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Başvuruda bulundu. Kabul edildi.
Applied Accepted

Eser Geçmişi / Article Past: 09/02/2021 21/02/2021

Araştırma Makalesi

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21551/jhf.877480>

Research Paper

Orjinal Makale / Original Paper

The Conference of Bujan as a Foundation of the Statehood of Kosova

Kosova Devletinin Temeli Olarak Bujan Konferansı

Abstract

In April of 1941 the fascist allies attacked Yugoslavia and disbanded the country. At the time Kosova was part of the Yugoslav Kingdom, therefore the new invading forces occupied Kosova and later divided the territory into three demarcation zones: the German, the Italian and the Bulgarian zone. The paper analyses the beginning of the conflict among various occupying forces and their collaborators against the partisan units, and those who fought for the liberation of Kosova and for a solution to the Albanian case. The most prominent event of this period is arguably the Conference of Bujan, held on December 31st 1943 until January 2nd 1944, where the Albanian people expressed their will for Kosova to unify with Albania proper after the war.

Key words: The Second World War, Albanian organization, Conference of Bujan, the Resolution of the Conference of Bujan.

Öz

Nisan 1941'de faşist blokuna dahil olan devletler, Yugoslavya'yı dağıtıp parçalayarak işgal etmişlerdi. Yugoslavya'nın kaderini, kendi yönetimi altındaki Arnavut toprakları tarafından da yaşamışlardı, onlar üç işgal bölgesine ayrılmıştı: Almanlar, İtalyanlar ve Bulgarlar. Bu bilimsel makalede, yeni işgalciler ve işbirlikçileri arasındaki çatışmanın başlangıcını ve genel olarak Arnavut halkının ve özellikle de Kosova'nın ulusal sorununun kurtuluşu ve çözümü için arzusunu detaylandırmaya çalışacağım, bu nedenle Arnavutlar ana devlet ile olan Arnavutluk ile birlik olmasını talep ediyorlardı. İkinci Dünya Savaşı sırasında Kosovalı Arnavutların en önemli organizasyonu 31 Aralık 1943 ve 1 ve 2 Ocak 1944 Bujan Konferansıdır, bidirgesinde, diğer şeylerin yanı sıra, Kosova Arnavut halkının ve Dukagjini Ovası'nın savaştan sonra Kosova'nın anavatanına - Arnavutluk'a katılma iradesini özgür bir şekilde ifade etmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: İkinci dünya savaşı, Arnavut örgütü, Bujan Konferansı, Bujan Konferansı Kararı

ATIF: DOBRUNA ,Alban, "Kosova Devletinin Temeli Olarak Bujan Konferansı", *Tarih ve Gelecek Dergisi*, 7/1 (Mart 2021), s. (119-129)

CITE: DOBRUNA ,Alban, "The Conference of Bujan as a Foundation of the Statehood of Kosova", *Journal of History and Future*, 7/1 (March 2021), pp. (119-129)

Introduction

The Conference of Bujan took place at a time when the Second World War was at its most intense point, and when it became clear that the Allies were going to come out of the war victorious. The Allies had promised that after the war would end, they would take into consideration the legitimate request for self-determination as presented by the oppressed nations. In this regard, the region of Bujan also bore a symbolic meaning as it was positioned in the highlands that spanned from Kosova to Albania. It became a meeting place for both nations, Albanians and Serbs alike, where they came to an agreement to bring the inter-ethnic conflicts to a halt. The Conference of Bujan was organized in the *kulla* (traditional Albanian tower) of Sali Mani, who was a chieftain of Krasniqe, where the Headquarters of the National-Liberation Army of Kosova were stationed. The 49 delegates who participated in the meeting came from various Albanian regions. Among the participants there were nationalists, communists, democrats, patriots, representatives of the armed groups, representatives from the anti-fascist youth and representatives from the anti-fascist women's front. From a historical perspective, the conference took place quite at an appropriate political climate, which the delegates used to their advantage to express a legitimate act of their willpower for self-determination and unification with Albania. This marks an important turning point in the modern history of Kosova.

Historical background

In April of 1941 the Axis powers attacked Yugoslavia and disbanded the ruling government¹. As a result, the Albanian lands within the territory of Yugoslavia were also occupied. The Axis powers divided the Albanian lands in three occupied territories: the German, the Italian and the Bulgarian. The majority of Kosova's territory together with the north-western territories of Plava, Gucia, Rozhaja, Tutin, Ulcin and Tuz, as well as the northern Albanian territories including Tetova, Gostivari, Dibra, Kërçova, and Struga were included in the Italian occupied zone².

The German occupied territories included the region of Mitrovica, parts of which were Podujeva, Vushtrri and Novi Pazar, which were administered as part of Serbia under Nediç's reign. The fascist administration of Bulgaria incorporated parts of Skopje and Kumanovo, as well as a part of the town of Gjilan, Kaçanik, Vitia, Presheva and Bujanovc³. Although the unification of Albanian territories was completed under fascist rule, the unification in itself represented an important historical stride. The occupying powers decided that the local governance in Albanian

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- 1 Gjeçovi Xhelal, "Çështja Kombëtare Shqiptare në vitet e Luftës së Dytë Botërore", *Studime historike*, 3-4, (2005), p.147; Dezhgiu Muharrem, "Kombi shqiptar në planet strategjike të fuqive ndërluftuese gjatë Luftës II Botërore", *Studime historike*, 3-4, (2005), p.160; Lefter Nasi, "Kosova dhe problemi kombëtar në vitet 1941-1943", *Kosova*, 28, (2006), p. 213.
 - 2 *Arkivi Qendror Shqiptare (further on cited as: AQSH)*, Fondi (F). 266, Ministria e Tokave të Lirume, p.1-25; Kuadri i Personelit të Nënprefekturave: Dragash, Rahovec, Suharekë, Gjakovë, Istog, Drenicë, Plavë, Cucinjë, Rozhajë, Gjilan, Ferizoviq, Tetovë, Gostivar, Kërçovë, Strugë, Rekë, Carisver (Prespë e madhe); *AQSH*, F. 266, Ministria e Tokave të Lirume, V. 1943, Nr. 32, p.2: Koncept Mbretinija e Shqiptare Komisarjati i Naltë Civil për Kosovë, Dibër e Strugë. Prizren 29 gen 1943.
 - 3 Rexhepi Fehmiu, "Lufta e shqiptarëve për vetëvendosje e bashkim kombëtar gjatë Luftës së Dytë Botërore", *Shqiptarët gjatë Luftës së Dytë Botërore (Përmbledhje studimesh)*, (Prishtinë: Instituti i Historisë" Ali Hadri"-Prishtinë, Instituti i Historisë-Tiranë, 2014), p.136-137.

inhabited territories should be done by Albanians⁴, whereby the Albanian language was declared an official state language.

For the first time since the First World War, Albanian schools were reopened, and the use of national Albanian symbols was decriminalized. Albanian newspapers were also legalized as well as celebrating national Albanian days⁵. However, despite the new earned rights, the division of Kosova under three occupied powers was done so in order to economically exploit the lands and the people⁶.

Immediately after Kosova was occupied by German forces,⁷ new disagreements appeared between the occupying forces in terms of establishing a demarcation line, considering that each power wanted to claim larger territories within its occupied lands. Similar types of conflicts began to appear also among the local collaborators, of whom each wanted to expand the territories they governed under the guise of Axis occupation.⁸

What aggravated the situation even further was the formation of the so-called ‘Great Albania’ by the Italians as a response to the formation of “Great Serbia” by the Germans, and the formation of “Great Bulgaria” by the Bulgarians. The grievances between these nations deepened further⁹.

The Albanian people in general, and especially the Albanians in Kosova, aimed to liberate their lands and find a final solution to the national cause – which meant that the Albanians wanted to unify the Albanian territories with Albania proper. Although this was achieved later on with the help of the Germans, this was not done for the sake of Albanians, but rather because it suited the interests of Germans in establishing an Albanian resistance against the partisans and other hostile groups¹⁰. The former also wanted to exploit the natural resources of Albanian lands¹¹.

The situation of Kosova during the Italian and German occupation was dire, considering that both regimes were brutal and expressed this hostility towards the locals¹². During the Second World War a large number of Albanians was arrested, beaten and interned, which in turned caused the latter to lose faith in the German occupiers. The loss of support for the Germans also came about at a period when the Germans were losing tractions in the Eastern Front, and also because the National Liberation Armies of Yugoslavia and Albania were beginning to make a serious resistance against the occupiers¹³.

4 Karastojanov Stefan, *Kosova (Një analize gjeopolitike)*, (Shkup: Serembe, 2007), p.152.

5 Dervishi Kastriot, *Historia e Shtetit Shqiptar 1912-2005*, (Tiranë: 55, 2006), p.450; Duka Valentina, *Historia e Shqipërisë 1912-2000*, (Tiranë: Kristalina-KH, 2007), p.213.

6 Pllana Emin, “Vuçiterna me rrethinë në kuadrin e sistemit pushtues fashist 1941-1945”, *Kosova*, Nr. 7, (1978) p. 297.

7 Joanna Bourke, *The Second World War: A People’s History*, p. 104.

8 Jens Reuter, *Die Albaner in Jugoslawien* (München: Oldenbourg, 1982), p. 34.

9 *Ibid*, p.297.

10 *Ibid*.

11 Abdyl Tahir, “Shfrytëzimi i pasurive natyrore në Kosovë nga pushtuesit fashistë (1941-1944)”, *Kosova*, Nr. 7, (1978) p.151. Jozo Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941-1945: Occupation and Collaboration* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2001), 2, 149.

12 Hadri Ali, “Sistemi i pushtimit fashist në Kosovë (1941-1944)”, *Kosova*, Nr. 7, (1978), p.52.

13 Hadri Ali, *Lëvizja Nacional Çlirimtare në Kosovë 1941-1945*, (Prishtinë: 1971), p.190.

Communism was seen as a means to fulfill the most sublime wishes of humanity: an equal society, an ideal society which promoted the “end of history” – because it appeared there was not much more there could be achieved. However, in practice these approaches failed and many people who had previously pledged their belief in communism had retracted it. It must be added that communism remained relevant in the sense that it had a long history from the middle of the 19th century until the 60’s and ‘70’s of the 20th century.

Because of the history behind it, to ask from the Albanians in Kosova during 1941-1943 to organize within a united front with the Serbs (Yugoslavs) was quite difficult, and it depicted either a visionary idealism, naiveté or national treason. The three of these options were possible.

In 1941 some Albanian antifascists (communists) would posit the question of how was this ‘brotherhood and unity’ to be achieved with the Serbs, considering that the majority of the Albanians were wary of the crimes that the Serbs had committed against Albanians between the two world wars. Furthermore, it raised questions on what could be achieved, considering the genocidal plans furthered by the Serbian elite academic circles. The first of the communists who would ask this question was Emin Duraku. The opinion was shared thereafter by Meto Bajraktri and Zenel Sadiku as well. Later on, the same opinion was expressed by Ali Shukriu, who wrote a letter asking if the Albanian communists can write tracts and proclamations without using the word Yugoslavia in order for the Albanian people to be able to join the anti-fascist front.

The question raised by the Albanian antifascists was answered by the Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, whose stance was that “such a practice was not allowed”. Because of the stance displayed by the latter, there was a vacuum of Albanian recruits who joined the antifascist front in the years 1941-1943. A request that the name Yugoslavia ought not to be mentioned in documents urging the Slovenian people to join the antifascist front was proceeded and accepted by Edvard Kardelj in the beginning of 1942¹⁴.

Despite these unresolved delicate matters, the National Liberation front did not evolve as a proper communist movement, but rather as a movement that proclaimed liberty from fascism. This helped their cause in Kosova particularly, where national liberation councils were slowly beginning to be established. In a similar pattern, small groups and battalions began to be formed comprised of Albanian partisans. This resulted in the establishment of two levels of antifascism in Kosova – the councils which de facto represented an illegal governance and the partisan armed forces.

In its beginning the movement in Kosova was not very active, it only executed some small actions against communication lines and roads, in order to prevent the liberal movement of the incumbent forces¹⁵. The first partisan group named “Zejnel Hajdini” under the command of Xheladin Kurbajja and commissary Fadil Hoxha was formed in 1942¹⁶.

14 Bajrami Hakif, *Rëndësia historike e Konferencës së Bujanit (31. 12. 1943 dhe 1-2 janar 1944) në faktorizimin e Kosovës në LANÇ*, *Fejton* ne Radio Kosova e Lirë, 26/01/2016.

15 Gexha Qamil, “Demonstrat antifashiste në Gjakovë gjatë Lëvizjes Nacionalçlirimtare (1941-1943)”, *Kosova*, Nr.2, (1973) p.123.

16 Hoxha Vahide, “Aradha partizane “Zejnel Hajdini”, *Kosova*, Nr.9-10, (1980/81) p.108.

Organizing and inciting the youth to join the National Liberation movement in Kosova was inspired by patriotic sentiments, which were honed by very specific local conditions: the separation of Kosova in three occupying zones, the demagogic policies used by the occupying forces included the illusion that a part of the Albanian masses shared in regards to liberation, as well as the general anti-Yugoslav sentiments.¹⁷ Despite these obstacles the National Liberation Front in Kosova managed to win the trust of the people and establish itself among Albanian families.

Several partisan platoons were established in Kosova during the period 1941-1945. They eventually progressed to partisan battalions numbering more recruits. These armed units waged guerrilla warfare, although scarcely ever frontal warfare, against the occupying force, although they lacked sufficient strength to pose significant damage to the enemy. The frontal war began to be used later on in 1944, when the battalions numbered more recruits. The increase in partisan support and recruits is mostly attributed to the establishment of national liberation councils which helped in creating a support base among the locals from the partisans.¹⁸

The movement paid special importance to the inclusion of women in the anti-fascist war. The initial supporters were the wives and sisters of members of the National Liberation War¹⁹. Some of them later became symbols of resistance and patriotism, such as Sabrije Vokshi known mostly by her penname Bija; Ganimete Tërbeshi, Hyrie Hana and many of their fellow women in arms²⁰. Regarding this, the academician Ali Hadri wrote “The anti-fascist women’s movement in Gjakova became an important factor among the cadres in the National Liberation Movement in Gjakova, and in Kosova generally. Once women started participating in the movement, the emancipation of the Albanian woman began to take place. This phenomenon has a special historical importance”²¹.

The Conference of Bujan

After the movement strengthened its military and political position, and after it became apparent that the end of the war was nearing, Fadil Hoxha proposed to call on the Conference of Bujan on December 31st 1943, and January 1st and 2nd 1944. The meeting was to be held in the Highlands of Gjakova, which was the headquarters of the National Liberation Movement in Kosova. The delegates at the conference declared, among other things, that the Albanian people of Kosova and the Valley of Dukagjin express their will to become liberated and that after the war, Kosova was to be unified with Albania proper²².

The idea to establish the National Liberation Regional Council for Kosova came about in December of 1942, after the first AVNOJ held in Bihac. The idea was also supported by Boro

17 Kate Hudson, *Breaking the South Slav dream : The rise and fall of Yugoslavia* (2003), p. 66.

18 Hubert Neuwirth, *Widerstand und Kollaboration in Albanian 1939-1944* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2008), 27.

19 Kojqini Sulltane, “Zhvillimi dhe masivizimi Frontit Antifashist të Grave të Kosovës (1941-1945)”, *Kosova*, Nr. 6, (1977), p.116.

20 Rizvanolli, Masar, “Sabrije Vokshi-Simbol i patriotizmit të gruas shqiptare”, *Kosova*, Nr.33/34, (2010/11) p.22.

21 Hadri, Ali, *Gjakova në LNÇ*, (Prishtinë: Bashkësia e institucioneve shkencore të KSA të Kosovës, 1974), p.91-92.

22 Murtezai, Ekrem, *Fadil Hoxha siç e njoha unë*, (Prishtinë: Shtëpia botuese “Libri shkollor”, 2011), p.79.

Vukmirovic, Secretary of the Party, as well as Ramiz Sadiku. This idea came to fruition in February of 1943, however after the two aforementioned partisans were murdered, the process came to a halt. After Italy capitulated in September of 1943, the idea of a Temporary National Liberation Council started circling around.

In an article published in the newspaper “Liria” authored by Fadil Hoxha, the latter rebuffed the establishment of the Second League of Prizren, and informed the public about the forthcoming Conference of the People of Kosova and Dukagjini Valley, which was to surpass in importance the League of Prizren itself, which was held in 1878²³. The decision to organize the Conference was taken on the VI Council of the Regional Committee of the Party for Kosova and Dukagjini Valley, which was held in the mountains of Sharr on 3-5 November 1943²⁴.

The Conference of Bujan was organized by the leading powers of the Anti-fascist Movement in Kosova. Before the first Conference of the Regional Committee of the National Liberation Movement in Kosova, Svetozar Tempo warned that the conference might set in motion the fall of the political and military leadership in Kosova, which was being influenced by the nationalist clique, whereby he was accusing the partisans in Kosova that “they were following the Greater Albania pathway”²⁵, which is arguably a chauvinist assertion.

By the end of 1943 and the beginning of 1944 there were some developments in the National Liberation Movement. Its leadership had decided to call on the Founding Conference of the National Liberation Council of Kosova and Dukagjini Valley. The Albanians of Kosova were convinced that the Communist Party of Yugoslavia could not offer them a solution for their national cause. In these circumstances, the Conference was considered as the first necessary step to solve this problem. Because of the general political situation, there were many hurdles that had to be overcome in order to organize the Conference.²⁶

There were some nationalist groups who declared themselves ready to establish and participate in this Conference, by reasoning that the Communist Party of Yugoslavia would guarantee them the opportunity to solve the Albanian question on their own. There were also difficulties to overcome when it came to the stances held by the Serbian and Motnenegrin communists in the Regional Committee of Kosova²⁷. The Conference initiated its work on December 31 of 1943 until January 2nd 1944, which in history is known as the Conference of Bujan²⁸.

It was agreed upon that participants of the Conference were to represent all Albanian regions in Kosova. The Conference was held in the village Bujan of the Gjakova Highlands, considering

23 Repishti, Sami, “Rezoluta e Bujanit- 2 janar 1944 një analizë”, në *Studime historike*, nr. 1-4(1995), viti XLIX(XXXII), (1997) p.90.

24 *Ibid.*

25 Shatri, Muhamet, *Kosova në Luftën e Dytë Botërore*,(Prishtinë: Instituti i Historisë-Prishtinë, 1997), p.19.

26 Jens Reuter, *Die Albaner in Jugoslawien* (München: Oldenbourg, 1982),p. 38–39.

27 Historia e Popullit Shqiptar, vëll. IV. 2008: p.141.

28 *Agjencia Shtetërore e Arkivave të Kosovës*, Fondi: Komiteti Krahinor i Lidhjes Komuniste të Kosovës, Fondi i Shtabit të Këshillave Nacionalçlirimtar, Viti 1944, Nr. i kutisë 23, Nr i Inv. 1329, Rezolucion nga Konferenca e parë e Këshillit Nacionalçlirimtar për Kosovë e Rrafsh të Dukagjinit e mbajtur më 31 dhjetor 1943 dhe 1 e 2 janar 1944, Nr. 1329, p.1-7.

that there were no free zone in Kosova yet²⁹. The Conference was held in the tower of Sali Mani, the village leader of Krasniqe, which was situated within the Regional Headquarters of the National Liberation Army of Kosova and Dukagjini Valley as well as the Headquarters of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.

There were 61 invited participants in the Conference, from which only 49 participated. Aside from the region of Plava and Gucia, which was considered as part of Kosova, invited were also members of other Albanian territories outside of Kosova, which proves that there was not a complete agreement on how to proceed with the Albanian question³⁰. Therefore, it became evident that Kosova was placed in a field where Yugoslav and Serb actors were in charge, and not the Albanians³¹.

The English representative Handsy was also invited, who declared that his country will be an ally of the National Liberation War. Xhevdet Doda, a delegate of the Kosovar-Macedonian Brigade, gave the opening speech. The commander of the Headquarters of the National Liberation Army in Kosova, Fadil Hoxha, also gave a declaration during the conference. After the opening speech and the declarations, the Honorary Presidency of the Conference was elected, which was composed of Roosevelt, Churchill, Stalin and Enver Hoxha³².

After the discussions were closed, the delegates proceeded to approve the documents of the Conference, which included the Resolution of Call to the People of Kosova³³. All 48 delegates, Albanian, Serbian and Montenegrin alike, represented their base organizations and political parties (communists) and partisan formations³⁴.

The political platform of the Resolution of Bujan established its political goals, which were as follows:

Kosova and Dukagjini Valley were inhabited mainly by Albanians

The Albanians of Kosova and Dukagjini Valley, as now and the past as well, want to unify with Albania proper

The most optimal way for Albanians to unify with Albania was the joint war together with other nations of Yugoslavia (not Albania) against the occupier and their servants.

The Albanian people of Kosova and Dukagjini Valley will have an opportunity to establish their own fate as a result of their war against the occupier.

The decision of its own fate includes the right for self-determination until secession.

This right is guaranteed by the National Liberation War of Yugoslavia³⁵, of Albania, and

29 Palnikaj, Mark, *Konferenca e Bujanit 31 dhjetor 1943-2 janar 1944*, (Tiranë: Grand Prind, 2006), p.5; *Historia e Popullit Shqiptar*, vëll. IV 2008: 142.

30 Shatri, Muhamet, *Kosova në Luftën e Dytë Botërore*, (Prishtinë: Instituti i Historisë-Prishtinë, 1997), p.142.

31 Lalaj, Ana, "Konferenca e Bujanit, 31 dhjetor 1943-2 janar 1944, një analizë e rivlerësuar", në *Studime historike*, nr. 3-4(2011), viti LXV(XLVIII), (2012)p. 33.

32 Palnikaj, Mark, *Konferenca e Bujanit 31 dhjetor 1943-2 janar 1944*, (Tiranë: Grand Prind, 2006), f. 6.

33 *Historia e Popullit Shqiptar*, vëll. IV 2008: p.p.142-143.

34 Dervishi Kastriot, *Historia e Shtetit Shqiptar 1912-2005*, (Tiranë: 55, 2006), p.510.

35 *Agjencia Shtetërore e Arkivave të Kosovës*, Fondi: Komiteti Krahinor i Lidhjes Komuniste të Kosovës,

in the international arena, it is guaranteed by the Great Anti-fascist Allies (The Soviet Union, England, the United States) as promised by the Atlantic Charter and the Conference of Moscow and Teheran³⁶.

The conference closed its proceedings and was consequently transformed into the National Liberation Council.

As a result, all the delegates of the Conference became members of the National Liberation Council for Kosova and Dukagjini Valley, which represented the highest authority of power in Kosova. The Directorate of the Council was also established which was comprised of 9 members. The Director of the Directorate was elected Mehmet Hoxha, Vice-Director was elected Rifat Berisha and Pavle Jovicevic³⁷.

In the circumstances presented during the war (1943) the Resolution of the Bujan Conference, combined with the war waged by the Partisan and anti-fascist units, the Albanian people of Kosova and Dukagjini Valley ensured that they have the right to rule their lands because they were legally and legitimately fighting with the Anti-Hitler Coalition. This position also went against that held by the Chetniks, who in their programs foresaw the eradication of the Albanians and they subsequently allied with fascist coalitions. This stance would also be taken by Serbian communists such as Milovan Djilas, Rankovic and Tempo, who politically strongly opposed the decisions taken at the Conference of Bujan. In line with their workings, the Albanians would soon become less of an important actor when it came to the work of Albanian anti-fascists.

The National Liberation Conference of Kosova and Dukagjini Valley elected its final Directorate, which was to serve as a provisional government. The elected members of the Directorate were: Mehmet Hoxha as president, Rifat Berisha Vice-President, Pavle Jovicevic as Vice-President, Zekeria Rexha as member; Xhevdet Doda, Milan Zecar, Fadil Hoxha, Ali Shukriu, Hajdar Dushi as members.

In conclusion, the Conference of Bujan marks an important period in the history of Albanians of Kosova. The Conference represented the will of the people of Kosova and its alignment on the side of anti-fascist Allies. However, it was the interference of the General Headquarters of the war of Yugoslavia those which made it impossible to act and blocked the implementation of the decisions taken at the Conference of Bujan. The decisions of the Conference of Bujan confirmed that the territory of Kosova and Dukagjini Valley were largely inhabited by Albanians and that in this regard they should unify with Albania proper, by expressing their will naturally.

Fondi i Shtabit të Këshillave Nacionalçlirimtar, Viti 1944, Nr i kutisë 23, Nr. i Inv. 1329, Rezolucion nga Konferenca e parë e Këshillit Nacionalçlirimtar për Kosovë e Rrafsh të Dukagjinit e mbajtur më 31 dhjetor 1943 dhe 1 e 2 janar 1944, Nr. 1329, p.1.

36 Repishti Sami, "Rezoluta e Bujanit - 2 janar 1944 një analizë", në *Studime historike*, nr. 1-4(1995), viti XLIX(XXXII), (1997) p.90.

37 Historia e Popullit Shqiptar, vëll. IV 2008: p.p. 142-143. For general partisan warfare in Yugoslavia and the development of the National Liberation Front, see also Klaus Schmider, *Partisanenkrieg in Jugoslawien 1941-1944* (Hamburg: Mittler, 2002).

Conclusions

After establishing itself as a military and political power, the National Liberation Movement in Kosova proposed to hold a Conference which was to officially establish the Movement as a government in action. The Conference was held in the village of Bujan in the Highlands of Gjakova on December 31st 1943 until January 2nd 1944. The Conference expressed the will of the people of Kosova and its positioning in alignment with the anti-fascist Allies. The Resolution of Conference, among other matters, also stressed that the will of the people of Kosova and Dukagjini Valley was that they were to be unified with Albania proper after the war.

The unanimous agreement, as proven by archival documents, echoed the will to foster tolerance and inter-ethnic cooperation between the nations in Kosova. The conference also had a positive impact on the image and popularization of the National-Liberation Movement in Kosova, and especially in convincing Albanians to join its ranks³⁸. The expression of will for self-determination until secession at the Conference of Bujan was in complete accordance with international acts, defined by them as a principal right of nations, and it was also in agreement with the documents released by the highest organs of the Anti-fascist National-Liberation front of Yugoslavia.³⁹ This meant that the matters discussed at the conference were far sighted, as they are a testament for the braveness of those who participated in the meeting.⁴⁰

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