# STUDIE / ARTICLE

# Neighborly Relations in Kosovo and Metohija between the Two World Wars – Examples of Family Cooperatives (*porodične zadruge*)<sup>1</sup>

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# Neighborly relations in Kosovo and Metohija between the two world wars – examples of family cooperatives (*porodične zadruge*)

In Kosovo and Metohija, the patriarchal way of life prevailed between the two world wars, so the population was organized into the traditional tribes, fis, and family cooperatives. These communities represented economic and social units in which each member had a specific role, among other things, in preserving and nurturing traditions and customs. In Metohija, Albanian family cooperatives had up to 80 or even more members. There were also dual-faith cooperatives (Catholic and Islamic) in which special attention was paid to customs and religious obligations. The members of the family cooperative formed one blood community, kindred (fis), and members did not marry each other as long as there was an awareness of their common origin. Under the influence of agrarian reform, industrialization, and modernization, but also the aspirations of the members of the cooperative

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for personal income, these family cooperatives were subdivided into smaller families. This affected the size of their property holdings, which became smaller. The awareness of kinship among Albanians was much stronger than among Serbs, so the cooperative remained among them longer. In the years preceding the Second World War, due to the process of modernization, many family cooperatives broke up into smaller families.

**Keywords:** neighborhood; Kosovo and Metohija; family cooperatives; tradition; interwar period 1918–1941

#### Introduction

In the period between the two world wars (1918–1941), a patriarchal system of social relations prevailed in Kosovo and Metohija, which expressed the population's moral understandings, social and economic organization, and artistic feelings, which they expressed through poetry and decorative arts. The most obvious characteristic of this patriarchal regime was the social and economic organization in the form of tribes, fraternities (*bratstva*), and family cooperatives (*porodične zadruge*).<sup>2</sup>

In my paper, I will deal with family cooperatives in the period between the two world wars, analyzing the topic on the basis of scholarly historiographical and ethnographic studies, travelogues, statistical materials, and the period press. Grigorije Božović was one of the most renowned Serbian interwar writers, and his travelogues are important for researchers studying the interwar period. Božović's stories mainly focus on Kosovo and Metohija, but he also deals with Macedonia. Rebecca West's *Black Lamb, Gray Falcon* is an important travelogue of Yugoslavia, and it also covers everyday life in Kosovo and Metohija. Two Englishwomen who traveled in the Balkan Slavic countries in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Georgina Muir Mackenzie and Adelina Paulina Irby, challenged prejudices about the Slavs as a "wild" people and introduced the English to a people that most knew nothing about. Edit Durham is also a notable travel writer, and she especially became known for her anthropological observations about the life of Serbs and Albanians from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. (However, some Serbian historians believe that after visiting the Albanian territory she became a lobbyist in support of

<sup>2</sup> Jovan CVIJIĆ, Balkansko poluostrvo i južnoslovenske zemlje: osnove antropogeografije (Beograd: Marso, 2011), p. 122.

Albanian independence).<sup>3</sup> The ethnological books and papers about Kosovo and Metohija by Tatomir Vukanović, who concentrated on the history, folklore, and culture of inhabitants of Yugoslavia in general and the Kosovo and Metohija in particular, are another indispensable source. Atanasije Urošević was a Serbian geographer and ethnologist who made a great contribution to the study of the history of Kosovo and Metohija with his studies of the ethnic structure, ethnic processes, settlements, villages, and families in these regions. Branislav Nušić was a highly respected writer and consul in Bitola, Skopje, Thessaloniki, Serez, and Pristina, so his writings (ethnography and personal diaries) have also been very important for my research. Adam Pribićević was a publisher, writer, and politician. His book From Gentleman to Peasant shows his daily life as a settler in Kosovo and Metohija. Vladan Jovanović's recent research focuses on southern Serbia and the period between the two world wars, relying on archival material from Serbia and the region. From the statistical sources, I should single out the results of the population census that were significant for the structure of the population in this area. Press like the Southern Review (Južni pregled) and Vardar gave us significant data for the daily life of the population.

This paper is divided into several sections to provide a logical structure for readers. In the first part, which discusses family cooperatives, I will analyze their presence, number of members, prevalence, significance, and the differences among them. I will also examine categories of members within these cooperatives and their roles in the household. At the end of this section, I will discuss how and why these cooperatives began breaking up. I will also analyze the smaller families that emerged from the cooperative households. In a special section, I will provide a brief analysis of Albanian *fis* in Kosovo and Metohija in this period and their mutual relations. I will dedicate one section to domestic life, housekeeping, and hygiene as important aspects of each household's living conditions, and there I will analyze the way of life, the types of houses, the conditions in which people lived, and also their social connections. The final section is dedicated to the modernization of houses and living conditions, because the way of life began to change in the years approaching the Second World War, although the modernization process proceeded slowly because the population's mindset was closed to novelties.

<sup>3</sup> Aleksandar RASTOVIĆ, "Meri Daram o Srbima," Istorijski časopis 51/2004, pp. 129–155.

#### Family cooperatives

Blood relatives were considered members of the same family, and they formed cooperatives. The family cooperative was one of the remnants of the traditional clan system of the Serbian people. Several generations descended from a common ancestor lived in compounds, where collective property, collective production, and use of goods and social equality of all members, which was guaranteed by custom, were preserved.<sup>4</sup> Family cooperatives were still prevalent in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and they persisted into the 1930s in Kosovo and Metohija (cooperatives in Turkish *kalabaluk* and in Albanian *shpijanik*).<sup>5</sup>

The sources generally agree that cooperative life was better preserved among Albanians in Metohija, where there were Albanian cooperatives with large numbers of members. Milenko Filipović mentions that in Istok, in 1931, there was an Albanian cooperative comprising over 80 members who were able to marry each other.<sup>6</sup> Around Peć and Djakovica some of the Albanian cooperatives had 90 members each.<sup>7</sup> Mirko Barjaktarović states that in 1940 the Tahir Shehua family cooperative from the village of Planeja near Prizren had about 100 members who lived in five houses with thirty rooms.<sup>8</sup> The average number of members in Serbian cooperatives in Kosovo and Metohija was around 15. In the mountain villages of Stari Kolašin in 1933 the Serbian cooperatives were better preserved than in the lower villages, and they averaged 25–30 members. However, there were also exceptions among Kosovo Serbs. According to Mirko Barjaktarović, in the village of Labljana the cooperative of Dimitrije Stojanović Borgović had 93 members in 1932.<sup>9</sup> Atanasije Urošević also provides an example from 1938 in which Serbs had slightly more family members than Albanians: in the Sirinićka župa region there was an

9 Ibidem, pp. 328–353.

<sup>4</sup> Vidosava NIKOLIĆ-STOJANČEVIĆ, *Etnološka proučavanja Srba u Metohiji* (Leposavić: Institut za srpsku kulturu – Priština, 2003), pp. 11–27.

<sup>5</sup> Mitar VLAHOVIĆ, "Etnološka promatranja na Kosovu polju," *Južni pregled* 12 (decembar 1930), pp. 574–577.

<sup>6</sup> Milenko S. FILIPOVIĆ, *Različita etnološka građa sa Kosova i Metohije* (Beograd: Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti, 1967), pp. 50–52.

<sup>7</sup> Petar VLAHOVIĆ, "Etnološke odrednice Kosova i Metohije," in Kosovo i Metohija u svetlu etnologije: zbornik radova, ed. Mirjana MENKOVIĆ (Beograd: Etnografski muzej – Muzej u Prištini: Centar za očuvanje nasleđa Kosova i Metohije – Mnemosyne, 2004), pp. 220–228.

<sup>8</sup> Mirko BARJAKTAROVIĆ, "O porodičnim zadrugama na Kosovu i Metohiji," in *Kosovo i Metohija u svetlu etnologije: zbornik radova*, pp. 328–353.

Albanian family cooperative that had 33 members, and a Serbian one with 42. Until 1934, there was a huge cooperative in this area (the Serb Durlević family's cooperative in Drajkovac, which had 106 members); however, it split that year and ended up with 99 members. The Durlevićs came from the tribes of Šalja, Beriša, and Krasnići. Some interesting details about them are mentioned in the magazine *Vardar*. They spoke Serbian, but pretended to be Albanians, emphasizing "I am a Serb, but Šalja." No administration could "impose Serbism on them, because there was no administration on Shara": "It was a completely autonomous part of Yugoslavia in which the whole world is a native." When a clerk or district chief came to the village, it was an event. The Durlevićs had 45 hectares of land, which they had not acquired through agrarian reform, and they did not even believe that they would get it (they said "This is Kosovo"). They had their 200 sheep, a mill, a forest, a church, and a cemetery. The part of the service of the part of t

The population of Kosovo and Metohija considered family cooperatives to be very important. Their birth rate was high, so it can be assumed that they felt it was better to raise large numbers of children at home within the cooperative. Mirko Barjaktarović also draws this conclusion when he points out that a family with few members was called a "solitude" (*samotinja*).<sup>12</sup> He also tells readers that family cooperatives were closed, that they kept their members and traditions, and he describes the duties assigned to each member. For Albanians, the cooperative was "a small state that guarded its borders, had its own customs, and where anyone who could go to war was a soldier." Immovable property (houses, other buildings, and land), as well as livestock, and money and debts were held in common. Barjaktarović states that each member received what he needed (food, clothing, shoes), and smokers also got tobacco from the cooperative property.<sup>14</sup>

An interesting phenomenon were dual-faith cooperatives, which consisted of members of the Catholic and Islamic faiths, because some members had been "Turkified" in the past and had kept their faith (Milisav Lutovac noted such a case

<sup>10</sup> Atanasije UROŠEVIĆ, *O Kosovu: gradovi, naselja i drugi antropogeografski spisi* (Priština: Narodna i univerzitetska biblioteka "Ivo Andrić", 2009), pp. 240–242.

<sup>11</sup> Vardar, 4 January 1934, p. 12.

<sup>12</sup> Mirko BARJAKTAROVIĆ, "O porodičnim zadrugama na Kosovu i Metohiji," pp. 328–353.

<sup>13</sup> Archive of Serbia Belgrade (furthermore AS), Fund Security Information Agency, folder 112, Mirko BARJAKTAROVIĆ, *Život i običaji Arbanasa od dolaska Turaka do naših dana*.

<sup>14</sup> Mirko BARJAKTAROVIĆ, "O porodičnim zadrugama na Kosovu i Metohiji," pp. 328–353.

in 1936 in the Metohijan village of Kosurić). This is also confirmed by Mirko Barjaktarović's research. He states that in households like this, there was exceptional attention to the customs and religious obligations of those of other faiths, primarily because they were close relatives, and also because of their shared economic interests. 16

In each family cooperative, members were assigned responsibilities according to their ages, and they also had special names or titles in accordance with their roles. In his research, Tatomir Vukanović shows us the titles and divisions of work and obligations within the cooperative. At the head of the cooperative were the host and the hostess. This elder managed all the adult men from the cooperative. He took care of the house, organized household chores, and his family. Then there were names in the family for men and women by age. They called newborns, infants, and small children "crazy." A "child" was 5 to 9 years old. From the age of 10 to 15, youths were called "boy" or "girl." From 16 to 18, a man was a "boyfriend" and a woman was a "girl" (for marriage); a "groom" was a man when he proposed to a girl and he planned to marry her within a year, and then he was a "husband" after their wedding. A "begged girl" was the one who had been given the betrothal ring, and a "bride" bore that name for a year after entering into marriage. She became a "wife" after she gave birth to children. After the age of 50, a man became an "old man" (Gnjilane and Sredačka župa).<sup>17</sup>

In their study of villages, using Suvi Do, Denda, and Dželetović as examples, Denda and Dželetović-Ivanov show us shows us the strict gendered division of work in the family cooperative. These were very tiring duties because of the large number of family members in the house, and there was almost no time for rest. The organization of work was determined by the older members of the cooperative. Men did physically harder jobs, and the women were housewives working in shifts. Their housework included preparing food, making clothes, and giving birth and raising children. Women did not engage in field work, but they did garden chores and in many cases also worked with the poultry and livestock. They also picked fruit, harvested grain, and cut lawn grass, and hay and clover. They carried water from wells, often from neighbors' homesteads, because not every house had its own. They used a lard-based soap for washing laundry, which they made using soda

<sup>15</sup> Milisav LUTOVAC, *Gora i Opolje: antropogeografska ispitivanja* (Beograd: Srpska akademija nauka, 1955), p. 23.

<sup>16</sup> Mirko BARJAKTAROVIĆ, "O porodičnim zadrugama na Kosovu i Metohiji," pp. 328–353.

<sup>17</sup> Tatomir VUKANOVIĆ, Srbi na Kosovu, I (Vranje: Nova Jugoslavija, 1986), pp. 223–225.

ash. The women sewed and made their own clothes, and also mended them. They got up early, and in the evening, they lit kerosene lamps and went to bed late. In winter, they pickled cabbage, dried cheese, prepared butter by putting milk in a "stick" (churn) and stirring until they got butter. They kneaded bread in a wooden vessel called *naćva*, and baked it in ovens built from bricks in which *tala* (corn) or straw was burned. They usually baked five pans of bread at a time. They rarely visited women in other households, because they did not have enough time to rest. When it was market day, they went shopping, but only if they could also sell some of their own products. <sup>18</sup>

Women had many jobs in the house and strictly defined obligations in life. A female child was "someone else's burden" or "someone else's bone" because from the moment of her engagement, she belonged to her husband's home and family, and the girl's family had no obligations to her (except in the case of her husband's death). From the moment of marriage, a woman was obliged to contribute with her work, and to give birth and raise children, but she did not have the right to appropriate what she produced, or even the children she gave birth to and raised. Female children did not have the right to inherit property, because they moved to another house upon marriage. The women in the family cooperative did not have the right to make decisions, and obedience was expected from them without discussion. After the division of the cooperatives this began to changing: husbands consulted with their wives on various issues, but the wives still lacked any right to decide. In such a traditional environment, the role of a woman was reduced primarily to the role of a mother, so it's logical that only a very few women did not participate in childbirth. During her trip to Kosovo and Metohija, Rebecca West concluded that because these women were destined to give birth and raise children, they paid little attention to themselves and their appearance. She describes how she was very impressed by the "beautiful young woman" she met in Priština, in a clean dressing room, but "she seemed somewhat neglected because she forgot she had to save her womb."19

As in any patriarchal society, as a rule, children had to respect their parents. Tatomir Vukanović describes that the host could punish his children, but they were not allowed to "raise a hand" against him, and this also applied to a married son if they lived together in a community.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Petar DENDA – Pavle DŽELETOVIĆ-IVANOV, *Suvi Do* (Beograd: Odbor za proučavanje sela SANU, 1993), pp. 37–39.

<sup>19</sup> Rebeka WEST, *Crno jagnje i sivi soko: putovanje kroz Jugoslaviju* (Belgrade: Beogradski izdavačkografički zavod, 2000), pp. 672–673.

<sup>20</sup> Tatomir VUKANOVIĆ, Srbi na Kosovu, I, pp. 223–225.

The patriarchal cooperative kept and nurtured folk tales, charms, curses, oaths, toasts, riddles, sayings, question-asking games, and proverbs, as well as its customs and beliefs. Milisav Lutovac gives the example of the people in Gora preserving their traditions, especially singing songs. They sang when they left and when they returned from work in the fields. The women sang when they knitted and embroidered handicrafts. The inhabitants of Gora had a very developed cultural and social life, and all the songs were a reflection of their way of life; that is, they sang about going to work abroad (*pečalba*).<sup>22</sup>

The disintegration of family cooperatives was influenced primarily by the agrarian reform and colonization in Kosovo and Metohija that began after the Balkan Wars and was definitely regulated by laws passed in the 1930s, but also by the strengthening of the aspirations of individual members of the cooperative to dispose of their personal earnings independently. We can also see data on the breakups of family cooperatives reflected in census data, which can be deduced by the reduction of the average household size (while the number of households was growing). The number of households in the territory of Kosovo and Metohija in 1921 was 84,889, and in 1931 it was 108,761 (in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia the number of households in 1921 was 2,347,879, and in 1931 it was 2,709,309).<sup>23</sup> In addition to family members, in 1921 and 1931 all persons who lived in the household were counted, regardless of their relationship with the elder.<sup>24</sup> The disintegration of family cooperatives can also be observed when analyzing the size of the properties, which were becoming smaller over time: ownership structure data from 1931 indicates that 37.72 % of farms had holdings with an area of 2 to 5 hectares.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Zoran VUKADINOVIĆ – Milovan J. BOGAVAC, *Srpska prosveta i kultura u Kosovskoj Mitrovici* (Priština: Institut za srpsku kulturu – Prizren: Učiteljski fakultet, 2001), pp. 149–156.

<sup>22</sup> Milisav LUTOVAC, Gora i Opolje: antropogeografska ispitivanja, pp. 43-44, 54-55.

<sup>23</sup> *Definitivni rezultati popisa stanovništva od 31 marta 1931 godine*. Knj. 1, Prisutno stanovništvo, broj kuća i domaćinstava (Beograd: Opšta državna statistika, 1937), p. XI; *Vardar*, 9 July 1933, vol. 99, p. 7.

<sup>24</sup> Vladimir SIMEUNOVIĆ, Stanovništvo Jugoslavije i socijalističkih republika: 1921–1961: ukupno stanovništvo, polna i starosna struktura (Beograd: Savezni zavod za statistiku, 1964), p. 11, 31–32, 36.

<sup>25</sup> In Kosovo and Metohija, out of 64,900 households, 3,100 were without land; i.e., up to 0.51 hectares; 4,000 with 0.51 to 1.0 hectares; 9,300 with 101 to 2.0 hectares; 24,300 with 2.01 to 5.0 hectares; 16,800 with 5.01 to 10 hectares; and with over 10 hectares there were 7,400 families. Thus, 62.6% or two thirds of agricultural households lived on a property with less than 5 hectares (Momčilo ISIĆ, "Sitnoposedništvo kao kočnica ekonomske modernizacije Srbije u prvoj polovini XX veka," in *Srbija u modernizacijskim procesima 20. veka*, ed. Latinka PEROVIĆ – Marija OBRADOVIĆ – Dubravka STOJANOVIĆ (Beograd: Institut za noviju

During the division of the family cooperative, first all the property was divided into equal parts (land, house, garden, buildings, and household), and finally the debt was divided. In Prizren Podgora, the division of cooperatives was determined by the host, and during the division, godparents were also shared.<sup>26</sup> Barjaktarović states that in cases where the division was difficult, they called older neighbors, and individuals were apportioned parts of the property by gambling.<sup>27</sup> Atanasije Urošević provides an example of one family cooperative – Durlević – in Drajkovac. When that large family had to divide in 1934, they called on prominent Serbs to help them, but when this attempt did not succeed, they invited Albanians, who contributed to the division.<sup>28</sup>

Even when family cooperatives were divided, the members mostly still lived in the same building, divided by partitions.<sup>29</sup> Milenko Filipović confirms in his research that even where cooperatives began to decline, family relations remained as they had been before in cooperatives when it came to the division and distribution of labor, inheritance, order of marriage, eldership, and so on. The son did not leave his parents' house to go somewhere else in the village, but stayed there until his parents died. Then he decided whether to remain there or move away. The community sharing their property and labor was so important that often the families that made up the cooperative also shared houses and kept all or part of the entire property and thus created a "cooperative".<sup>30</sup> This confirms how strong the patriarchal relations were, as well as the traditional preservation of family ties, even though modernization tried to penetrate and there were pressures to create new, smaller families.

In his studies, Milenko Filipović states how new groups with their own customs emerged from family cooperatives, and he highlights the differences between Serbs, Turks, and Albanians. In the Gornja Morava region, if one cooperative was divided, new families would emerge from it. They became "sections" (*odeljaci*); these sections formed one blood community or clan (*kabil*, *fis*, relatives or kinship),

istoriju Srbije, 2018), pp. 101–111; Nikola VUČO, *Privredna istorija Jugoslavije* (Beograd: Visoka škola političkih nauka, 1962), p. 6; Ali HADRI, *Kosovo i Metohija u Kraljevini Jugoslaviji* (Beograd: b.i., 1969), pp. 57–58.

<sup>26</sup> Milenko S. FILIPOVIĆ, Različita etnološka građa sa Kosova i Metohije, pp. 50–52.

<sup>27</sup> Mirko BARJAKTAROVIĆ, "O porodičnim zadrugama na Kosovu i Metohiji," pp. 328–353.

<sup>28</sup> Atanasije UROŠEVIĆ, O Kosovu: gradovi, naselja i drugi antropogeografski spisi, p. 243.

<sup>29</sup> Vidosava NIKOLIĆ-STOJANČEVIĆ, Etnološka proučavanja Srba u Metohiji, pp. 11–27.

<sup>30</sup> Milenko S. FILIPOVIĆ, *Etničke prilike u Južnoj Srbiji* (Skoplje: Štamparija "Južna Srbija", 1937), pp. 451–457.

and members did not enter into marital relations as long as there was an awareness of common origin. Each family had its own plot in the cemetery. Members of one clan who lived in the same village were usually grouped together and their houses formed one *mahala* (in Albanian *maala*, in Turkish *takim*) which was named after the clan itself. Serbs had fewer houses in their extended families because of difficult circumstances and because many of them moved out of the area. Among the Turks, the kinship was more narrowly defined than among Serbs and Albanians (up to three degrees *laube*). Albanians had large families. The practice of polygamy as well as the high birth rate contributed to the strengthening of the Albanian clans.<sup>31</sup>

#### Albanian fis

When Albanians from northern Albania arrived in Podrima they continued to adhere to their customs and forms of organizations. One of these were the landscape units, and another was the barjak (flag), a territorial military unit. The barjak contained several fis that could be, but were not necessarily blood relatives. Among Catholic Albanians, it was *vlaznia* (brotherhood). The term *ndami* (sections) had the same meaning; i.e., those created by division. A narrower family or families who had a common origin and lived together in the same village in the same neighborhood were said to be a "garden" (bašta), but this term also referred to more extended families; i.e., branches that lived in different villages. Galap (Arabic "surname") was also used to refer to the fraternity. All those who were of the same lineage from the same ancestor and bore the same family name were considered mutual relatives (kusherin). There were many Muslim Serbs in Podrima who considered themselves members of the Gash tribe, so they called the Muslims of that tribe kusherins (relatives).32 The Muslim clans mostly took the names of the great Albanian fis, so they were considered to be connected to the fis in the Albanian homeland. Atanasije Urošević states that the largest number of Albanian fis were in the areas north of the Sharr Mountains and Skoplje Montenegro; Albanians had immigrated there from Skadar Malesia, Luma and Mirdita, an area characterized by this form of tribal organization in northern Albania.<sup>33</sup> In Kosovo and Metohija

<sup>31</sup> Ibidem, pp. 451-457.

<sup>32</sup> Milenko S. FILIPOVIĆ, *Različita etnološka građa sa Kosova i Metohije*, pp. 52–56; Tatomir VUKANOVIĆ, *Srbi na Kosovu*, I, pp. 223–225.

<sup>33</sup> Atanasije UROŠEVIĆ, *Gnjilane i okolina* (Kosovska Kamenica: Lokalna kancelarija Zajednica – Beograd: Rantes – Gnjilane: Knjižara "Sveti Sava", 2001), p. 77. For more on *fis* in Albania,

in the period between the two world wars, the Albanian *fis* ranked according to their power were: Krasnići, Gash, Beriš, Sop, Šalja, Tsač, Krue Zi, Bitić, Klimente, Škrelje, Kastrati, Hoti, Mzi, Društin, Merturi, and Kuči.<sup>34</sup> Larger groups of the same *fis* were in Gnjilane Karadag (Berisha), Gnjilane Golak (Krasnići), and the southern foothills of Kopaonik towards Mitrovica and Vučitrn (Shala). Krasnići also took place around Kačanik, although there were other *fis* among them. Later, the *fis* lost its legal significance, and only their names survived. The tribe belonged to the nearest family, and new opportunities made the feelings of solidarity that developed within a village and between families different in nature than they had been before.<sup>35</sup>

Atanasije Urošević states that within Albanian *fis*, members did not marry each other, although in some places this rule was violated, especially because Sharia allows fourth-degree relatives to marry (for example, one's paternal uncle's brother and maternal uncle's sister). There was a ban on endogamy in the village even when not all the residents were from the same *fis*;<sup>36</sup> however, this ban on endogamy could not be maintained among Albanian Catholics, because they avoided marriage with Serbian Catholics and could marry even within the family itself when kinship was more distant than the fourth degree. For the same reasons, endogamy within the genus also existed among Catholic Serbs.<sup>37</sup>

The fis was said to be "above faith," and members helped each other and were obliged to take blood revenge. Each fis had its own chief, whom they called baryaktar or aga. That title was not hereditary, and usually these were men of great moral authority who were consulted by people not only from his own fis, but also from others. Among the Albanians in the vicinity of Prizren and in Metohija, some prominent people and some of the chiefs were considered senior chiefs (plakudheut, plaku e ketij dheut, parish or provincial elder). Their kind of leader was not elected, but, like the baryaktar or aga, he was a man of great moral authority and his title was not hereditary. A man like this was approached for advice by people from

customs, and picturesque descriptions of Albanian life at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, see: Mary Edith DURHAM, *The Burden of the Balkans* (S.I.: Kessinger Publishing, 2010).

<sup>34</sup> Tatomir VUKANOVIĆ, *Drenica: druga Srpska Sveta Gora: antropogeografska i etnološka razmatranja na terenu i u narodu vršena 1934–1937.godine* (Priština: Muzej: Narodna i univerzitetska biblioteka, 1998), pp. 129–139.

<sup>35</sup> Atanasije UROŠEVIĆ, *Gornja Morava i Izmornik: antropogeografska ispitivanja* (Beograd: Narodna štamparija, 1931), pp. 126–135.

<sup>36</sup> Idem, O Kosovu: gradovi, naselja i drugi antropogeografski spisi, pp. 80-82, 240-242.

<sup>37</sup> Idem, Gornja Morava i Izmornik: antropogeografska ispitivanja, pp. 126–135.

his own *fis* as well as from those outside it, especially when "it came to blood" or dying, division of property, disputes over the land and other serious matters. These leaders adhered to the Law of Leka Dukadjini.<sup>38</sup> Milenko Filipović gives an example of Prenk Tair from the village of Dolja in Has, who had such a reputation among the inhabitants of Podrima; without his participation no trial of Catholics could be conducted in the Đakovica, Peć, or Prizren districts, but his reputation declined because he once received a bribe and approved of the kidnapping of a girl; and soon after this he died (1938 or 1939).<sup>39</sup>

The Serbs who became Albanians bore the names of the fis who had influenced them to convert to Islam or to become Albanians. The clans and fraternities were very branched. The Krasnići, for example, were not only in northern Albania, but also in Metohija, Drenica, Kosovo, and Gornja Morava. Each fis bore the name of the one from the home area that had been its ancestor; that is, the name of the fis in which the ancestors became brothers. This means that the descendants of Albanianized Serbs and Romani, as a rule, bore the names of original Albanian fis (Gash, Berish) because their ancestor had placed himself under the protection of a certain fis or entered the fis that had the strongest influence in converting him to Islam or convincing him to become Albanian.<sup>40</sup> They completely identified with these clans and adopted their characteristics (way of dressing, behavior etc.) Due to the fact that in Kosovo and in the surrounding areas the fis also celebrated slavas (celebrations dedicated to a particular saint), the opinion arose that members of the same fis are all those whose slava was the same. This assumption was not only adhered to when people who had converted to Islam entered the fis, but it was passed on to the Serbs who remained in Orthodoxy. Thus, the Nočići Serbs in Plementina thought they were Krasnići because they celebrated Vrače; the Ćosići in Mirač were counted among the Gashi because they celebrated Saint Paraskeva's Day, etc. It is interesting that Orthodox Romani in some villages were also tied to certain fis. In Glogovac, some Romani pretended to be members of Shala, and some pretended to be members of Kliment. This affiliation was not based on the *slava* they celebrated, nor on the reliance on their neighbors, but "it is possible that the Albanians gave it to them because of their miserable appearance, because for the Kosovo Albanians they are the poorest tribes in northern Albania."41

<sup>38</sup> See more in: Kanon Leke Dukađinija (Podgorica: CID, 2011).

<sup>39</sup> Milenko S. FILIPOVIĆ, Različita etnološka građa sa Kosova i Metohije, p. 59.

<sup>40</sup> Idem, Etničke prilike u Južnoj Srbiji, pp. 487-491.

<sup>41</sup> Atanasije UROŠEVIĆ, O Kosovu: gradovi, naselja i drugi antropogeografski spisi, pp. 366–370.

Tatomir Vukanović states that during the conversion of Serbs to Albanian *fis*, it was not known whether a ceremony was held, while a religious rite (*kurban*) was performed among Albanians and a great feast was held.<sup>42</sup>

#### Housing and hygienic conditions

The basic form of the house in Kosovo was a ground floor house (in Gnjilane *dol-ma*) that had two sections with a porch (*ayat*) in front of them (the Moravian type of house), and there were also a smaller number of two-story houses (Vardar-type houses). They were mostly made of wood and covered with mud, while the houses made of hard material (brick or stone) were located in places that were connected to the administrative centers by roads. Roof tiles were the main covering material, <sup>43</sup> and later those who had been in America (only Orthodox) covered their roofs with sheet metal. In the description of her journey through Peć, Mary Durham tells us that "most of the houses are built of rubble and mud and they are all real shanties." By the Second World War, houses like these gradually disappeared, and the buildings lost their function, because family cooperatives disintegrated, giving way to houses where the changes were most often reflected in the addition of the entrance porch. <sup>45</sup>

Milisav Lutovac gives an example of interior furnishing of a house in Ibarski Kolašin. The houses were in two parts – a "house" with a fireplace, and a "room". The fireplace was only later replaced by a tin stove, the so-called "French." The furniture and utensils were very simple and sparse. There was a fireplace in the middle of the room, and chains held a hanging cauldron above it. The fireplace later moved from the middle to the wall. There was a "pot" (*crepnja*) and some kind of oven called "peer" (*vršnja*) for baking bread by the fireplace. Next to the fireplace were low, small, three-legged stools. On the wall was a box for salt (*soljarnik*) and a *lojčarik* for cutlery. At one end, there were *naćve* for flour and bread mixing. There was also a bed and a trunk in the room. If the bed was made of planks and had its

<sup>42</sup> Tatomir VUKANOVIĆ, Drenica: druga Srpska Sveta Gora, pp.129–139.

<sup>43</sup> Milenko S. FILIPOVIĆ, Različita etnološka gradja sa Kosova i Metohije, pp. 30–35.

<sup>44</sup> Meri DARAM, Kroz srpske zemlje (Beograd: Slobodna Evropa, 1997), p. 246.

<sup>45</sup> Ljiljana TOJAGA VASIĆ, "Prilog proučavanju seoske arhitekture severnog dela Kosova", in *Kosovo i Metohija u svetlu etnologije: zbornik radova*, ed. Mirjana MENKOVIĆ (Beograd: Etnografski muzej – Muzej u Prištini: Centar za očuvanje nasleđa Kosova i Metohije – Mnemosyne, 2004), pp. 305–317.

feet driven into the floor it was called a *tronj*, and if it was bought from a carpenter and movable then it was called a "bed". In the vicinity of Prizren straw was placed on the bed, and it was covered with a sheet of hemp (*penjava*) or a quilt made of leather (*plja*). Towards the bed in the wall was a *dolap*, a recess with a door for holding food and drinks. In Kosovo, there were porches where individual families in the cooperative could sleep, called *klijet*, *klet*, *ižina*, *zgrada*, *vajat*, or *ćiler*. There was not supposed to be a fire on the porch, and if a fire was lit there it was a sign that the married family member had separated from his parents.<sup>46</sup>

Atanasije Urošević discusses the differences between Serbian and Albanian courtyards, and describes the Muslim gardens, whose beauty he emphasizes. The area where the house and other buildings in Kosovo were, was called *obor* (*dvor*, *avlija*). There was a thick, high fence around the barn with spikes placed on top, and Albanians covered their walls mud and reeds as well as placing stakes and spikes on top. There was a garden in one part of the yard. The Albanians had doublewinged gates with a small door – *kapidžik*. Two doors led from the yard to the street a large one to let cars and cattle through and a smaller "door" (*vratnica*) for the family. In the vicinity of Prizren there was a type of two-story house with an open balcony facing toward the yard, as in Povardarje. Describing family cooperatives, Mirko Barjaktarović states what was in the yard that could be used by all members of the cooperative. The facilities included cattle pens, a grain barn, a fruit dryer, a well or a pump, a place where work tools stand, a corn basket, a bread bakery, a place for wood, and two toilets (male and female). As

Ljiljana Tojaga Vasić, describing the rural architecture of the northern part of Kosovo, compares Serbian and Albanian houses and comes to the conclusion that the differences were not great. In Metohija, she says, there was no difference between Albanian and Serbian houses. These were one-story buildings, mostly made from stone, and later from brick, due to the family arrangement and for better security. There were only doors on the ground floor and small windows with heavy wooden shutters on the floor above it. As mentioned above, the yard around the house usually had a high wall or fence around it. There were few side buildings, and usually everything was kept in the house. The ground floor of the house served as a cattle barn. From there, stairs led to the first floor, where there was a "house"

<sup>46</sup> Milisav LUTOVAC, *Ibarski Kolašin: antropogeografska ispitivanja* (Beograd: Srpska akademija nauka, 1954), pp. 97–102.

<sup>47</sup> Atanasije UROŠEVIĆ, O Kosovu: gradovi, naselja i drugi antropogeografski spisi, pp. 13–14.

<sup>48</sup> Mirko BARJAKTAROVIĆ, "O porodičnim zadrugama na Kosovu i Metohiji," pp. 328–353.

with a fireplace, sleeping quarters, a guest room, and a dairy or a pantry. Muslim houses differed only in their internal layout. They had two rooms: a *selamluk* and haremluk, and where there was only one room, it was divided by kanats - movable partitions. Every Muslim house had a *hamamdzik*, a small bathroom. This was also the case in Catholic houses, where the floorplan was the same as in Muslim houses. Upstairs, attached to the outside, was a toilet made of planks, with a small window. Households had very few items in them. Vessels used for food could be wooden, earthen, or metal (those that went into the fire), and there were also vessels made from gourds, such those that held water, wine, or brandy. In the women's chambers, there were chests that held their dresses. Those chests were brought into the household by brides. The same was with the Serbs. Bedding was kept on top of these crates during the day. As a decoration, large potatoes, apples, corn cobs, etc. were hung around the room. There was a large bed- the tronj, a chest - sandak - for some of the clothing and linens, jewelry, and money, and some other clothing items were hung on large wooden pegs nailed to the wall.<sup>49</sup> Branislav Nušić describes the details of the decoration in Serbian houses, including the fact that each one had a religious section on one wall. Cups, plates, nice soap, and apples or quinces were lined up on the shelf. On the east side, in a niche in the wall, there was an icon, picture of a household saint, and rosaries, and a lamp was lit there every Sunday and on holidays.50

Mirko Barjaktarović, describing the Albanian houses in Djakovica, states that only rich people had a separate guest room or even special guest house. Small children slept in cradles made of boards, and the carpenters in Djakovica put various patterns on them with oil paints. In the villages around Djakovica, the guest house was a special ground floor building that had a bedroom and an entrance hall. The guest room was spacious. Next to the wall were pillows, and the floor was covered with straw; only in some houses was there a bed. In the middle of the wall was a chimney, a fireplace, which was made with patterns designed e. g. with bricks.<sup>51</sup>

Town houses were usually located along the street line; only Muslims built them set back from it. The newer type of town houses had an additional floor above the street, and this second floor was set at a right angle to the ground floor and had

<sup>49</sup> Ljiljana TOJAGA VASIĆ, "Prilog proučavanju seoske arhitekture severnog dela Kosova," pp. 305–317.

<sup>50</sup> Branislav NUŠIĆ, Kosovo (Priština: Panorama, 2007), pp. 94–100.

<sup>51</sup> Mirko BARJAKTAROVIĆ, Život i običaji Arbanasa od dolaska Turaka do naših dana; Milenko S. FILIPOVIĆ, Različita etnološka građa sa Kosova i Metohije, pp. 35–40.

arched windows and doors, but this was quite rare in relation to small inconspicuous houses with 2–3 sections.<sup>52</sup> Atanasije Urošević gives an example of the very typical houses in Kosovska Mitrovica, which included a house with rooms on a first floor that was set over a square base. Many such houses also had warehouses on the ground floor with arches on the doors and windows.<sup>53</sup> Tatomir Vukanović states that such houses also existed in other parts of Kosovo and Metohija. They had a basement, in the middle of the house there was a kitchen, about two or three rooms for the family, and one large guest room. Next to the house was a *ćenef* (toilet), which in wealthier households had a window and a brick canal with running water (Peć, Prizren). The houses mostly had dirt floors, but later plank flooring was laid down. In the town houses, a Pirot or Persian rug was placed on the wooden floor. There were curtains on the windows decorated with homemade lace. The interiors and exteriors of the houses were cleaned, washed, and painted on religious holidays.<sup>54</sup>

Social relations imposed on the Albanians in certain parts of Kosovo and Metohija the construction of residential building "towers" (*kullas*), with massive stone walls, square foundations, and low roof structures, in locations that could not be approached unnoticed.<sup>55</sup> The tower was built as a kind of fortress and was a national and religious symbol of the Albanians. Towers were particularly prominent in Drenica, Junik, Klina, Istok, and Peć (also in Montenegro, Macedonia and Turkey).<sup>56</sup> Grigorije Božović wrote "When Arnautin<sup>57</sup> crosses the threshold, he wants to be safe as if he were in a real fortress, he wants to rest carefree and flee from there only when he hears a cannon."<sup>58</sup> Božović also describes them as "aristocratic

<sup>52</sup> Atanasije UROŠEVIĆ, O Kosovu: gradovi, naselja i drugi antropogeografski spisi, p. 285.

<sup>53</sup> Ibidem, pp. 343-345.

<sup>54</sup> Tatomir VUKANOVIĆ, Srbi na Kosovu, II, (Vranje: Nova Jugoslavija, 1986), pp. 11-30.

<sup>55</sup> Petar VLAHOVIĆ, "Etnološke odrednice Kosova i Metohije," p. 223.

<sup>56</sup> Sahar RASSAM, *Traditional Houses in Western Kosovo: A Descriptive Survey of Kullas in the Municipalities of Istok and Klina* (unpublished paper) https://s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/media.archnet.org/system/publications/contents/3336/original/DPC0961.pdf?1384774307 (accessed on 19 April 2023).

<sup>57</sup> Arnautin is an old fashioned term for an Albanian (particularly north-Albanian) in Serbian and Montenegrin sources, as well as a Turkish ethonym used to denote Albanians in the Ottoman Empire.

<sup>58</sup> Albanian towers are considered monuments of residential architecture, and they were especially prevalent in the western part of Metohija. All of them were built in the 19<sup>th</sup> centuryt by wealthier people, and some have been preserved to this day (22 registered among cultural monuments after the break-up of socialist Yugoslavia). See: Branislav KRSTIĆ, *Kosovo izmedju istorijskog i etničkog prava*, (Beograd: Kuća Vid, 1994), p. 48.

castles." Georgina Muir Mackenzie and Adelina Paulina Irby, who traveled through Slavic countries under Turkish rule, write about towers in their travelogues. They also describe them as defensive and that many brothers of the same parents along with their own families live in them. Ljiljana Tojaga Vasić describes the interior of these houses. The windows on the ground floor were narrow slits, and the furniture within was simple. The tower had a barn on the ground floor, where large animals were housed, and on the first floor above there was a kitchen, a pantry, and a toilet (*cenef*). If the tower had two floors above the ground floor, on the highest one there was a common men's room. The entrance was an opening in the floor through which the steps from the barn passed. The opening was a lid that closed when guests entered, so it thus gained the function of part of the floor. The most common furniture was *minderluks* (low seating beds), mattresses, and carpets. One type of fireplace was used for heating, and later it was sometimes replaced with a cast iron furnace.

Mirko Barjaktarović states that with the expansion of the family cooperative, other buildings started to be built next to the tower. As the family cooperative grew, a new house would be added in the yard, ground floor or upstairs with new "apartments," a more spacious women's room, a larger kitchen, the necessary food storage, and a women's toilet. All rooms had windows, and often massive wooden shutters.<sup>62</sup>

Sources generally agree that the settlers<sup>63</sup> brought better cultural and hygienic habits. Regarding hygiene, personal cleanliness was poor, morning washing was

<sup>59</sup> Grigorije BOŽOVIĆ, *Slike Kosova i Metohije (putopisi i reportaže)* (Priština: NUB "Ivo Andrić", 2006), pp. 47–53.

<sup>60</sup> Georgina Mjur MEKENZI, *Putovanje po slovenskim zemljama Turske u Evropi* (Beograd: Luxphoto: Rotary club, 2007), p. 158.

<sup>61</sup> Ljiljana TOJAGA VASIĆ, "Prilog proučavanju seoske arhitekture severnog dela Kosova," pp. 305–317.

<sup>62</sup> Mirko BARJAKTAROVIĆ, "O porodičnim zadrugama na Kosovu i Metohiji," pp. 328–353.

<sup>63</sup> Settlers were colonists from the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (from 1929 the Kingdom of Yugoslavia), who were settled in Kosovo and Metohija on uncultivated state land, plots abandoned by emigrants, and land confiscated from outlaws (*kachaks*). The greatest priority was given to the colonization of Metohija due to the national interest, economic needs of the population and public safety. Settlement was not easy. Adam Pribićević, one of the most famous settlers (brother of the famous Yugoslav politician Svetozar Pribićević), describes in his book *From Gentleman to Peasant* the difficulties he had to make arable land. Also, because of security, he believed that it took more courage to go to Kosovo than to go to America. At the end of 1939, the population included 9.2 % colonists. Nevertheless, colonization changed the image of Kosovo and Metohija in terms of demographic, ethnic, cultural and national aspects. See more: Božica

superficial, and bathing was rare, except for among the settlers who paid the most attention to order and cleanliness. Bed linen was washed when it got dirty. They changed clothes once a week, and this clothing was mostly tattered and in patches. Many suffered from scabies. <sup>64</sup> Mitar Vlahović writes that in Sredačka Župa the food was simple and badly prepared, using a lot of salt and spices, and meat and dairy products were not sufficiently represented. Bread was the most common staple of the diet, and it made mostly from non-wheat flour, or sometimes from several types of grain. <sup>65</sup> Stojan Čupković emphasizes that the diet of the settlers was a little better and more generous, so the food improved a little, except for among the Albanians. <sup>66</sup>

# Modernization of houses and living conditions

The construction of modern buildings proceeded quite slowly. The buildings were built mostly on private initiative, but not all were built according to hygiene regulations. The prevalence of poor domestic hygiene varied by geographical locality, and some of the habits were associated with the traditional patriarchal habits and traditions, and could reflect the household's economic power. Vladan Jovanović's research analyzed the results of a survey from the beginning of the 1930s, which showed that in the area of the Vardar Banovina 95 % of peasants did not whitewash their houses, 40 % slept with cattle in the same room, and 80 % did not know about soap. He concludes that almost 32 % of urban households in the Vardar Banovina

SLAVKOVIĆ MIRIĆ, *Političke, ekonomske i kulturne prilike na Kosovu i Metohiji 1929–1941* (Beograd: Prosveta – IP Pricip, 2018), pp. 277–301; Nikola VUČO, *Poljoprivreda Jugoslavije*, (Beograd: Rad, 1958); Milivoje ERIĆ, *Agrarna reforma u Jugoslaviji 1918–1941* (Sarajevo: "Veselin Masleša", 1958); Aleksandar PAVLOVIĆ, "Prilog o ekonomsko-socijalnom položaju kolonista na Kosovu i Metohiji 1918–1941," *Arhiv* 1–2/2009, pp. 91–104; Milovan OBRADOVIĆ, *Agrarna reforma i kolonizacija na Kosovu: 1918–1941* (Priština: Institut za istoriju Kosova, 1981); Vladan JOVANOVIĆ, "Tokovi i ishod međuratne kolonizacije Makedonije, Kosova i Metohije," *Tokovi istorije* 3/2006, pp. 25–44; Đorđo KRSTIĆ, *Kolonizacija u Južnoj Srbiji*, (Sarajevo: Đ. Krstić, 1928).

<sup>64</sup> Tatomir VUKANOVIĆ, Drenica: druga Srpska Sveta Gora: antropogeografska i etnološka razmatranja na terenu I u narodu vršena 1934–1937.godine, pp. 161–162; Vardar, 6 November 1935, p. 1.

<sup>65</sup> Mitar S. VLAHOVIĆ, Sredačka župa (Skoplje: Skopsko naučno društvo 1931), pp. 28–38.

<sup>66</sup> Stojan ČUPKOVIĆ, *Dvadeset godina naše kolonizacije u Srezu Nerodimlje na Kosovu* (Beograd: Centralni higijenski zavod 1940), pp. 507–509.

lived in unhygienic buildings. <sup>67</sup> Radosav Purić and Kosovka Ristić researched housing conditions in Kosovo and Metohija and came to the conclusion that the houses were too small to accommodate such a large number of family members. The wooden ceilings were infested with bed bugs, and the rooms with earthen floors harbored fleas, so the occupants protected themselves from the parasites using magic or ash. The houses were usually damp all the way up to the roof – and the roofs were leaking. The yards were full of garbage, ponds, and cesspits. In Priština, there was 9.9m<sup>2</sup> of air per capita in such houses (for comparison, prison cells in Yugoslavia had to have at least 25m<sup>2</sup> of air per convict).<sup>68</sup> In Little Kosovo (Malo Kosovo), there was about 6.7 m<sup>2</sup> of living space per inhabitant in houses, so if a household had over six members, each had 40-50 m<sup>2</sup>. <sup>69</sup> Adam Pribićević describes the anguish of a small peasant room "which was used for a kitchen, a bedroom, a salon, an office, a dining room, a shelter for brooding hens, newly hatched chicks, newborn calves until they dry, and so on, and is regularly packed with things and people."<sup>70</sup> In the Vardar magazine, they concluded that Serbs and Montenegrins accepted changes and the process of modernization faster than other residents of Kosovo and Metohija.<sup>71</sup>

#### Conclusion

From the sources I used in the work, I can conclude that family cooperatives survived for a long time thanks to the patriarchal way of life that was maintained in Kosovo and Metohija in the period between the two world wars. By combining travelogues with ethnographic and historiographical literature, I have described family cooperatives, their way of life, and the slow process of household disintegration. The family cooperative represented a large number of generations who had a common ancestor and lived together. According to sources, they had a large estate and a large number of members (up to 80 or more). Each family cooperative had its own business organization, which helped it to survive for many years. However, due to the agrarian reform and the aspirations of some members of the cooperative

<sup>67</sup> Vladan JOVANOVIĆ, *Vardarska banovina 1929–1941* (Beograd: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, 2011), pp. 548–551.

<sup>68</sup> Radosav PURIĆ, "Stambene prilike u Južnoj Srbiji," Južni pregled 10 (1936), pp. 324-330.

<sup>69</sup> Kosovka RISTIĆ, Malo Kosovo: antropogeografska studija (Priština: s.n., 1971), pp. 183-188.

<sup>70</sup> Adam PRIBIĆEVIĆ, Seljak (Zagreb: B. Miletić, 1936), p. 5.

<sup>71</sup> Vardar, 9 July 1933, vol. 99, p. 7.

to manage their own earnings, the cooperative were eventually divided. Thus, smaller households were created and the estates were fragmented. Cooperatives among Albanians survived for a long time, and *fis* survived as a special organization. The *fis* is a community whose members are linked to each other as kin through the same patrilineal ancestry and live in the same territory. It has been translated in English as "tribe" or "clan." The houses and conditions in which the members of the cooperative lived were not satisfactory, especially in the countryside. According to the sources I used, the settlers brought much better cultural and hygienic habits to the area of Kosovo and Metohija. The influence of the nearby towns spread to the villages, but it went very slowly, because the peasants were hesitant in accepting the new way of life; still, the changes were certainly visible. The developments were halted by the outbreak of the Second World War, which definitely changed the way of life of the population of Kosovo and Metohija. But even today, we come across examples of Albanian family cooperatives and membership in clans or tribes.

#### **SUMMARY**

The family cooperative, in Kosovo and Metohija, represented a large number of generations who had a common ancestor and lived together. It represented the expression of the patriarchal and traditional way of life. The members of the cooperative had a large estate and a large number of members. In Metohija, Albanian family cooperatives had up to 80 members or even more. These communities represented economic and social units in which each member had a specific role, among other responsibilities, in preserving and nurturing traditions and customs. There were also dualo-faith cooperatives (Catholic and Islamic) in which special attention was paid to customs and religious obligations. However, under the influence of agrarian reform, industrialization, and modernization, as well as the aspirations of the members of the cooperative for managing their personal income, the family cooperatives were eventually divided into smaller families. The awareness of kinship among Albanians was much stronger than among Serbs, so the cooperative was kept with them longer especially in the form of fis (tribe or clan). The fis is a community whose members are linked to each other as kin through the same patrilineal ancestry and live in the same territory. The houses and conditions in which the members of the cooperative lived were not at a satisfactory level, especially in the countryside. The settlers brought much better cultural and hygienic habits to the area of Kosovo and Metohija. The influence of the nearby towns slowly spread to the villages, because the peasants were distrustful of the new way of life. After the Second World War, the way of life of the population of Kosovo and Metohija had definitely changed. Nevertheless, family cooperatives and belonging to fis still exist among the Albanian population in Kosovo and Metohija.