Kosovo. Therefore, in the "care" expressed by the noisy advocates of the nation's survival, meaning of those who have always been in one way or another connected with the official government (though these were rather individual and group privileges and corruption that only added to the further devastation of the moral and the material values of Kosmet), the question of the Romanies - following the automatism of all-pervading party ideological approach - could not even be brought up as a special and significant contemporary issue. The Romanies' position not only at Kosmet - but in the most pregnant form there - was constantly permeated with a feeling for permanent proving loyalty to the existing regime despite the fact that "the Romanies have not been here since yesterday or from today on, but they have been here for quite a long time in their own authentic ways" (D. B. Đorđević). The last act of the Romanies' loyalty as a special mission took place when they accepted to participate in the delegation representing the interests of all the national minorities before and after the Rambouix meeting. The Romanies' participation as an equal member of the negotiating commission was to such an extent transparent and disgusting that it brought more damage to the Romany population than it contributed to possible affirmation of their status. Namely, the Romanies' representative shared the fate of the general attitude of the existing government towards all those it has used just as a means for remaining in the game of preserving the power, that is, in a special sort of governing known as Oriental despotism. That is why it is logical to ask whether the Romanies' representative supported the negotiation farce before the NATO aggression to the extent of repression that he himself otherwise felt in other occasions. Therefore, the political sphere only used an ethnocentric matrix of the man belonging to the Serbian spiritual orientation (encouraging it to the extent it was useful to it) thus confirming that it had no space left in it for thinking about some Otherness just as it has no sense for understanding some other conception of

---

<sup>5</sup> The bringing about this law which was originally named the "Act on Limiting Trade with the Unmoveable Property" con-s in the most illustrative way the way the problems, especially those at Kosmet, were dealt with superficially including, for example the "Kumanovo's Peace Agreement", the act of defending the country from the NATO Alliance, etc. Namely, the current government was never able to get to the core of the things; instead, it tried to use laws, sub-legal acts and regulations as means of regulating the basic rights in strictly limited and controlled positive laws. In this way the determinations of the positive freedom as guaranteed by contemporary standards were transformed into the regulations contrary to the rights and thus in an absurd way they tried to prevented people from realizing their basic natural laws. That is, the example of the above-mentioned law or even the very law itself contributed to further nepotism, corruption and criminal activities. Once the right to one's own taking care of one's own interest is prevented, then one is most surely forced to find some ways of getting things settled for himself or herself - including the criminal ways since the legal means are unnatural. The situation at Kosmet was, therefore, due to the absurd laws valid only for this region and only to the behavior of the people living there, brought to absurdity as well. Consequently, an explosion in all the aspects of human existence was just a question of time.

organization of living.<sup>6</sup> Hence the attitude towards the Romanies, especially today, is that delicate point that should be used as the cause for sobering up from xenophobia<sup>7</sup>.

If the majority of the Romanies were supporting the existing Serbian government that was, for them personification of the state they live in and they identify with<sup>8</sup>, then this was a double sin in the eyes of the Albanians who had no single variant of the compromise with the basic assumptions that the Romanies accepted in advance. Hence, the Romanies could not be anything else but the same symbol - even though a more passive and peaceful one - that represented, for the Kosmet Albanians, repression; thus, it became the reason for their later suffering as the road-chosen-in-advance. All this is a part of the story viewed in the most obvious and superficial way since it is much more complex and which - regarding its framework - was lacking another basic attitude interpreted from the opposed point of view regarding the actual practice. Namely, this is the fact that the Kosmet Romanies did a lot of harm to the Kosmet Albanians before and especially during the NATO Alliance air-raids most surely under the protection of the Serbian Forces in any formation and with more or less compulsion. A somewhat different approach to the Romanies is found in the paper by Duška Anastasijević: "Two weeks after the retreat of the Yugoslav Armed Forces the rumors were quickly spread about the mass Romanies' participation in the crimes committed to the Albanian civilians. However, rarely anyone could be found any eye-witness who could tell in what way the Kosovo Romanies were involved in the crimes. Still, the rumors were sufficient to encourage a new wave of the

---

<sup>6</sup> In the last decade at Kosmet there was not one single intellectual to be found who would act outside the national ethnicity promotion; it was even less possible to publish something in the spirit of the civil concept. Every public gathering was imbued with Serbianism or "Great Serbia" mythomania. The contents of the journals and other publications, public debates, theatre productions as well as any other public occasion - everything was in the service of patriotism. Those who attended the infamous "counter-meeting" held on December, 12, 1996, were not forced to do it though there was some pressure as a means of warning. People went there to demonstrate the Great Serbia idea that the citizens of the rest of Serbia, especially of Belgrade and Niš, allegedly forgot. Therefore, the otherness in opinions among the same Serbian ethnicity could not be respected. Especially when they heard from their leader how much he "loves them"; it was unreal to expect that others could be noticed; the only ones who were given attention were those identical to them.

<sup>7</sup> In the analysis of the value-mental structure of the Serbian population under the general thematic title "The Power of Serbian Nationalism" Slobodan Inić commented upon the empirical data and concluded: "Thus, for instance, 64,1% of the citizens express xenophobic ideas pleading for "caution" towards the members of the other nations, while 31,8% are ready to express somewhat different, that is, slightly more open approaches towards the others. That Serbia will pay for, as it is paying now, bad education of its citizens in the future, but not only in the development sense but also from the standpoint of the possibility for preserving the international peace of the ethnically different communities and groups is also shown by the very fact that almost 70 percent of all of its citizens have only eight classes of elementary school completed! It is to this category of citizens that those having the most extreme views of the ethnic cleanness of the nation belong. Namely, 23 percent of such people share the belief in the ethno-hygiene while 42 percent of them have a xenophobic view of the other nations! For our purpose the most important fact is that the degree of nationalist and xenophobic ideas is (as said by S. Inić but it also stands for this paper as well) is in *high positive correlation with authoritarianism*." (See in Слободан Инић, *Пресказање капитализма*, "Хелсиншка повеља", 17/1999, p. 25).

<sup>8</sup> One of the many expressions of this approach is the most memorable one: "The only sin we made was that we were loyal to the Serbian state, that we paid the taxes and voted. That is why the Albanians hate us and want to expel us from Kosovo. They want an ethnically clean state." See in Душка Анастасијевић, *Роми на Косову*, "Хелсиншка повеља", 18/99, p. 16.

refugees and dislodgement of the population at Kosovo."<sup>9</sup>

However, the previous statement was later somewhat changed by further evidence about the events that really took place as written by Ljiljana Bogdanović in the paper entitled "Abuse and Violence over the Kosovo Romanies." Along with numerous examples of the testimonies of the Romanies themselves about some crimes they were forced to do (participation in the Serbian police and military formations, burials, robberies, thefts, etc.) the Kosovo Romanies also state that the same attitude towards them was taken by the members of the KLA after the Serbian forces' retreat.<sup>10</sup>

The first insistence on the negative attitude towards the Kosovo Romanies, as well as their forceful recruitment to take part in dirty jobs was not at all accidental let alone harmless since it was necessary to find some justification (namely, to conceive some scheme and give it an official dimension) for all kinds of the conflict behavior that occurred later - meaning at the time when the time came to "make things even." For this purpose all sorts of things were used including quoting some unsupported statements and insinuation on the part of Albanians that the Romanies were also the hostile otherness that should be judged in the same way as the Serbs.<sup>11</sup> Thus, propaganda, compulsion and abuse of the Romanies as a minority entity were used to achieve the general platform for action at the two levels, namely, 1) for the general negative attitude towards peculiarities and differences at Kosovo, that is, towards the Others and thus, *especially* towards the Kosmet Romanies, and, 2) for everyday practical aspect in the behavior of the Albanians at the "site" when the individuals were allowed to express - under the pretence of the "behavior impossible to control" as claimed by the newly-established authorities - even those individual (but manifested within organized groups) psychological traits needed to turn some people into what they really are, namely, into murderers, rapists, highjackers, thieves, arsonists, and, most of all, people who were ready to use and abuse the frustrated state of the members of their own ethnicity. Moreover, this is exactly what was practiced by the members of an ethnicity that knows how to defend itself as well as the lives of the

<sup>9</sup> Quoted from Душанка Анастасијевић, *Роми на Косову*, Хелсиншка повеља 18/1999, p. 16.

<sup>10</sup> It can be concluded from the above-mentioned paper by Lj. Bogdanović that, firstly, the Kosovo Romanies are outside any active participation in some of the concept of the exertion of power, but that they were in both the cases (Serbian - Albanian) regarding the expression of the will on behalf of the people that party which was as much abused and, even more, victimized. The abuse - under the threat of retribution unless they join the existing government and accept its suggestions for the given form of participation as well as victimization - as an unavoidable way of behavior towards them, regardless of the enforced degree and form of collaboration, was the basic pattern towards an extremely unorganized and unprotected ethnic minority that was historically kept as a second order minority. If there were the times when this could be seen more clearly then it was at the times of the NATO action against Yugoslavia. (Љилјана Богдановић, *Злоупотреба и насиље над косовским Ромима* – unpublished manuscript, the paper reported at the roundtable entitled "Directions of the Scientific and Social Engagement in Following the Romanies' Position" SANU, December, 1999).

<sup>11</sup> The words of Arsim Osmani, the citizen of Kosovska Mitrovica, should be a school example of the way the facts were fragmented in order to delude the public and to abuse the previous sufferings of the Albanians. That the Romanies were serving the Serbs in the dirtiest jobs is the main idea of this statement: "They loaded the corpses on the trucks and buried the Albanians in mass graves." This is a direct accusation that he can, apparently, document by a video tape. However, this cannot be seen on the tape: "However, what can be seen are random passers-by walking along a street in Mitrovica; there is not even one single scene of violence whereas by no means is there anything pointing to the fact that the actors of the crime are Romanies" (See in Душанка Анастасијевић, op. cit. p. 16).

family since its cultural matrix in the widest sense is based on the domination of the collective identity and strict coherence in action as springing from their clan-tribal conception of life<sup>12</sup>. Such staging of the Kosmet scene as a picture of complete chaos that still has its own logic is springing from the requirement set by the general level platform with a long-term goal, namely, to create as pure an ethnic environment as possible even at the expense of punishing the individual for some dirty crime on the part of the dominant - and at the moment in some power - rounded and harmonious ethnic community.

This is, therefore, newly-conquered and newly-created bipolarity as a legitimate reality of the two socially-directed pathways that never cross each other mostly because of the cultural matrices they belong to and in whose inter-space there is no room for proper and complete recognition of any special separate socially existing group including the Romanies from Kosmet. For, the basis from which a new exodus is threatening them as the "most unfortunate people" can be at the same time and in the widest possible sense regarded as the lack of the needed cultural milieu through which the Serbs and the Albanians base their attitude towards the world in which in a very suspicious civilization way the standards of the legal and political spheres as the dominant ones are practiced. Namely, the man's world and his attitudes towards the established values are created by both the conflicting parties as immature ethnic groups in order to 1) dominate over others, while 2) in their conception of their own responsibility (as well as individual one) they can hide behind idolatry, mythomania and megalomania.

How are we to understand the sufferings and additional victimization of the Romanies from Kosmet in our times regarding the fact that all this is only extended in the central part of Serbia? The proportion of their suffering comparing to the numerous population that used to live at Kosmet can also be clarified by means of numbers.

#### WHAT THE NUMBERS TELL US

Any attempt to find out the number of the Kosovo Romanies in the status of the "temporarily dislodged persons" - so that their position can be discussed in an argument-supported way - inevitably leads to insufficient number of facts or no facts at all. The same uncertainty is awaiting the scientists in any dealing with Romanies in general. That is why the statement made by Aleksandra Mitrović from the Institute for Criminological and Sociological Research, Belgrade and the member of the SASA Commission for the Study of the Romanies' Life and Customs turns out to be absolutely true, namely, that "one of the key problems lies in the fact that the greatest number of the Romanies' refugees is invisible since many of them are unregistered so that the humanitarian aid hardly ever gets to them."<sup>13</sup> Hence the data about the escaped Kosmet Romanies that were quite difficult to collect do not, by any means, represent anything else but only an *attempt* of some kind of systematization of the articles picked up from our daily press and

---

<sup>12</sup> Regarding the spiritual matrix of the Kosmet Albanians as well as the importance of the blood revenge, see more in Слађана Ђурић, *Освета и казна – социолошко истраживање крвне освете на Косову и Метохији*, Просвета, Ниш, 1998.

<sup>13</sup> In *Danas*, February, 22, p. 4

on the basis of the testimonies by the people who have, due to their profession, position or role they play, the opportunity to report on their partial insights.

#### EXODUS AT WORK, COMPLETELY

The statistics as well as many individual statements testify that at Kosmet before the NATO Alliance intervention there were 137,000 Romanies. Except for one report stating that the percentage of those who remained ranges between 15 and 20 percent, all other reports as well as the sum of the number of those who have settled in other municipalities undoubtedly confirm that the number of those who have remained in their homeland areas is considerably less.

The overall number of the dislodged Romanies regarding the places of their re-settlement is shown in the following Table:

	<b>Place of Re-settlement</b>	<b>Number of Persons</b>
1	Central Serbia	
8	Belgrade	30.000
4	Bujanovac	7.000
3	Vranje	7.000
2	Kragujevac	4.000
5	Kraljevo	500
7	Niš	20.000
6	Prokuplje	10.000
9	Vojvodina	10.000
10	Montenegro	25.000
11	Skopje	500
12	Italy	10.000
13	<b>Total</b>	<b>124.000</b>

Such migration could not be anything else but a forceful one. In that case it cannot be considered as an omnipresent category such as migration usually is. For it is by all means an exodus, that is, a systematically planned and carried out expulsion on the part of the present Kosmet authorities. Still, the crimes never get outdated.

The proof of the systematically-done harm to the Kosmet Romany population as well lies in the fact that up to February, 2000, in the region of Kosmet there were "75 to 300 Romanies' settlements or places completely destroyed, that is, from 14,000 to about 20,000 houses that used to belong to the Romanies were destroyed and levelled to the ground."<sup>14</sup> These are the data collected by the Society for the Endangered Peoples; it published extensive documentation about their sufferings at Kosovo; the Society was

<sup>14</sup> Dejan Marković, op. cit, p. 21. As for the way the reports from the scenes of mass crimes look like, consider this example: "Somewhat less than 100,000 Romanies from Mitrovica lived in groups in the settlement around the Fabrička street. Up to July, 7, there were hardly ten houses in the settlement spared from burning and robbery. In Mitrovica, priština as well as on the road to Gnjilane and more south to Macedonia there were heavy smokes and occasionally burning fires. 'Maybe some of these houses are Serbian' says the Albanian driver who knows quite well the road leading from Pristina to Macedonia, "but those ones must be Romanies'. The Serbs did not live there." (From D. Anastasijević, op. cit. p. 16)

otherwise formed in Germany and is active there.

#### PERMANENT EXTERNAL VIEW OF THE THINGS - AS AN UNAVOIDABLE CATASTROPHE

Every care shown to the refugees is going on at the level of biological survival. With the Kosmet Romanies everything is even more tragic. The titles of the newspaper reports that help us get an idea about the sufferings of the people near us are always more detached than the very drama staged by the life itself no matter how much they reveal the essence and shrewdly point to the problem itself.<sup>15</sup> The following few examples confirm that:

- "A Baby Died of Cold or Smoke",
- "What Does Montenegro Need Romanies for?",
- "Fire Destroyed One Life",
- "Romanies - the Most Jeopardized Ethnic and Social Group in Serbia",
- "Left to Themselves Until the Elections",
- "Living Conditions of the Romanies' Refugees - Terrifying"
- "Manipulations with the Romanies"
- "Revenge on Them Because of Slobodan"
- "A Bomb Thrown on the Romanies' House"

The contents analysis, as one of the possible research approaches, would easily show that none of these articles gives any strictly precise data, that it is always the matter of remarks and occasionally mentioned details. Not rarely is it possible to find the following kind of manipulation as this one: "The help that Damjanović (Jovan, Minister without portfolio in the Government of Serbia and President of the Romanies' Association of Serbia - remark by J. Ž.) distributed to the escaped Romanies was collected by the Serbian Radical Party"<sup>16</sup> - this is, we should stress, the famous Serbian solidarity humanitarian scene! In the same text it is said that the humanitarian aid comprised three tons of various goods but without mentioning the number of the refugees to whom it was distributed or the structure of the given help or any other necessary details.

If the above-mentioned quotation is taken as a typical one to be compared with any other one concerning any detail related to the refugee status of the Romanies that was written about, then we can see that, as a rule, many things are missing such as the exact number of the registered refugees, their structure regarding gender, age, health condition or especially the classification of children regarding their age or of the work able population regarding its qualification. For, it is upon these data that decisions are made about what particular groups or the whole refugee population is needed concerning humanitarian aid. In this way, however, even if some of the data are obtained everything

---

<sup>15</sup> I have never seen on any TV any refugee camp of the Romanies nor have I heard any confession by any of them. Neither was there any group story telling about the sufferings these people endured and what they now need the most. The question should be raised why television, as a more available and considerably influential medium, has failed to treat this problem more seriously and thus affect people's minds - this is not, by any means, pure omission!

<sup>16</sup> See in the paper *Danas*, January, 18, 2000



goes on without order or plan. The disorganization of people hit by misfortune makes their position even worse. Or, to put it differently, the lack of organization and solidarity on such unfortunate occasions cuts off the people who suffer from the society in a specific way making their life absolutely useless.

#### FORMS OF SUFFERING

Any attempt to make some logical classification of people's sufferings is made even more complicated due to the fact that many of the presumed forms merge into one or, for example, one particular form comprises more than it is usually regarded as a distinct form of suffering. Hence negative experiences as expressed in the Romanies' sufferings can be viewed in the following forms:

##### 1) *Discrimination*

- in distribution of food, shoes and other existential needs,
- in division of the Romanies into Orthodox and Muslims thus encouraging different ways of behavior according to their religious confession,
- in refusing to accept them into refugee centers,
- in medical care regarding religious or ethnic divisions,
- in enforcing them to do a particular kind of work regarding their ethnic or religious membership, and,
- in engaging adolescents in some jobs just because they are Romanies, etc.

##### 2) *Compulsion*

- to obligatory work (trench digging, building of embankments and road barriers, loading and unloading of trucks),
- to destroy other peoples' property
- to thefts and robberies (breaking into storages, warehouses, private houses, as well as "collection" of cattle in private yards and fields),
- to bury the murdered, tortured and in many other ways killed people, and,
- to mobilization (in police force, military operations and other jobs in these formations), etc.

##### 3) *Spreading Fear*

- verbal threat to keep silent about the jobs they were forced to do,
- taking photos at the moment when the goods were taken from some storage or warehouse,
- accusations told face to face that there are documents testifying about the committed crimes,
- physical attacks in the form of slapping in the face or not-so-serious beating up, and,
- short-time imprisonment, etc.

##### 4) *Abuses*

- beating by metal sticks, chains, sticks,
- arrests made without any reasons or proofs or on the testimony of someone whom the accused never actually meets,
- causing injuries on some parts of the body with knives or similar sharp blades in public places or at private property (in the house, before the members of the family), and,

- causing injuries on some parts of the body with knives or some other sharp blades in prison, etc.

5) *Robberies*

- taking household appliances,
- stealing cattle,
- stealing food,
- stealing jewelry, most of all of gold, and,
- stealing money, especially foreign currency, etc.

6) *Raping*

- for the slightest disobedience punishment by insult, beating and humiliation of the female part of the Romany population, and,
- under whatever pretence, sexual abuse of one or more women regardless of their age or presence of other persons, etc.

7) *Kidnappings*

- of person living in the same household,
- of male member of the family,
- of more members of one family, and,
- of female persons, etc.

8) *Murders*

- of particularly selected family members,
- of all family members,
- of parents,
- of one parent and a child, and,
- of children.

As for the last form of the Kosmet Romanies' tragedy, the things to be found out should concern the victim(s), the place and the time when the crimes were most frequently done, the number of the present witnesses at the moment of crime, the reasons and interpretation of the reasons why the murder took place, etc. All these aspects, regardless of the emotions the whole thing evokes, should be analyzed which would lead to the determination of the degree of irrationality of the people as well as of the parties involved on the whole, namely, of those who did such horrible things.

Certainly it cannot be only guessed who and in what way committed many kinds and forms of crime since there are already some proofs, testimonies, records and presented papers. The precision in these things is indispensable and it should not be violated by some casual reproduction; the only thing which is to allow is to repeat particular parts of the whole tragedy as a proof or confirmation of some thesis that has not been presented so far.

## CONCLUSION

The solution of the problem stated in the title, as we have tried to make evident, does not lie in singling out any of the well-known partial approaches. Or, before advocating for any of the partial approaches, it is first necessary to define more clearly the problems as well as the aims that impose themselves as indispensable regarding the explanation why a particular problem is being explored at all. This is especially important when dealing with

the Romanies' position and situation. For it is one thing to speak about the Romanies' fate from the historical and general-education aspect or to lament over their position; it is something else to set up a particular project having a definite aim to organize a practical campaign and different kinds of action in order to change the constitutional-legal status of the Romanies and thus mark the beginning of solving of our overall problems (since these are, undoubtedly, our problems since the Romanies' status, not only of those from Kosmet, is our burning problem as well). Hence, if the whole thing has to be made more accurate, it should be said that the first and basic problem of the Romanies is not, for instance, in the right to education or the number of teachers or school space, as said by Mr. Mile Savić, President of the Municipality Board of the Romanies' People's Party in Kraljevo.<sup>17</sup>

The contemporary solution of the Romanies' constitutional-legal position requires first of all the cutting of the constitutional-legal knot that binds us all together. For this reason I strongly support the formation of many non-government organizations with Romanies' members as well as their participation in other forms of coordination of the non-government organization sector of Serbia. I also expect much from the newly-formed Balkan Federation of the Romanies as well as the Commission for Finding Proofs of the Romanies' Sufferings; each of them, I hope, will contribute to the establishment of the civil society that should help solving problems of us all regardless of the ethnicity we belong to.

#### REFERENCES

1. Биљана Ковачевић-Вучо, *Косовска криза и људска права*, "Људска права" 1-2/98, p. 7-13.
2. Горан Башић, *Религија и савремени конфликти – случај Југославије*, Зборник радова, Охранити сање, Марибор, 1998, p. 214-223.
3. Дејан Марковић, *Косовски Роми у Немачкој*, "Хелсиншка повеља", 25/2000, p. 21.
4. Драгољуб Б. Ђорђевић, Драган Тодоровић, *Јавор изнад главе*, Комренски социолошки сусрети, Ниш, 1999.
5. Драгољуб Б. Ђорђевић, *Живети с Ромима*, Република, 234/2000, p. 21-28.
6. Душка Анастасијевић, *Роми на Косову*, "Хелсиншка повеља", 18/99, p. 16.
7. Љиљана Богдановић, *Злоупотреба и насиље над косовским Ромима* – необјављен рукопис, рад саопштен на Округлом столу "Правци научног и друштвеног ангажовања у праћењу друштвеног положаја Рома, САНУ, December, 1999
8. Слађана Ђурић, *Освета и казна – социолошко истраживање крвне освете на Косову и Метохији*, Просвета, Ниш, 1998.
9. Слободан Инић, *Прескакање капитализма*, "Хелсиншка повеља", 17/1999, p. 25.

---

<sup>17</sup> See the article entitled "Трепуштени сами себи док не дођу избори", *Данас*, March, 1, 2000, p. 16.

**SUDBINA ROMA KOSOVA****Jovan Živković**

*Razrešavanje problema, datog kroz naslov, nije u izdvajanju jednog od dosada poznatih pristupa. Ili, pre zastupanja bilo kog od pristupa podrazumeva, ponajpre, da se unapred i jasno definiše i ustraje na određenju njihovog statusa, što bi bio početak rešavanja ukupnih naših problema - a njihov status je nesumnjivo gorući problem. Kažemo naših problema, budući da je odgovornost za poigravanjem njihovim sudbinama u rukama onih koji drže "ključeve" u određivanju njihovog statusa. Taj početak mora da se ogleda u ozbiljnom pristupu i kategorizaciji stradalništva na Kosovu. Odnosno, ako ne dođe do vidnog poboljšanja u beleženju njihovog stradanja i zbrinjavanja, onda je, istovremeno, to nastavak dosadašnjeg licemernog ponašanja oficijelne normativne sfere ovog sistema.*

Ključne reči: *autoritarizam, totalitarizam, egzodus, stradanje, ksenofobija, diskriminacija.*