

The outstanding Albanian novelist Ismail Kadare has devoted a great deal of attention to the troubled region of Kosovo over the years. In his brief collection of stories entitled *Elegy for Kosovo*, he notes that Serbs and Albanians are "prisoners, tied to each other by ancient chains that they could not and did not want to break." Likewise, the Ottoman invasion meant that "Christian and Turkish blood mingled more forcefully than they would have in a thousand years of intermarriage." Kadare is well aware of the nuanced meaning of these simple statements: old territorial disputes, on the one hand, and an unhappy track record of violence on the other, paralleled by common history, common suffering, and a considerable amount of common culture. It might seem odd to recommend a third book to readers during a double review such as this, but Kadare’s stories could indeed be read as an undemanding but thought-provoking introduction to the two meticulously documented works at hand. Kadare provides illustrations of many of the main points of these authors. Since hardly anyone seems to discuss Kosovo without mentioning "ancient ethnic hatreds" and their supposedly crippling effect on peace and prosperity in today’s Balkans, we would do well to consider the deceptively simple calculus Kadare uses: blood has a mighty conditioning effect on memory, and memory shapes culture; but it is in the absence of new stimuli that old culture prevails. The two books under review complement each other well from their respective disciplines of anthropology (Duijzings) and international relations (Leurdijk and Zandee), even though the latter scholars see the twentieth-century experience of coexistence in Kosovo in darker shades.

Dick Leurdijk’s and Dick Zandee’s book is a study of the international diplomatic and military response to violence in Kosovo. The focus of the text, as well as an extensive chronology in the appendices, is the period from 1998-2000. The events of Operation Allied Force, NATO’s eleven-week air war against Serbia to force Milošević to accept peacekeepers and autonomy for Kosovo, are covered in great detail. Unfortunately the narrative stops before the fall of the Serbian dictator in October 2000. The study has no pronounced thesis or argumentative direction, but it certainly succeeds in its stated goal of informing readers about the response of NATO, the UN, the OSCE, and other organizations to the Serb-Albanian conflict. It also raises an important cautionary note about "the use of air power as a successful instrument to end complex conflicts." (p. 96) The authors, in the most intriguing part of the book, give compelling hints about the effectiveness of pressure from Russia, the Serbian military and Milošević’s political opposition, the Kosovo Liberation Army, and NATO’s plans to initiate a ground campaign. Leurdijk’s and Zandee’s work competently surveys a
complex situation that is just beginning to unfold, as is the primary source base (government documents) for more authoritative diplomatic and military histories.

The book does have some problems. For instance, it cries out for better editing to remove numerous patches of jagged prose. There are also some small factual errors, such as the dating of the Serbian Revolution as 1829-1830 instead of the correct 1804 and the translation of Četniks as "gangs" instead of paramilitaries or, in historical usage, nationalist-minded irregulars. The clarity of the text would also be enhanced by more completely identifying new terms upon their first usage, instead of mentioning "Contact Group" or "Rambouillet talks" with no context. Since there is no index to the volume, it is very hard for readers to assemble their own thumbnail profiles of these proper nouns.

The book does not set out to give a complete history of Kosovo, but it does provide valuable background information. Sometimes the "straw men" that the authors seek to knock down seem rather contrived, as in their insistence that the Serb-Albanian tension did not, after all, begin with the revocation of Kosovo's autonomy by Milošević in 1989. This is true, of course, but how widespread, really, is that misconception? To their credit, Leurdijk and Zandee do not go to the other extreme and trot out the old shibboleth about undying, centuries-old hatred. They limit themselves to an examination of how the myth of the Battle of Kosovo (1389) has been manipulated in Serbian culture and how the twentieth century has brought a steady diet of brutal oppression and war to the region. Even though the non-violent political movement of Ibrahim Rugova is dispatched rather summarily, the analysis of the growing tension and misery in Kosovo after Tito's death in 1980 is very well done.

This case study of "coercive diplomacy" is undergirded by a blow-by-blow account of negotiations and techniques from the arsenal of many diplomats and politicians from Holbrooke to Ahtisaari to Kouchner. Leurdijk and Zandee also set up a properly cautious paradigm for comparing the Bosnia crisis to that in Kosovo before moving to a detailed description of the goals and activities of NATO's occupation force (KFOR) and the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Reading about the splits within NATO over Kosovo policy and the determination of Washington to act even without a UN mandate, one cannot help but wonder whether the roots of the United States' current unilateralism lie deeper than just the second Bush administration.

The word "crisis" is certainly much overused in our society today as a synonym for "big problem." It really means, however, that a situation is at a turning point; this reviewer likes to say in the classroom that a crisis is when a system can no longer cope with a problem and must evolve or disappear. Any of these meanings confirm the wisdom of the title of this book. The crisis of 1998-1999 consisted of the radicalization of the Albanian political scene due to increasing privation and ever more drastic Serbian oppression. The province had reached a state of great violence, almost open warfare; the moral and public relations lessons of Bosnia, as well as fears that strife in Kosovo would destabilize neighboring countries (including Bosnia) or attract outside intervention in the region pushed the West into acting. Presumably, the second "crisis" referred to in the title is the question of what should happen in Kosovo now. No longer an issue just involving regional history and local animosities, the political