ISSN: 2065-1759 Public Administration & Regional Studies

The Discourse of Republic Srpska and the Shaping of the Debate on the Association of Serb-Majority Municipalities in Kosovo: Between Perception and Institutional Model

Leonora BAJRAMI*

Abstract

The debate surrounding the Association/Community of Serb-majority Municipalities in Kosovo has become one of the most sensitive political and institutional issues in the Kosovo–Serbia dialogue. Since the Brussels Agreement of 2013 and the Ohrid Agreement of 2023, the Association has generated extensive political, legal, and public controversy regarding its institutional nature, competencies, and potential impact on Kosovo's sovereignty and state functionality. This paper examines how the discourse surrounding Republika Srpska has shaped political and public perceptions of the Association in Kosovo, while also assessing whether meaningful institutional similarities between the two models actually exist. The study applies a qualitative research methodology that combines discourse analysis, comparative institutional analysis, and a constructivist theoretical framework. It analyzes political narratives, constitutional interpretations, and international mediation strategies related to the Association, focusing particularly on the concepts of "constructive ambiguity" and "hopeful ambiguity" in the Kosovo–Serbia dialogue process. The paper further examines the legal and institutional framework of the Association through the Brussels Agreement, the 2015 General Principles, the Ohrid Agreement, and the Constitutional Court of Kosovo decision KO130/15. The findings demonstrate that the debate over the Association extends beyond a purely legal or technical issue and has evolved into a broader discussion concerning sovereignty, ethnic power-sharing, state functionality, and territorial organization in Kosovo. While important constitutional and institutional differences exist between the Association and Republika Srpska, political narratives and collective perceptions have significantly influenced public understanding of the issue. The study concludes that the Association represents not only a mechanism of inter-municipal cooperation but also a symbolic and political issue that reflects competing visions regarding Kosovo's institutional future and the normalization process with Serbia.

* South East Univesity, North Macedonia, Corresponding author: lb32351@seeu.edu.mk

Copyright: © 2026 by the authors.
Open access publication under the terms and conditions of the
Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

Keywords: *discourse analysis; Republika Srpska; Constitutional Court of Kosovo decision KO130/15; Kosovo–Serbia relations*

Introduction

The dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia has been one of the most important political and diplomatic processes in the Western Balkans since Kosovo declared independence in 2008. While Serbia continues to challenge Kosovo's statehood and considers it part of its territory, Kosovo regards Serbia as a neighboring country and views mutual recognition as the ultimate goal of the normalization process. As James Ker-Lindsay (2009) argues, Kosovo's post-independence development has been shaped by contested statehood and the ongoing quest for broader international recognition, making the normalization of relations with Serbia a key factor in strengthening its international position. The European Union launched the dialogue process in March 2011 with the aim of normalizing relations between the two sides. The negotiations, held in Brussels under the mediation of the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, produced several agreements. Among the most significant and controversial outcomes was the Brussels Agreement of 2013, which envisaged the establishment of the Association of Serb-Majority Municipalities (hereafter, the Association).

More than a decade later, however, the Association remains one of the most disputed issues in Kosovo–Serbia relations. Despite numerous discussions and proposals, no statute acceptable to all parties has been finalized, and disagreements continue to persist (Kosovo Academy of Sciences and Arts, 2020, p. 11). Belgrade and Pristina have maintained fundamentally different views regarding both the purpose and the future role of the Association (Nesovic & Celeghini, 2015, p. 2). Critics in Kosovo have often compared the proposed Association to Republika Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina, expressing concerns that it could create a parallel political structure capable of undermining the functionality of the state (Weber & Bajrami, 2018, p. 17). Others argue that such comparisons are exaggerated, emphasizing that the Association would operate within the framework of municipal competencies and would not possess the constitutional powers or institutional characteristics that define Republika Srpska (Rami, 2015). The debate gained renewed importance following the Agreement on the Path to Normalisation and the Ohrid Implementation Annex in 2023, which brought the issue of self-management for the Serbian community back to the center of negotiations. As a result, the Association continues to represent one of the most sensitive political and

institutional questions in Kosovo. The gap between political perceptions and institutional realities has made the issue particularly complex and highly contested.

Against this background, this paper does not seek to determine whether the Association is or is not equivalent to Republika Srpska. Instead, it examines how references to Republika Srpska have shaped political and public discourse in Kosovo and explores whether there are concrete institutional features that support or challenge such comparisons. Drawing on discourse analysis, comparative institutional analysis, and a constructivist perspective, the study aims to provide a balanced and critical assessment of the relationship between political narratives and institutional realities in debates surrounding the Association.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research methodology that combines discourse analysis and comparative institutional analysis in order to examine the debate surrounding the Association in Kosovo. The research focuses on the interaction between political narratives, constitutional interpretations, and institutional arrangements within the Kosovo–Serbia dialogue process. The discourse analysis examines political statements, public narratives, and terminological constructions related to the Association, including the use of terms such as "Association," "Community," "Zajednica," and "Self-Management." In parallel, the institutional analysis evaluates the legal and constitutional framework of the Association through an examination of the Brussels Agreement (2013), the General Principles/Key Elements Agreement (2015), the Ohrid Agreement (2023), and Decision KO130/15 of the Constitutional Court of Kosovo.

The study also adopts a comparative approach by examining the proposed institutional model of the Association alongside the constitutional structure of Republika Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The objective is not to establish a direct equivalence between the two models, but rather to analyze how political perceptions and institutional realities interact in shaping political discourse and state-building debates in Kosovo.

The Constructivist Approach and the Role of Political Discourse

This paper is based on the constructivist approach to international relations, which argues that political and institutional realities are shaped not only by material

factors, but also by ideas, identities, narratives, and collective perceptions. In this sense, the way political and social actors interpret a political issue can directly influence how political and institutional reality is formed. As Alexander Wendt (1999) famously argued, "anarchy is what states make of it," meaning that international structures do not have fixed meanings on their own; rather, their meaning emerges through social interaction and interpretation. From this perspective, the debate surrounding the Association of Serb-Majority Municipalities cannot be understood only through legal or technical dimensions, but also through the political narratives and public discourse that shape its interpretation. Even the disagreement over terminology — whether it should be called the "Association," "Community," or "Zajednica" — reflects not simply legal distinctions, but deeper competing understandings about the purpose and nature of this mechanism.

Constructivism also places strong emphasis on the role of identity and perception in politics. Martha Finnemore (1996) argues that norms and ideas influence how states define their interests, suggesting that political debates are driven not only by material concerns, but also by symbolic and historical interpretations. In this context, the term "Zajednica" has frequently been used by opposition actors and segments of public opinion to evoke fears of creating a highly autonomous structure similar to Republika Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As a result, the Association has been framed not only as a mechanism for inter-municipal cooperation, but also as a politically and symbolically charged concept. Political discourse therefore becomes an active force in shaping the political meaning attached to the Association. A similar argument is made by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966), who explain that social reality is continuously constructed through processes of interpretation and institutionalization. This can also be seen in the different interpretations regarding the competencies of the Association. Representatives of Kosovo's institutions have generally described it as a body without executive powers, while Serbian officials have promoted a broader institutional vision that would include competencies in areas such as education, healthcare, and spatial planning. These competing interpretations have contributed to political and institutional ambiguity, further intensifying debates and public perceptions regarding the true nature of the Association. In this regard, discussions about the Association and comparisons with Republika Srpska should not be viewed solely as legal debates, but rather as political and symbolic processes through which political actors attempt to shape citizens' understanding of Kosovo's institutional and political future.

At the same time, this paper does not rely exclusively on a constructivist perspective. In order to avoid reducing the debate entirely to perceptions and narratives, the study also incorporates elements of institutional analysis.

Institutional Analysis and the Material Dimension of Debate

The debate surrounding the Association also involves concrete legal and institutional dimensions, particularly regarding its structure, competencies, and relationship with Kosovo's constitutional order. James G. March and Johan P. Olsen argue that institutions are not simply administrative mechanisms, but also normative and organizational frameworks that shape how political actors perceive their interests and political responsibilities. From this perspective, analyzing the Association requires more than examining the political discourse surrounding it; it also demands an assessment of its possible competencies, institutional arrangements, and the potential impact it could have on the functioning of Kosovo's institutional system.

Within the literature on consociational democracy and power-sharing in ethnically divided societies, Arend Lijphart argues that political stability in plural societies is often achieved through institutional mechanisms that guarantee collective representation for ethnic communities. According to Lijphart, such arrangements can help reduce conflict and integrate minorities into the political system, but they may also reinforce ethnic divisions and create institutional deadlock (Lijphart, 1977). In the case of Kosovo, the debate over the Association reflects precisely this tension: balancing the need to ensure representation for the Serbian community while addressing concerns that such a mechanism could weaken the functionality of the Kosovar state. Similarly, Soeren Keil argues that multinational federal arrangements may contribute to conflict management in divided societies, but can also create institutional complexity and governance challenges when ethnic representation becomes deeply embedded within political structures (Keil, 2013).

The origins of the Association can be traced back to the Vienna negotiations on Kosovo's status, which culminated in the Ahtisaari Plan in 2007. The plan foresaw mechanisms of cooperation among Serb-majority municipalities as part of a broader process of decentralization and institutional integration of the Serbian community in Kosovo (Balkans Policy Research Group, 2017, p. 16). However, from the very beginning, the concept of the Association was accompanied by conceptual ambiguities and competing political interpretations. According to Florent Muqaj and Përparim Gruda (2020), uncertainty regarding the Association's competencies

and institutional structure has contributed to legal insecurity and political polarization in Kosovo. They further argue that delays in implementation have increased international pressure while simultaneously intensifying domestic constitutional concerns related to sovereignty and institutional functionality (Muqaj & Gruda, 2020). Rogers Brubaker (2004) argues that ethnicity should not be understood as a fixed category, but rather as a political and discursive process through which political actors mobilize collective identities for political purposes. This perspective is also reflected in the terminology used in discussions surrounding the Association. While the Albanian discourse commonly refers to it as the "Association," Serbian-language discourse often uses the term "Zajednica" or "Community." These linguistic differences are not merely semantic; they reflect broader disagreements over the political nature and future role of the proposed mechanism. Within the discourse of the political movement Lëvizja Vetëvendosje, the term "Zajednica" has evolved into a political symbol used to express concerns that the Association could eventually develop into a structure with ethno-territorial characteristics and expanded political autonomy.

Consequently, the debate surrounding the Association extends beyond a purely legal or institutional issue. It represents a broader discussion about the nature of Kosovo's statehood, the relationship between majority and minority communities, and the organization of power within a multiethnic state. For this reason, combining institutional analysis with the constructivist approach offers a more comprehensive framework for understanding not only the formal dimensions of the Association, but also the perceptions, narratives, and political fears that continue to shape the debate around it.

The Debate on the Ohrid Agreement and the Concept of "Self-Management" in the Kosovo–Serbia Dialogue

The Agreement on the Path to Normalisation of Relations between Kosovo and Serbia, commonly known as the Ohrid Agreement of 2023, brought the issue of the Association back to the center of political and institutional debate in Kosovo. Much of the discussion surrounding the agreement focused on the concept of "self-management," a formulation that generated different political and legal interpretations and raised concerns that the dialogue process could move toward a more complex and potentially problematic institutional model for the functionality of the Kosovar state.

Article 7 of the Ohrid Agreement states that Kosovo should ensure "an appropriate level of self-management" for the Serbian community in Kosovo, including the possibility of "financial support from Serbia" and "a direct channel of communication" between the Serbian community and central institutions. For critics of the agreement, this wording created new ambiguities regarding the actual nature of the Association and the possibility that it could eventually acquire broader competencies. Florian Bieber argues that unresolved institutional disputes and continued political ambiguity in the Western Balkans have often contributed to democratic stagnation, political polarization, and the strengthening of nationalist narratives (Bieber, 2021). In this context, the ongoing uncertainty surrounding the Association has reinforced wider debates about sovereignty, governance, and ethnic representation in Kosovo. Similarly, Nicholas Wheeler argues that agreements containing ambiguous language in ethnopolitical conflicts frequently produce new tensions during implementation, especially when the parties involved hold different expectations about the substance of the agreement. This dynamic is evident in the case of the Ohrid Agreement. Serbia interpreted the concept of "self-management" as a basis for granting substantial autonomy to the Serbian community, while Kosovo maintained that any mechanism established through the dialogue must remain fully within the constitutional framework and without executive powers. Although the Constitutional Court of Kosovo imposed limitations on the Association in 2015, public debate intensified because the Ohrid Agreement does not explicitly rule out the possibility of expanding the Association's competencies through broad and flexible formulations such as "self-management." In this regard, some authors argue that the Association could potentially produce political consequences even more complex than those associated with the Republika Srpska model. For critics, the absence of a clear legal definition creates the risk of future institutional and political crises.

From a constructivist perspective, the debate surrounding the Ohrid Agreement demonstrates that the political meaning of the Association is shaped not only through legal provisions, but also through political narratives, collective perceptions, and discursive interpretations. Rather than reducing the controversy surrounding the Association, the Ohrid Agreement appears to have intensified it. The use of flexible and ambiguous language has created space for competing interpretations and deepened political distrust between the parties involved.

Discourse on Republika Srpska in the Political Debate in Kosovo

The debate surrounding the Association has consistently been accompanied by comparisons to the model of Republika Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In Kosovo's political discourse, Republika Srpska has evolved beyond a simple institutional comparison and has become a political symbol associated with questions of sovereignty, state functionality, and the territorial organization of Kosovo. Bosnia and Herzegovina is frequently portrayed as an example of a highly complex state structure that has produced political deadlock and weakened institutional effectiveness. This perception can also be understood through Benedict Anderson's concept of nations as "imagined communities," constructed through historical narratives, symbols, and collective experiences (Anderson, 1983). As a result, references to Republika Srpska have acquired strong emotional and identity-related dimensions that shape collective perceptions regarding Kosovo's institutional future. At the same time, uncertainty surrounding the Association has been closely linked to debates over its legal nature, competencies, and institutional role. This ambiguity has created space for competing political and legal narratives among Kosovo, Serbia, and international mediators. In this regard, the European Union's approach to the Kosovo–Serbia dialogue has often been characterized by what scholars describe as "constructive ambiguity," particularly in relation to the Association. According to Kartsonaki (2018), the EU's deliberate use of ambiguity enabled the parties to reach short-term political agreements while simultaneously creating long-term uncertainty regarding the interpretation and implementation of the Association.

The concept of "constructive ambiguity" has long been used in diplomacy as a tool for overcoming disagreements between negotiating parties. Henry Kissinger (1976) argues that deliberate ambiguity can help negotiations continue by avoiding direct confrontation over highly sensitive issues. Similarly, Geoff Berridge, Alan James, and Lorna Lloyd (2012) note that the intentional use of vague or flexible language may facilitate political compromises during negotiations. However, Dean G. Pruitt and I. William Zartman (2007, cited in Kartsonaki, 2018) emphasize that while such ambiguity may support short-term agreements, it can also create serious long-term challenges during implementation. This dynamic is particularly visible in the Kosovo–Serbia dialogue, especially in the Brussels Agreement of 2013 and the 2015 Agreement, both of which left room for fundamentally different interpretations by Prishtina and Belgrade. Serbia interpreted the Association as a mechanism that would provide substantial autonomy for the Serbian community in Kosovo, while Kosovo maintained that it should function strictly within the constitutional

framework and without executive powers. A related concept that helps explain this process is "hopeful ambiguity," developed by Mikhail Troitskiy (2016). According to Troitskiy, parties often accept ambiguous formulations not because they genuinely agree on the substance of a settlement, but because each side believes future political developments will ultimately favor its own interpretation of the agreement (Troitskiy, 2016, p. 47). In this way, ambiguity becomes a diplomatic mechanism that allows negotiations to move forward while avoiding immediate deadlock. This logic is clearly reflected in the case of the Association of Serb-Majority Municipalities. Serbia has consistently interpreted the Association as a mechanism of substantial autonomy for the Serbian community, whereas Kosovo has sought to limit it to a non-executive structure operating entirely within Kosovo's constitutional framework. Similar disagreements emerged regarding the Ohrid Agreement and the European proposal for the normalization of relations. Kosovo interpreted these agreements as steps toward de facto recognition, while Serbia insisted that they did not imply formal recognition of Kosovo's statehood. Political opposition to the Association became particularly visible during 2015 and 2016, when opposition parties such as Lëvizja Vetëvendosje, the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK), and the Initiative for Kosovo (NISMA) organized protests against its implementation. Opposition leaders argued that the proposed model could evolve into a structure similar to Republika Srpska and potentially undermine Kosovo's constitutional order. These concerns culminated in repeated disruptions of parliamentary sessions, including the use of tear gas by opposition deputies, illustrating the intensity of political resistance to the agreement (Al Jazeera, 2015a).

Public demonstrations further demonstrated the extent to which the Association had transformed into a symbolic political issue. Thousands of citizens participated in protests in Prishtina, while opposition representatives framed the Association as a mechanism that could strengthen Serbia's influence within Kosovo and obstruct effective governance. Gradually, the political discourse surrounding the Association shifted from a debate about local self-government to a broader discussion about sovereignty, statehood, and the future organization of the Kosovar state (Al Jazeera, 2015b). These contradictory interpretations were also reflected in the official positions of the parties involved. The Government of Kosovo, led by Prime Minister Isa Mustafa, described the Association as a coordinating body without executive powers that would operate within Kosovo's constitutional framework. In contrast, Serbian officials presented it as a mechanism with broader competencies in areas such as education, healthcare, culture, and spatial planning, supported by separate administrative and representative structures. One of the most controversial aspects of the 2015 Agreement was the phrase "exercise full overview," translated into

Albanian as "ushtrim i mbikëqyrjes së plotë." This formulation generated concerns about the limits of the Association's competencies and the possibility of creating an intermediate level of governance. As a result, President Atifete Jahjaga referred the matter to the Constitutional Court of Kosovo in 2015 for interpretation. The Court concluded that the Association must operate in accordance with Kosovo's Constitution and could not exercise competencies that would undermine the constitutional order of the state.

In this context, the debate surrounding the Association cannot be understood merely as a legal or technical issue. Rather, it represents a broader political and discursive process through which narratives about sovereignty, autonomy, and state organization are constructed and contested. Comparisons with Republika Srpska therefore function simultaneously as political instruments, identity symbols, and interpretative frameworks through which political actors and citizens attempt to understand the potential implications of the Association for Kosovo's future.

Comparative Analysis: Between Perception and the Institutional Model

The debate surrounding the Association has consistently been shaped by the interaction between political perceptions and the analysis of concrete institutional elements. Donald L. Horowitz (1985) argues that political institutions organized along ethnic lines may contribute to short-term stability while simultaneously reinforcing identity divisions and interethnic competition. In Kosovo, these concerns have been strongly influenced by the experience of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where Republika Srpska functions as an entity with extensive constitutional powers and significant influence over state-level decision-making. At the same time, Brendan O'Leary (2005) emphasizes that the success of such institutional arrangements depends on maintaining a balance between guaranteeing community representation and preserving the functional capacity of the state. The debate surrounding the Association in Kosovo reflects precisely this tension: the need to ensure collective rights and representation for the Serbian community while addressing concerns about the possible impact of such a mechanism on Kosovo's sovereignty and institutional functionality. According to Gëzim Visoka, Kosovo's state-building process has continuously been shaped by struggles over recognition, legitimacy, and sovereignty, in which political narratives and institutional practices play a central role in the everyday construction of statehood (Visoka, 2018). From the constructivist perspective developed by Alexander Wendt (1999), political narratives and collective perceptions are not simply reflections of political reality but

active elements in shaping it. This suggests that even when institutional similarities between the Association and Republika Srpska are incomplete, the comparison itself may still produce real political consequences by influencing public opinion, political behavior, and decision-making processes.

Nevertheless, beyond the perceptual dimension, several concrete institutional factors have contributed to these comparisons. According to the Brussels Agreement, the Association was envisioned as a mechanism of inter-municipal cooperation among Serb-majority municipalities in Kosovo. The dialogue agreements foresaw competencies in areas such as local economic development, education, healthcare, and urban planning. Although these competencies have been interpreted differently by the parties, they have generated ongoing debate regarding the level of autonomy the Association could potentially acquire. By contrast, Republika Srpska is a constitutional entity established under the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement, possessing legislative, executive, and administrative powers. It has its own president, parliament, police force, and governing institutions, functioning as a highly autonomous political unit within Bosnia and Herzegovina. In comparison, the Constitutional Court of Kosovo ruled in 2015 that the Association must operate fully in accordance with Kosovo's Constitution and may not exercise executive powers or undermine the constitutional order of the state. This legal interpretation represents one of the main distinctions between the Association and the Republika Srpska model. However, despite these constitutional limitations, uncertainty regarding implementation and differing political interpretations have continued to fuel public debate and comparisons between the two models. For this reason, the analysis of the Association cannot be reduced to the simple question of whether it "is" or "is not" Republika Srpska. The broader significance of the debate lies in the interaction between institutional realities and political perceptions and in the way this interaction shapes political reality itself.

In this sense, comparisons with Republika Srpska have produced tangible political consequences by shaping how citizens and political actors understand the Association and its potential implications for Kosovo's future. It is precisely this relationship between perception and institutional design that makes the issue one of the most sensitive and politically complex debates in contemporary Kosovo politics.

Conclusion

The Kosovo–Serbia dialogue process, particularly the debate surrounding the Association of Serb-Majority Municipalities, represents one of the most complex political, legal, and state-building challenges in post-independence Kosovo. Constitutional disputes regarding the format of the Association, deep disagreements between Prishtina and Belgrade, differing positions among international actors, and concerns about its possible legal and political consequences have transformed the Association into both the central issue and one of the greatest obstacles in the normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia.

As a result, the dialogue process has increasingly reflected a recurring diplomatic confrontation in which Serbia insists that "the Association of Serb-Majority Municipalities must be established," while Kosovo maintains that "the Association of Serb-Majority Municipalities will not be established." Consequently, the debate has acquired a much broader meaning. The Association has not been discussed merely as an institutional arrangement, but also as a political and identity symbol connected to fears of institutional fragmentation, weakened state functionality, and the possibility of creating obstructive mechanisms within Kosovo's political system.

The analysis presented in this paper demonstrates that ambiguity has extended far beyond terminology—whether "Association," "Community," or "Zajednica." It has also concerned the legal nature, competencies, and institutional role of the mechanism itself. This interpretative space has produced competing narratives between Kosovo and Serbia and has generated ongoing political and constitutional uncertainty. In this regard, the concepts of "constructive ambiguity" and later "hopeful ambiguity" help explain how agreements have been achieved through intentionally flexible formulations that allow each party to preserve its own political interpretation. From a formal legal perspective, the Constitutional Court of Kosovo, in Judgment KO130/15, established clear constitutional limitations regarding the Association, emphasizing that it must function in accordance with Kosovo's Constitution and cannot exercise executive powers or create an intermediate level of governance. Nevertheless, despite this constitutional interpretation, later political developments—especially the Ohrid Agreement and the introduction of the concept of "self-management" for the Serbian community—have generated new concerns within Kosovo.

As a result, the debate is no longer limited to the Association's existing legal competencies, but increasingly focuses on the possibility that it could evolve into a mechanism with broader political and institutional influence. Within this context,

parts of Kosovo's public discourse have argued that the Association could potentially create consequences even more complex than those associated with Republika Srpska—not necessarily through formal constitutional powers, but through its ability to generate political influence, institutional deadlock, and continued dependence on ethnic dynamics and external political intervention.

Therefore, this paper concludes that the debate surrounding the Association cannot be reduced either to a purely legal analysis or to a formal institutional comparison with Republika Srpska. Its broader significance lies in the interaction between legal structures, political perceptions, historical narratives, and the strategic calculations of both domestic and international actors. In this sense, the issue of the Association remains not only a challenge related to the implementation of dialogue agreements, but also an ongoing debate about the future model of Kosovo's political and institutional organization.

References

Akademia e Shkencave dhe e Arteve e Kosovës. (2020). *Dialogu Kosovë–Serbi: Dilemat dhe kundërthëniet*. Akademia e Shkencave dhe e Arteve e Kosovës.

Al Jazeera. (2015a, October 15). *Kosovo opposition stages tear gas protest in parliament*. Al Jazeera. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/10/15/kosovo-opposition-stages-tear-gas-protest-in-parliament

Al Jazeera. (2015b, December 21). *Kosovars use bricks, tear gas protesting EU agreement*. Al Jazeera. https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2015/12/21/kosovars-use-bricks-tear-gas-protesting-eu-agreement

Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. Verso.

Balkans Policy Research Group. (2017). *Asociacioni i komunave serbe: Kuptimi i pikëpamjeve kundërthënëse të shqiptarëve dhe serbëve*. Balkans Policy Research Group.

Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge*. Anchor Books.

Berridge, G. R., James, A., & Lloyd, L. (2012). *The Palgrave Macmillan dictionary of diplomacy* (3rd ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.

Bieber, F. (2015). *Power sharing and democracy in Southeast Europe*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Bieber, F. (2021). *The rise of authoritarianism in the Western Balkans*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Bieber, F. (2023). *The Serbia-Kosovo agreements and the EU dialogue process*. Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory Group.

Brubaker, R. (2004). *Ethnicity without groups*. Harvard University Press.

Constitutional Court of the Republic of Kosovo. (2015). *Case KO130/15: Assessment of the compatibility of the principles for the establishment of the Association/Community of Serb-majority municipalities with the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo*.

European External Action Service. (2023). *Agreement on the path to normalization between Kosovo and Serbia and implementation annex*. European Union.

Finnemore, M. (1996). *National interests in international society*. Cornell University Press.

Horowitz, D. L. (1985). *Ethnic groups in conflict*. University of California Press.

Kartsonaki, A. (2018). Playing with fire: An assessment of the EU's approach of constructive ambiguity on Kosovo's blended conflict. *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies, 22*(1), 4–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/19448953.2018.1497750

Keil, S. (2013). *Multinational federalism in Bosnia and Herzegovina*. Ashgate.

Ker-Lindsay, J. (2009). *Kosovo: The path to contested statehood in the Balkans*. I.B. Tauris.

Kissinger, H. (1976). *Years of renewal*. Simon & Schuster.

Lijphart, A. (1977). *Democracy in plural societies: A comparative exploration*. Yale University Press.

March, J. G., & Olsen, J. P. (1989). *Rediscovering institutions: The organizational basis of politics*. Free Press.

Muqaj, F., & Gruda, P. (2020). Constitutional and legal dilemmas for establishing the Association of Kosovo Serb Majority Municipalities. *Lex Localis – Journal of Local Self-Government, 18*(3), 603–624. https://doi.org/10.4335/18.3.603-624(2020)

Nesovic, B., & Celeghini, R. (2015). *Community/Association of Serbian Municipalities: The sum of all fears*. NGO Aktiv.

O'Leary, B. (2005). Debating consociational politics: Normative and explanatory arguments. In S. Noel (Ed.), *From power sharing to democracy: Post-conflict institutions in ethnically divided societies* (pp. 3–43). McGill-Queen's University Press.

Pruitt, D. G., & Zartman, I. W. (2007). *Negotiation and conflict management: Essays on theory and practice*. Routledge.

Rami, A. (2015). *Dallime të mëdha mes Asociacionit dhe Republika Srpska*. PrizrenPress.

Troitskiy, M. (2016). Hopeful ambiguity in international negotiations. *Russian Politics & Law, 54*(1), 47–50.

Visoka, G. (2018). *Acting like a state: Kosovo and the everyday making of statehood*. Routledge.

Weber, B., & Bajrami, A. (2018). *Mbrojtja kolektive etnike si mjet i (ç)integrimit: Asociacioni i komunave me shumicë serbe*. Fondacioni i Kosovës për Shoqëri të Hapur.

Wendt, A. (1999). *Social theory of international politics*. Cambridge University Press.

Wheeler, N. J. (2013). *Trusting enemies: Interpersonal relationships in international conflict*. Oxford University Press.