

## MIGRATIONS OF THE POPULATION OF THE ŠAR MOUNTAIN ŽUPA GORA\*

The name of Gora situated in the Šar Mountain complex was mentioned back in 1348 in the Hrisovulja of Tzar Stephan Dušan. With that official document bearing a gold seal the Tzar tested that seven villages in Gora were given as a present to the monastery of St. Archangel (Facsimile No.1)<sup>35</sup>. There are no other preserved cultural and relevant monuments where Gora is mentioned. Its name occurred in other, later written documents. A region bearing that name was referred to at times of the medieval Serbian state.

The nahiyah Gora (subdivision of vilayet) was named between 1452 and 1455 in Turkish defters (income and property records) as a part of the sanjac (minor province) of Prizren. Almost all the villages of Gora, including total numbers of houses, first and family names of house or household owners, individual or in some villages total income were recorded in such documents. First or family names listed in defters of that time are much more important because they speak for themselves (Facsimile No. 2)<sup>36</sup>.

In the work of distinguished Greek astronomer, geographer and mathematician Claudius Ptolemy (2nd century A.D.) "the Slavic name Goranies, i.e. residents of mountain regions, is recognized in the Greek term Orinci (Orini)" said Dr. Miodrag Stojanović, our well-known Hellenist.

### *Basic geographical information*

Gora is the most southerly mountain ravine of the Republic of Serbia, located south of Prizren, between the highest peaks of the mountains Šar, Korab

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<sup>35</sup> Хрисовуља цара Стефана Душана (Hrisovulja of Tzar Stephan Dušan), Гласник Друштва српске словесности, Bgd., 1862, p. 282.

<sup>36</sup> Подаци добијени од академика М. Пешикана у Београду 1992. г. (Information obtained from M. Pešikan, Full Member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, in Belgrade in 1992).

and Korinuk. Its natural and ethnic border is the Albanian mountain Galač, covering the surface of 385.6 m<sup>2</sup>.

After World War I when the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was established its borders with Albania were "corrected" in 1925 by decision of the International Commission on Limitation. Unfortunately, the župa Gora of the Šar Mountain region was then divided. Nine settlements with over 15,000 present-day residents (Borje, Zapod, Košarište, Novo Selo, Orgosta, Orešek, Pakisa, Crneljevo and Šištevac) were allotted to Albania. The Commission certainly did not take into account natural-geographical, ethnic and historical facts, as well as the rightful wish of that ethnic community to be in one and the same country. Interests and strategic pretensions of Italy, exerting decisive influence<sup>37</sup> at that time, were dominant. In Albania Goranics were all the time exposed to the process of strong ethnic assimilation, which also meant physical displacement from their homes put up centuries ago. In that way all their ethnic characteristics were erased and every contact with their native land Gora and Serbia was broken.

### *Some essential characteristics of demographic relations from the period of Turkish occupation until today*

Goranics stand for Islamized Serbo-Slavic population. Jovan Cvijić<sup>38</sup> and some other authors thought that the assimilation process in Gora ended up in the 16th century. On the contrary, P. Kostić, I. Yastrebov, M. Lutovac and others think that it lasted longer in Gora than in some other territories and that it ended up in the second half of the 19th century<sup>39</sup>.

According to P. Kostić the last Christian resident, named Božana, was buried in Brod in 1856 because she could not bear separation from her already Islamized children.

Based on anthropological, anthropogeographical, ethnological, ethnosocial, philological, folklore and other characteristics Goranics represent a separate ethnic group of people and they feel like it. In their homeland as well as in a

<sup>37</sup> Лутовац, М. (1995), *Гора и Ополје – антропогеографска проучавања* (Gora and Opolje – Anthropogeographical Studies), Српски етнографски зборник, књ. LXLX, Насеља и порекло становништва (*Settlements and the Origin of Population*), књ. 35, САН, Београд, стр. 233.

<sup>38</sup> Цвијић, Ј. (1911), *Основе за географију и геологију Македоније и Старе Србије* (Basic Requirements for Geography and Geology of Macedonia and Old Serbia), књ. III, Београд, стр. 1098.

<sup>39</sup> Костић, П. (1928), *Црквени живот православних Срба у Призрену и његовој околини у XIX веку* (The Church Practice of Orthodox Christian Serbs in Prizren and its Surroundings in the 19th Century), Београд, стр. 47-48; Јастребов, И.С. (1879), *Подаци за историју српске државе – из путничког записника* (Statistics of the Serbian State's History – From a Traveller's Notebook), Београд: Лутовац, М., *ibid.*, стр. 269.

foreign country, regarded as their second homeland where they must 'work hard' as migrants, in contacts with other people they most often call themselves Goranians and their local speech "our fellow countrymen's speech". Brought up under particular conditions of the reality in and out of Gora only they could manage to survive and remain what they used to be. They imposed themselves as a separate kind of people who hold patriotism and patriotic feelings above narrow national interests. They at the same time tended, and still do to be close to all other people, but to remain on their own.

Brod was mentioned as a settlement as far back as the Middle Ages. Tzar Dušan gave it with precisely marked boundaries to St. Archangel's monastery in 1348:

„село Бродъ и урочш Бродъ с попѣви диканѣнкы и с нихъ родомъ и с нихъ вацинаши и съ заселкомъ Грьмагани а мерга мѡу ѿ планине ѿ прѣкслева на слапъ на овчо брьдо на соухъ стоуденць; на модриѣ мѣль. низ рѣкоу на Милчева кошарица и низ рѣкоу кровъщенькоу до потока како оупада Зли Потокъ оу рѣкоу. низ рѣке оуз дѣль на Црѣвображеніе. на крѣчь оу стоуден'ца поугрем белнмъ на потокъ на страторию, тере поутемъ како цѣста грѣ оу рѣкоу на враникѣ а црвин гвоздь и чисте дѣ сѣкоу оу опкиноу Орчюша и Глобочица и Бродъ. из рѣке оу ѣлнѣ. оус потокъ крстовачкѣ како се стане жоломъ белнмъ. и оуз вѣлн доль како

**(Text in Old-Church Slavonic)**

Facsimile No.1 *Official document of Tzar Dušan with a gold seal (Glasnik Društva srbske slovesnosti, XV. Beograd, 1862, pp. 181-182)*

### Nahija Gora (qwrē)

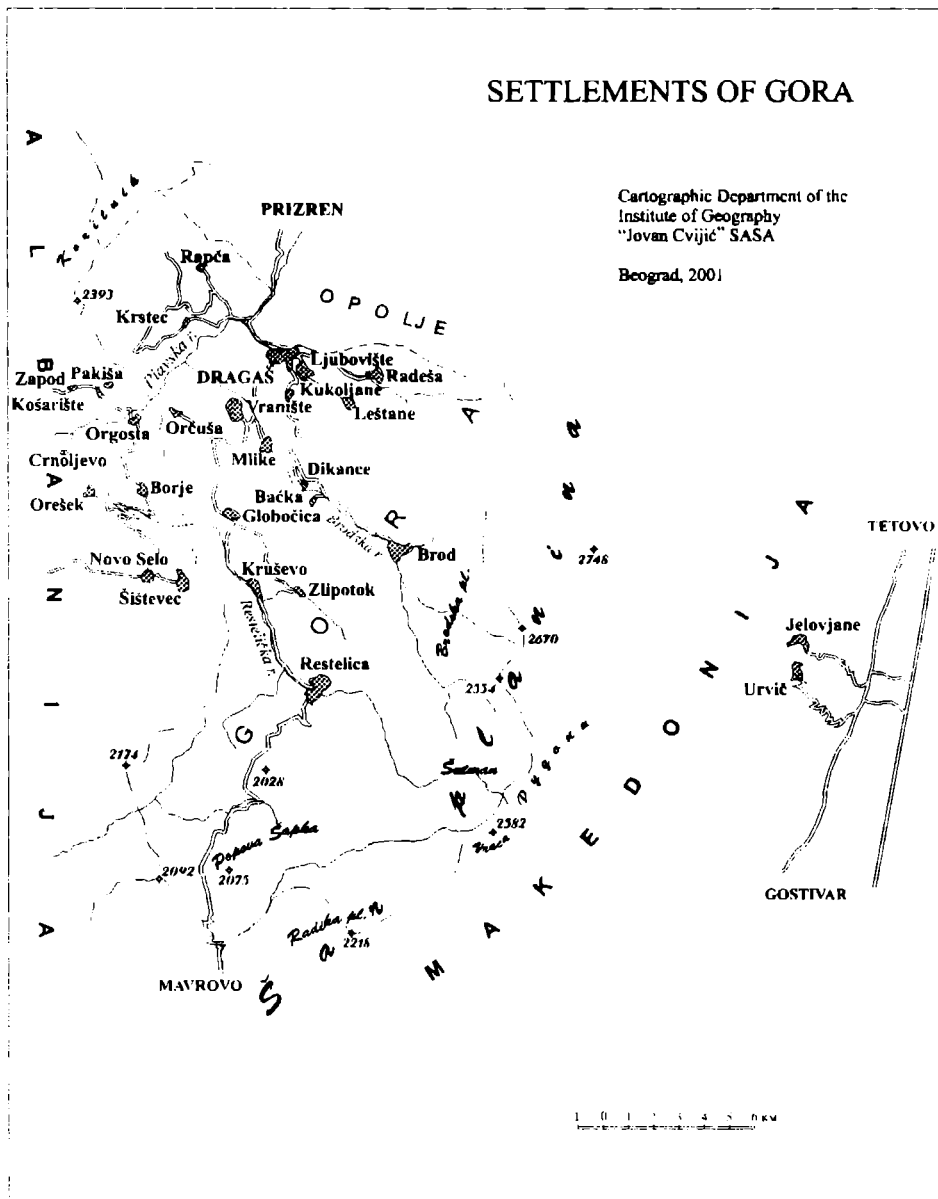
#### 1. Village Brod (brwd):

(1) Bojki, Dobromir, Bojko, Bogdan; (2) Dabiživ, priest, Bratoslav (bradslaw), Rajko; (2) Bogdan, Bracan, Milin, Rad, Dragoš; (4) Vojislav, Dragoslav, Novak, Grubče or Grujica, Bogdan; (5) Dabič (?), (dabØx-), Rajko, Djurdj, Dobračin, Bojko; (6) Radoslav, Radič, Draja, Bogdan, Rajko; (7) Draga or Drage, Dobroslav, Bardo, priest, Drajko, Rajko; (8) Petri, Djura, Draja, Drajko, Jovana; (9) Bogdan, Milič (mlvc-), Bogdan, Brajan, Brajo; (10) Radoslav, Radič, Lazor, Rajko, Boja.

5. Village Radeša (radše): (1) Djurko, Bojo, Rajin, Bojčica (?), (bwØxØx-), Bogdan; (2) Rajko, Jovan, Vladko, Rajčin; (3) Bogdan, Radoslav, Rajko.

6. Village Dikanica (dqanØx-): (1) Radoslav, Bojko, Dabiživ, Radič, Miloc (?), (mlvc-); (2) Dabiživ, Dimitrij, Nikola, Stanko or Stajko, Drajko; (3) Bogdan, Bojko, Djurdj, Djin, Rad.

20. Village Orgoste (arkwste): (1) Branko or Brajko, looking after horses, plants and crops, see Radoslav; see Bojko, Stanko or Stajko, Dobroslav, Stane, Stanko or Stajko; (2) Bogdan, Dragoslav, Novak, Novak, priest, see Grdman, Petri (btry), Dobričin, Dimitri. – House 14, income 700.



Map 2. *Settlements of Gora*, Cartographic Department Institute of Geography "Jovan Cvijić" of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Beograd, 1955.

28. Village Rabča (rabc-), Jovaniš, looking after horses, plants and crops: (1) Petko, Prodan, Petran or Mizan, Branko or Brajko. Brajan or Bratan; (2) Dobromir, Cvetko or Svetko (aswdkw), Rajan, Brajan or Bratan. – House 9, income 450.

29. Village Leštani (lštny), Jovaniš, looking after horses, plants and crops: (1) Stanihna, priest, Bogič (bwgØx), Bogdan, Veliša. – House 9, income 450.

30. Village .....(asyracwe), already mentioned Jovaniš, looking after horses, plants and crops: Marko, Andrija, Bogdan. – House 3, income 150<sup>40</sup>.

### *How residents of Gora used to emigrate in the past*

The population of Gora was not caught by great migrations, which took place in the region of Kosovo and Metohija, i.e. south Serbia in the 17th and 18th century. The settlements forming part of the mountain massif of Šar Mountain and Koritnik were situated away from the mentioned roads. This is why their population was not subjected to greater movements and direct pressure. Such movements started with the beginning of Islamization and went on in two directions: in the first case towards Prizren and the Sirinić župa and in the second towards Tetovo and the villages Dolno, Palčište and Tearce. Residents of several villages of Gora, carried by a migration wave, settled down in Urvič and Jelovjane situated on the eastern side of Šar Mountain as a subgroup of the settlements of Gora<sup>41</sup>.

Another larger migration of Goranics occurred after Balkan War I, i.e. after the liberation, which took place in 1912. At that time great numbers of Goranics left their homes for socio-economic and political reasons and went to Turkey.

World War I and two consecutive draughts and barren years exerted crucial influence on decrease of the population of Gora. Because of hunger and poverty masses of Goranics left their homes and went to Prizren and Tetovo. Many of them were dying of hunger and disease not only in the villages of Gora but on the way to Prizren and Tetovo as well.

After World War II many Gorany families left their homeland forever because of new socio-economic relations, political circumstances, introduction of collectivization and bying up of crops in their villages. Land was abandoned and sold very cheaply. One group of families went to the nearest towns: Prizren, Priština, Tetovo, Skopje, Belgrade, and the other group immigrated into Turkey to 'work hard'. Therefore a number of settlements had a negative balance in the 1961 census in comparison with the results of the earlier census taken in 1948.

<sup>40</sup> A part of the facsimile from the defter BVA, 12.- No. 2, 1452/5, which has been transcribed and translated by Mitar Pešikan and Olga Zirojević. The capital letter (O) was added to fill the blank spaces in the middle of certain names (for example Radoslav) whenever the same letter had supposedly been there. The names have thus in all probability been reconstructed. Underlined letters are used to show that the scribe had previously written the same letters in their place and that reconstruction of the names was carried out according to reality rather than assumptions. Where it was necessary Latin transliteration strictly followed the spelling of Arabic originals.

<sup>41</sup> Трифуновски, Ј.Ф. (1952), *Урвич и Јеловљане* (Urvič and Jelovljane), Гласник Етнографског института САН, св. 1-2, Београд, стр.413.

### *Going abroad in search of employment*

Intensive separation of Goranians from their homes to 'work hard' in foreign countries began in the 1950s after a certain pause because of the war and the post-war period.

It is hard to find out who was the first to leave his home, his Gora, or when and why Goranians in their new domicile started to make and sell Turkish delights.

Since their survival in Gora did not depend on agriculture but on cattle-breeding as a dominant sector of economy, and on profuse pastures, it is believed that the first Goranians started going abroad, into the world, when the balance between summer pastures on spacious slopes of Šar Mountain and winter quarters in areas alongside the Vardar River was disturbed. The robbers (haramije – kačaci) from Albania (Ljuma) were more and more often waiting for shepherds on their way back from winter quarters and were grabbing whole flocks from them. Cattle breeding in the settlements around Gora rapidly decreased and the number of emigrants increased. Almost all men capable of work went away, very often with elder men and children. As soon as the children turned seven they were frequently going away together with their fathers, relatives or neighbors to become small-scale tradesmen in the streets of the Balkan towns.

The life of migrants in foreign countries was painful. Therefore, pain, sorrow, longing, hopes and expectations, as well as the joys of love, mingled with social and other aspects of their position, were the basic subjects of many folk songs composed by migrant workers:

"Rano me isprati, majčice mila mua,  
na gurbet da idem,  
o mila majčice, od sedom godine,  
pare da ćarujem, majčice mila mua,  
izmećar da bidem..."<sup>42</sup>

'Come, me Mom, at crack of dawn  
to see off thine tiny 7-year sonny,  
going to serve them bloody haves,  
leaving to earn them bloody quids,  
far, far from thee, me Mom!'

The migrant workers used to send or bring to Gora what they earned. Under conditions of typical economic underdevelopment and poverty the work abroad seemed to be a way to preserve Gora. The wives of migrant workers did heavy masculine jobs at home, raising children and supporting families at the same time. With great rejections and temptations they accomplished their tasks and waited for the members of their families to come back. Their expectations were painful and frequently uncertain. It should be said with pride that Gorany

<sup>42</sup> Хасани, Х.Н. (1987, Горанске народне песме (Folk Songs of Goranians). "Jedinstvo", Priština, p. 14.

\* Translated by Smiljana Naumović.

women succeeded to preserve their speech, songs, and folklore undoubtedly contributing in that way to the maintenance of their entity and identity.

While earlier migrants either sent, with great self-denial, or brought home and their families everything they earned, contemporary migrants take their wives and children with themselves to share common fate in the new location. Migrant work has preserved Gora and kept people around it. Schoolyards were full of children.

### *Contemporary migrations*

The comparison of the last census statistics, obtained in Gora ten years ago, with data of the preceding censuses reveals that interesting and important demographic, ethnosocial, economic and other processes are currently going on.

Increasingly great number of households run by elderly people, rapid decrease of the number of pupils at school and the number of population in spite of equalized birth rate, i.e. of the natural increase of population, lead to a conclusion that in the last decades intensive migration movements were taking place in Gora.

Contemporary migration processes have continually been going on in Gora for more than fifty years. They were rather intensive in the 1970s when Goranies succeeded to create more favorable conditions (apartments, houses) for life in their "second homelands" and when they most often used to take close family members with themselves. They usually returned for Djurdjevdan festivities (St. George's Day feasting) lasting six days in the spring or in the summer. They did not want to work in the fields, to reap and collect crops that migrant workers usually did in the past. They were coming back to spend summer vacations, to visit relatives, to take part in traditional wedding ceremonies well-known in Gora, to make friends and fall in love with local girls whom they would like to marry and enjoy their own glorious wedding ceremonies next summer.

### *Directions of migration movements*

It could be expected that Goranies in their migrations would prefer areas and city quarters where the majority of Muslims live. On the contrary, data collected and presented in Table 1 show that the reason of their settlement in town centers was not the presence of their fellow Moslem believers. Economic reasons, hopes for better payment and living conditions were of crucial importance.

In former Yugoslavia around 12,000 people in 234 settlements took part in migratory movements. The greatest migration end was normally Serbia or the territories within its borders. More than 8,552 immigrants found shelter in it in

the course of several decades (Table 1). More than half of the migrants (53.8%) settled in 79 smaller or bigger towns in the central part of Serbia.

More than 4,500 Goranians who remained in Gora were unlucky. They believed that the southerly Serbian region was their proper home and that available possibilities could be shared with all other fellow countrymen. Unfortunately, under pressure of Albanian terrorists and separatists nearly all of them had to leave the second homeland. Their property (houses, apartments, shops) was taken up, occupied, plundered, and destroyed. They had to go away and shelter with their relatives, friends, neighbors most often in the central part of Serbia or Vojvodina.

Further analysis of migrants from Gora shows that over 34% found shelter in Belgrade with their families. They got various, frequently strenuous jobs with the exception of about ten pastry makers who had their own shops. They all, especially members of the second and third generation, point out that they are generally well accustomed and satisfied with their position. They regard Belgrade as their second homeland and are thankful to it for everything they achieved in it and in Gora (Table 4).

Other migration directions led towards other republics of former Yugoslavia (Cartogram 2, Tables 1 and 2).

It has been proved that all settlements were more or less caught by migratory movements of various intensities. In the settlements: Brod, Vranište, Leštane, Mlike, Kukuljane, Orčusa, Dikance and Bačka the migratory part of the population has been bigger than the stationary. For example: over 72% of inhabitants of the village Mlike live and work in places beyond the boundaries of their homeland, 85.4% of them in Belgrade. Let us take another example: in the village Bačka there had been 116 houses before NATO aggression on our country 94 of which were uninhabited and closed; of 650 local residents only 84 remained. I think that every comment is unnecessary.

That region of Serbia was also heavily struck by economic emigrations to highly developed West European countries, most intensive towards the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, when large numbers of workers from Gora went for temporary work to other countries.

### *Settling of Albanians in Dragaš*

In the last two decades, the population of Albanian nationality has intensively been settling in Dragaš, the seat of the Municipality of Gora. It is difficult to follow up the number of Albanians who moved to Dragaš because they boycotted the last census.



Table 3. Goranies in their homeland and in all other parts of former Yugoslavia (1991-1992)

Settlements	Residents in Gora		Residents outside Gora		Total in former SFRY
	Number	%	Number	%	
Bačka	215	22.1	399	77.9	614
Brod	1660	12.6	2236	57.4	3896
Vranište	731	40.2	1088	59.8	1819
Globočica	968	56.3	750	43.7	1718
Dikance	257	38.6	409	41.4	666
Dragaš	1018	73.3	371	26.7	1389
Zlipotok	609	47.6	669	52.4	1277
Krstac <sup>x</sup>	837	75.0	279	25.0	1116
Kruševo	714	86.8	823	13.2	823
Kukuljane	621	53.4	1162	46.6	1162
Leštane	679	48.6	1396	51.4	1396
Ljubovište	799	75.4	1060	24.6	1060
Mlike	335	25.4	1317	74.6	1317
Orčuša	221	23.8	929	76.2	929
Radeša	1226	53.3	2301	46.7	2301
Rapča <sup>xx</sup>	1781	81.1	2177	18.9	2197
Restelica	1881	82.3	1116	17.7	5307
<b>Total</b>	<b>16817<sup>xxx</sup></b>	<b>58.6</b>	<b>11900</b>	<b>41.4</b>	<b>28717</b>

Source: The 1991 Census, Vol. 2, Federal Statistics Administration, Beograd, 1993.

<sup>x</sup> Donji and Gornji Krstac together

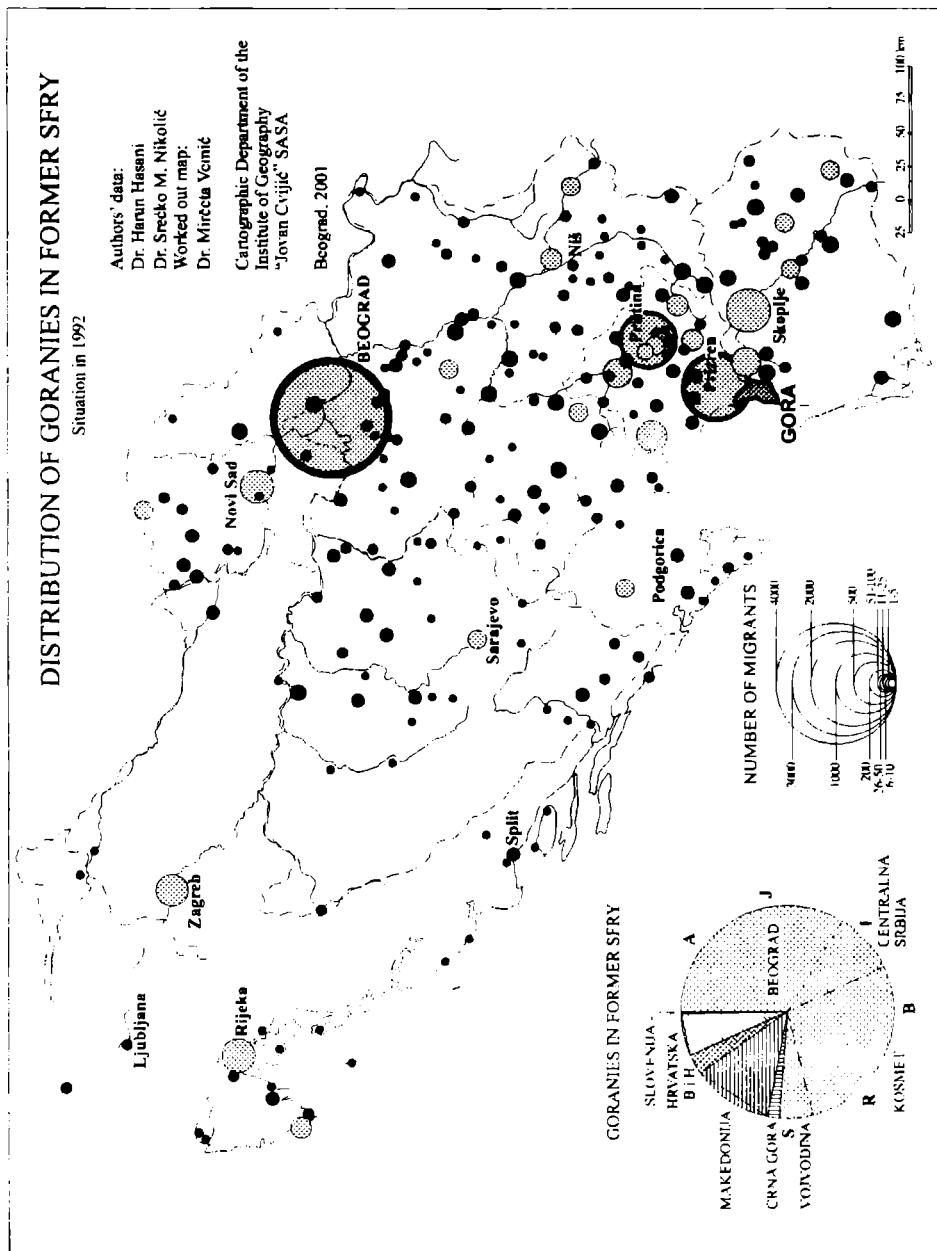
<sup>xx</sup> Gornja and Donja Rapča together

Table 4. Goranies in Beograd – their second homeland

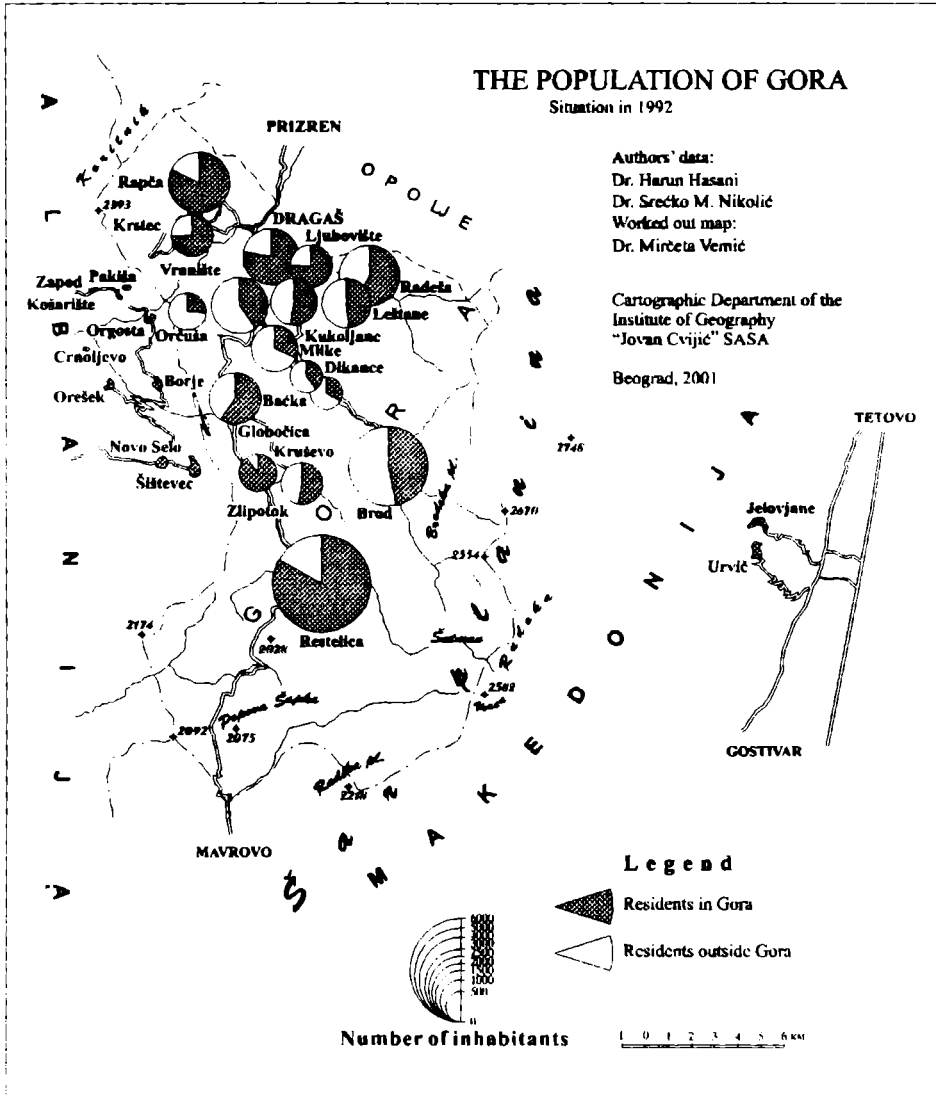
Settlement	House-holders	With-out family	With fa-mily	Division of labor		Member of family		Total
				privatel-y	publicly-owned	male	female	
Bačka	41	6	35	1	40	32	72	145
Brod	22	2	20	6	16	42	41	105
Vranište	90	9	81	21	69	73	151	314
Dikance	52	3	49	7	45	37	108	197
Dragaš	71	3	68	4	67	89	151	311
Zlipotok	5	-	5	4	1	6	8	19
Krstac <sup>x</sup>	62	23	59	12	50	38	69	169
Kruševo	3	1	2	-	3	4	8	15
Kukuljane	104	23	81	5	99	170	175	449
Leštane	128	17	111	16	112	156	256	540
Ljubovište	45	15	30	1	44	34	57	136
Mlike	167	9	15	3	164	200	345	712
Orčuša	59	1	58	8	51	133	178	370
Radeša	9	1	8	-	3	14	22	45
Rapča <sup>xx</sup>	23	11	12	2	20	18	18	59
Restelica	7	1	6	1	6	13	24	44
<b>Total</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>772</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>808</b>	<b>1068</b>	<b>1699</b>	<b>3668</b>

<sup>x</sup> Donji and Gornji Krstac together

<sup>xx</sup> Gornja and Donja Rapča together



Map 3. *Distribution of Goranies in former SFRY, Situation in 1992, Data provided by Dr. Harun Hasani and Dr. Srećko M. Nikolić*



Map 4. *The population of Gora, Situation in 1992.* Data provided by Dr. Harun Hasani and Dr. Srećko Nikolić; Map worked out by Dr. Mirčeta Vemić, Beograd, 2001.

The number of Albanians in Dragaš doubled after tragic events in Kosovo and Metohia, and the settlement was physically divided into upper Dragaš where Albanians are prevalent, and lower Dragaš where native Goranians live.

### *Return to Gora*

Possibilities of migrants to come back were limited because the Municipality of Gora is one of the most underdeveloped regions of Serbia. Their return to and stay in Gora will depend on their future status. Will it be possible to create conditions for their security, personal and ownership safety? If not the majority of Goranians and of other non-Albanian population would persist with migrations because they speak Serbian and regard Serbia as their native country.

The number of Goranians who have already left or are in the course of leaving their homeland is becoming greater from day to day (6,500). Bearing in mind that Gora is a region geopolitically and geostrategically very important to integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Serbia consequences of their migrations could not be foreseen.

Gora as the Šar Mountain župa at the most southerly tip of Serbia is presently experiencing tragic historical moments with far-reaching consequences, which could affect first of all the chances of Goranians to preserve and assert their ethnic being.

"The New York Times" has lately published a report of Benedict Givier, "head of the OSCE Regional Group" for Prizren and its surroundings<sup>43</sup>. It is underlined in the report that "Albanians are allowed to threaten and even kill unprotected members of the national minorities" in Kosovo and Metohija, including Serbs, Romanians, and other non-Albanian population, especially "Slavic Muslims – Goranians" in the most southerly part of Serbia.

What an absurd opinion of "democratic" Europe! Since the beginning of her statehood Serbia has been protecting safety and security of all her citizens within her borders and at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century she is deprived of that right.

Gora has always been sharing her fate with Serbia as the only and unique homeland of Goranians. She managed to survive down the ages withstanding assaults of Albanian anarchists. Therefore she should not be now left to herself or taken as a matter of some political agreements that would lead to her separation from Serbia. The population of Gora has throughout history by defending itself been defending the state of Serbia and her continued existence as well. This is why Tzar Dušan allowed the people of Gora special rates and privileges: "Goranians should not pay tax per head or cattle. They should pay annual tax per their households. We order them to do so because they represent the greatest devotees of our state and the most faithful element of our population ...".

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<sup>43</sup> NIP "Politika", Beograd, November 6, 1999, p. 16.