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Adem BUNGURI

ILLYRIAN HELMET FROM SOFRAÇANI (DIBËR)

In the place known as "Qafa e varreve" in the village of Sofraçan of the commune of Zerqan (Bulqizë), during the works for the construction of "Ruga e Arbërit" (Road of Arber), in February 2008, a flat Illyrian cemetery was discovered. (Fig.1).

It is located 500 m eastern of "Tre çesmat e Zerqanit", on the right side of the national street which goes across Sofraçan. A part of the cemetery was destroyed because of the road construction, and two full bronze helmets of the Illyrian type¹ and other archaeological objects were discovered. In the remaining part of this cemetery, rescue excavations² were done, in order to learn more about its archaeological and cultural character.

The ancient cemetery was situated on the northern edge of the river terrace known as "Livadhi i madh". The terrace which has natural protection and its orientation north-south, is located 550-532 m above the sea level, a north-south diameter of 197m and the one east-west 40-60m and it has an elliptic surface about 1.2 ha. It falls with steep and rocky slopes in the western and southern parts over the river bed of Bulqiza and with a milder slope on the eastern side, whereas in the northern side it has been cut by the "Ruga Arbërit" trackway, in the eastern-western direction. (Fig. 2-3).

¹ The helmets are now property of Archaeologic Institute thanks to the announcement in time and the full commitment of the archaeologist in Diber Mr. Hysen Uka (Peshkopi), whom we are grateful for on the occasion of their publishing. We show our gratitude to Prof. M.Koruti and Prof. L. Bejko who at the time headed respectively the Archaeologic Institute and the Institute of the Monuments of Culture, for providing the practical possibilities in verifying the information.

² The rescue excavations (20.05-20.06.2008) were financed by the General Directorate for Road Construction in the Ministry of Infrastructure. We show our gratitude to the director general of this directorate in 2008, Mr. S. Çota, the main responsible in its technical office, Eng. B.Makishti, and the CEO of the construction company "Almo Construction" for the Lot Krajkë-Çerenec, Mr. Sh.Bitri, for the support. Mr. R.Bitri (representative of the company and worker in charge), A.Sala (draftsman), H.Roshi (topographer) and 3 students of the Faculty of History, branch of Archeology, University of Tirana (I.Daci, B.Veliu and I.Jonuzi) participated in the excavation process. The topographic leveling is done by H.Roshi, drawing of objects by I.Zaloshnja, whereas the photos were taken by the author. Gratitude to all who contributed with their careful work undertake.

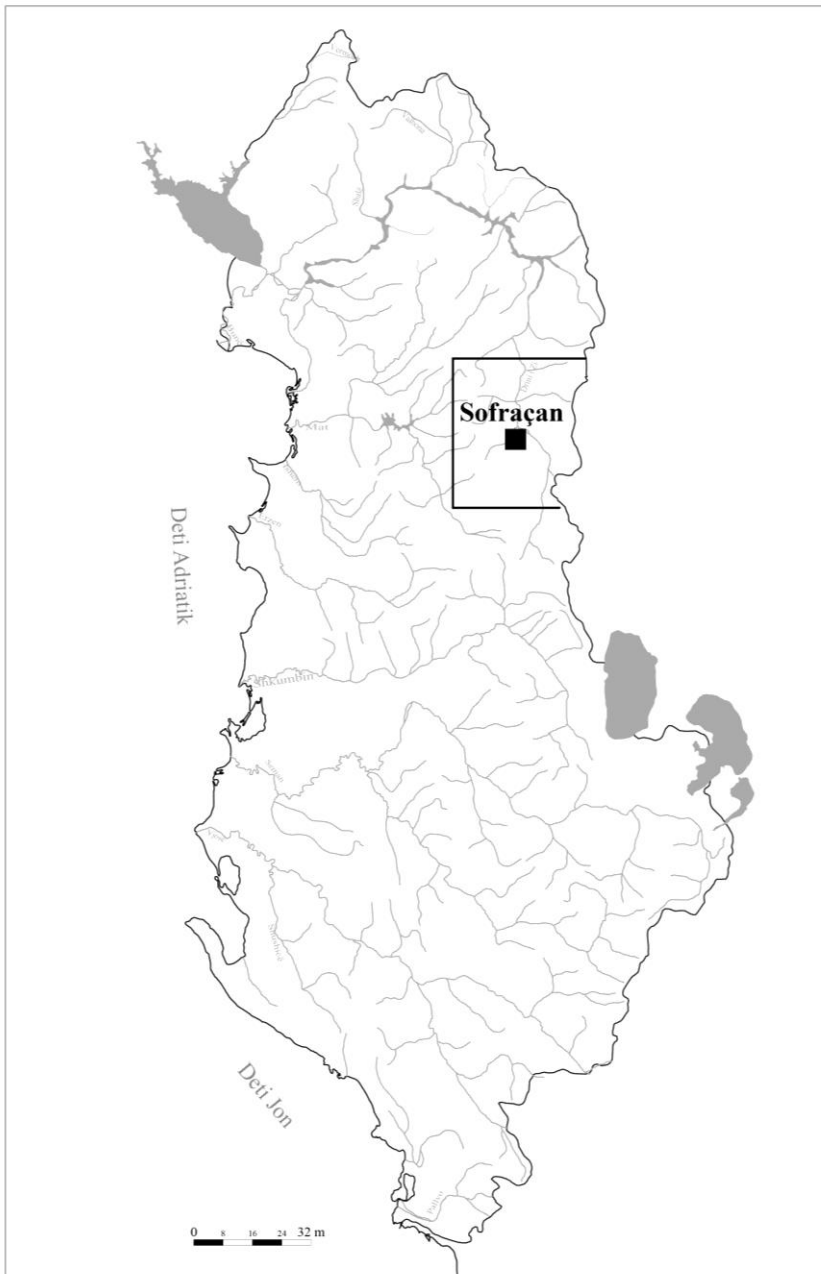


Fig. 1. Map of Albania and the position of Sofraçan



Fig. 2. General view of the Illyrian cemetery



Fig. 3. The view of the findplace of the helmets

The remaining part of the cemetery was located in the northern most edge and the highest part of the terrace. "Livadhi i madh", on the left side of Zalli i Bulqizës, next to the national road Bulqizë-Dibër. It has the shape of a light hill with a diameter east-west of 60m, north-south of 70m. the highest peak of this hill is at the same time a trigonometric point with the coordinates: $x = 449.473.903$, $y = 459.807.909$ and $z = 550.18$, which served as a basic point for measuring the quotes. The rescuing excavations were concentrated close to the area where the helmets were found, precisely in the part which would be excavated for the new trackway. Here, 5 teams with the dimensions 2x2m, 3x3m and 4x4m, with a general surface of 61 m² were excavated. Square I with the dimensions 2x2m was opened next to the new trackway, square II with the dimensions 4x4 was in the west of square I, next to the trackway of the road under construction too, square III, with the dimensions 3x3 was opened 5m

south to the square I, in the southern part of a military trench and bunker. Squares IV-V with the dimensions 4x4m were placed 9m west to the square II, in the highest part of the hill, which northern half part has been cut by the trackway of the road construction. Cemetery remains or objects of their inventories were not found in any of the excavated squares. (Fig.4).

The rescuing excavations were proceeded by the control of soil that has been removed by the digger machine. During this control, in addition to the helmets, the following object were found too: 4 tips of iron spears, one one-bladed iron knife, two small bronze parts of the helmet no.1, a small fragment of a third helmet, and some fragments of table dishes in black lacquer of the V-IV cent. B.C. Some human skeleton remains and some cemetery slabs of the type cyst were found too.

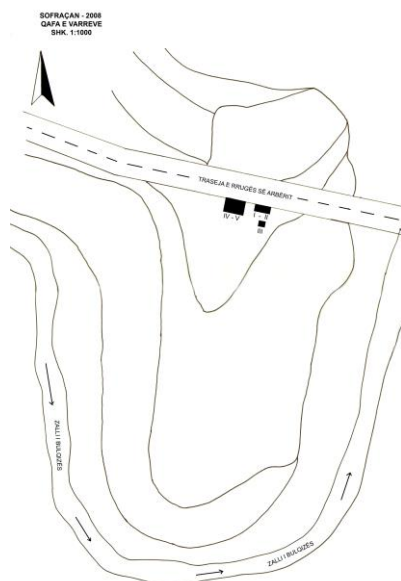


Fig. 4. The relevation plan of "Livadhi i Madh"

Analysis of findings:

From this flat Illyrian cemetery, we now have a small collection of attack and defense weapons, as well as some fragments of table dishes in black lacquer of the V-IV cent. B.C.

a. Illyrian helmet

1. Sofraçan. Nr. inv. 17124. Bronze helmet³. Type III, variant IIIA 1a.

It is preserved in the Archaeologic Museum, Tirana (further MAT) (Tab. I, 1-2). It is preserved almost as complete, deformed in the right side because of the pressure of the digging wheel loader. The cap is damaged too in the central part of it due to two old transversal cracks with a length of 5 cm and 6 cm. dimensions: height 28.5 cm, depth

³ Bunguri 2010, 261-262, tab. CX, 1-2; Bunguri 2013, 70, nr. 80.

23.8 cm and width 15.7 cm. Weight: 1530 gr. It is composed of light monolith bronze sheet green color in the outer part, with a thickness of 5 mm in the central part of the cap and of the on-forehead and 2-4 mm in the side part and the cheeks protections. The cap has a round semi-spherical shape. The face opening has a trapezoidal shape with large frontal base 10 cm and a height of 14 cm (the small base close to the gill is pressed), such as well the cheeks' protector close with an arched line. In the area over the ears they create a sharp angle with the neck protection but the angle split is not deep and the height of the triangle is 3 cm. The cap is permeated by two symmetric crests with outer depth of 6 cm and inner depth of 4,2 cm, each of which is composed of a plastic stripe with triangular cut with a height of 1.3 cm. The middle creek between them, with a width of 2.5 cm, a bit higher than the surface of the cap, is ornamented with a belt of three parallel stripes recorded with a width of 0.5 cm, which permeate the whole cap up to the fetter above the neck. Immediately under the middle creek, in the front side of it, 3 cm over the forehead line of the face opening, the helmet has a round hole with a diameter of 2 mm, in order to mount decorative feathers. Even the cheeks' protection in their edges have a hole, for the gill's lace, whereas in the back side over the neck, the helmet has a U-shaped linchpin, vertical, which is used to catch the inner lining. The neck protection threshold, in the shape of horizontal brim, with a width of 2 mm is only 2 mm under the above linchpin. The lips of the face openings of the helmet as well as the cheek and neck protection, are ornamented with a decorative stripe with a width of 5 mm, filled with small sandy circles, put next to each other with a diameter of 2.2 mm. in addition to the decorative function, it imitates even the stripe with the rings of the inner lining applied in the Illyrian helmets of the oldest types. In the technical viewpoint, the helmet has a thick working, it is heavy, and it has typological elements of the ancient products of the helmets of this type.

2. Sofraçan. Nr. inv. 17125. Bronze helmet⁴. Type III, variant IIIA2a.

Preserved in MAT (Tab. II, 1-2). It is damaged. A part of the bottom left side has been removed and it needs conservation. The back side of the neck, the neck protection, as well as the bottom part of the cheeks protection are missing. It is composed of light monolith bronze sheet green color in the outer part, with a thickness of 3 mm in the central part of the cap and of the on-forehead and 2 mm in the side part and the cheeks protections. The cap has a round semi-spherical shape. Dimensions: height 0.28.5m, depth 0.19m and height 0.15m. Weight of the helmet is 1135 gr., the weight of the disconnected left side is 98 gr., and the general weight of it is 1233 gr. The face opening has a trapezoidal shape with ribs 11.5 cm and 8 cm and height 15 cm, whereas the cheek protection, damaged in the edges, which close in an arched line. In the area over the ears they create a sharp angle with the neck protection, with the depth of the angle 4 cm. The cap is permeated by two symmetric crests, each of which is composed of a plastic stripe with triangular cut with a height of 1.4 cm. The middle creek between them, with a width of 3 cm, 0.5 cm higher than the surface of the cap, is ornamented with a belt of three parallel stripes recorded with a width of 0.5 cm. Immediately under the middle creek, in the front side of it, 4.7 cm over the forehead quad of the face

⁴ Bunguri 2010, 262-263, tab. CXI, 1-3 ; Bunguri 2013, 71, nr. 81.

opening, the helmet has a round hole with a diameter of 2 mm, for decorative feathers. In the left side of the inner part of the helmet, 3 cm away from the pertinent crest, the repairing traces are preserved in the shape of an elliptic stamp, with the dimensions 2x1.5 cm, the shape of which is reflected in its outer part too. This repair, done seemingly after being hit at fights, proves the metal-workings of the Illyrian craftsmen, and it is another indicator about the presence of the metal workers with the territory of Albania today (tab. II, 3). The lips of the face openings of the helmet as well as the cheek and neck protection, are ornamented with a decorative stripe filled with small sandy circles.

The space between the two light plastic slopes of this strive with a width of 4 mm, is filled with small circles with relief, with a diameter of 1 mm, put next to each other. The circles have been realized with the technique of hitting with cylindrical shaped instrument, the bottom part of it has created in the negative the shape of the circles of this decorative stripe.

3. Sofraçan. No. inv. 17126. Helmet fragment⁵, bottom part of the verge of the neck protection. Type III, variant IIIA2a.

It is preserved in MAT. Dimensions: length 13cm, width 1-5-2 cm and thickness 2mm; weight 19gr. The edge side of it is also ornamented with the usual decorative stripe, with a width of 4mm and the small circles diameter within it 2mm (Tab.II,4). Given the fact that this stripe is different to the one of the cheeks and neck's protection of the above helmet, and does not fit with its missing parts, we think that this fragment is part of another third helmet, not discovered or lost immediately after discovery.

The helmets of Sofraçan belong to the variants IIIA1a and IIIA2a of the helmets of type III of the Illyrian helmets, and comply with phase III of the development of the Illyrian helmet, with chronological limits in the V-IV cent. B.C.

b. Iron spears. 4 iron spears of the Illyrian type of two recognized variants, as well as a one-edged iron knife were found.

1. Iron spear of the type wide sheet in the form of a daphnia leaf. It is preserved in MAT. No.inv.3, tab. III,1 IV,1. The general length 27.5cm, the length of sheet 21cm, maxial width of the sheet 4.5cm, length of the tail 6cm, diameter of the conic tail 1.00cm, oxidized at a high rate. The elliptical sheet with a max. width 4.5cm, is permeated by a slight longitudinal ridge. There are extended rhombic incisions. Very short conic tail, open only 1,00 cm in the outside. The rate sheet-tail 1:4,6.

2. Iron spear of the type wide sheet in the form of a daphnia leaf. It is preserved in MAT. No.inv.10, tab. III,2, IV,2. Broken and damaged in both its edges. In the bottom part pressed by the digging wheel loader and distorted close to its tip. The bottom part of the sheet and the tail are missing, whereas in its tip, the sheet in addition to the damage, is leaned on the side. The general length of the sheet is 43 cm, the length of the damaged and leaned sheet on the top is 9cm. The sheet with the maximum width of 4.2cm is permeated by a slight ridge with a rhombic incision. The spear is very oxidized, however in specific part it preserves the black and brown iron color. The two-edged spear sheet is preserved in the length of 43 cm, from which 34 cm are part of the

⁵ dem, 263, tab. CXI, 4

straight part and 9cm of the distorted one. It has a maximal width of 4cm, elongated triangular incision, the width of it close to the tip is 1.5 cm. In all its length, it is permeated by the longitudinal ridge, which becomes thinner reaching the tip. The side blades are thin and damaged because of corrosion. From the typological perspectives both these spears belong to the wide sheet type of Glasinac of the developed iron phase, Glasinac IVc1 (625-550) and Glasinac IVc2 (550-500/475), with a duration of use by the beginning of the V cent. B.C.

3. Tip of iron spear of the variant with a narrow sheet in the shape of an olive or osier leaf. It is preserved in MAT. No. inv. 4, tab.III, 3, IV,3. General length 28 cm, length of sheet 16.5cm, maximal width of the sheet 2.8cm, length of conic tail 11.5cm, bottom diameter 1.5.2 cm. Highly corrugated. It is included in the variant of narrow sheets, with a conic tub form bottom, which is widened towards the bottom, open in the outer part, length of opening 4cm. The sheet is permeated by a slight longitudinal ridge, which provides an elongated rhombic incision. Ratio sheet-tail 1:2.4.

4. Tip of iron spear of the variant with a narrow sheet in the shape of an olive or osier leaf. It is preserved in MAT. No. inv. 5, tab. III,4, IV,4. General length 28 cm, length of the sheet 17.5 cm, bottom length -10.5cm, bottom diameter- 2cm. The spear is highly damaged due to oxidation and it is covered in iron oxide from the outside, which has made possible even the deformation of the bottom. Conic bottom with round incision, open from the outside in a length of 8.5cm the sheet with a maximal width of 2cm is permeated by the usual rhombic ridge. Ratio sheet-tail: 1:2.6.

Similar tip of spears have been found in the area of Dibra⁶, and everywhere in the territory of Albania, such as in the tumuli cemetery of Kuçit të Zi (Korçë)⁷, in the flat cemetery of Borova (Kolonjë)⁸, in the area of Shkodra⁹, in the tumuli of Mat¹⁰, and the areas of Kukës (Krumë¹¹, Kënetë¹², Çinamak¹³, Bardhoc¹⁴) and of Has (Myç-Has)¹⁵, in the tumuli of Dukagjini Plain (Shirokë¹⁶, Rogovë¹⁷, Perçevë¹⁸, Romajë¹⁹,

⁶ Bunguri 1989, tab. I, 2, 4-11, II, 1-3

⁷ Andrea 1976, 185, tab. II, (v. 9) 2-3, tab III, (v. 13), 1, tab IV, (v. 19), 2, (v.21), 1, tab. V, (v. 24), 1, v. 34, 1; tab. X, (v. 76), 1, tab XI, (v. 97), 2, tab XII, (v. 102), 1, (v. 111), 2, (v. 108), 3, tab XIII, (v. 115, 2), (v. 121), 3, (v. 126), 2, tab. XIV, 16.

⁸ Aliu 1994, 30-31, fig. 13, tab. VII, 125, 129, X, 170, XII, 184, XIV, 206, 207; tab. XI, 173, XIII, 194, 197, XVI, 223, 235, XVII, 245, 248, 251; VII, 126, IX, 149, 150, X, 157, XVIII, 256, 264 etj.

⁹ Prendi 1958,113-114.

¹⁰ Slami et al 1955, tab. III, 3-5; Kurti 1974, tab. III, 1, 3; Kurti 1987, 97, tab. V, 9-10 (tuma V, v. 1), tab.IX, 5 (tuma V, v. 13), tab. IX, 9 (tuma V, v. 15), tab. X, 1-2 (tuma V, v. 17); Prendi 1974, 118, tab. III, 4.

¹¹ Jubani 1982, 156, tuma V, v. 1, tab. VI, 36.

¹² Jubani 1983, 110, tab. I, 1 (tuma I, v. 1), II, 18-19 (tuma I, v.8), IV, 39 (tuma II, v. 4), tab. V, 47-48 (tuma II, v. 6), Tab. VII, 72-73 (tuma III, v. 12), 81 (tuma III, v. 6), 82 (tuma III, v. 19); Jubani 1974, 195.

¹³ Jubani 1971, 44.

¹⁴ Hoti 1982, 26, tab. IV, 1-2 (tuma I, v. 1), IV, 3 (tuma I, v. 3).

¹⁵ Bela 1990,113, tab.I, 1, 3 (tuma I, v. 1), tab.I, 10 (tuma I, v. 3, tab.VII, 82-85 (tuma II, v. 2); tab. VII, 94-96 (tuma II, v. 3).

¹⁶ Slavković-Durić 1964, 545, tab. III, 5-6.

¹⁷ Garašanin 1966, 40-42.

¹⁸ Tasić 1979, 89-97, tab. IV.

¹⁹ Durić et al 1975, tab. I, 2, 3-5, VI, 1-3, tab.VII, 1-2, tab. X, 1-14, XI, 11-12, XIV, 4-7, XXII, 2-3 etc.

Ponoshec²⁰), as well as in Glasinac²¹ and Donja Dolina²², included in the Illyrian cultural group of Mat-Glasinac. Most of the analogies of the spears of this phase comply with the spears of the Glasinac phase IVc2 (550-500/475)²³.

5. Iron one-bladed knife, it is preserved in MAT. NO.inv.9, tab.III,5, IV,5. Only the one-bladed sheet and the beginning of the tail has been preserved, whereas the tip is damaged. The knife is highly damaged due to corrosion. The general length 10cm, the length of the tail 0.6cm. The blade with a width of 1cm has an elongated triangular incision. It is of the narrow-sheet type slightly bended inside the blade and a handle formed from the narrow extension of the sheet. Knives of this type are usual findings for the Illyrian cemeteries of the V-IV cent. B.C., which is confirmed even by the presence of the above spears as well as the helmets of bronze during this period. Similar knives have been found in the tumuli of Mat²⁴ and Has²⁵ which date to V-IV cent. B.C. as well as in Kuçi i Zi (Korçë)²⁶, in the flat cemetery in Borova (Kolonjë)²⁷ etc.

c. Fragments of table dishes

1. Kylix fragment. It is preserved in MAT. No.inv.7, tab, V, 1, VI, 1. Only the lip and the ring handle is preserved, set in a sloppy way on the shoulders of the dish. The diameter of the mouth 16cm. lips thin at the tip and lightly rolled on the outside. The width and length of the handles 4cm. very clean pink clay, very-well baked, painted inside and outside in shiny black lacquer with dipping, which is generally well preserved. Similar kylixes painted in black lacquer have been found in the tumuli of Burrel²⁸, of Kukës²⁹, dating to the V-IV cent. B.V. It reminds of the Dyrrah³⁰ kylixes of the V-VI cent. B.C. because of the clay and the type of lacquer.

2. Skyphos fragment spherical shape, with profiled lips, thin on top and slightly rolled on the outside, without handles. It is preserved in MAT. No.inv.8, tab. V,2, VI,2. The mouth diameter-16cm. very clean pink clay, very good baking. Decorated in black lacquer, with round floral ornaments in the shoulders, and horizontal lacquer stripe in its under-lip. Painted even inside in black shiny lacquer, which has been partly preserved. Similar skyphos shapes painted in black lacquer have been found in the tumuli of Burrel³¹ and Kukes³², dating back to V-IV cent. B.C.

3. Skyphos lip, painted in shiny black lacquer. Mouth diameter 12cm. It is preserved in MAT, tab. V3, VI,2. Same shape as of the above skyphos. Same period of time.

4. Lekythos. Preserved in MAT. No.inv.6, tab, V,4, VI,4. The bottom part and a part of the side parts are preserved. The general height 8cm, diameter of the body 9cm.

²⁰ Gashi 2009, AIA Prishtinë.

²¹ Benac-Čović 1957, 30-31, tab. IV, 7, 8, 12.

²² Marić 1964, tab. VII, 1-2.

²³ Benac-Čović 1957, 31 vv, tab. IV, 7, 8, 12.

²⁴ Islami et al 1955, tab. III, 10-11; Kurti 1987, 1, 97, tab. X, 6 (tuma V, v.21), tab. XII, 6 (tuma VII, v. 1).

²⁵ Bela 1990, 2, 114, tab.III, 31, VII, 91.

²⁶ Andrea 1976, 186, tab. V, (v. 28), 2, tab. XIV, 14

²⁷ Aliu 1994, 33-34, tab. V, 91, VIII, 139, XIII, 202, XVII, 238.

²⁸ Kurti 1987, 1, f. 94, tab.V, 1-2 (tuma V, v. 1)

²⁹ Jubani 1974, 195, tab. IX, 1-3.

³⁰ Hidri 1976, 245.

³¹ Kurti 1987, 94, tab. IV, 2 (tuma IV, v.2), tab.VI, 1(tuma V, v.2), tab. VI, 3 (tuma V, v. 3).

³² Jubani 1974, 195, tab. X, 1-2.

The bottom in ring foot and a diameter of 6cm, maintains in its base the concentric circle of the frame. Very clean pink clay, baked very well. Painted in the outside in black lacquer, initially by dipping into the tincture and later with paintbrush, in order to create 4-5 horizontal belts with more concentrated lacquer in shiny glow.

5. Small bottom fragments, with a diameter of 9cm, which have maintained the traces of black lacquer and which belong to the above vessels. (*Tab. V, 5-6, VI, 5-6*) as well as some unrecoverable walls, painted black lacquer (*Tab. VI, 7-8*).

The above fragments belong to the table dishes. They have been painted in black shiny lacquer respectively in both sides (kylix, skyphos) or only in the outside (lekythos). They are made of clean pink clay, very well baked, uniformly and they belong to the imports during the V-IV cent. B.C. the very clean pink clay, modelling and good baking as well as the qualitative lacquer orient us towards the Dyrrachium craftsmen. They represent a safe archaeological context for the date of the cemetery and its relevant inventory, respectively for the helmets and the tips of the spears during this period. Their discovery in Sofraçan testifies the penetration of the imported products through the valley of the Bulqiza river as well as the functioning of this road arteria since V-IV cent. B.C.

The discovery of the two helmets in Sofraçan is of a specific historical-cultural importance. They lead to number 32 of the Illyrian helmets discovered in Albania, in the archaic phase and the beginnings of the civilized period in Illyria and testify the high Illyrian culture in general. However, helmets constitute only in one element of the hoplite type of armor, together with breast-plate, shield, greaves, and forearms clothing, their discovery testifies that by the end of the V-IV cent. B.C in addition to the knights, a military category was born³³. They also testify the birth of the military aristocracy, the social differentiation even in the region of Dibra, inhabited by the Illyrian tribe of Penests³⁴ and their inclusion in the political-military life of this period.

The Illyrian users of the cemetery of the "qafës së vorreve" in Sofraçanit, seems to have had their dwelling very close to the cemetery, respectively in the Illyrian castle known as "qyteza e Sofraçanit" ("town of Sofraçan), very close to the ancient cemetery, in the surface of a rocky crest at a height of 862 m above the sea level. (Fig.5).

Its crest closes with a surface of an elliptic shape, with a diameter east-west 90m, and north-south 32-35m. The inner surface of the town, in the shape of an elliptic terrace, partly flat, reaches to 0.3ha. In the southern side and partly the eastern one, it closes up by a rocky slope side, whereas in the western and northern part, it preserves the fortification traces of the early iron age as well as its cultural deposits³⁵ (Fig.6).

³³ Ceka 1985, 129, shën. 138. Armatimi i plotë i një kalorësi është praqitur në një përkrenare ilire të Trebenishtit. Krhs. Lahtov 1965, tab. XXVIII, 3

³⁴ Burime 1965: Polibi XXVIII, 8, 11; Livi XLIII, 19, 1-5, 21, 1-2. Liv

³⁵ Bunguri 2011, AiA, Tiranë.



Fig. 5. Sofraçan castle-photo

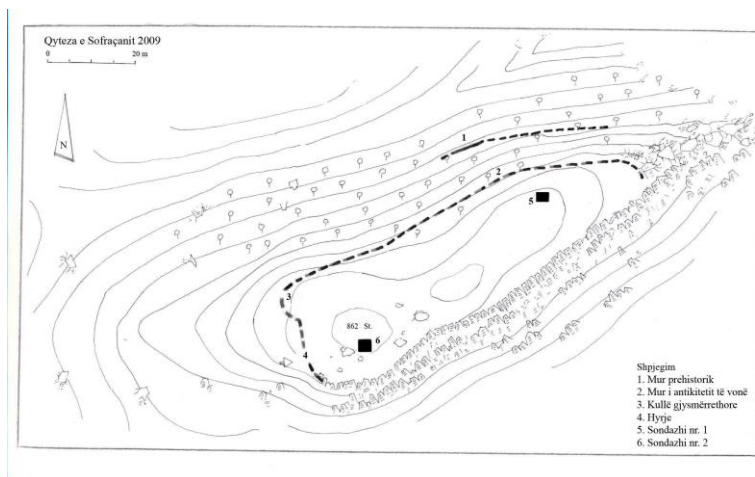


Fig. 6. Sofraçan castle: relevation

d. Illyrian helmets in Albania

Bronze helmets of Illyrian type are found almost in all of the territory of Albania (Fig.7).

Of the 9 helmets known until 1958³⁶ and 12 in 1963³⁷, today their number reaches to 32 of them³⁸. The geography of their dispersion is as following: Kolonja 1 helmet

³⁶ Prendi 1958, 112

³⁷ Ceka 1963, 103; Ibid, 1965, 102-109; Ibid 1972, 167-177; Ibid 2005, 162-174. The fragment of the helmet found in Nënshat in Shkodra is not included in this number, as it was found after the above article was sent to be published.

³⁸ According to unverified information, Illyrian helmets are found in the area of Shkodra too, in Palasa of Himara and in the area between Radhima and Dukat of Vlora. In addition to a recent information, a complete

(Borova)³⁹, Korçë 2 helmets (Mborje, Bitinckë)⁴⁰, Pogradec 3 helmets (Petrushë⁴¹, Starovë⁴², Radokal⁴³, Librazhd 2 helmets (Rajcë⁴⁴, Qukës⁴⁵), Elbasan 2 helmets (Maja e Shkëmbit⁴⁶, Belsh⁴⁷), Tiranë 1 helmet (Bastar)⁴⁸, Krujë 2 helmets (Zgërdhesh)⁴⁹, Lushnje 2 helmets (Dushk⁵⁰, Kosovë), Apoloni 2 helmets (Kryegjatë, Apoloni (tuma nr. 6)⁵¹, Durrës (1 helmet)⁵², Mat 2 helmets (Karicë, Burrel)⁵³, Mirditë 1 helmet (Perlat)⁵⁴, Kukës 3 helmets (Çinamak (2) and Krumë (1)⁵⁵, Lezhë 1 copë (Ungrej)⁵⁶ Shkodër 2 helmets (Nënshat)⁵⁷, Kurbin 1 helmet (Laç)⁵⁸, Dibër 4 helmets (Draj-Reç 1 helmet⁵⁹, Sofraçan 3 helmets)⁶⁰. In Kosovo 7 Illyrian helmets have been found so far respectively in Neprabisht (Shirokë) of Suhareka (1 helmet)⁶¹, Banja e Pejës (3 helmets)⁶², Korishë e Prizrenit (2) dhe Dejë of Rahoveci (1)⁶³.

More than 40 Illyrian helmets have been found also in the Albanian are of the Western Macedonia⁶⁴ 4 (Trebenisht⁶⁵, Strugë (Dologozhdë)⁶⁶, Reçicë (Ohër)⁶⁷, Ohër (Porta e Sipërme)⁶⁸, basin of Ohrid (unknown place of finding)⁶⁹, Kërçovë⁷⁰, Manastir

Illyrian helmet is part of a private collection of a businessman in Tirana. Although unverified, this information indicate that the real number of the Illyrian helmets in Albania is bigger.

³⁹ Aliu 1994, 35-37, fig. 15, tab.XII, 186.

⁴⁰ The unpublished helmets are preserved in the Archaeologic Museum of Korça.

⁴¹ Teržan 1995, 121.

⁴² Manastirliu 1968, 122, tab. XVII.

⁴³ Stipčević 1981, 111, nr. 205; Blečić Kavur-Pravidur 2012, 91, nr.53.

⁴⁴ Gjipali 1981, 242, tab. I, 8.

⁴⁵ Amore et al 2005, 336-360

⁴⁶ Ceka 1968, 110-111

⁴⁷ Ceka 1975, 161-162; Ceka 1976, 362; Ibid 1985, 129, tab. VIII, 7; Ceka 1988a, 244, nr. 111.

⁴⁸ Ceka 1963, 101, shën. 18.

⁴⁹ The most complete helmet is preserved in the Museum "Gjergj Kastrioti Skënderbeu" in Krujë.

⁵⁰ Ceka 1963, 104; ceka1988a, 284, nr.157.

⁵¹ Dimo1976, 365, tab. XXXI, 2; Dimo 2011, 326

⁵² Anamali 1956, 26-27, fig.8; Osmani 1988, 209-210, fig.1-2.

⁵³ Anamali 1956, 27, shën. 1; Kurti 1968, 94; Kurti 1974, 313

⁵⁴ Korkuti 1971, 12, nr. 22; Koka 1985, 34, nr. 178; Islami 2013, 81, pl.XXXVIII,1.

⁵⁵ Jubani 1971, 4 4, 47; Prendi 1988, 230, nr. 96

⁵⁶ Nopcsa 1909, 83-84, fig. 2-3

⁵⁷ Prendi 1958, 112, fig. 3.

⁵⁸ Nopcsa 1912, 188-189, fig. 44

⁵⁹ Bunguri 1989, 71-72, tab. II, 5.

⁶⁰ Bunguri 2010, 261-264, tab. CX, 1-2, CXI, 1-4; Bunguri 2013, 68-71, fig. 79-81.

⁶¹ Djasić 1957, 249; Vasić 1983, 76-79, a, 6

⁶² Perović-Pešikan 1990/c; Korkuti 2006, 5, fig. 1, 3.

⁶³ Shukriu 2004, 68, nr. 73.

⁶⁴ Pollozhani 2017, 275-294

⁶⁵ Filov 1927,81-82, tab. 96-98, 15, 1; 84, tab. 99, 15, 2; Lahtov 1965, 83; Pollozhani 2017, 280, fig. 3; 281, fig.4, 283, fig. 6-7, 284, fig. 8-9; 287, fig.14. Amongst 10 helmets found in the necropolis of Trebenisht,8 belong to the Illyrian type, out of which 5 belong to the second phase of the development of the Illyrian helmet and 3 to the late phase of its development.

⁶⁶ Bitrakova-Groždanova 1989, 87, tab. 4; Pollozhani 2017, 287-288, fig. 15.

⁶⁷ Lahtov 1965, fq. 48-59; Ibid 1967, f. 47, fig. 1; Sanev et al 1976, 62, nr. 691; Pollozhani 2017, 288, fig.

⁶⁸ Pollozhani 2017, 290, fig. 18-22

⁶⁹ Idem, 288, fig. 17

⁷⁰ Mikulčić 1964-1965, 218

(Progon Bukri)⁷¹, Tetovë⁷², Babino (Demir Hisar)⁷³, Dedeli (Valandovo)⁷⁴ dhe Koresnica (Demir Kapija)⁷⁵.

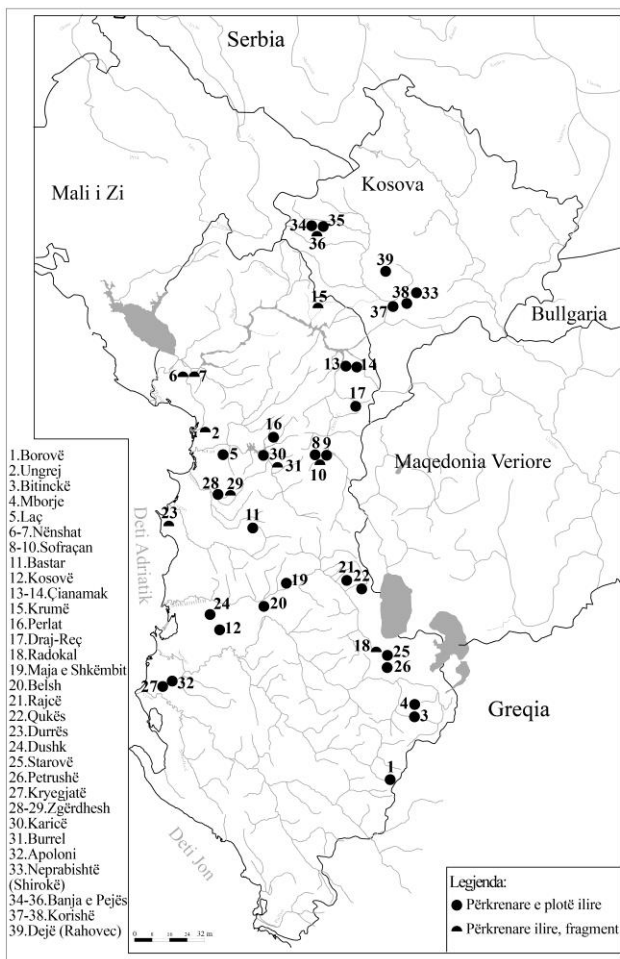


Fig. 7. Map of Illyrian helmets in Albania

⁷¹ Mikulčić 1966, 28, tab. 10, 19a; Simoska- Sanev 1976, 58, nr. 306; Simoska- Sanev 1980, 48, nr. 284; Pollozhani 2017, 280, fig. 1.

⁷² Lisićar 1951, f. 46, nr. 146; Lisićar 1954, 601, tab. 2; Pollozhani 2017, 287, fig. 12.

⁷³ Pollozhani 2017, 287, fig. 13.

⁷⁴ Idem, 285, fig. 11.

⁷⁵ Idem, 290, fig. 23-40.

An impressive number illyrian helmets have been also found in the Illyrian are in Monte Negro (Budva (3helmets)⁷⁶, Kličevo (Nikšić)⁷⁷, Bosnja⁷⁸ (Glasinac-Taline), Podstinje, Kiseljak⁷⁹, Donja Dolina⁸⁰, Gorica⁸¹ Kaçanj (5 helmets)⁸², Kroacisë (Cetine of Trilit)⁸³, Tepolje, Kaptol, Bublin, Sisak⁸⁴, Hvar⁸⁵, Dubrovnik (Cavtat)⁸⁶, South-eastern Slovenia (2 helmets in the tumuli 7 of Kapiteljska Njiva)⁸⁷, Western Serbia (Trstenik of western Morava)⁸⁸, Mitrovicën of Sremit, Zhupanj⁸⁹, tumuli necropolis of Ražana (grave 1 of tumuli V)⁹⁰ etc. Illyrian helmets have been found as disconnected even outside the Illyrian territories, as in Romania(Olteni-Gostavat)⁹¹, Timișoara (Jidovin)⁹² Transilvani (Ocna Muresului)⁹³, and lately also in Gâvojdia (in the Timiș river bed during the sand excavation)⁹⁴, in Ukraine (Kerttch- 1 helmet)⁹⁵, and an only copy in the Southern Russia (Osseti)⁹⁶, in Italy 2 helmets (Abrozso type IIIB) and Sicily(type IIIA3a), which should be considered as pure Illyrian imports⁹⁷. The geography of the Illyrian type helmets in the Greek territory stops in Peloponnese (Kalavryta)⁹⁸, Kalapodi (Atikè)⁹⁹, Olympia¹⁰⁰, in Cypress¹⁰¹, in the northern Greece¹⁰² in the temple of Athena in Athens, in the Acropolis of Athens, in Lindos of Rhodes¹⁰³, in the archaic necropolis of Ioannina¹⁰⁴, in Aegean Macedonia, as in the area of Doriani lake, in Lefkhada¹⁰⁵ etc. In the Archaeologic Museum of Thessaloniki there are 7 copies

⁷⁶ Petrović 1939, 170; Marović 2006, 22

⁷⁷ Žitić 1979. 216, tab. I.

⁷⁸ Teržan 1976, 376, nr. 145.

⁷⁹ Truhelka 1914, 26, 117

⁸⁰ Fiala 1899, 152, tab. 9; Truhelka 1904, 95, fig. 69; Čović 1961, 25, fig. 1.

⁸¹ Truhelka 1901, 6, fig. 3-4; Ibid 1914, 123, tab. 116 a.

⁸² Marić 1959, 89, tab. I, 1a-b; Marović 2006, 22

⁸³ Teržan 1995, 113, shën. 3.

⁸⁴ Mihalic 2004, 331, nr. 13.

⁸⁵ Nikolanci 1959, 82; Nikolanci 1960, 31, tab. I; Stipčević 2002, 200.

⁸⁶ Batović 1987, 62, tab. 10

⁸⁷ Dular-Hvala 2007, 243, fig. 141

⁸⁸ Garašanin-Garašanin 1973, 509, 511, tab. 111; Stipčević 2002, 170

⁸⁹ Vasić 1983, 76-79, fig. 1-3.

⁹⁰ Garašanin 1957, 36; Garašanin-Garašanin 1958, tab. 20, 1; Vasić 1983, 76-79; Zotović 1985, 73, tab. XX, 8; Marović 2006, 15-22, nr. 23

⁹¹ Berciu 1958, 441, fig. 3-4.

⁹² Idem, 441, fig. 5.

⁹³ Idem, 436, fig. 1-2.

⁹⁴ Medelet-Cedica 2004, 97-100, fig. 1.

⁹⁵ Gardner 1884, 65, tab. 46, 2.

⁹⁶ Vasić 1982-1983, 79; Stipčević 2002, 161.

⁹⁷ Ceka 1963, 103.

⁹⁸ Teržan 1995. 87-89, 111-121

⁹⁹ Pflug 1988, 46-47, fig. 6

¹⁰⁰ Kunze 1958, 137; Pflug 1988, 46-47, fig. 6.

¹⁰¹ Kukahn 1936, 53.

¹⁰² Teržan 1995, 113.

¹⁰³ Blinkenberg 1919, tab. 22, 570. This helmet is preserved in the Archaeologic Museum of Istanbul. Krhs. Ceka 1965, 107, shën. 262.

¹⁰⁴ Andreou 1985, 285-288, fig. 1-6. We remind here the fact highlighted even before that the helmet of Olympia and of Athens are sent as dedication (ex voto) to the God of Athena, and that the Illyrian helmet of Lindos has only been a war trophy. Krhs. Ceka 1963, 102.

¹⁰⁵ Ninou 1979, tab. 16, nr. 71.

of the Illyrian helmet with low angled cracks over the ears of the V cent. B.C., in two of which the decorating stripe of the face opening is covered by a golden stripe with a width of 20mm¹⁰⁶, and a part of the side of such a helmet in which the figure of Nike is stamped which holds in the right hand the spear and in the left hand the shield, found in Hagios Georgios (Grevena)¹⁰⁷, whereas in the Museum of the ancient city of Pellas¹⁰⁸, there is another Illyrian helmet of the IV cent. B.C, found in the agora of the city. In addition some bronze helmets of the Illyrian type are in the main museums of the western European cities as in British Museum¹⁰⁹ (3 pieces), Louvre (2 pieces), in the Berlin Museum (3 pieces) and Mainz in Germany (1 piece), in Vienna (1 piece from Olympia) and in Budapest¹¹⁰ (1 piece of unknown origin) etc.

In the typological viewpoint, the Illyrian helmets found in Albania belong to 3 types and some of their variant, which refer to 3 successive phases of their development (Fig.8).

The earliest type one, chronologically connected to the earliest phase of its development, respectively with the archaic period (cent. VII-VI B.C.), is represented by the material of Borova¹¹¹. It belongs to the variant Ib, with heavy structure, hemispherical round kalotte, without hampered earing, which prevents hearing. A similar helmet with the one of Borova, which is preserved in the Museum of Olympia (no.inv.121), has been reported by Snodgrass since 1964¹¹². The helmets of the variant Ib are represented by 7 ones, 6 of which are found in Olympia and one in Borova¹¹³. In addition to them Teržan mentions another one from this early archaic type from an unknown point, without defining its variant¹¹⁴. Differently from the helmets of type Ia, made of two joining pieces, the helmets of variant Ib, are made of a one piece of monolith bronze. Regarding their dating, the scholars do not see chronological differences between the two variants Ia and Ib of the helmets of this early type. Thus Kunze dates the helmets of variant Ib to the VII cent. B.C (700-640 B.C), Pflug to VIII-VII BC.¹¹⁵, whereas S.Aliu, based on the context of the cemetery dates the Borova helmet at the first ½ of the VII cent. B.C.¹¹⁶.

¹⁰⁶ Thessaloniki Museum, archaic room, showcase no. 2 (1 piece), antiquity room, showcase no.2 (2 pieces) and in the last showcase in the central room (4pieces). No. inv.18555.

¹⁰⁷ Museum of Thessaloniki, antiquity department, showcase no.2, object no.4, Krhs. Ninou, 1979, tab. 11, nr. 46.

¹⁰⁸ Museum of Pellas, antiquity showcase no.7.

¹⁰⁹ Hockey et al 1992, 281 vv, tab. 19, 21.

¹¹⁰ Mozcolics 1955, 49-50, fig. 12-13.

¹¹¹ Aliu 1994, 36, fig. 15, tab. XII, 186.

¹¹² Snodgrass 1964, 18, tab. 10

¹¹³ Kunze 1958, 12, nr. 1-22, Taf. 39-45; Pflug 1988, 47, Abb. 6a; Aliu 1994, 36.

¹¹⁴ Teržan 1995, 113 nr.5

¹¹⁵ Pflug 1988, 43, Abb. 1; 48

¹¹⁶ Aliu 1994, 36.

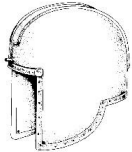

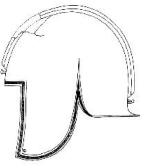

Faza e hershme (700-640)	Tipi I 	Varianti a		Varianti b	
		—		Borovë	
Faza e mesme (525-425)	Tipi II 	Varianti a		Varianti b	
		—		Ungrej Bitinckë	
Faza e vonë (425-325/168)	Tipi IIIA 	IIIA1a	IIIA2a	IIIA2b	IIIA3a
		Laç Nënshat 1-2 Mborje Sofraçan 1	Çinamak 1-2 Krumë Durrës Bastar Kosovë Zgërdhesh Qukës Draj-Reç Sofraçan 2-3	Perlat Karicë Radokal	Shkëmbi i kalasë Belsh Rajcë
Faza e vonë (325-168)	Tipi IIIB 	Varianti a		Varianti b	
		Starovë Petrushë		Dushk Kryegjatë	

Fig.8. Typological scheme of Illyrian helmets in Albania

The medium phase, chronologically is connected to the end of the VI-V cent. B.C. (525-425 B.C). Type II, which refers to this phase with a round kalotte and low angled crack over the ears, presents a further development of the first type, but which has not solved the problem regarding hearing. The helmet of Ungrej (Lezhe) and one of the Trebenisht helmets belong to this type. The earlier findings of this type, in Trebenisht date back to the phase IIIB (525-425 B.C) accompanied with proto-citizen rich material of ceramics¹¹⁷.

The late phase of their development includes ¼ of the end of the V cent and ¾ of the IV cent. B.C (425-325 B.C), whereas later copies, have been in use up to the beginning of the II cent. B.C. The helmets referring to this phase, have known two types of development: IIIA and IIIB, which in addition to full hearing, provide the neck protection too. The more frequent and preferred type is the one IIIA with a round kalotte reinforced by two plastic crests, lighter structure and angled crack over the ears. The opening lips of the face are ornamented with a sandy decorating stripe, which imitates

¹¹⁷ Lahtov 1965, 153.

catching the holes of the earlier variant¹¹⁸. The helmets of this type in Albanian have known four phases of development, defined as variant III A1a, IIIA2a, IIIA2b, and IIIA3a, defined not only by the form of the kalotte and the depth of the angled crack over the ears, but also by the type of the decorating stripe of its lips. Most of the copies found in Albania, Kosovo, Northern Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Western Serbia, Romania etc., belong to this type of helmet. Based on the comparison of the typological elements, we think that the helmet no.1 of Sofraçan belongs to the variant IIIA1a¹¹⁹ which dates to V cent. B.C. helmet number 2, more qualitative in all its elements, is included in the variant IIIA2a, which chronologically dates back to V-IV cent. B.C. based on the archaeological contexts that accompanies both helmets of Sofraçan, we think that they belong to V-IV cent. B.C and are contemporary to the helmets of Durrës, Çinamak, Draj-Reçit, Perlatit (accompanied by a cantar of the type San Valentin of mid V cent. B.C)¹²⁰, Banja of Peja¹²¹, and Trstenik of Western Serbia, included in the earliest phase of the Glasinac group¹²². The chronological boundaries of the use of the helmets of type IIIA include V-II cent. B.C.¹²³. In II cent. B.C the helmet of this type is used as a symbol in the coins of the Illyrian Kingdom. In the capital of this kingdom, two coins of the type shield-helmet were issued, the first after the year 186 B.C. in the name of the city community with the legend "Σ-KO-ΔΠ-ΝΩΝ"¹²⁴ and the second during the regn og Gent (181-168)¹²⁵ with the legend "ΒΑCΙΑε(ώC) ΓεNθΙO(Y)"¹²⁶. According to this numismatic source, the year 168 B.C. must be considered as *terminus ante quem* of the use of the Illyrian helmet of the type IIIA in Albania.

The late phase of the Illyrian helmet development, includes IV-II cent. B.C (325-168 B.C). the Illyrian helmet of the type IIIB¹²⁷, which refer to this phase are represented by 4 copies found in ë Kryegjatë (Apoloni)¹²⁸, Dushk (Lushnje)¹²⁹, Starovë dhe Petrushë (Pogradec)¹³⁰. The elements depicted as type on their own, are bended shapes of the opening over the ears, the lack of the engraved decorations of the middle creek of the central side and in any case even the lack of the holes in the paragnathites for the connection under the gills of the helmet. The helmets of this variant found in Albania are divided in two variants: IIIB1, with a decorating sandy stripe of the dace opening and its outer sides (Starovë, Petrushë), and IIIB2- without the decorated stripe (Kryegjatë, Dushk). The helmet of Dushk was found accompanied with a dish of the type Gnathia of the end of V cent. B.C (325-300 B.C). This date serves as *terminus post*

¹¹⁸ Prendi 1974, 119-120.

¹¹⁹ Teržan 1995, 121.

¹²⁰ Ceka 1985, 139, shën. 139

¹²¹ Perović-Pešikan 1990; Korkuti 2006, 5, fig. 1, 3.

¹²² Garašanin 1973, 511.

¹²³ Ceka 1963, 105.

¹²⁴ Islami 1972, 356, kat. IV, 1-6; tab. I, 6-7; 358, 365, IV; 373, XXV.

¹²⁵ Islami 1972, 356, 367.

¹²⁶ Idem, 367, IX.

¹²⁷ Teržan 1995, 121

¹²⁸ Dimo 1976, 365, tab. XXXI, 1-2.

¹²⁹ Islami 1972, 358.

¹³⁰ Manastirliu 1968, 121-122, tab. XXVII.

quem of the earliest time limit of the helmets of this type, whereas as *terminus ante quem* of their use is considered as the reigning time of Pleurat or Genti, respectively the coins of the type shield-helmet issued in Liss after the year 186 B.C with the legend "ΛΙΣΣΙ-TAN"¹³¹.

The denomination of the helmet with semi-hemispherical kalotte and quadrangular or trapezoidal face openings as of the Illyrian type, has in the present times been accepted by most of the scholars¹³², even though in any case the old denomination "Greek-Illyrian"¹³³, "island-Illyrian"¹³⁴ the term "Illyrian"¹³⁵, or even the hybrid term "so-called Illyrian"¹³⁶ are still found. Two opposite hypothesis exist regarding the issues of origin and the production of these helmets. The first hypothesis which attributes the Greek origin, is considered outdated in the present days. Thus according to the scholar E. Kukahn, the Illyrian helmets origin must have been from the Cyprus¹³⁷ island, whereas according to E.Kunze the prototype of the Illyrian helmet should be searched for in the conical helmet of the geometrical period of Argos (Peloponnese)¹³⁸, a thought which has later been supported even by A.Snodgrass¹³⁹. On the other hand, the scholar B. Teržan thinks that the Illyrian helmets have been crafted in the manufactory of Corinth or in the colonies found by it in the Adriatic coast¹⁴⁰, and the wider distribution of the helmets type III in Albania is seen as a consequence of this "colonization"¹⁴¹. In the meantime, the thought of C. Truhelka since the beginning of the XX cent. That "the Illyrian helmets must have been crafted by the Ilirians themselves"¹⁴², which is the most credible hypothesis, has been later supported by other scholars such as: M . Garašanin¹⁴³, H. Ceka¹⁴⁴, N. Ceka¹⁴⁵, B. Jubani¹⁴⁶, S. Aliu¹⁴⁷, etc., who think that in the Illyrian areas, there must have existed local metal manufactories for their crafting. As an argument for this not only serve the numerous copies of the late Illyrian helmets found in the Illyrian areas in the western and central Balkans, but also the numerous raw metal assets (sources) of the northern or south-eastern Albania, as well as the high metallurgical skills of the Illyrians, and especially of Pirusts. Accordinf to H.Ceka, It is precisely in this zone that must be searched the metallurgic manufactories of the Illyrian helmets¹⁴⁸. A. Stipčević too, who considers the Illyrian helmets initially as

¹³¹ Islami 1972, 358, 366, VI.

¹³² Truhelka 1902, 8; Pflug 1988, 42-63; Blečić 2007, 73-116; Blečić Kavur-Pravidur 2012, 35-122

¹³³ Kukahn 1936, 17, 53-55; Mozsolics 1955, 49-51.

¹³⁴ Kukahn 1936, 17, 53-55; Mozsolics 1955, 49-51.

¹³⁵ Vasić 1985, 76-80.

¹³⁶ Vasić 2010, 37-55.

¹³⁷ Kukahn 1936, 17, 53-55.

¹³⁸ Kunze 1958, 118, tab. 46-50.

¹³⁹ Snodgrass 1964, 26-28.

¹⁴⁰ Teržan 1995, 87

¹⁴¹ Idem, 87.

¹⁴² Truhelka 1902, 8, fig. 3-4; Truhelka 1914, 126-132.

¹⁴³ Garašanin 1957, 44, 37-51.

¹⁴⁴ Ceka 1963, 104.

¹⁴⁵ Ceka 1968, 110.

¹⁴⁶ Jubani 1974, 198

¹⁴⁷ Aliu 1985, 274.

¹⁴⁸ Ceka 1963, 103.

imported from Greece and in some case provided through naval pirate, accepts that at a later phase, they have been crafted by Illyrians themselves¹⁴⁹.

About the Illyrian origin of these helmets there exist two epigraphic testimonies. After the ex voto helmet of Olympia of the IV cent B.C., which holds engraved the name of its possessor "Verganzi of Grabos", the Illyrian affiliation of which has been given arguments by H.Crka in 1963¹⁵⁰, some years later, the helmet of Maja e Shkëmbit (Elbasan) would be published by Ceka (the young), which had been in possession to an Illyrian army officer of the III cent B.C. named Kaiilla¹⁵¹. Prof. Ceka (the senior) has drawn the attention by providing an irrefutable logical argument in support of the Illyrian origin of our helmet: as in Greece and in its colonies two types of helmets were used, the Attic and Corinth ones, then even in the hinterland of the Hellenistic colonies, respectively in Illyria and Macedonia, there must have been widespread these types of helmets; in Illyria as an area of the Corinth cultural impact, the second type must have been mainly present.

But the archaeological evidence speaks of the opposite. The absolute majority of the Illyrian helmets found in Albania and in the Western Balkans, belong to the Illyrian type, whereas the sporadic copies of the Corinth type in Bastar (Tirana) and 2-3 copies as such in the Illyrian space, serve, as highlighted by him, only for the statistics of the trade relations of the time¹⁵². The Sofraçan helmets are added to the register of the Illyrian helmets in our country, and reinforce the hypothesis of their production in the local manufactories, which might have been set up near the areas rich in raw metal sources and copper bearers in Albania.

Conclusions:

The Sofraçan village lays in the left side of the Zall of Bulqiza and of the national road Bulqizë-Çerenec, in vicinity to the villages of Krajka and Sopot. The working for the enlargement of the trackway of "Rruga e Arbërit", in the place known with the toponyme "Qafa e vorreve" on the village Sofraçan discovered a flat Illyrian cemetery. As a result of these works, a part of the cemetery was damaged, and two bronze helmets of the Illyrian type were found. The conducted rescuing excavations enabled reaching to some conclusions:

The ancient cemetery was in the northern edge of the river terrace known as "Livadhi i madh", which has steep and rocky slopes in the western and southern side, and a milder inclination in the eastern side. It seems to be included in the type of flat Illyrian cemeteries, which due to the identifying difficulties are rare in Albania. The cemeteries of this type of the iron period, have been found in Gërmenj of Lushnjë, Cakran and Drenovë of Fieri, in Malaxhi and Dushman of Shkodra, in Borovë of Kolonja¹⁵³ etc. the objects presented in this article were found during the control of the removed soil by the wheeled-loader machine. They are represented by two complete bronze helmets and the fragment of another copy, 4 tips of iron spears of the V-IV cent.

¹⁴⁹ Stipčević 2002, 200.

¹⁵⁰ Ceka 1963, 99.

¹⁵¹ Ceka 1968, 110.

¹⁵² Ceka 1963, 99

¹⁵³ Andrea 1981, 223.

B.C., a one-bladed iron knife of the same period, and some fragments of table dishes in black lacquer of the V-IV cent. B.C.

The chronological context of this cemetery refers to the V-IV cent. B.C, time reference of the helmets, spears and the fragments of the table dishes in black lacquer. In the cultural-historical context, the discovery of the helmets and the other archaeological material in Sofraçan is important, as it completes our knowledge regarding the defense and attack weapons used by the Illyrian inhabitants of this region. They also testify that the V-IV cent B.C, even in the inner continental areas the military aristocracy was present. This aristocracy equipping with expensive helmet, testifies the deepening of the social differentiation of the inhabitants of this region, and provides data regarding the military organization of these inhabitants, known by the historical sources as Penests¹⁵⁴. The eponym dwelling of the cemetery users seems to have been in the town of Sofraçan, next to the northern side of this village. The cultural deposits of the early iron age – (XI-IX cent B.C.) are preserved there, as well as those of the late ancient period (V-IV cent. B.C>).

The valley of the Zall of Bulqiza has been intensively inhabited, starting by at least since the early iron age (XI-IX cent. B.C), when in its left side, two Illyrian castles of this period are build, respectively the town of Krajka and the one of Sofraçan, which has been the habitat of the cemetery users of Sofraçan. Starting by at least during this period, this valley served as the main road arteria of the economical-cultural connection of the region of Dibra with the coastal areas, as testified by the tables dishes in black lacquer, which are purely import products, brought here along this valley. This is the reason that precisely throughout this valley in the Byzantine period (XI cent A.D) the "Road of Arber" was built, based on an Illyrian road traces, for which we still hope that it will be rebuilt following the parameters of a modern road.

Abbreviations:

- AAH: Acta Archaeologica Hungaria
 AiA: Arkivi i Institutit Arkeologjik (Archive of the Archaeologic Institute)
 APregl: Arheološki Pregled
 Ajug: Archaeologija Jugoslavia
 BArk: Buletin Arkeologjik
 BSA: British School at Athens
 BSHSH: Buletin i Shkencave Shoqërore
 BUSHT: Buletin i Universitetit Shtetëror të Tiranës
 Burime: Ilirët dhe Iliria tek autorët antikë. Burime të zgjedhura për Historinë e Shqipërisë
 GlasSarajevo: Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja Bosne i Hercegovine u Sarajevu
 GSMK: Glasnik Muzeja Kosova i Metohije
 HAK: Harta Arkeologjike e Kosovës JHS: Journal Hellenic Studies
 KSI: Kuvendi i Studimeve Ilire
 MaActA: Macedonia Acta Archaeologica

¹⁵⁴ Polibi, XXVIII, 8, 11; Livi, XLIII, 19, 1-5, 21,1-2.

MSA: Materiale të sesionit Arkeologjik
 PJZ: Praistorija Jugoslavenskih Zemalja
 SSSH: Seria e Shkencave Shoqërore
 VjesVM: Vesnik Vojnog Muzeja
 WMBH: Wissenschaft Mitteil aus Bossnien und Herzegovina

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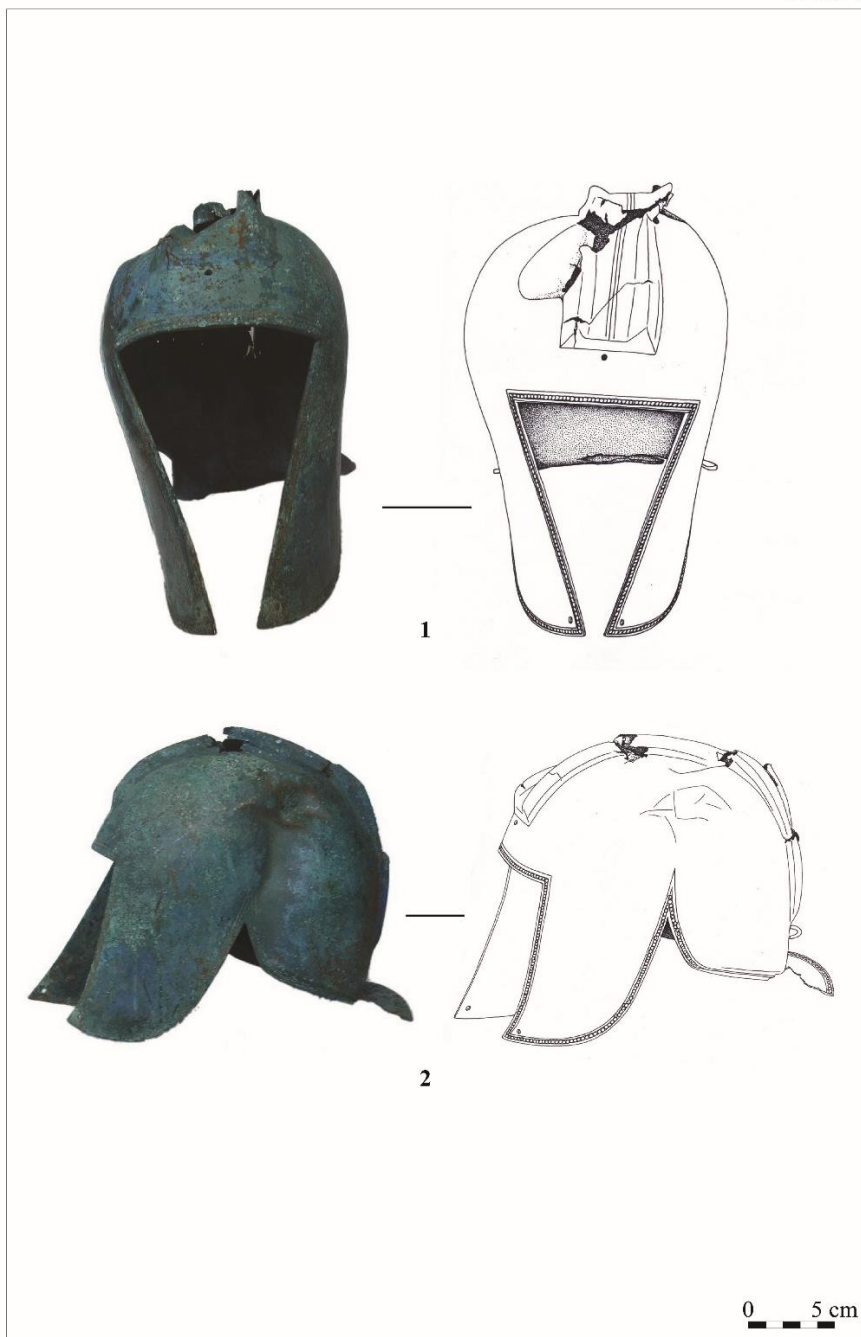
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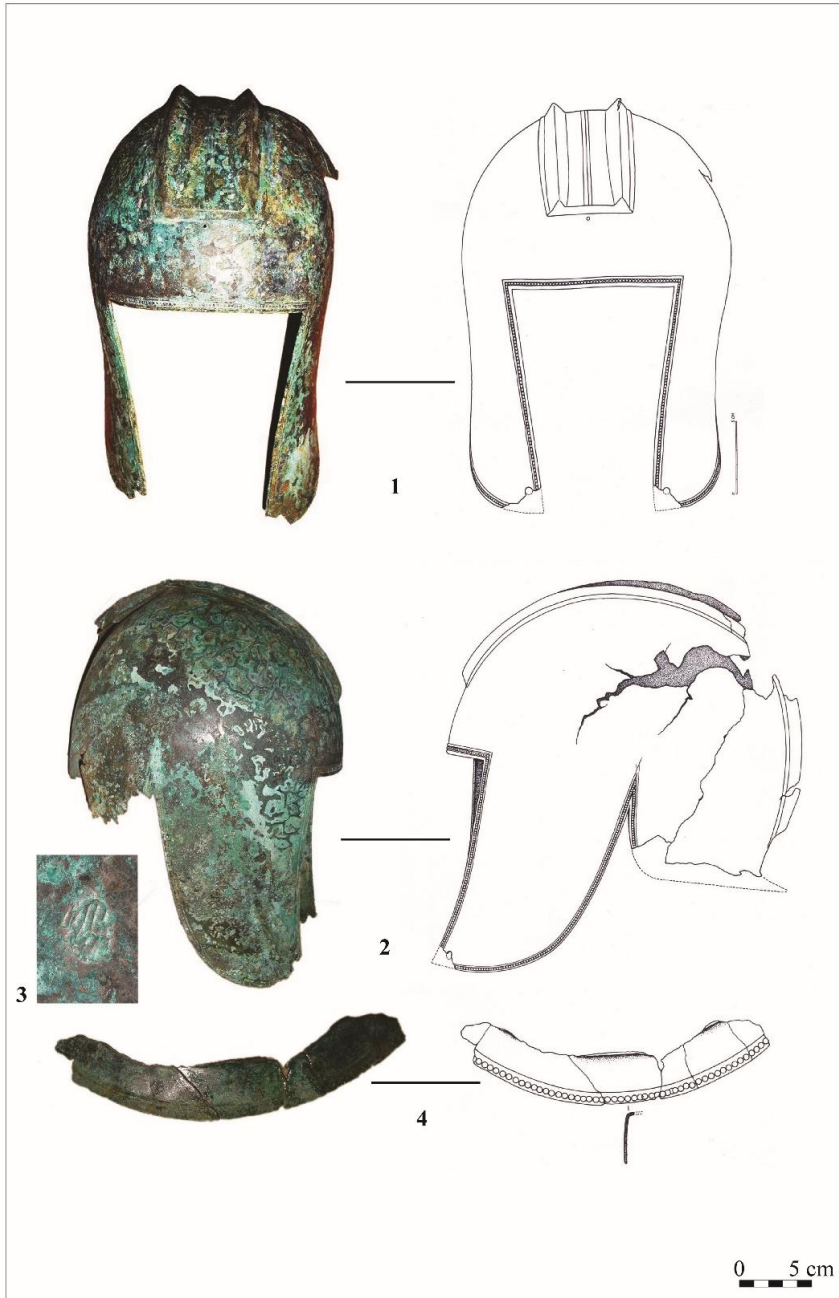
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TAB. I



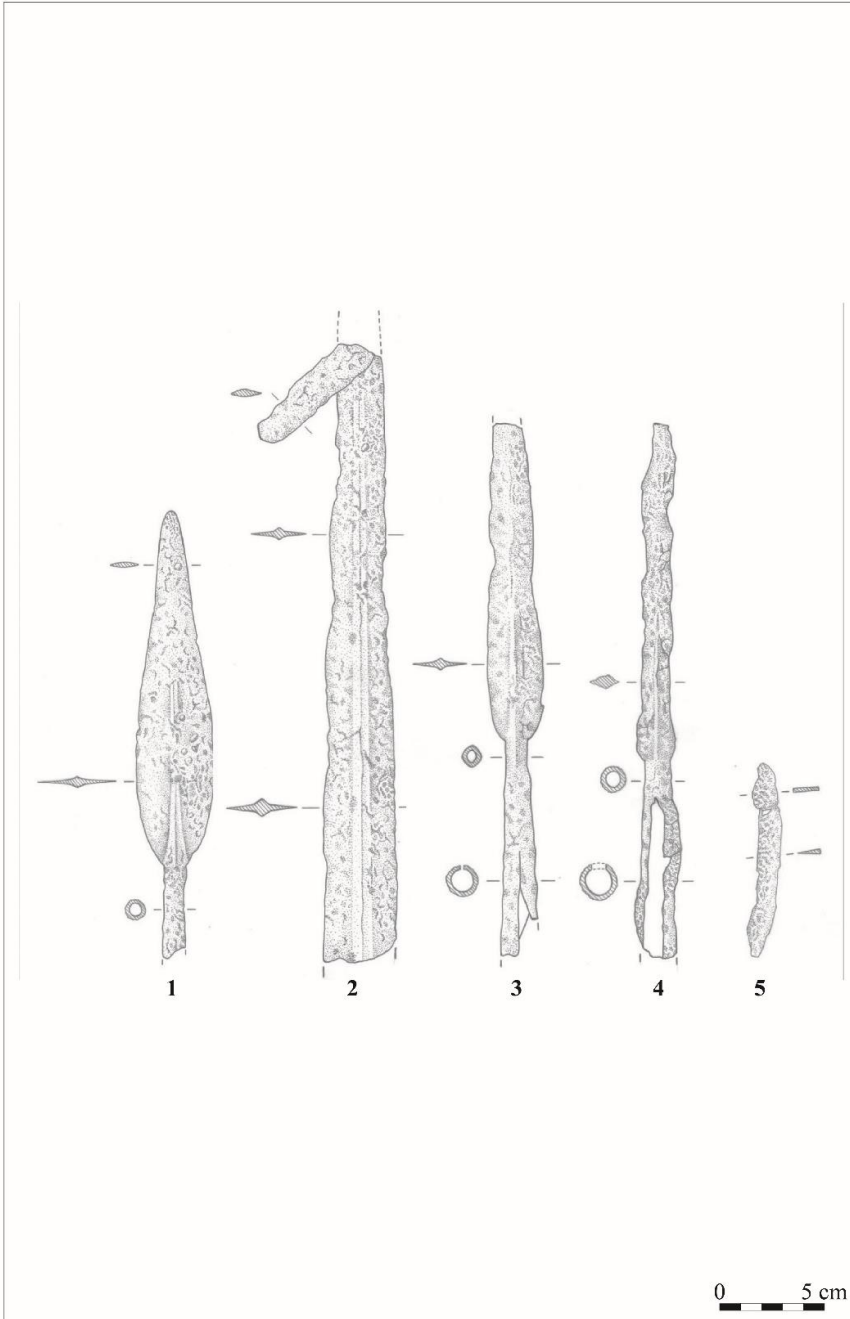
TAB. II



TAB. III



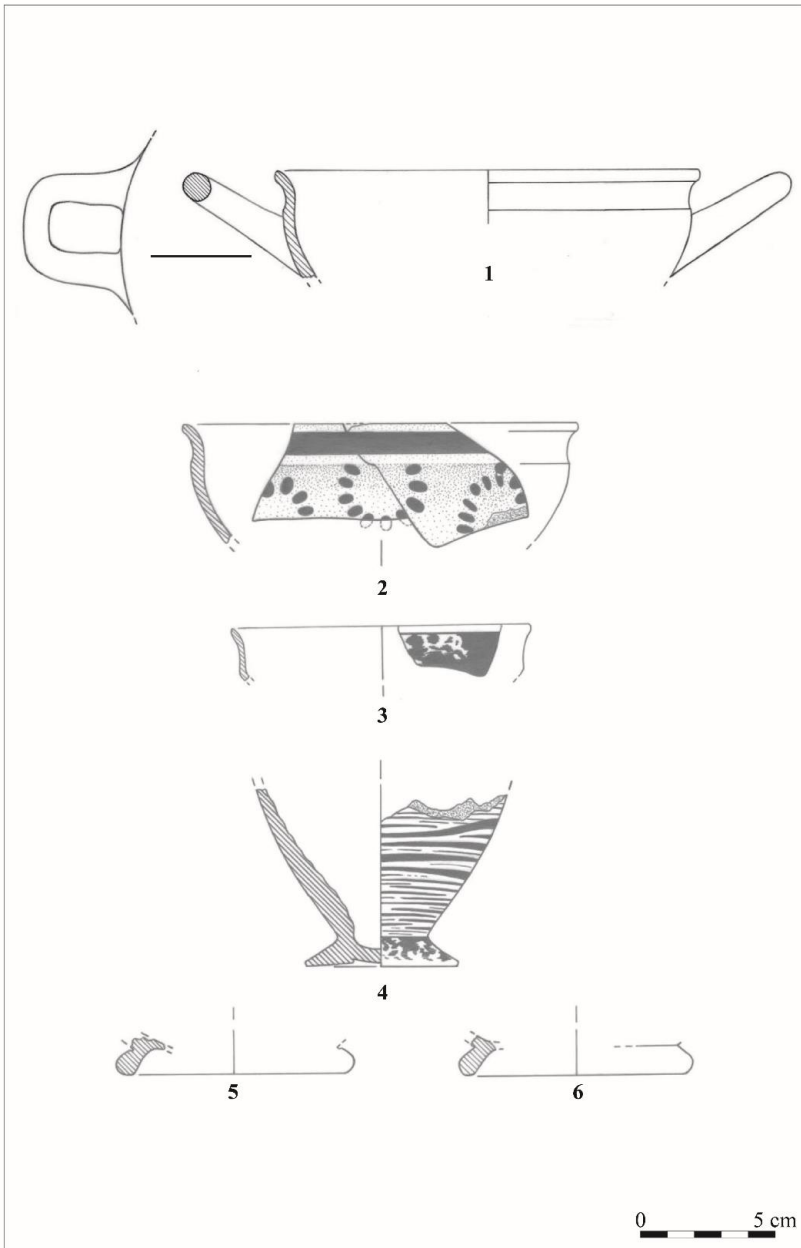
TAB. IV



TAB. V



TAB. VI



Elio HOBDARI

SCULPTURE ELEMENTS FROM THE MONASTERY OF SAINT JOHN VLADIMIR IN THE MUSEUMS OF TIRANA

The church of the monastery of St. John Vladimir near Elbasan, in condition of today's preservation, holds a considerable collection of sculptural elements of different historical periods [Tab. I, 1]. Most of them are reused in its body, while others are located in the courtyard of the monastery.

Only the sculptural elements with the inscriptions of the reconstruction of Prince Karl Topia, in three languages and the plates with his emblem, have been published, always in an epigraphic and not architectural context.¹

In 1981 some of the sculptural elements were removed from part of the south wall of the church, near the gate of this wing. The situation of this facade, before undressing [Tab. I, 2 and 3] and during this intervention, it is photographically documented² and graphically, but archival materials have never been published. Some of the sculptural elements taken from the church were exhibited in the National Historical Museum, while those that were not used there were deposited in the reserve of the Archaeological Museum of Tirana.

While extensive work is being done for a complete catalog of the sculptural material found in this church, the objects removed from there and exhibited in the National Historical Museum, those deposited in the reserve of the Archaeological Museum of Tirana and in the "Mosaic of Tirana" are presented in this paper³. Elements with inscriptions, exhibited in the Historical Museum of Tirana⁴, previously published, are being included in order to be framed in an architectural context. From this study it became possible to determine or correct the origin of 16 objects sculptures, one in the NHM (no. 6 in the catalog), 12 in the MAT reserve (no. 8-18 in the catalog) and 3 in the premises of the "Tirana Mosaic" - Sector of National Culture, Tirana (no. 19 and 20). This information had been lost over the years.

¹ Von Hahn 1854, p. 135-136; Ippen 2002, p. 222-224; Popa 1998, mbishkrimet nr. 2, 3, 4 dhe 5, p. 49-

52; Anamali et al. 1988, nr. 383 i katalogut, p. 463

² Labi 2015, figures on page 17.

³ To these was added a fragment still walled in the church of St. John Vladimir, in order to complete as much as possible the group of sculptural elements belonging to the medieval railing. In the "Mosaic of Tirana" there is also a late tombstone originating from the southern facade of the church of St. John Vladimir that is not included in this work. [Tab. I, 3].

⁴ As follows MHK = National History Museum (NHM), Tiranë and MAT = Archeological Museum of Tirana (AMT)

Archaeological and architectural context of the monument

The present-day church of the monastery of St. John Vladimir is a very late basilica, of which the perimeter walls and the two westernmost columns of the dividing arches of the naves remain. In this church the architrave, with two superimposed elements, of the portal of the church of the late fourteenth century, was reused over the southern gate, accompanied by other sculptural elements of the Byzantine and post-Byzantine period [Tab. I, 2]. The architrave rested on the shoulders (also reused) bearing inscriptions of later dates (late 18th century), while in the masonry of the church are found other fragments of marble sculptures that may belong to the shoulders of the gate of the church of Karl Topia⁵.

In 2000, works were undertaken for its restoration / reconstruction. It was not possible during these works to carry out an archaeological excavation inside the church where architectural remains were identified and thus nothing can be said about the earliest stages of the monument. Renovation of the church floor finally removed the possibility of conducting this research in the near future. Even more transformations stand out in the other buildings of the complex, most of which are new. Some part of the old perimeter wall with an entrance gate, of an unknown period, is preserved on the north side.

Most likely there has been a Christian building since the Paleo-Christian period, as evidenced by the sculptural elements of this period reused on the walls of the last church built or even found in the courtyard in the surrounding area⁶. A pilaster capital with acanthus leaves of this period [Tab. VIII, 1 and 2], deposited in the MAT reserve, and a railing pilaster fragment [Tab. VIII, 3 and 4] are included in the catalog⁷, while a granite column fragment of late antiquity is still located in the churchyard to its northeast. Even most of the Byzantine and post-Byzantine sculptural material seems to have been produced by reusing earlier sculptural elements, most likely Paleo-Christian.

The objects removed from the church walls in 1981, were partly exhibited in the NHM, while partially deposited in MAT funds. Some of the latter were also equipped with iron hooks, set to realize their MAT exposure, but eventually they were placed in the reserve of this museum. Three objects, under unknown circumstances, ended up in the premises of the Tirana National Culture Sector (Tirana Mosaic).

Collection of objects from St. John Vladimir's MAT also includes objects, which, referring to the photos we have available, may not have been removed from the southern facade, while the possibility is not ruled out that the MAT reserve may have another object originating from this monument, still unidentified.

Categories of sculptural elements, features and dating

The elements under consideration belong to two main groups and to these are added some special elements of different periods. The first group includes the architrave of two overlapping elements [Tab. II, 2-4], a fragment [Tab. III. 1] probably from the

⁵One of them may be building no. 3 in the catalog, removed in 1981 and stored in the reserve of the Archaeological Museum of Tirana.

⁶Praschniker, Schöber 1919, p. 58 and fig. 66; Hakani et al. 2012, p. 126 (alb), p. 127 (eng), fig. 8, 10 and 11.

⁷Mentioned and photographed on church walls (Praschniker, Schöber 1919, pp. 58 and fig. 66). Nr. 17 in the catalog.

church portal of 1380-1381 and plaques with the emblem of Karl Topia [Tab. III, 2]. The elements of the second group are part of the iconostasis (railing) of a medieval phase of the church that was located there before the reconstruction made by Karl Topia.

Little reserve remains for the role of the two decorated square tiles (nos. 15 and 16 of the catalog). We are safe for the function as railing tiles only for samples no. 6 and 7 of the catalog, the first exhibited in the NHM [Tab. III, 3 and 4] and the second still walled in the church [Tab. IV, 1 and 2]. Of the pilasters (no. 8-13 of the catalog) only one clearly preserves the beginning of the colonnade (no. 10 in the catalog) [Tab. V, 3 and 4], in another case a lead connection hole is preserved in the upper part, while the beginning of the colonnade is also preserved with great suspicion [Tab. V, 1 and 2]. A single fragment of the epistle of this railing is preserved (no. 14 in the catalog) [Tab. VI, 6 and 7].

The elements of the railing, it seems, have generally undergone modifications that should not be related to their readjustment in the initial use and the purpose may have been placement on the walls with a decorative role, in analogy to what happens in other monuments of the century. XIII-XIV⁸. Pilasters have been deprived of their colonnades being cut at the top, while at least one slab (no. 6 in the catalog) has apparently been cut to be transformed into a square slab (similar in size to the two slabs no. 15 and 16 of the catalog). The small width of the railing tiles is noticeable, while we cannot be sure of the height. In the only example preserved with side edging (catalog no. 6) the width is 40 cm. It is possible that the curb has been reduced in the case of reuse, but nevertheless it remains quite narrow. We must therefore think that we are dealing with elements of the railings of the side naves or of the side wings of the cross, in the case of a church with a cross-shaped plan [Tab. VII, 1]. In this case, fragments of tiles are not preserved from the central part of the railing, or we have not yet been able to identify them among the reused elements in the walls.

The dating of the elements of the portal of the church of Karl Topia is determined by the inscriptions they contain, the years 1380-1381⁹. The relief with the coat of arms of Karl Topia must also be of this time. But this tile has had at least two other earlier apparent uses. It has been a slab, probably with inscription, of the late Roman or ancient period, judged by the preserved edging, while the square depth at an angle indicates that it may have been reused as an altar table base in the Paleo-Christian period or, more likely, in a Byzantine phase of church. As for the other elements, those of the railing, the difficulty lies in the lack of comparative examples from the area. In the absence of reliable comparisons we can say with some reservation that they belong to the century. XIII. If these were reworked to be used for decorating facades during the twentieth century. XIII or in the rebuilt church of the last century. XIV, we cannot say this for sure.

The special objects are the Paleo-Christian capital of the above-mentioned pilaster, a fragment of the railing pilaster of the same period [Tab. VIII, 3 and 4], a frieze part

⁸ We can mention examples of Shën Mërisë in Apollonia (Meksi 1971, p. 107, fig. 8); Shën Kollit in Mesopotam (Meksi 1972, p. 58-61); Shën Kollit in Kurjan (Meksi 1974, p. 240) etc.

⁹ Von Hahn 1854, p. 120, 135-136; Ippen 2002, p. 222-224; Popa 1998, p. 50-51.

[Tab. VIII, 5], probably of the Hellenistic period and a tombstone with inscription of 1780 [Tab. VIII, 6]. Paleo-Christian objects are local dating products in the VI century. The acanthus leaf cap (catalog number 18) is a poor workmanship. Given its size, it can be considered part of a paleo-Christian railing. The pilaster of the railing has been reused, indefinitely, as a column base [Tab. V, 4]. Having no lead hole in the retaining bed, it can be assumed that it belonged to a column constructed of mortar-bound drum. It was reused in masonry somewhere in the monastery as evidenced by a photo published in 1919¹⁰, along with other objects included in this article. One of these objects is the fragment of the frieze, which seems to have been cut into a square shape, perhaps to fit into the wall as a decorative element.

The tombstone with the inscription from 1780, in addition to its importance as an epigraphic source, also serves as a *terminus ante quem* for the construction of the southern façade of the present church, together with other analogous elements still found there.

Material used for the sculpture

For the elements coming from the iconostasis (railing) is used local limestone resulting from two different types. The first and most used is light ocher, it is compact and seems to be easily worked, while the other stone is white, porous and preferred for architectural sculpture of different periods (at least from the Hellenistic to the Paleo-Christian period.). Porcelain stone pilaster (no. 12 in the catalog) [Tab. VI, 3] also has a slightly larger section. Some of the elements are clearly made of reused material as they preserve decorative parts of their primary use, most likely from the Paleo-Christian period. It is about the two decorated tiles (no. 15 and 16 of the catalog) [Tab. VII, 2 and 3] that have been produced by reusing earlier, probably early Christian, frameworks.

They preserve parts of the decor of this initial use, in one case parts of acanth leaves, while in the other part of a ribbon with pearls and pirouettes. We also tend to see other elements as being made of reused material, including the plaque with the coat of arms of Karl Topia mentioned above.

Of course the marble of both elements of the architecture is reused as well as the other fragments of sculpture we assume as part of the church portal. These are manufactured using reusable columns or (less likely) shoulders or door architraves. For the type of marble it is not possible to determine the origin. Most likely these columns, as well as the fragment of the granite column, were part of the early Christian church located there. Two of the elements of early Christian sculpture included in the catalog were to belong to that church. The capital and the pilaster of the railing are made of two different types of limestone. The coexistence of local Paleo-Christian sculpture with imported marble sculpture (in this case also granite columns) is a normal occurrence in many Paleo-Christian monuments, while in the area of Elbasan, considering the material from St. John Vladimir, becomes more of a rule.

The examples of the basilicas of Scampis, the basilica in Tepe and the extra-walled one, have proved this best¹¹.

¹⁰Praschniker, Schöber 1919, p. 58 and fig. 66.

¹¹ Hobdari, Cerova 2014, p. 503.

The Christian sculpture of the middle and late Byzantine period in the territory of Albania is little treated in our studies. Even less known is the sculptural material from the central part of the country. This makes it difficult at the moment to frame the material from the medieval church of St. John Vladimir in time, or to identify stylistic connections with objects from other monuments. This is possible today for the material of the middle Byzantine period from the territory of Epirus or a little further north (Ballsh¹²), where research has advanced somewhat¹³. Meanwhile the material of the late Byzantine period is more untreated¹⁴. The fact that the church to which this material belongs no longer exists makes it even more difficult to form a clearer idea, both of the installations and of the church architecture in general. On the other hand, the material presented here is important, both in terms of the portal elements of historical and historical importance, as well as for the elements of the railing, which of course belong to the last period when this liturgical installation was still realized with sculptural elements of stone or marble. And perhaps for the first time, we systematically present a collection of sculptures, even partial, of the late Byzantine period in Albania.

Catalogue of objects¹⁵

1. Port architrave, the lower part resting on the shoulders [Tab. II, 2-4] No. inv. 1533 (MHK). Exhibited in the medieval pavilion of the National Historical Museum. White marble with light gray veins.

Preserved complete with superficial fractures in the central part. The broken parts are glued. Length: 194 cm;

height: 29-29.5 cm;

gate light space: 102 cm;

height in light space: 102 cm;

depth: 16 cm.

The main side is smooth, except for the slightly edged side borders, while the bottom side is a bit rough. The architrave is diluted in the light space part. The transition from it to the parts that rest on the shoulders is done in two steps. In the part of the light space the border has a rounded quarter quarter profile and a narrow bandage. On the main page there is a border 10 cm to the left, 9 cm to the right and 1.5 cm up and down. By means of a 0.9-1.2 cm slat, four panels are divided, two in the parts that overlap the shoulders and two in the central part. In the two central panels is the inscription of the reconstruction of the church in the Cyrillic alphabet¹⁶, in two rows and some letters at the end as the third and fourth rows. At the top and outside of these panels there is a strip created by two sinusoidal strips that form ellipses. In the right panel the straps

¹² Muçaj 2001; Muçaj 2008.

¹³ Muçaj et al. 2004; Hobdari 2011; Hobdari 2017; Hobdari 2018 etc.

¹⁴ Meksi 1972; Muçaj, Poçi 2005; Gega 2016; Meksi 2017, p. 145-159 etc.

¹⁵ The catalog is organized not according to the chronology of objects, but according to the groupings in which they are included.

¹⁶ The left panel has a scene. From below a Latin cross rises above a slate, and on each side there is a figure with a book in his hand, to the right an eagle (St. John the Evangelist?) And to the left a figure with an animal body, wings and a horned head. . At the level of their heads there are three tables with letters (unread). Ippen 2002, p. 224; Popa 1998, p. 51.

have from an elongated gem at the meeting points. The panel on the left, above the shoulder, has a scene. From below a Latin cross rises above a slate and on each side there is a figure with a book in hand, an eagle on the right (St. John the Evangelist?) And a figure with a body of animal on the left, with wings and horned head. At the level of their heads there are three tables with letters (unread).

The panel on the right, above the shoulder, measuring 25 cm x 25 cm, has, within a square, a disk in the center of which there is a Greek cross formed by pairs of slats with a button in each quadrant. To its right is an inscription in a vertical row, from top to bottom:

ΔΙΜΙΤΡΙ ΣΠΑΤΑ ΠΑΡΤΙΤΣΕ¹⁷

Demetrius from the Slope

It should be about the engraver of the object.

The architrave has been reused in the south gate of the church of St. John Vladimir.

Dates: 1380-1381.

Note: In the assembly made in the museum, two such ones with other origins that have no connection with the church of the monastery of St. John Vladimir were used as shoulders.

Bibliography: Popa 1998, p. 51; Meksi 2004, p. 110, fig. 47.

2. The upper part of the church architrave [Tab. II, 2].

Nr. inv. 1534 (MHK).

Exhibited in the medieval pavilion of the National Historical Museum.

White marble with light gray veins.

Stored complete with little ciphering.

Length: 206 cm; height: 27 cm; immeasurable depth.

The front page is flat and has the inscription in Greek in five rows which becomes six at the bottom¹⁸.

The element has been reused in the southern gate of the church of St. John Vladimir on it with no. inv. 1533.

Dating: 1380 (according to the date on the inscription).

Bibliography: Ippen 2002, p. 224; Popa 1998, p. 49-50 and the bibliography cited by him.

3. Portal parts, shoulder (?) [Tab. III, 1].

Without no. inv. In the reserve of the Archaeological Museum of Tirana.

White marble with gray veins.

One corner part is preserved with a straight face and the other damaged. The section is partially preserved.

Dimensions: stored height: 22 cm; stored width: 21 cm; thickness (depth): 18 cm.

¹⁷ Labi 2015, p. 17. The author mistakenly attributes this inscription to the plaque with the coat of arms of Karl Topia.

¹⁸ Popa 1998, p. 49-50

The front page is decorated. The back side is parallel to the decorated side at 11.5 cm and then narrows somewhat irregularly until it reaches a thickness of about 10 cm at the preserved end. The way of working is irregular.

Front decor: edging consisting of a flat bandage, 2 cm left and 2.5 cm (preserved) upwards and an inner bandage with a curved profile 3 cm wide.

Inside it vertically is a row of intertwined rings with a diameter of 13 cm and a thickness of 1-1.5 cm, from which is preserved the starting half-ring, an almost complete ring and half of the following. The depth of the decor work is about 0.5 cm.

It has been reused in the church masonry.

Dating: End of the century. XIV (?).

Bibliography: Unpublished.

4. Plate with relief (coat of arms of Karl Topi) [Tab. III, 2].

Nr. inv. 1538 (MHK).

Exhibited in the medieval pavilion of the NHM.

Open ocher limestone.

A broken corner is preserved in the upper left corner.

Dimensions¹⁹: stored height: 90 cm; stored width: 57 cm; immeasurable thickness.

The plate has a border of about 9.5 cm consisting of two bandages. The outside, 5 cm wide, is flat and contoured by a thin channel from the outside and inside, while the inside has a spoon section. Inside the field, deeper are carved the coat of arms of Karl Topia and the inscription in the upper right corner, in five rows. This is interrupted by a 11 cm x 12.2 cm square-shaped recess with a hole for the lead fixed pin.

The tile, with a lot of reserve, can be defined as the top of a table in its primary use. It can most certainly be said that there was a second use as a table base, starting from the deepening for the insertion of a leg. Use as a decorative tile on the south wall of the church is at least its third use.

Th. Ippen assumes we are dealing with the tombstone of Karl Topia. A slab used as a table base could have a length between 160 cm and 190 cm, which would make it suitable for a tombstone. Although the tile has no traces of wear and tear from human violation and the stone does not appear to be suitable for use on a floor, Ippen's hypothesis cannot be disproved with certainty. The slab has been reused in masonry, near the south gate of the church, to its right.

Dating: Between the time of construction of the church by Karl Topia (1380-1381) and his death (1388).

Bibliography: von Hahn 1854, p. 120; Ippen 2002, p. 222-224; Popa 1998, p. 52; Anamali et al. 1988, no. 383 in the catalog, p. 463.

5. Inscription plate.

Nr. inv. 1535 (MHK).

Exhibited in the medieval pavilion of the NHM.

Marble.

Stored complete.

¹⁹ Dimensions given by Th. Popa are not correct.

Dimensions: height: 38 cm; length: 49.5 cm; immeasurable thickness.

The nine-line Latin inscription of the church reconstruction by Karl Topia²⁰.

The slab has been reused in masonry, near the south gate of the church, to its left.

Dating: 1381 (according to the date on the inscription).

Bibliography: Ippen 2002, fig. 111, Popa 1998, p. 50-51.

6. Railing tile (iconostasis) [Tab. III, 3 and 4].

Nr. inv.1382 (MHK)

Exhibited in the NHM archeology pavilion.

Light ocher compact limestone.

The upper part is preserved with small ciphers. The bottom is sawn and maybe even the curbs have been reduced somewhat.

Width: 40 cm above and 39.5 cm below; stored height: 38.5 cm; thickness: 13.5 cm above and 14.5-16 cm at the bottom.

Decor: Cross with extreme patent, from which only the upper part is preserved, including half the width of the horizontal bar, inside a thin frame (2 cm above and 0.5-0.8 cm on the sides). The vertical bar is 2.8 cm wide. The decor in the two preserved quadrants is symmetrical. From the union of the wings of the cross emerges a branch (bandage with three leaflets) that opens ideways and sticks lat lately ending with a complicated flower.

At the bottom of the quadrants develops another floral motif with volutes that includes a grape bistak. Above this floral motif there is a bird, turned towards the vertical pole of the cross, which bites a few grains.

The slab has been reused in the masonry near the south gate of the church, to its right.

Dating: Century. XIII.

Note: In the label that accompanies the building in the MHK pavilion, the date is given in the century. IV and the origin is defined as "Elbasan" without further specification.

Bibliography: Unpublished

7. Railing tile (iconostasis) [Tab. IV, 1 and 2].

Located on the east wall of the church, north of the apse, inverted²¹.

Light ocher compact limestone.

The bottom is preserved, without the borders and parts of the decor. Some chipping and partially preserved lips covered with mortar during grouting.

Stored width: 33.5 cm; stored height: 26.2 cm; immeasurable thickness.

Decor: Cross with extreme patent, from which only the lower part of the vertical bar is preserved at 25 cm. The vertical bar is 2.8 cm wide. The decor in the two preserved quadrants is almost symmetrical. From the union of the wings of the cross it emerges from a branch (bandage with three strips) that opens sideways with volutes

²⁰ Popa 1998, p. 50-51

²¹ The reasoning for the position is based on the decor.

and from a leaf with double ribs next to them and climbs upwards with a bottle with a long stalk.

On its sides there is a leaf and a bandage with three strips that ends with a closing volume. These on the left arm have an excess drill hole that is somewhat camouflaged inside a ring. Above the jaws is a cross of St. Andrew created from four heart-shaped motifs. These are partially preserved and seem to have completely complemented the space of the quadrants of the cross.

Dating: Century. XIII.

Bibliography: Unpublished.

8. Pilaster of the railing (iconostasis) [Tab. IV, 3 and 4].

Without no. inv. In the reserve of the Archaeological Museum of Tirana.

Compact open ocher limestone.

The upper part is cut straight (sawn) in the upper part where the column should have continued. Broken at the bottom. Injuries to the back.

Dimensions: stored height: 57 cm; width: 15 cm; depth: 16-17 cm; working depth: 0.5 cm.

The right side is curved behind an edge of about 2 cm. At the top for about 20 cm is run chisel with teeth. The left side has the right edge of 4-5 cm from the arm of the decorated page and is then plucked for about 11-12 cm. Only a small part of the page is preserved on the back, run with a toothed chisel.

In this part there is a motif in the form "0". Iron hook for hanging on the back (for exhibition in the museum).

Front decor: It is surrounded by a flat border 1.2-1.7 cm and has at the top a Greek cross with extreme patent. From the upper arm emerge two buds on each side. Beneath the cross there is a bulge on either side of which emerges from a band of three strips that sticks to the two lower quadrants of the cross and ends with volute. Under the bulge below the cross, two bandages with three volumes start with one volume, which descend sinusoidally, intersecting with each other. In the first field, from above, created by them, in the shape of a heart, there are two bandages that descend from above, opening sideways and ending with volute. At the point where they separate a trifoliate flower emerges. The second space features a St. Andreas cross with bilobe extremes. The cross is formed by four heart-shaped motifs consisting of bandages with two strips that at the extremities are closed in the form of volumes, creating lobes. Beneath this field the two sinusoidal bands terminate under another larger cross of St. Andrew which occupies the entire width of the field of the decorated side of the pilaster. The other pages are flat.

Dating: Century. XIII.

Bibliography: Unpublished.

9. Pilaster of the railing (iconostasis) [Tab. V, 1 and 2].

Without no. inv. In the reserve of the Archaeological Museum of Tirana.

Light ocher compact limestone.

The broken upper part is preserved. Small cracks. Damaged in the back.

Dimensions: stored height: 24.5 cm; width: 17.5 cm; depth: 17 cm. Depth of

decor work: 0.5 cm.

Iron hook for hanging on the back (for exhibition in the museum).

At the top near the right side a lead connection hole filled with mortar (about 2 cm x 2 cm), 7 cm away from the edge of the decor page and 2 cm away from the tile joint page). It is not clear whether an injury to the retaining bed is actually the trace of a column rising above it. The front side is decorated, the one on the right is chiseled irregularly, while the left and back are flat and smooth. The latter also has some tweaks. Preparatory lines are recorded engraved on the decorated page.

Front decor: Simple border of 3 cm at the top and 2 cm at the sides, inside which is a Greek cross with extreme patent. The wings are also pointed with 0.2 cm channels inserted 0.5 cm inside the contours. From the upper arm emerge two buds on each side. Under the cross there is a cross of St. Andrew formed by four heart-shaped motifs as in pilaster no. 8 of the catalog, from which a little more than the upper. Is stored. From its sides emerge two bandages with two strips each forming a volume in the lower quadrants of the cross with patented wings.

Dating: Century. XIII.

Bibliography: Unpublished.

10. Pilaster of the railing (iconostasis) [Tab. V, 3 and 4].

Without no. inv. In the reserve of the Archaeological Museum of Tirana.

Light ocher compact limestone.

The upper part is preserved with the trace of the beginning of a column with a quadrangular section with rounded corners. Different chips

Dimensions: stored height: 35.5 cm; width: 15.5 cm; depth: 16 cm. Column section: about 10.5 cm x 11 cm. Depth of work of the decor: 0.5 cm.

The side to the left of the decorated one is flat and has the trace of joining with a slab of the rail carved sharply and concavely. The trace is 11 cm wide and about 1 cm deep and is 3 cm away from the edge of the decorated page. The right side is smooth with a few traces coming out with teeth, while the back side is harder worked. In the latter there are iron hooks for hanging (for display in museums).

Front decor starts 20 cm from the top edge, inside a simple curb 1.5 cm on each side. At the top of the flat there are vertical preparatory lines.

There are two bullet holes, 15.5-16 cm from the upper edge with a diameter of about 1.8 cm and a depth of 2 cm. The left is 3 cm away from the edge, while the right is 2.2 cm.

The 12.5 cm wide field starts with a descending pallet with two double leaves that open sideways with a drill hole in each of them. Below this, the sides have two motifs in the shape of "8" (infinite), consisting of bands with two strips, with drill holes in the centers of the circles. Between them descends another palmette, from which only the two outer leaves are partially preserved.

Note: If the beginning of the column was not preserved, we would consider this element as the bottom of the pilaster, so we would tend to look at the decor as inverted.

Dating: Century. XIII.

Bibliography: Unpublished.

11. Pilaster of the railing (iconostasis) [Tab. VI, 1 and 2].

Without no. inv. In the reserve of the Archaeological Museum of Tirana.

Light ochre compact limestone.

The straight sawn part is preserved²². Different cuflosje.

Dimensions: stored height: 28.5 cm; width: 17 cm; depth: 18 cm. Depth of work of the decor: 0.5 cm.

The left side of the decorated one is flat and smooth, while the right one is curved. The back is smooth with a few strokes. There are two holes for hook placement, one of which is used.

The front page decor is located inside a simple edging 1.5 cm down, and 2 cm on the sides. The decor from above is the same as that of the pilaster above (catalog no. 10). Beneath the two palm leaves there is a cross formed by four heart-shaped motifs, preserved in a circle $\frac{3}{4}$, and below it appear to begin two bands with three stripes. Above the cross, on its sides are two bullet holes measuring 2.3 cm x 2.4 cm and 2.8 cm x 2.5 cm, with a depth of 2.3 cm.

Dating: Century. XIII.

Bibliography: Unpublished

12. Pilaster of the railing (iconostasis) [Tab. VI, 3].

Pa no. inv. In the reserve of the Archaeological Museum of Tirana.

Porous limestone.

Broken up and down and with injuries to the sides and back. Small cracks. Damaged in the back. The section is kept complete only at the top.

Dimensions: stored height: 42 cm; width: 18.3 cm; depth: 18.7 cm. Depth of work of the decor: 0.7 cm.

The side to the right of the decor page has a 3-4 cm flat edge, while the rest is sharply curved and is slightly concave. The left side and the back (as far as it is preserved) are flat. Iron hook for hanging on the back (for exhibition in the museum).

Front decor: Simple border 2.5 cm on the sides. From above²³ descends a flower with two ribbed leaves that open sideways and a "pistil" in the center. On its sides there is a band of two strips that close with a volute. Below this are four heart-shaped motifs created with pairs of bands from two listels, joined at the top of them, which close with volutes, each with a rhombus in the center that they create thus a cross of St. Andrew. From the sides of the cross come out and go down, in a sinusoidal way, two bandages with three stripes that cross once and close down from the inside with volute. In the created space there is a trifle lily. Below another cross as the first, which is preserved in circle $\frac{1}{2}$.

Dating: Century. XIII.

Bibliography: Unpublished.

²² It is considered as such according to the analysis made for the above fragment with no. 10 of catalog having identical decor.

²³ Where we do not have elements to determine the positioning of the element, we have done it starting from the logical sense of placing decorative elements, as far as this has been possible.

13. Pilaster of the railing (iconostasis) [Tab. VI, 4 and 5].

Without no. inv. In the reserve of the Archaeological Museum of Tirana.

Light ochre compact limestone.

The broken central part up and down is preserved. An important break in the decorated site.

Dimensions: stored height: 30.5 cm; width: 17 cm; depth: 18 cm. Facade decorated with relief (depth of work: 0.5 cm). The right and back sides are flat and smooth, while the left is curved. The bottom of the pilaster is cut almost horizontally and the surface is directed with a notched chisel. This must have happened in the case of any reuse. The back is smooth. Iron hook for hanging on the back (for exhibition in the museum).

Front panel decoration: Inside a 2 cm flat border and, in the center of the height of the preserved part, there is a cross of St. Andreas with extreme bilobes like the above specimen, from which emerge up and down by a pair of sinusoidal bandages, consisting of three lists. Below (according to the sense of decoration) they intersect with each other once and then close with a volume, between which rises a motif similar to a three-leaf clover (triangle in the middle and a volume on the side). Above the bandages create a volume and continue to rise above them.

Here is the breaking line of the pilaster.

Dating: Century. XIII.

Bibliography: Unpublished.

14. Epistle part of the railing. The most difficult is to be the upper frame of the tiles [Tab. VI, 6 and 7].

Nr. inv. 18801 (MAT), in the reserve of the Archaeological Museum of Tirana.

Light ochre compact limestone.

Broken on both sides with ciffos on the decorated front. The upper bandage is completely missing.

Dimensions: stored length: 28.5 cm; height: 14.5 cm; width of the support bed: 14.5 cm; width of the support bed: about 18.5 cm. The front side, 12 cm high, is decorated with relief (depth of work 0.5-0.7 cm). The top and back are smooth, while the bottom is worked with stitching.

Front decor: The preserved part is dominated by two compartments with three strips each starting from the bottom and rising opening and ending in the part

upper with closing volumes. Between them a silent motif with the button inside the top. This at the bottom has two volumes and below them an extended button. On the right there are bandages that twist in the form of volutes creating a floral decor that is not identified. All centers of volutes are drilled with a drill. In one case a hole was drilled that is not related to any decor, so it is a mistake. The supposed upper bandage is not stored.

The fragment has been reused in masonry.

Dating: Century. XIII.

Bibliography: Praschniker, Schöber 1919, p. 58 and fig. 66.

15. Quadrangular tile with decor on one side [Tab. VII, 2].

Without no. inv. In the reserve of the Archaeological Museum of Tirana.

Light ocher compact limestone.

Stored complete with any ciphers. Injuries to the back.

Dimensions: width: 35.5 cm; height: 37.8 cm; thickness: 11.5-12 cm at the edge; about 13 cm in the center.

Front side decorated with relief (depth of work 0.7-1.2 cm).

The tile is produced by reusing a frame, probably Paleo-Christian, with acanthus leaf decor, which are partially preserved at the bottom of them on the right edge of the tile. It is not clear whether the thickness of the slab is the same as that of the frame or it is thinned. The trail came straight and toothed. Iron hook for hanging on the back (for exhibition in the museum).

The back of the slab (the backing of the frame?) Is very hard worked (probably belongs to the use as a frame). From the decor of the frame is preserved, over a straight bandage 2 cm, the lower part of the decor with acanthus leaves about 2.5 cm.

The other edges of the plate are worked more roughly. It in contrast to the decor of the frame has severe damage.

Front decor: Simple border: 0.5-1 cm above, 2-2.5 cm below, 1.7-2 cm on the right and 0.7-1 cm on the left. From the lower left corner emerge two branches 3-3.5 cm wide (bands with three strips each). One climbs up and ends with a volute from the outside, while the other arches to the right, descends down to the edge, and rises up. Slightly above the center of the plate a flower consisting of three motifs in heart-shaped joined at the top and formed by two strips. Inside each there is a rhombus. From this emerge two bandages with three leaflets each, one up and one down, which go to the right surrounding the flower and almost meeting each other.

In the end they end with a volume.

Bottom right a bullet hole 9 m from the left edge and 6.5 cm from the bottom edge 3.3-3.5 cm in diameter and 5.3 cm deep. On the surface the hole widens to 5.6-6 cm in diameter and depth about 0.7 cm. Perhaps this is caused by the pulling of the lead with the iron element fixed there (perhaps the arm for hanging the lighting fixture).

The slab has been reused in masonry near the south gate of the church.

Dating: Century. XIII.

Bibliography: Unpublished

16. Quadrangular tile with decor on one side [Tab. VII, 3].

Nr. inv.16244 (MAT), in the reserve of the Archaeological Museum of Tirana.

Light ocher compact limestone.

Partially preserved, about 2/3 of the left length with fractures in the upper preserved corner.

Dimensions: stored length: 24.5 cm; height: 39 cm; thickness: 9.5-10 cm at the edge.

The plate was produced by reusing a frame, probably paleo-Christian, from the decor of which only parts of a ribbon with pearls and piouettes are preserved. It is not clear whether the thickness of the slab is the same as that of the frame or it is thinned.

Front side decorated with relief (depth of work 1-1.1 cm). The back is flat on the perimeter for about 10 cm and in the center, where it is higher, it is sharply pointed. Probably the original frame bed.

The plain border is 1.6 cm wide on the left arm and 5 cm below.

The decor is symmetrical with that of the tile without no. inventory, No. 14 of the catalog.

The tile has been reused in masonry.

Dating: Century. XIII.

Bibliography: Unpublished.

17. Fragment frieze [Tab. VIII, 5].

Nr. inv. 16237 (MAT), in the reserve of the Archaeological Museum of Tirana.

Light ocher compact limestone.

Stored with minor damage. It is cut in a square shape, perhaps to be reused in masonry with a decorative function.

Dimensions: length: 28.5 cm; height: 30.5 cm; bottom bandage: 6 cm; thickness: 18 cm (maximum); relief exit: about 1 cm.

The decor is described by Praschniker and Schöber²⁴.

Dating: Hellenistic period?

Bibliography: Praschniker, Schöber 1919, p. 58 and fig. 66.

18. Pilaster capital with acanthus leaves [Tab. VIII, 1 and 2].

Pa no. inv. In the reserve of the Archaeological Museum of Tirana.

Light ocher compact limestone.

Preserved almost complete with lots of damage from all sites. There are no traces of the crib and one of the side panels. The abacus is not preserved.

Dimensions: stored height: 36 cm; support bed: about 24 cm x about 18 cm (calculated); support bed: about 28 cm x about 25 cm (calculated).

Bullet connection hole in the backing bed. The dimensions are about 4 cm x 4 cm with a depth of about 3 cm.

The capital had a rectangular section and was dressed by two rows of acanthus leaves.

The lower row, about 14 cm high, had angular leaves, while on the two broad sides there was also a central leaf. The upper, protruding, part of these leaves is completely flattened. Between each pair of leaves emerge the leaves of the upper belt, with a height of about 20-21 cm. So two leaves on narrow pages and one on wide pages. These poorly drawn. It appears that above the angular leaves of the lower band there were two halves of acanthi leaves that joined the tops of the leaves at the junction of the pages. These parts are badly damaged.

The capital has been reused in masonry.

Dating. Century. VI.

Bibliography: Praschniker, Schöber 1919, p. 58 and fig. 66

19. Railing pillar²⁵ [Tab. VIII, 3 and 4].

Exhibited in the premises of "Tirana Mosaic" (Sector of National Culture, Tirana).

Limestone.

²⁴Praschniker, Schöber 1919, p. 58.

²⁵ It is considered with complete certainty that it is the pilaster photographed by Praschniker and Schöber in the church (Praschniker, Schöber 1919, pp. 58 and fig. 66), as the dimensions almost completely match those given by them and the decor is quite clear up in detail in their photo.

The upper part is kept in a circle. Of the original height, with some small cracks.

The pilaster is transformed into a column base at an indefinite time. There is no lead connection hole in the retaining bed of the column base.

Dimensions: stored height: 47 cm; width: 44 cm; stored depth (height of the base of the column): 23 cm; diameter of the base support bed: 38 cm; height of the cylindrical part of the base: 7.5 cm. The front of the pilaster is decorated with the usual geometric motifs inside a flat border, 6 cm on the sides and 5 cm above. Inside it there is a strip 1.7-2 cm that forms open lunettes at the top and inside a bandage of other flat about 6-6.5 cm contouring the central axis with convex section 14 cm wide.

The pilaster has a channel for inserting the slab on both sides 2-3 cm deep which comes after the wide exit 6.5 cm on the left and 5.5 cm on the right. The preserved width of the canal is 10-11 cm. Maybe this is the full width (or almost full) and only the other bracket is eliminated when the column-based transformation is done.

At the top of the left channel there is a lead connection hole about 5 cm from the top edge. The dimensions of the hole are 2.5 cm x 2.5 cm and the depth is 1.5 cm.

The pilaster has been reused in masonry.

Dating: Century. V-VI.

Bibliography: Praschniker, Schöber 1919, p. 58 and fig. 66.

20. Tombstone [Tab. VIII, 6].

Exhibited in the premises of "Tirana Mosaic" (Sector of National Culture, Tirana).

Strong light gray limestone, known in Elbasan as "Krasta stone".

The upper part is preserved with two small fractures in the upper and lower right corner and some small ciphers. It is broken into three parts and restored (glued). The bottom is cut straight, but it is not clear if it is intentional cutting or breaking

accidental. The slab has been reused in masonry near the south gate of the church.

Dimensions: stored height: 60 cm; width: 65 cm; maximum thickness: 16.2 cm.

The plate on the right side from the back is engraved with a convex sloping profile, so it must have been originally used as a frame.

Behind a straight curb 9.8 cm left, 9 cm right and 4 cm above there is a 2 cm wide strip and 2 cm forward, inside which a field is created about 1 cm deeper than the limiting strip with dimensions : width: 42 cm and height about 54 cm.

Inside it at the top for about 30 cm high there is a Latin cross, today erased, but which is clearly visible in the photo of the '60s [Tab. I, 2] and two peaks silently extended to the sides. At the bottom there is a Greek inscription in two rows, with letters in relief: ΖΟΓΑΣΖΟΓΓΗΕ / ΕΝΕΤΗ 1780. The letters and numbers that close the rows are engraved on the list. Transcription²⁶ and translation are:

ΖογαςΖογγηε / ἐνἔτη 1780

I Zoga Zonje / in 1780

Zonje (lady) should probably be seen more as an adjective than as an honorary title.

Dates: 1780.

Bibliography: unpublished

²⁶ The inscription was transcribed by the colleague As.Prof. Nikolay Sharankov (Universiteti i Sofies "St. Kliment Ohridski").

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Pëllumb XHUPI

THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT AT THE TIME OF THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE: AVERTING A NEW PARTITION

The end of World War I was anxiously but hopefully anticipated by activists of the Albanian question. However, Albanian territories still remained occupied, this time, by the Entente armies. Following the withdrawal of the Austro-Hungarian forces, a contingent of ally troops under French command was positioned in Shkodra. The French were also present in the Korça region, whereas the rest of Albania's territory was under the control of Italian troops. Meanwhile, Serbia and Greece, who sided with the Allies, despite not engaging in military action, expected the Paris Peace Conference to satisfy their claims over those Albanian territories which they had failed to annex following the London Conference of 1913. To make matters worse, Italy, which, within Albanian patriotic circles was regarded as a friendly country, one that had played a significant role in the formation and preservation of the Albanian state, was now forcefully laying claims over Albania. The secret Treaty of London concluded in 1915, whereby the Allies persuaded Italy to side with them, granted her full sovereignty over Vlorë and its hinterland, as well as the protectorate over what would remain from Middle Albania once the North and South would be divided amongst Serbia, Montenegro and Greece "at the will of France, Great Britain and Russia"¹. The Treaty was denounced by the Bolshevik government of Russia and became an object of stigma and harsh criticism by the US president W. Wilson². On January 8, 1918, he delivered his speech before Congress, whereby he outlined his Fourteen Point peace program for Europe, which contrary to the customary practice of the Great Powers; it brought forth a new liberal and democratic spirit in international relations³. According to him, the world order should not hang on the balance of powers, but on the right of nations to

¹ A. Puto, *Shqipëria politike 1912-1939 [Political Albania 1912-1939]*, Tirana: Toena, 2009, p. 168, 169.

² S. Pollo-A. Puto, *Histoire de l'Albanie des origines à nos jours*, Roanne: Éditions Horvath, 1974, p. 201-202; A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare pas Luftës I Botërore* [The Albanian Question in International Acts after World War I], vol. III (1919-1926), Tirana: Albin, 2001, p. 256; H. Kissinger, *Diplomatie*, Paris: Fayard, 1996 p. 205-207.

³ M. Gilbert, *La Grande Storia della Prima Guerra Mondiale*, Milano: Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, 2010, p. 477, 478; Georges Castellan, *Histori e Ballkanit (shek. XIV-XX)* [History of the Balkans, 14-20th centuries], Tirana: Çabej, 1996, p. 451.

determine their own fate⁴. “Secret diplomacy” had to be replaced by “the diplomacy of nations”⁵.

Referring in particular to the US President’s emphasis of putting an end to secret covenants among the Powers and on the affirmation of the rights of small nations, Ismail Qemali confidently addressed the Political Party in the USA via a letter, dated October 7, 1918, stating: “President Wilson, who rightfully should be proclaimed an apostle of peace and freedom of nations, delivered a new message, which constitutes a new guarantee for our salvation... Without any doubts, today marks the beginning of the empire of rights and the era of universal justice”⁶. Certain of the new role that the USA would be playing in the global arena henceforth, I. Qemali advised the Albanian patriotic circles in the US to meet with American officials and show them, with historical, political and geographic arguments, who the Albanian nation is, what its rights and wishes are and make clear that “without adding Kosovo to the north of Albania and Çamëria to the south, peace cannot be settled in the Balkan Peninsula”⁷. But while the war had ended and peace was being discussed in Paris, dark clouds were looming over the Albanian sky, thus, action had to be swift. “Today”, I. Qemali wrote to Sevasti Dakos on November 17, “is Albania’s last day: we either come alive or we die”⁸.

Under these impetuous and dangerous circumstances, Albanian patriotic circles, both in and out of the country, held the conviction that the country needed a government - as expression of the will and sovereignty of the Albanian people - which could convey its voice at the Peace Conference. The presence of an Albanian delegation at the Peace Conference, albeit one supportive of Italy’s claims was also in the latter’s interest, since it controlled a considerable part of Albania’s territories⁹. To this end, since October 1918 the Foreign Italian Minister, Sidney Sonnino, instructed on the establishment of an “Albanian National Council” headquartered in Durrës, which would then form the delegation to the Peace Conference¹⁰. However, this was far from easy. The period following the proclamation of Independence in 1912 saw the interplay of an ample number of diverging factors in the country’s political life, which culminated with the establishment of several occupation areas during World War I. Consequently, the

⁴ H. Kissinger, *Diplomatie*, Paris: Fayard, 1996, p. 11; Marie-Janine Calic, *Südosteuropa. Weltgeschichte einer Region*, München: C. H. Beck, 2016, p. 433.

⁵ Hans Herzfeld, “Erster Weltkrieg und Friede von Versailles”, in: *Propyläen Weltgeschichte*, Hrsg. Golo Mann, 9. Band: *Das zwanzigste Jahrhundert*, Berlin: Propyläen Verlag, 1991, p. 108; H. Kissinger, *Diplomatie*, p. 205-207.

⁶ Letter of I. Qemali to the “Political Party” Committee in the USA, Madrid, October 7, 1918, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, by M. Çami, H. Luga, Dh. Andoni, M. Shuteriqi, Z. Rexha, vol. I, Tirana: Academy of Science-Institute of History, 1975, p. 29-31.

⁷ Letter of I. Qemali to the “Political Party” secretary in USA, Paris, March 10, 1918, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920* [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920], vol. I, p. 19-21.

⁸ *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar* [The Struggle of Albanians], vol. I, p. 53.

⁹ S. Pollo-A. Puto, *Histoire de l’Albanie*, p. 205.

¹⁰ Instructions of Minister Sonnino, Rome, October 22, 1918, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920* [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920], vol. I, p. 37.

country's political and cultural elite was fragmented in its own political positions and choices. On October 22, 1918, F. Castoldi, the chief of the office for Albania and the Balkans in the Italian MFA, rightfully remarked, "the indolence and indecision of those people who claim to lead the Albanian nation, is the reason why today there is no center, no group to assume the appearance and authority so as to speak and act on behalf of its people"¹¹. On the other hand, the Italians were not that eager for Albanians to have a steering body that would speak on behalf of the Albanian people, as Castoldi maintained. The "Albanian National Council", the Italian minister, Sonnino, would point out "had to be established with Albanian personalities whom we can trust and who can exert authority over the entire Albanian territory that we occupy, except for Vlora and its surrounding"¹². The exception of Vlora and its region from representation in the Albanian delegation underscored the stubbornness of the Italian government to maintain its sovereignty over Vlora - under occupation since 1915 - as asserted by Sonnino himself when addressing the Italian parliament on February 23, 1918¹³. However, the Italian perspective on the post-war organization of the Albanian state and its representation to the Peace Conference clashed with the skepticism and even opposition of Albanian personalities, who on December 25, 1918, convened in Durrës. In the letter sent to the Italian government the very next day, on December 26, the delegates of the Assembly informed the Italian government on their decision to not establish an "Albanian National Council", as Sonnino had recommended, but rather a national government, as an expression of the sovereignty of the Albanian people, which would have the proper authority and investiture to protect the country's interests at the Peace Conference. Even though they recognized the need of assistance and coordination with the Italian government, the Durrës Assembly members further stated that the Albanian Delegation in Paris would lose its gravity and credibility if it were to express the same as the Italian delegation and if it did "not go beyond Rome's standpoints"¹⁴. The Foreign Minister Sonnino foresaw that the Albanian government would not be simply an Italian pawn, hence he requested to be informed to why such decisions were not in line with the Rome-issued directives. He further asked to be informed of the speeches and voting of each Assembly delegate¹⁵.

On January 18, 1919, the Peace Conference, which sought to fix the world in the aftermath of WWI, opened in Paris. As in 1878, at the Congress of Berlin, Albania, which only in 1913 had been recognized as an independent state, found itself in such a high international platform against the territorial claims of its neighbors? The new Yugoslavian state, born out of the union of Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia, baptized

¹¹ *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar [The Struggle of Albanians]*, vol. I, p. 40.

¹² Telegram of S. Sonnino to Italian MFA Secretary, Paris, November 30, 1918, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar [The Struggle of the Albanians]*, vol. I, p. 58.

¹³ *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920]*, vol. I, p. 19; Syrja Vlora, *Kujtime. Nga fundi i sundimit osman në Luftën e Vlorës [Memories: From the End of Ottoman Rule to the War of Vlora]*, Tirana: Iceberg, 2013, p. 173, 175.

¹⁴ *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920]*, vol. I, p. 69-71.

¹⁵ Sonnino's telegram to Gen. Piacentini, Rome, December 27, 1918, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920]*, vol. I, p. 72.

precisely at the Peace Conference, put forth Belgrade's claims of a Serbian outlet to the Adriatic through the annexation of the northern territories of the Albanian state¹⁶. Nonetheless, the danger of recognizing Italy as the protectorate power in Albania, as provided for by the secret Treaty of London, came foremost in Belgrade's strategic assessments. Against the Italians' insistence to obtain such protectorate, in Paris, the Yugoslavians chose to present as a first option the recognition of the independence and territorial integrity of 1913 Albania, should the rest do the same. Otherwise, if Albania's South would be partitioned and come under Italian protectorate, then Yugoslavia would demand the annexation of the entire territory north to the Drin River in Shkodra, as well as the lands on the right shore of Black Drin¹⁷. In anticipation of the resolutions that would come out of the Peace Conference, Yugoslavian forces had penetrated into Albanian territory and menacingly positioned in Has, Luma, Dibra, Malësi e Gjakovës and Malësi e Madhe¹⁸.

The Greek prime minister, E. Venizelos, came to Paris with a long list of territorial claims, which had been listed and made known earlier to the Great Powers' chancelleries through the memorandum "Greece at the Peace Conference", drafted by none other but Venizelos himself¹⁹. The prime minister had persuaded Greek opinion that he was the man that would carry through the nationalist project of "Megali Idea", officially announced in 1844 by the then prime minister Joannis Kolettis and which provided for the restoration of a great Euro-Asian empire with Istanbul as its capital²⁰. The enthusiasm surrounding his persona was exorbitant and on his way to the Paris Conference, Venizelos was sent away with a pompous ceremony, where Greek MPs stood in line and kissed his hand as if he were an oriental despot²¹. "Greater Greece and Eleftherios Venizelos represent a single notion", the Speaker of the Athenian Parliament would state, whilst in Paris, the Prime Minister attempted to politically seize considerable portions of Albania, Aegean islands, Thrace and Asia Minor²². Venizelos presented an extended list of territorial claims, even though Greece had arrived at the table with a poor war balance sheet, whilst the winners counted millions and hundred thousands of victims²³. Not surprisingly, Venizelos warned his collaborators not to refer to figures pertaining to the losses the Greece had incurred during the war. The figure

¹⁶ Report of the Chargé d'Affaires in Belgrade, Galanti, to Minister Sonnino, March 24, 1919, in: *Documenti Diplomatici Italiani* (hereinafter cited as: *DDI*), series VI (1918-1922), vol. 3, Rome: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 2007, no. 6, p. 6.

¹⁷ *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. II, Tirana: General Directorate of Archives, 1976, p. 17-20.

¹⁸ S. Pollo-A. Puto, *Histoire de l'Albanie des origines à nos jours*, Roanne: Éditions Horvath, 1974, p. 199; *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920* [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920], vol. I, p. 219, 284, 293.

¹⁹ A. Puto, *Shqipëria politike, 1912-1939* [Political Albania, 1912-1939], Tirana: Toena, 2009, p. 227.

²⁰ P. Enepekides, *E doksa kai o Dichasmòs. Apò tà mystikà archeia tes Viennes 1908-1915*, Athens: Mpiris, 1962, p. 11; P. Xhufi, "Manipulimi i historisë: rasti i Epirit" [Manipulating History: The case of Epirus] in: *Dilemat e Arbrit*, Tirana: Pegi, 2006, p. 422-425.

²¹ M. Macmillan, *Paris 1919: Six months that changed the World*, with a foreword by Richard Holbrooke, New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2003, p. 347.

²² D. Kitsikis, *Propagande et pressions 1919-1920*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1963, p. 21

²³ Erik Goldstein, "Great Britain and Greater Greece 1917-1920", *The Historical Journal*, London: Cambridge Univ. Press, 32/II (1989), p. 346.

was 4917 killed, injured and lost, which stood at an extreme disproportion to the presented claims²⁴. Characterized by unscrupulous megalomania and ambition, Venizelos attributed Greece a great role in the European chess board, as a civilizing country, a role that Great Britain and France had assumed with African and Asian peoples. Greece's "civilizing skill" was one of the arguments that Venizelos put forth in order to legitimize Greek claims over foreign territories, whereby Greece assumed to civilize the Albanians, Turks and undeveloped Slavs²⁵. With regards to the annexation of southern Albanian territories, "the Albanians of Vorio-Epirus (Northern Epirus)", he stated using a term conjured and used by him since 1913, "should feel joyous that Greece was willing to take them in"²⁶.

During October-November 1918, Prime Minister Venizelos visited Paris and London, where he anticipated Athens' territorial claims before officially presenting them in the Peace Conference. Quite easily, he managed to validate the Greek theses²⁷. In his meeting with Lloyd George, Venizelos requested the Greek annexation of Northern Epirus, which, allegedly the Greek army had occupied in October 1914 with Ally "approval"²⁸. As was often the case, Venizelos was bluffing yet again, either by using the ignorance on the matter or the short memory of his interlocutors. In fact, it was he, who in December 5, 1914, had refused the Franco-English offer to immediately join the war on the Entente side, against the promise to annex the coveted parts of south Albania. In justification, Venizelos stated that "the general situation demanded that Greece maintained neutrality"²⁹. And even further, Greece maintained a "*néutralité expectante*" (expectant neutrality)³⁰. Nonetheless, this did not prevent the Greek troops on December 1, 1916 to shoot at the Ally fleet in the Piraeus Port, causing damage to the ship and killing several French and English sailors³¹. Greece entered the war on the side of the Entente only in its last months³². The precedents, thus, were not quite promising for Greece, and Venizelos came prepared at the Paris Peace Conference to

²⁴ A. Mazarakis, *Apomnemeumata*, Athens: Ikaros, 1948, p. 252; D. Kitsikis, *Propagande et pressions 1919-1920*, p. 182; P. S. Delta, *Eleutherios Venizelos*, Athens: Hermes, 1979, p. 102; A. Puto, *Pavarësia shqiptare dhe diplomacia e Fuqive të Mëdha 1912-1914 [Albanian Independence and the Diplomacy of the Great Powers 1912-1914]*, Tirana: 8 Nëndori, 1978, p. 47.

²⁵ M. Macmillan, Paris 1919, p. 349; A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 147.

²⁶ V. Mparas, *To Delvino tes Voreiou Eperou*, Athens, 1966, p. 6; E. P. Stickney, *Southern Albania or Northern Epirus in European International Affairs, 1912-1923*, Stanford, California, 1926, p. 26; M. Macmillan, *Paris 1919*, p. 352-353, 357. For more on the term "Vorio-Epirus", see: P. Xhufi, "Manipulimi i historisë: rasti i Epirit" [Manipulating History: The Case of Epirus], p. 417-423, 427-430.

²⁷ M. Macmillan, *Paris 1919*, p. 353-357.

²⁸ N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)*, Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1978, p. 36, 72.

²⁹ FO, 371/2241-249: Elliot to E. Grey, desp. 269, December 7, 1914. Quoted according to: N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)*, Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1978, p. 37.

³⁰ S. P. Cosmin, *Dossiers secrets de la Triple Entente: Grèce 1914-1922*, Paris, 1969, p. 65.

³¹ The Chair of the Peace Conference, Georges Clemenceau himself reminded Venizelos of such fact given his annoyance with the latter's territorial claims. See: D. Kitsikis, *Propagande et pressions 1919-1920*, p. 81. See also: Richard Clogg, *A concise History of Greece*, Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 91-92.

³² N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 43; R. Clogg, *A concise History of Greece*, Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 93.

persuade the Great Powers on three main matters: that Greece's commitment in the war, albeit belated, had been decisive in the Ally's victory in the East; that Greece, this young and dynamic state, could replace the Ottoman Empire in these regions; and that the territories claimed by Greece in the Conference had a Greek character³³.

The allied soldiers of the "Army of the East", deployed at the Thessaloníki front since October 1915 were the first to note the contradictions and the deep rift between Greek society, as well as the weakness of Venizelos' phantomatic government to become a supporting factor in the fight against the Austro-Hungarian, Bulgarian and Italian armies in the Balkan scenario³⁴. Nonetheless, the Greek prime minister, Venizelos enjoyed unconditional support by the French and British diplomacy during the war and especially during the Peace Conference. The positioning of Paris and London in favor of Greek claims was evident since the first meeting of the "Committee on Greek Affairs", on February 12, 1919, when the chair of the session, the French Jules Cambon opened the proceedings by declaring that "The Conference provided the best means to satisfy the early claims of the Greek nation, thus finally completing the act of independence initiated a century ago by the Liberal European Nations"³⁵. In other words, Greece's claims were not only her problem but also of Liberal Europe! Even on the matter of the annexation of Korça, where Venizelos encountered the most resistance from the Allies, the French Foreign Minister, S. Pichon attempted to justify the ambitions with fictitious arguments of strategic character. He admitted that from the historical, ethnic and linguistic point of view, Korça was undoubtedly Albanian. However, under the conditions of an Italian protectorate over Albania, it was of interest that this city and its surroundings joined Greece; otherwise "Italy would become the owner of the only communication road from Monastir to the Ionian Sea"³⁶. Pichon openly affirmed that granting Korça to Greece would benefit another ally, Serbia (Yugoslavia), since it would also connect to the Ionian Sea via the Monastir-Korça-Saranda road³⁷. The French delegate to the Peace Conference, Laroche, was even more explicit when on February 18, in the Commission for the review of Greek demands, he declared that the Monastir-Korça-Saranda road was significant with regards to a potential conflict that Serbia and Greece, Entente allies, could have in the future against Bulgaria³⁸.

The British representative to the Peace Conference, Eyre Crowe, further defended the idea that ethnic considerations need not be taken into account with regards to the Greek claims of South Albania. According to him, economic and strategic consideration was of priority to the Allies. In reference to the remark of the American

³³ D. Kitsikis, *Propagande et pressions 1919-1920*, p. 82.

³⁴ Thérèse Krempp Puppincq, "De la Grèce rêvée à la Grèce vécue: L'armée d'Orient dans une interculturalité complexe", in: *Balkanica*, Belgrade, XLIX (2018), p. 91-104.

³⁵ E. Goldstein, "Great Britain and Greater Greece 1917-1920", p. 344.

³⁶ Letter of the French Foreign Minister Pichon to the Prime Minister and the Minister of War, Paris, June 14, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 225.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 238.

³⁸ Transcript of the February 18, 1919 session of the Commission for the review of Greek claims in the Peace Conference, in: A. Puto, *Çëshija shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare*, [The Albanian Question in International Acts], vol. III, p. 125.

delegate regarding the Albanian ethnic character of that region, Crowe quite cynically declared that one must have faith in what he called “the great assimilation ability of the Greek nation”³⁹.

It was precisely the Great Britain delegation that provided the greatest support to Venizelos’ claims in the Peace Conference. Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Great Britain, an ally until its fall, feared the creation of a power vacuum that could put at risk the seafaring routes in the Eastern Mediterranean. Therefore, it was in her interest that the Straights were under the possession of an ally. The Labor Prime Minister Lloyd George identified Greece as such, compelled by what she had to offer as well as the appeal that Venizelos had on him⁴⁰. The seasoned Greek politician had promised him that should the Greek claims be fulfilled, he would make available to Britain any port or naval base in current Greek territories and in those that Greece expected to be granted in the Conference according to the list presented in his memorandum “Greece and the Peace Conference”⁴¹. Cyprus, under Great Britain possession, was purposefully not included in that list; the “silence” clearly implied a promise to the British that the island, besides other marine bases, would remain under British control, obviously should Greece leave the Conference satisfied⁴². The promises were enticing to the “the queen of the seas”, who fully endorsed Athens’ demands. But Venizelos had cautiously extended the Greek offer for British naval control of the marine bases in the Eastern Mediterranean as a personal offer. Therefore, it ran the risk of not going through should he lose power, and in order for him to stay in power, Venizelos could not return to Athens empty-handed! Hence the overzealousness of the British to give Venizelos great credibility by supporting his every demand⁴³. It is not by coincidence that the negotiating group representing Great Britain at the Paris Peace Conference comprised philohellenes and proclaimed turkophobes, like Sir Eyre Crowe, Harold Nicolson, Allen Leeper, and to a lesser extent Arnold Toynbee, a prominent researcher of civilizations⁴⁴. This group, within the British Foreign Office, during 1918-1920 worked for the creation of a Greek-British alliance, whereby a “Greater Greece” would be Britain’s main partner in this historically high-sensitive region⁴⁵.

The Greek prime minister could not find the level of understanding that he had with the British and the French with the Italians. Greek claims clashed with Italian ones not only over Albania, but also over Asia Minor and the Aegean islands. This raised the hopes of Albanian patriots for a firm commitment of Italy regarding the protection of Albanian interests in relation to Greek claims. However, the Italian insistence in

³⁹ N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 145; Transcript of March 4, 1919 session of the Commission for the review of Greek claims in the Peace Conference, in: A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 177, 178.

⁴⁰ Erik Goldstein, “Great Britain and Greater Greece 1917-1920”, p. 339; A. Gerolymatos, “Lloyd George kai Venizelos 1912-1917”, in: *Deltion Istorikes Ethnologikes Etairias Hellados*, 28 (1985), p. 206; M. Macmillan, *Paris 1919*, p. 353-357.

⁴¹ A. Gerolymatos, “Lloyd George kai Venizelos 1912-1917”, p. 205 and so forth; N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 134.

⁴² N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 125.

⁴³ E. Goldstein, “Great Britain and Greater Greece 1917-1920”, p. 345, 346.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 342-343.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 339, 341.

demanding the implementation of the secret Treaty of London provisions shattered such hopes. A few months before the armistice was announced and World War I came to an end, on March 15, 1918, Fan Noli, speaking on behalf of “Vatra” Federation openly expressed his skepticism with regards to Italy’s role in favor of Albanian interests. “Italy”, he would write, “shall not hesitate to grant Greece the rest of Southern Albania in exchange of the Dodecanese, and satisfy itself with Vlora and its hinterland”⁴⁶. The same sentiment was echoed by the branch of “Vatra” Federation headquartered in Switzerland, in its statement of December 1, 1918, where with great foresight it highlighted: “The Italian intervention in Albania and its intentions to occupy Vlora and its hinterland undermine the independence and territorial integrity of Albania... but Albania’s full independence and integrity are the necessary conditions to avoid future complications and dangerous frictions between Italy and other Balkan states”⁴⁷. At that time, even patriotic organizations, such as the “Kosovo National Defense” Committee or prominent individuals in Albania, such as Aqif Pasha Elbasani, recognized and warned of the danger posed to the fragmentation of Albania by the recycling of the secret Treaty of London clauses at the Paris Peace Conference⁴⁸. “Should Italy keep Vlora”, read a statement of the Kosovo National Defense Committee, in January 1919, “and should it gain the Albanian protectorate, our Committee foresees political, land and economic harm to Albania ... since because of Vlora our neighbors shall be left coveting a portion of our Homeland’s integral parts”⁴⁹. Hence, the solution was “a separate governance, without a protectorate, as dictated by the great American citizen, Wilson, by recognizing the right of self-determination of all small nations”, a group of patriots which included Ndrek Kaçulini, Mikel Shkreli, Riza Kopliku, Haxhi Hafizi, Kel Marubi, Kolë Gjinaj, Jonus Repishti etc., would state on February 1, 1919 in the “Populli” [People] newspaper⁵⁰.

However, Italy insisted on implementing the secret Treaty of London. During the two meetings that Foreign Minister Sonnino held with the Greek Prime Minister Venizelos in Paris, on January 10 and 19, 1919, he insisted that Italy received Vlora and the entire coastal line of Albania opposite Corfu, while Greece could be satisfied with the southern inland territories of Korça, Leskovik and Kolonja⁵¹. Nonetheless the Italians did not deem definitive the project of partitioning Southern Albania between her and Greece. Its effectuation would depend on the achievement of a general Italian-Greek agreement, which besides Albania, would include other scenarios, in the

⁴⁶ Statement of the Panalbanian Federation “Vatra”, March 15, 1918, signed by Fan Noli, Chair, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 24. `

⁴⁷ *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, vol. I, p. 59.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 67, 72, 73, 76, 83.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

⁵¹ Sonnino’s reports on his meetings at “Edouard VII” and “Mercedes” hotels with prime minister Venizelos, Paris, January 10 and 19, 1919, in: *Documenti Diplomatici Italiani* (hereinafter cited as: *DDI*), series VI, vol. 2 (January 18 - March 23, 1919), Rome: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 1980, p. 51, 52. On that occasion, Venizelos showed his discontent with the Italian offer, since, according to him, the Albanian coastline up to Vlora was inhabited by a Greek population!

Dodecanese and Asia Minor. Sonnino was resolute: either an agreement on everything, or nothing (*accordo su tutto, o niente*)⁵²!

The Greek prime minister E. Venizelos, who had already held talks with the delegation heads from Paris, London and Rome at the Peace Conference, presented Greek territorial claims over Southern Albania, initially, before the High Council of the Conference, on February 3, and then before the *ad hoc* Committee on Greek Affairs (February 24, 1919)⁵³. Venizelos brought forth all sorts of historical, economic, geo-strategic, ethnographic and linguistic data to argue the necessity of the unification of Southern Albania with the Greek state. To prove the alleged Greek character of Southern Albania, Venizelos had to do bold “acrobatics”, by presenting maps, photographs, questionable statistics, even referring to the region with the term “Northern Epirus”, first coined by Greek politics in 1913⁵⁴. He attempted to support them with statistics, which, as he admitted, were not scientific statistics but figures collected by the Greek consular and ecclesiastical authorities, whose “accuracy he swore by the reputation of the Greek government and his own”⁵⁵. He glossed over the ethno-linguistic factor, by “admitting” to some world-known facts: that half of the numerous Greek provinces, as he stated, were populated by inhabitants of Albanian origin; that Albanians warriors rebelled against the Ottoman Empire in 1769; that Albanians were also the main leaders of the Greek revolution in 1821, such as Boçari and Miauli; that even ministers of his cabinet spoke Albanian as their mother tongue. Indeed, he added, “more than two thirds of the sailors in our navy are of the Albanian race and when Admiral Kunduriotis addresses them... he speaks to them in Albanian”⁵⁶. By nimbly moving the topic from the mother tongue to the school language, while also making a false statement, Venizelos stated that in the whole of “Northern Epirus”, specifically in Korça, there was only one school in the Albanian language with a total of 200 students⁵⁷. Not without purpose, he specified that this school was run “quite well” by an American. Whereas, according to him, Greek schools

⁵² DDI, series VI, vol. 2, p. 180.

⁵³ A. Puto, *Shqipëria politike 1912-1939 [Political Albania 1912-1939]*, Tirana: Toena Publishing, 2009, p. 232; A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 16. The exhaustive elaboration of Venizelos is published in full in pages 139-157 of this publication. See also: N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 135.

⁵⁴ B. Kondis, *O Ellenismos toy Boriroy Epeiroy kai elleno-allvanikes skeseis*, vol. I (1897-1918), Athens, 1995, p. 237; B. Mparas, *To Delvino tes Boreioy Eperoy*, Athens, 1966, p. 6; B. Kondis, *Greece and Albania 1908-1914*, Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1976, p. 70-71. It is noteworthy that during the sessions of the Committee on Greek Affairs, Chairman Cambon and the other Frenchman Gout went along with Venizelos by employing the term “Northern Epirus”, while members of the Albanian and Italian delegations used the term “Southern Albania”. See: A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 107, 140, 148, 152, 162, 164, 166, 168, 176, 190, 197, 207, 220.

⁵⁵ A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 140-141.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 145-146.

⁵⁷ E. Hösch, *Geschichte der Balkanländer von Frühzeit bis Gegenwart*, Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 1988, p. 159; M. Macmillan, *Paris 1919: Six months that changed the World*, New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2003, p. 358; Nathalie Clayer, *Në fillimet e nacionalizmit shqiptar [The origins of Albanian nationalism]*, Tirana: Përpjekja Publishing, 2009, p. 278-279.

in Korça numbered 2400 students⁵⁸. On this premises, while bordering on racist attitudes, he found the opportunity to oppose the decision of the London Conference and the Florence Protocol of 1913, which recognized Albania that territory on the basis of the language spoken in the family, i.e. Albanian, which he contemptuously referred to as the “Muslim language”⁵⁹. Hence, Venizelos concluded, the basic element of a nation's identity was “neither race, nor language, nor the shape of the skull”⁶⁰, but was national consciousness, and this, he said, was based on religious belief. He recalled the example of Crete’s Muslim inhabitants, who were Greeks by language and history, but who had converted to Islam and consequently always sided with Turkey⁶¹. On this premises, Venizelos presented Albania’s history as a conflict between Muslims and Christians, where the former kept their eyes on Istanbul, while the latter saw salvation in the Kingdom of Greece. Taking advantage of the Commission members’ ignorance on this matter, he attributed to this alleged religiously-driven conflict, the great exodus of the 14th century towards Greece of what he called “Orthodox Albanians”, despite the fact that in the 14th century Epirus was inhabited only by Orthodox Albanians, as neither the Turks nor the Islamic religion had yet appeared, neither in Albania nor in the Balkans⁶². The Greek Prime Minister was informed that in the preliminary sessions of the Commission, the Italian delegate had recalled the crimes committed by the Greeks in 1913-1914 in Southern Albania. Back then, the crimes in question had shocked European public opinion, to such extent that witness A. Herbert, an English MP, called them the work of a “*horrid little nation*”⁶³. However, five years had passed since those events, and Venizelos relied on the short memory of the Commission members. Therefore, he presented the massacres in question as retribution of the local Christian population for the mistreatment they had suffered at the hands of the Muslims during Ottoman rule⁶⁴. Consequently, Venizelos cynically concluded, “tens of thousands of Muslims fled and took refuge in Vlora, and had no reason to complain”⁶⁵!

Furthermore, in contrast to what happened two days later during the Albanian Delegation submission, which was frequently interrupted, the Speaker of the session, the Frenchman Cambon, allowed free rein to the Greek Prime Minister. Any occasional interruption by him or the British representative was made only to support Venizelos' arguments. Nonetheless, since the first meeting of the Committee on Greek Affairs on February 12, US delegate Day warned that his country would not accept the borders

⁵⁸ A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 146, 147.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

⁶⁰ N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)*, p. 136.

⁶¹ A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 142.

⁶² A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, 143.

⁶³ A. Herbert, *Diaries and Papers 1904-1923*, London: I. B. Tauris, 2011, p. 6, 178-187.

⁶⁴ See Venizelos’ interference in the February 24, 1919 session of the Committee on Greek Affairs, and of the Albanian Delegation of February 27, in: A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 141, 142, 148, 166-167; A. Puto, *Shqipëria politike 1912-1939 [Political Albania 1912-1939]*, Tirana: Toena Publishing, 2009, p. 232-236.

⁶⁵ A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 141.

proposed by Venizelos because they did not coincide with ethnic boundaries⁶⁶. His conclusion, after the Committee was acquainted with the Greek claims, that “nothing should be granted to Greece without first studying the matter in depth” disappointed Venizelos and the head of the Committee, the Frenchman Jules Cambon, who hoped to quickly end the proceedings of the Committee, based on the pre-arrangements made between Venizelos and Prime Ministers Lloyd George and Clemenceau⁶⁷.

Meanwhile, in the first sessions, it was the Italian delegate who strongly contended the Greek claims for Southern Albania. Col. Castoldi, who had served in Albania during World War I and was quite knowledgeable on the Albanian question, framed his argument by bringing to the Committee’s attention, the events that had followed the decision of the Conference of Ambassadors of 1913 to determine the southern borders of Albania. The Greek army refused to withdraw from the southern Albanian territories, as ordered by the Conference of Ambassadors; instead, regular army officers and soldiers changed uniforms and organized the “Epirote movement”, which carried out outrageous massacres on the Albanian population of those territories, both Muslims and nationalist Christians⁶⁸. According to Castoldi, the city of Leskovik, before its destruction by the Greeks had 3 thousand Muslim inhabitants and 1 thousand Christians. Today, Castoldi stated, it has only 340 Muslims, while Christians remain a thousand⁶⁹. Prompted by this significant finding, at the February 24 session, Venizelos was asked to elaborate on how he explained the fact that the Christian population of Përmet was currently equal to what it had been before the events of 1913-1914, while its Muslim population had shrunk to 80%⁷⁰. Castoldi’s well-informed arguments upset the core elements of the Greek Prime Minister’s submission, as well as the pro-Venizelos convictions of the French and British Committee members. However, the chair, Jules Cambon, made one last attempt in support of the Greek prime minister, addressing the “benevolent” and inductive question of what guarantees did Athens give to the Muslim populations that could remain within the new Greek borders. Of course, Venizelos avowed his government’s commitment to honoring and respecting minority rights, whereby special legal acts were being drafted⁷¹. However, following the poignant facts cited by Castoldi, neither the philo-Hellenic Cambon could have hardly believed those promises.

After Venizelos’ submission, the delegation of the Durrës government had to speak before the Commission. At the February 26 Commission meeting, Chairman Cambon,

⁶⁶ The speech of the American delegate Day at the February 12, 1919 session, in: N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)*, f. 101; A. Puto, *Shqipëria politike 1912-1939 [Political Albania 1912-1939]*, f. 231.

⁶⁷ The speech of the American delegate Day at the February 18, 1919 session, in: A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 115; N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)*, p. 72.

⁶⁸ A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 106.

⁶⁹ A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 108.

⁷⁰ N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)*, p. 142.

⁷¹ See the discussions passage of February 24, 1919 session, in: A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 153—157; N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)*, p. 154.

supported by the British delegate, claimed that the Albanian delegation did not represent an internationally recognized government, therefore time could be saved by depriving it from the right to speak, instead allowing for the submission of written arguments⁷². In fact, on February 15, the Albanian delegation had presented the Conference with a memorandum on the Albanian government's position⁷³. But, apparently, it had not been read by the Commission members. Thus, at the insistence of the American delegate Day, supported by the Italian De Martino, the Commission session with the Albanian delegation took place on February 27⁷⁴. The very presence of the Orthodox Albanian from Korça, Dr. Mihal Turtulli, was an *argumentum ex silentio* that refuted the claims presented by Venizelos two days ago before the very same Commission. Dr. Turtulli was quite active during the session, rebuking all elements of Venizelos' arguments, from his use of the fictitious name "Northern Epirus", instead of Southern Albania, to the manipulation of false statistics. Alternatively, Dr. Turtulli detailed the statistics presented to the Conference of Ambassadors of 1913, whereby in Southern Albania lived 213 000 Albanians, 16 500 Greeks, 6 673 Vlachs and 3 958 Bulgarians⁷⁵. Indeed, he added, not only the northern part, but the whole of Epirus "had ever been Greek". At this point, Mehmet Konica interrupted to clarify for the Commission that the Chameria region, annexed by Greece during the Balkan wars, was inhabited by 40 000 Muslim Albanians, 14 000 Christian Albanians and only 6 000 Greeks⁷⁶. Introducing himself as an Orthodox Albanian from Korça, Dr. Turtulli invalidated Venizelos' thesis, as believed by several Commission members, whereby the Orthodox Albanians identified as Greek. Why would an Orthodox Albanian, he posited, should be considered Greek, when Orthodox Russians, Bulgarians or Serbians are not considered such⁷⁷. To the Chair Cambon's question, motivated by Venizelos' previous statements before the Commission, of why Dr. Turtulli's Korça had only one Albanian school, established by the Americans, while there were numerous Greek schools, the honest old man provided a rather logical answer. Under Ottoman rule, he stated, the Turkish government did not recognize the Albanian nation, hence it banned the use of Albanian language and considered as subversive those Albanians, whether Muslims or Christians, who sent their children to the only Albanian school. However, he underscored, it was rather significant that when in 1908, the Young Turks promised to allow the official use of Albanian language and the opening of Albanian schools, in merely seven months up to 500 Albanian schools

⁷² A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 158-159.

⁷³ The memorandum also contained an implicit reference to President Wilson's Declaration, whereby he denounced the policy of "balance" and "status quo" that had preceded previous peace congresses and that "had brought upon calamities for Albania, as a country without protection and coveted by its Greek and Slavic neighbors backed by powerful countries". See the memorandum text in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920]*, vol. I, p. 117-121.

⁷⁴ A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 158-159.

⁷⁵ A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 162.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 163, 169.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 162, 163.

were opened and up to 30 newspaper titles were published⁷⁸. Always referring to Korça in the years of French occupation during World War I, Dr. Turtulli recalled the decision of Col. Descoin to allow the establishment of the Albanian Republic of Korça, where the Albanian flag would be raised and whose official language would be Albanian. He recalled the great spread of Albanian education in that region, despite the efforts of the Greek bishop of Korça to restore the monopoly of Greek schools, and quoted statements by the French military authorities, according to which, the cessation of Greek interventions in Korça allowed the Orthodox and Muslim Albanians to live in peace and harmony⁷⁹. The last word of the Albanian delegation was spoken by the astute diplomat Mehmet Konica, who brought to the attention of the Commission the atrocities committed by the Greek army in 1914. These, he said, were not carried out by the orthodox inhabitants of Southern Albania, whether Albanians or Greeks, but by regular soldiers, who took off the Greek uniforms to present themselves as an expression of the will of the local population. "The place was burned to the ground and atrocious massacres took place," he stated. Konica also recalled the independent report by the Dutch General De Veer of the International Control Commission, who had observed *in loco* the total extermination of the Muslim inhabitants of the village of Hormova⁸⁰.

Even though the debates in the Committee on Greek Affairs were not going as smoothly as Venizelos had hoped, he nonetheless was confident in their favorable conclusion. As the Peace Conference continued its proceedings, strongly supported by the representatives of France and Great Britain and confident of finding a common language with Italy, he feverishly conducted from Paris the preparations for the handover of "Northern Epirus". Thus, as early as February 3, he instructed the Minister of War in Athens to speed up the recruitment of the 1919 class "to guarantee the occupation of territories that would eventually be granted to us"⁸¹. By his order, petitions were sent from the border areas with Albania, and boisterous manifestations were organized by the "northern-Epirote clubs", which purposefully included Muslim Albanians. Their presence would affirm Venizelos' thesis defended at the Paris Conference, whereby not only the Christians of southern Albania, but also the Muslims wanted a union with Greece⁸². On March 5, the Italian Minister in Athens, Avezana, informed Rome that Greek army units as well as paramilitary forces were gathering in the border posts of Ioannina, Camanda and Konica, wherefrom they would enter into Albanian territory to organize an uprising and declare the "Autonomy of Northern Epirus," according to the play used in 1914⁸³.

Negative developments taking place in Albania further exacerbated this unfavorable international situation. In tune with the Peace Conference and clearly to condition its decision-making on Albania, Essad Pasha Toptani stirred up a new Essadist movement,

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

⁸¹ N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)*, p. 136.

⁸² *DDI*, series VI, vol. 2, p. 178, 254; M. Macmillan, *Paris 1919*, p. 357.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 482.

encouraged and supported by both Belgrade and Athens.⁸⁴ In June 1918, he had presented British Admiral Troubridge in Thessaloníki with a plan, which was immediately forwarded to the British Secretary of State, Lord Milner. The project envisaged the transfer of 10,500 km² of Southern Albania to Greece, leaving 6,000 km² of Northern Albania to Serbia, while the territories between the Vjosa and Drini Rivers would become a Muslim state governed by him⁸⁵. Essad himself reconfirmed his project to the Serbians and the Greek Minister of Navy, Kunduriotis, during a visit to Belgrade in early January 1919⁸⁶. The project was a revision of the agreement that Essad Pasha had extended to Nikola Pašić and Eleftherios Venizelos in August 1914⁸⁷. This time, contrary to their acts in 1914, the Italians opposed Pasha's plans that ran counter to their interests⁸⁸.

Following the debates held before the Committee on Greek Affairs during the month of February, the issues pertaining to Albania's status and its borders proceeded to secret talks among the British, French, American and Italian delegations. The much anticipated Wilsonian approach was far from apparent, and the Albanian delegation was growing concerned that the Albanian question was increasingly being linked to the Adriatic or the Aegean islands issue, where the Italians, Yugoslavs and Greeks contended with each other. On June 1, 1919 the Albanian government delegation sent a note to the French Prime Minister, G. Clemenceau. "Albania," it stated, "has always been regarded as means of reward to appease conflicts completely unrelated to our people, or simply to satisfy our neighbors' rapacity"⁸⁹.

Precisely in June, Rome had a new government headed by F. Nitti, and Foreign Minister T. Tittoni. On July 2, 1919, the head of the Albanian delegation, Luigj Bumçi, greeted the new Italian Foreign Minister, wishing him to exercise his authority and that of the country he represented to protect Albanian interests, in line with the proclamation on Albania's independence and territorial integrity, made in Gjirokastra on June 3, 1917 by the Italian troops commander, General Ferrero⁹⁰. Monsignor Bumçi could not have known that Tittoni, like his boss, Prime Minister Nitti, represented a new development of Italian diplomacy in relation to Albanian interests. The new Italian government further tightened the grip on the Durrës government, as could be clearly indicated by

⁸⁴ Justin Godart, *Ditarët shqiptarë [Albanian Journals]*, Tirana: Dituria, 2008, p. 96, 97. Godart affirms that in the summer of 1920, a troop of 250 men, including Serb soldiers in uniform, entered from Yugoslavia and advanced as far as Koplík. The troop was commanded by the Essadists Alush Lohja and Luk Luka. Furthermore, near Dibra, the forces of the Serbian army, approximately 15 thousand troops, which had been joined by the Essadist front line units of the traitor Halit Lleshi, penetrated deep into Albanian territory. These attacks were accompanied by massacres and burning of entire villages. See also: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 67, 68, 93.

⁸⁵ N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 60.

⁸⁶ N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 82, where the relevant document of the Greek MFA is cited, a report of Kundurioti to minister Diomidi dated January 10, 1919.

⁸⁷ G. B. Leon, "Greece and the Albanian Question at the Outbreak of the First World War", in: *Balkan Studies*, 11 (1970), p. 70-71.

⁸⁸ *DDI*, series VI, vol. 3, No. 840, p. 847-850.

⁸⁹ *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920]*, vol. I, p. 219.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 252-254.

the appointment of a “High Commissioner” (Sali Nivica would aptly call him “proconsul”)⁹¹ to the government of Turhan Pasha⁹². Tittoni’s predecessor, S. Sonnino, had favored a counteraction, or at least curbing, of the Greek claims in Albania.⁹³ On the contrary, on July 29, the new Italian minister and E. Venizelos would sign a secret agreement, which reproduced in a more serious form the clauses of the secret Treaty of London. As Tittoni informed Prime Minister Nitti, Italy vowed to support Greek claims on the Albanian territories of Gjirokastra and Korça, including the coastal strip between Fteleon Cape and the White Trail (Palasa), whereas Greece would support Italy on the matter of sovereignty over Vlora and its hinterland, as well as of the mandate over the rest of Albania, and would pay Italy for the expenses made for civil purposes in the Korça-Gjirokastra regions⁹⁴. The news greatly enthused the Italian Prime Minister and in his reply of July 30, he warmly congratulated Tittoni for that agreement, “which represented a great victory” and for which the Greek Prime Minister, Venizelos, whom Nitti referred to as his “personal friend,” had his own merit⁹⁵. Prime Minister Nitti had gladly accepted that deal. He even appeared to have given up a possible mandate on Albania, citing the huge costs that such an undertaking would require. “Who shall maintain the troops with all those expenses, who shall keep the order in an anarchy-driven country, whose sympathies for Italy have been exhausted,” he rhetorically asked. And, “in order to alleviate our troubles, we will have to come to an agreement with Yugoslavia on the Albanian-Yugoslav border, as you so cleverly did with Venizelos on the Greek-Albanian border,” he concluded the message to Tittoni⁹⁶. Thus, a perfect

⁹¹ Article by Sali Nivica published in “Populli” newspaper, no. 45, dated December 12, 1912. See: E. Skëndaj, *Sali Nivica. Publicistika*, Tirana: Argeta, 2009, p. 256.

⁹² S. Pollo-A. Puto, *Histoire de l’Albanie des origines à nos jours*, Roanne: Editions Horvath, 1974, p. 205.

⁹³ N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)*, p. 78. Regarding the disputes that existed between Italy and Greece on the Albanian question, in November 1918, Sonnino would declare to the British representative Rodd that they “were an unfortunate reality with which Italy had to live, but not only by making concessions, because with the Greeks concessions meant increasing demand” (N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)*, p. 78). Sonnino synthetically frames a concept that the historian J. Ph. Fallmerayer introduced since mid-19th century regarding the thesis of the “Megali Idea” and the territorial ambitions of the new Greek state: “While they do not give and do anything, the Greeks just want to grab, and practically for thirty years have not stopped complaining and demanding money, honors, privileges and territories... The Greeks claim that they can make no progress in political life and that the country will continue to be full with bandits as long as they are not even granted Epirus and Thessaly... But once you grant them Epirus and Thessaly, see what happens. To be completely and utterly honest, the Greeks will say, you have to give us Macedonia, Thrace and even Istanbul. But even if you grant them everything, they will remain what they have been since the time of the Palaiologos: a mob of Christian barbarians who have gone unpunished only due to the infantile weaknesses of European politics”. See: J. Ph. Fallmerayer, *Gesammelte Werke. Neue Fragmente aus dem Orient*, II. Band, Leipzig: Verlag Wilhelm Engelmann, 1861, p. 145.

⁹⁴ A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 218-222; Report of Minister Tittoni to Prime Minister Nitti, Paris July 29, 1919, in: *DDI*, series VI, vol. 4, No. 174, p. 143; S. Pollo-A. Puto, *Histoire de l’Albanie*, p. 206.

⁹⁵ Telegram of Prime Minister Nitti to Minister Tittoni, Rome, July 30, 1919, in: *DDI*, series VI, vol. 4, No. 183, 186, p. 156, 158.

⁹⁶ Prime Minister Nitti to Foreign Minister Tittoni, Rome, September 6, 1919, in: *DDI*, series VI, vol. 4, No. 358, p. 281-282. Following the abandonment of Albanian interests by the new Italian government, in July 1919, the Serbs expanded the area of occupation within the borders of Albania, entering the Gjakova Highland, and a few months later reached Theth and Shosh. See: Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin

partition of Albania into three parts, whereby Italy reduced its claims to keeping Vlora and its hinterland, and to the demilitarization of the rest of the southern coast, which would pass to Greece.

Clearly, Nitti's enthusiasm was out of place. His Foreign Minister, who was experiencing the atmosphere of the Conference from within, and who had to make a synthesis of the humors he encountered there, apparently reassessed the agreement he had signed himself. Indeed, only a few weeks later, on August 8, Tittoni returned to the matter of the agreement with Venizelos, which he now considered an "unresolved matter," even dismissing and referring to it as simply an "exchange of ideas" that could be implemented "only in the context of resolution of other disputes"⁹⁷. On August 29, Tittoni submitted to the British Prime Minister, Lloyd George, and the French, Clemenceau, a new proposal for the Albanian-Greek border, which was essentially the one presented by the American delegation in February, which included Gjirokastra within Greek territory, but excluded Korça. With this step, Italy *de facto* nullified the Tittoni-Venizelos July agreement⁹⁸. The handover of Korça under Greek sovereignty, according to the Italian Foreign Minister, "would create great turmoil"⁹⁹. On September 2, the Americans also came into play. Polk asked the President of the Conference, Clemenceau, to immediately order the cessation of preparations for the Greek occupation of Korça, which the Americans would not recognize¹⁰⁰.

These negative developments could not but collide with the Albanian delegation to the Peace Conference, creating divergences among its members, especially on the matters of the protectorate and Italian occupation of Vlora. On the one hand, Italy's ambitious positions on the matter of Albania's territorial integrity, on the other hand, the pressures of patriotic associations, both within Albania and abroad, rejecting any violation of the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity, shook the confidence of pro-Italian elements within the delegation¹⁰¹. Under pressure from the representatives of Albanian colonies from the USA, Romania, Turkey and Switzerland, Mehmet Konica and Mihal Turtulli took a stand against the Italian claims of Albania. They expressed the well-founded fear that should Italy abide by the clauses of the secret Treaty of London, 1915 and demand the annexation of Vlora, it would be obliged not to oppose the annexation of Northern and Southern Albania by the Serbs and the Greeks respectively, as provided by the same treaty. Thus, they reasoned, "the Italian government not only is incapable of protecting and uniting all Albanians in a single state, but on the contrary, with its intention to transform Vlora and its hinterland into Italian land, it has become the main cause of our national ruin"¹⁰². This reasoning was

kombëtar, 1918-1920, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 331, 432.

⁹⁷ *DDI*, series VI, vol. 4, No. 230, p. 190-191.

⁹⁸ N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 296.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 297.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Minister Sonnino to General Piacenti, Commander of Italian troops in Albania, Paris, April 2, 1919, in: *DDI*, series VI, vol. 3, No. 94, p. 101.

¹⁰² Letter of M. Turtulli and M. Konica to the head of the Provisional Government, Turhan Pasha, Paris, April 14, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar 1918-1920*, [The struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920], vol. I, p. 161-162.

on point, and by now was even shared by the “pro-Italian” faction of the delegation. On June 7, Luigj Gurakuqi, a delegation member, would protest against the positions of the Great Powers gathered in Paris, including Italy, where he publicly stated that “Albania should not be treated as an object of rewards, and the Albanian people should not be treated as immature people incapable of an independent life, necessitating a colonial mandate such as for the Asian and African peoples”¹⁰³. Gurakuqi had been a moderate supporter of the option of an Italian mandate over Albania in the name of preserving the country's territorial integrity, but his statement shows how the Durrës government delegation was increasingly forsaking such option. The letter that Turhan Pasha sent to Minister Sonnino on May 3, 1918, confirmed the determination of his group, which also included other members of the government and of the Albanian delegation to the Conference, such as M. Kruja, M. bey Libohova, to work closely with Italy. However, innuendos could be inferred in-between the lines. The task of the Albanian delegation had become extremely difficult and unfortunate since till then, the Italian government had not given any assurances as regards the basic national question, at least pertaining to the preservation of Albania's territorial integrity. Turhan Pasha did not fail to underline that the Albanian delegation was aware of the unfavorable statements that Minister Sonnino had made on this question before the Italian parliament. Therefore, in order to instill a peaceful spirit inside and outside the Albanian representation, the Italian government had to provide assurances, first regarding Albania's ethnic borders, and in the impossibility of their preservation, at least for the borders accepted by the Treaty of London and the Protocol of Florence¹⁰⁴. As evident, Turhan Pasha's letter does not mention an Italian mandate over Albania, but it infers that the Albanian government could consider such an option should Italy distance itself from the secret Treaty of London, and extended such a mandate over the entire Albanian territory, in order to ensure the territorial integrity of the country. The Italian annexation of Vlora was not explicitly mentioned in the letter, but it was implicitly stated through the denunciation of the Treaty of London. Two weeks earlier, Turhan Pasha, on behalf of the Albanian delegation, had sent a letter to the Chair of the Conference, Clemenceau, where he rejected the plans for the annexation of Shkodra and Southern Albania by Serbia and Greece respectively, as well as those for the annexation of Vlora by Italy.¹⁰⁵ The letter, while strongly emphasized the showing of respect for Albanian sovereignty, it also expressed the Durrës government willingness to accept “for a certain period the benevolent protectorate of one of the Great Allied Powers, to steer Albania towards the first steps in the path of progress”¹⁰⁶. The Vlora question was specifically addressed in the letter sent to the Secretary General of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, De Martino, on May 28, 1919. It clearly underlined

¹⁰³ Telegram of L. Gurakuqi for “Rassegna Italo-Albanese” magazine, June 7, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 224.

¹⁰⁴ *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920* [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920], vol. I, p. 192-193.

¹⁰⁵ Letter of Turhan Pasha to G. Clemenceau, Paris, April 14, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920* [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920], vol. I, p. 163.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

that “to us, the Vlora question is a national question of uttermost significance, and any Albanian government, regardless of its politics, would, under any circumstances, recognize Italy the right to possess a part of national territory based on an international decision”¹⁰⁷.

Such developments within the Albanian delegation greatly concerned Foreign Minister Sonnino, who on April 2, from Paris asked Piacentini to consolidate the Durrës government’s position and that of the Albanian delegation in Paris into the Italian positions¹⁰⁸. Firstly, “people like Mehmet Konica, Mihal Turtulli and Mithad Frashëri had to be silenced”, since they would not refrain from denouncing Italian politics. At the same time, the newspaper “Kuvendi” [Assembly], which was published in Rome, had to reinforce the propaganda in favor of Italy and its policy towards Albania¹⁰⁹. To realize this, the composition of the Durrës government delegation in Paris had to change also. Indeed, thanks to Italian pressure, by June, the delegation was joined by Lef Nosi, Mehdi Frashëri, Mustafa Kruja and Myfit Libohova, who, more or less, advocated the need for a foremost cooperation with Italy¹¹⁰.

¹⁰⁷ Letter published in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 212.

¹⁰⁸ *DDI*, series VI, vol. 3, No. 94, p. 101.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 297.

¹¹⁰ *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 241; *DDI*, series VI, vol. 3, No. 216, p. 221. The interpretation of R. Gurakuqi (*Shqipëria dhe çështja shqiptare pas Luftës së Parë Botërore [Albania and the Albanian Question after WWI]*, Tirana: UET Press, 2013, p. 19), seems a bit far-fetched, according to whom, “in the Catholic part of Albania, the acceptance of the Italian protectorate was favorably regarded, not only in the context of achieving national unity, but also as a guarantee and protection of the Catholic minority under a Muslim majority state, which had inherited an intolerance legacy from the Ottoman Empire... However, the close relations established between the Italians and the beys of Southern Albania sounded an alarm in the northern part of the country, mainly in the Catholic areas... The constant compromises that the Italians made with the Anatolian beys saddened them immensely and made them lose faith in their seriousness in defending the values of a civilized government”. Firstly, it should be specified that the “Southern Anatolian beys”, who led the communication and talks with the Italian government and other Entente governments during 1918-1920, were of solid Western formation and represented the top of the Albanian political and cultural elite. They were Mehmet and Faik Konica, Myfid Libohova, Sami and Iljaz Vroni, Ismail, Syrja and Eqrem Vlora, Sulejman Delvina, etc. Secondly, and most importantly, R. Gurakuqi misidentifies the position of the northern Catholic territories and regions, with the position of a radical clerical group, which did not find its place within a “Muslim majority state”, but fought for an “autonomous Catholic canton”, even for a union with Christian Montenegro. Not surprisingly, this position was supported by Serbia and Montenegro (see: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. II, p. 401-402). Significantly, this anti-Albanian project was opposed by patriotic Catholic clergy, such as Gjergj Fishta, Preng Bardhi, Nikol Kaçorri, Ndre Mjeda, Ndoc Nikaj and undoubtedly secular personalities of the Catholic faith, such as Hil Mosi, Mati Logoreci, Nikoll Ivanaj, etc., who held an all-encompassing concept of the Albanian homeland and state. See: Gj. Fishta, *Përndritje. Publicistikë*, Tirana (Lajmëtari), 2000, p. 223; Fishta’s letter to Viçenc Prenushi, Paris, April 15, 1920, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar 1918-1920*, [The struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920], vol. II, p. 216; Hil Mosi, “Kombësia dhe kleri katolik” [Nationality and the Catholic Clergy], in “Shpëna e Shqipënisë” [The Hope of Albania] newspaper, Trieste, No. 13: September 16, 1907; A. Wernicke, *Theodor Anton Ippen. Ein österreichischer Diplomat und Albanienforscher*. Albanische Forschungen 7. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1967, p. 34, 59; M. Kraja, *Mati Logoreci*, Tirana: 8 Nëndori, 1987, p. 57-62; N. Ivanaj, *Historia e Shqipërisë së Re [History of the New Albania]*, Part II: Shqipëria e kleri katolik [Albania and the Catholic Clergy], Tirana, 1945, f. 3, 11, 26-27, 32; J. Godart, *Ditarët shqiptarë, mars 1921-dhjetor 1951 [Albanian Journals, March 1921- December 1951]*, Tirana: Dituria, 2008, p. 21, 25.

Meanwhile, the group represented by M. Konica, M. Turtulli and the representatives of the main Albanian diaspora across the world could not *a priori* dismiss the idea of an Albanian protectorate during its first steps. According to them, the United States of America should have been the “protectorate power”¹¹¹. This option was openly proposed at a meeting of the Albanian delegation, on March 24, 1919. The proponents of this option, headed by Mehmet Konica, considered the USA the country with the decisive contribution during WWI, with a democratic and principled foreign politics, as embodied in President Wilson’s Fourteen Points, and a large Albanian diaspora, which had played a major role in the national events of the twentieth century. The fact that this great country was the only one that had until that moment curbed Greek ambitions for Southern Albania, further supported this idea¹¹². But, as Mustafa Kruja put it in a brilliant argument at that meeting, while addressing the American or Italian protectorate dilemma through the lens of reality, relations between nations are not built on human feelings, but on political and economic interests, and it was unlikely that the transatlantic superpower had any such interests in the small Albania.

On the contrary, “Italy was the only country deeply interested in Albania in the framework of its Balkan policy, which is one of the cornerstones of general Italian policy”. According to Kruja, “Italy’s intentions towards us stem at least from its interest in having a friendly Albania against it, and also our, enemies, and at most from its imperialist desire to turn Albania into an Italian colony. The extent to which Italy can achieve these goals will be determined by political circumstances, as well as the attitude and will of the Albanian people for freedom”. Under these conditions, M. Kruja concluded, “there is no other path but to choose one of the two: Will we submit to fate and accept an Italian protectorate, or will we trust ourselves and protest against any kind of foreign invasion into our land. If, from the two evils, we prefer the first, let us boldly, and perhaps with tears in our eyes, say so, and steer our policy towards that direction; should we prefer the second one, let’s decide it then and act accordingly”¹¹³.

Since November 17, 1918, Ismail Qemali had emphasized the need to protect Albanian interests in the Peace Conference “while maintaining the composure among the Great Powers”¹¹⁴. This was no easy feat, and the two years that preceded the Peace Conference brought bitter disappointments to both proponents of an “Italian solution” and proponents of an “American solution”. The first group, in a vain attempt to make the Italians issue a public statement in defense of Albania’s territorial integrity, ceded step by step, until, in a desperate attempt to avoid the Italian protectorate, on May 24, 1919, they proposed to Rome to have a prince from the House of Savoy as the head of

¹¹¹ On May 26, 1919, Commander S. Piacentini reported from Vlora, that the idea of an American protectorate over Albania had found great support in Albania, and well-known names had publicly expressed for the American protectorate, such as Spiro Koleka and lawyer Koço Dilo from Gjirokastra. See: *DDI*, series VI, vol. 3, No. 616, p. 627.

¹¹² The speech of Mehmet Konica in the Albanian delegation meeting in Paris, March 24, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 149; M. Macmillan, *Paris 1919*, p. 356.

¹¹³ *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 149-152.

¹¹⁴ Letter to Sevasti Dako, Madrid, November 17, 1918, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920* [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920], vol. I, p. 53.

the country, while also trading Sazan, Karaburun, Zvërnec and the Pasha Limani Port for Vlorë, which was essentially the same thing¹¹⁵. For their part, the US mandate proponents, who immensely believed in US moral authority, were shocked when in April 1919, President Wilson descended to the level of “secret diplomacy”, which he had so strongly stigmatized, by agreeing that Vlorë should remain under the possession of Italy¹¹⁶. Kristo Dako, leader of the Albanian National Party in the US, did not refrain from sending a protest telegram to President Wilson, expressing Albanians’ deep disappointment for this unexpected step, which was “openly contrary to the sacred principles of nationality and self-determination of nations”¹¹⁷. Even Turhan Pasha, on behalf of the Albanian government delegation in Paris, protested to President Wilson. “Our bafflement was so great and upsetting”, he stated in that protest, “since the small Albanian nation had based all their hope on the high principles of Your Excellency, not to divide countries without taking into account the national rights of the peoples who live in them”¹¹⁸. Albanian protests did not seem to fall on deaf ears. In a conversation with Lloyd George, President Wilson indicated that he was stifled by a large number of Albanian petitions, who were horrified by the decision to grant Italy the mandate over Albania. “Perhaps they should have their own independence,” he added. But the British Prime Minister replied: “I cannot understand what Albanians would do with it, save for slaughtering each other”. Albania, Lloyd George continued, would become like the Scotland highlands in the 15th century. A remark to which Wilson coldly replied: “Do not speak ill of the Scotland highlands, they are the birthplace of my ancestors”¹¹⁹. And his icy retort with the British Prime Minister was the prelude to a radical change of American stance in the days that followed.

Until December 1919, the Albanian delegation in Paris attempted to persuade the Italian government to give up its claims in Albania, against the appointment of the Duke of Aosta as the head of the Albanian state¹²⁰. Against the deadly silence of Rome, on December 26, Luigj Bumçi, on behalf of the Durrës government and its delegation in Paris, presented a final proposal to the Chair of the Conference, Clemenceau, offering

¹¹⁵ Decision of the Durrës cabinet members L. Gurakuqi, Mustafa Kruja, Myfit Libohova, Mehdi Frashëri and Turhan Pasha, Paris, May 24, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 209.

¹¹⁶ From the memorandum “On the Adriatic Affair” presented by President Wilson to the Italian delegation in Paris on April 14, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920* [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920], vol. I, p. 165.

¹¹⁷ Telegram dated May 1, 1919, published in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 187. Three days later, an extraordinary meeting of the Albanian Political Party leadership addressed a similar telegram to President Wilson, openly criticizing the offering of Vlorë, “the sacred altar of Albania’s independence”, in flagrant violation of nationality and self-determination principles”, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 199-200.

¹¹⁸ Note of the Durrës Government delegation in Paris addressed to the US President W. Wilson, Paris, May 8, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 204-205.

¹¹⁹ M. Macmillan, Paris 1919, p. 362.

¹²⁰ Minutes of the meeting of the Albanian delegation in Paris, September 25, 1919, and minutes from the talks of the Head of the delegation, Monsignor L. Bumçi, with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, Scialoia, 15 December 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 401, 501.

to recognize Yugoslavia's right to use a railway line and the port of Shëngjin as a commercial transit, while for the Greek minority in the south of the country, he promised a "local autonomy in accordance with a project, which we intend to present to the Peace Conference, and which contains far more concessions than our fellow citizens were willing to make"¹²¹. By now, such continual offers, which were left unanswered, had become an indication of the powerlessness of the Durrës government. The inability of that government and its Delegation in Paris to defend the country's interests in the face of the Anglo-French determination to reward their Balkan clients and the Italian government's readiness to use Albania as a market commodity for its own interests began to steer the national movement towards the organization of an armed popular resistance. On September 3, 1919, a Committee of 13 members was established in Vlora, representing the city and region of Vlora. Through its branches and with the main engagement of patriotic teachers and intellectuals, the Committee initiated an intense activity for the liberation of Vlora from Italian invaders. Its first mass action was the organization of celebrations for November 28 of that year, which turned into an anti-Italian demonstration under the slogan "Foreigners out", which ended in clashes between Vlora citizens and Italian *carabinieri* who exerted brutal violence to disperse demonstrators¹²². Eqrem bey Vlora, who was in Vlora at the time, stated that he was amazed by the bravery and organizational skills shown by leaders, such as Osman Haxhiu, whom in his memoirs, he generally treated with contempt, regarding them as representatives of the "middle-class"¹²³. The news about the event, accompanied by details, such as the desecration of the national flag by the Italian military, spread throughout Albania and electrified Albanians countrywide. In the aftermath of the November 28 conflict in Vlora, the outbreak of a popular uprising was only a matter of time¹²⁴. It had already been established that the liberation of Vlora from the Italians was the key that solved the conundrum in which the Great Powers had put the Albanian question in Paris. Mehdi Frashëri recounts a meaningful conversation he had with Osman Haxhi a few weeks before the Vlora epic began. Haxhi wanted to know from the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Durrës government whether a diplomatic solution to the Albanian question lay on the horizon. "Getting Italy out of Vlora through diplomacy is impossible", Frashëri replied. The only solution is to force the Italians out, but I do not know if this will be possible". Osman Haxhi assured him that Vlora and its region had decided to attack the Italians, regardless of the sacrifices. Then Mehdi Frashëri said: "If *you* throw the Italians into the sea, I guarantee the

¹²¹ Note of the Albanian delegation to the Peace Conference Chair, G. Clemenceau, Paris, December 26, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 509.

¹²² See the letter sent by the people of Vlora to the Durrës government, whereby it notifies on the November 28 conflict with the invading Italian troops, Vlora, December 3, 1919, in: *Dokumente e Materiale historike nga lufta e popullit shqiptar për liri e demokraci 1917-1941*, [Historical Documents and Materials on the Struggle of the Albanian People for Freedom and Democracy 1917-1941] Tirana: State Archives Directorate, 1959, No. 10, p. 9-11; S. Vllamasi, *Ballafaqime politike në Shqipëri, 1897-1942*, [Political Encounters in Albania, 1897-1942] Tirana: Marin Barleti, 1995, p. 151-153; A. Puto, *Shqipëria politike 1912-1939*, [Political Albania] p. 253.

¹²³ Ekrem Bey Vlora, *Lebenserinnerungen*, II. Band, München: Oldenbourg Verlag, 1973, p. 126, 128.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

salvation of Vlora and all of Albania”¹²⁵. In Albanian circles it had already been consolidated the general conviction that the liberation of Vlora from the Italians was a precondition to avert the partition of Albania by the Serbs and the Greeks, in the north and south of Albania respectively¹²⁶.

Following the disappointments generated by the Paris Peace Conference, and in the aftermath the popular demonstrations in Vlora on November 28, 1919, patriotic activists were deeply convinced that in the face of national emergency, a government that heeded to its own people rather than the diplomacy of foreign actors, was needed. Even the ultra-conservative aristocrat Syrja Bey Vlora believed that Albania could be saved, either through a victory of the Socialists in the Italian elections, whose government “would abandon imperialist politics and remove troops from our country”; or, if this was not the case, Syrja Bey reasoned, then it was the turn of the Albanian people to have the last word, and had the right to fight against the occupier¹²⁷. But the people needed a government to lead it, and this role could not be performed by the exhausted Durrës government, which “had become an appendage of the Italian government”¹²⁸.

The reflections of the conservative Syrja Bey Vlora, the old defender of the policy of negotiations and compromises with foreigners, are the most evident indicator of the radicalized situation in Albania in the early 1920s. Under these conditions, on January 20, 1920, on the very same day when the Secretary of State Lansing on behalf of President Wilson denounced the unilateral decisions taken thus far by the Anglo-Franco-Italian allies in Paris, the National Congress of Lushnja convened. The Congress elected a national government adopted the first Statute or Constitution, which consecrated the sovereignty of the Albanian people and laid the foundations for the organization of the state in parliamentary form. On this basis, the Durrës government and its capitulating policy were overthrown and the Albanian delegation in Paris was reformatted, which is now taken over by the independent faction, Monsignor Bumçi, Mehmet Konica and Mihal Turtulli¹²⁹. In a message addressed to the Paris Peace Conference, which aptly was called a “protest”, the Congress strongly denounced the projects for the partition of Albania based on the secret Treaty of London; it further expressed Albanians’ gratitude to President Wilson and his upholding principles; it declared its unwavering determination not to recognize any foreign mandate or protectorate; and warned that “Albanians were ready to make any kind of sacrifice, shedding the last drop of their blood, against any action they might endanger the independence of Albania and its territorial integrity”¹³⁰. Subsequently, the Lushnja government set to work in order to extend its authority nationwide. Within May, with the support of the people and staunchly defeating the attempts of the Italians, French

¹²⁵ M. Frashëri, *Kujtime 1913-1933*, [Memoirs] Tirana: Omsca, 2005, p. 82.

¹²⁶ S. Vllamasi, *Ballafaqime politike në Shqipëri (1897-1942)*, [Political Encounters in Albania], p. 118.

¹²⁷ Syrja Vlora, *Kujtime. Nga fundi i sundimit osman në Luftën e Vlorës* [Memoirs: From the End of the Ottoman Empire to the War of Vlora], Tirana: Iceberg, 2013, p. 175-176.

¹²⁸ Syrja Vlora, *Kujtime* [Memoirs], p. 171-172.

¹²⁹ A Puto, *Shqipëria politike, 1912-1939*, [Political Albania] p. 258.

¹³⁰ *Dokumente e Materiale historike nga lufta e popullit shqiptar për liri e demokraci 1917-1941*, [Historical Documents and Materials on the Struggle of the Albanian People for Freedom and Democracy 1917-1941], No. 23, p. 25; A Puto, *Shqipëria politike, 1912-1939*, p. 257, 258.

and Esad supporters to keep the country divided pending its partition by the Peace Conference; in February 1920 the government advanced its power and dispatched its troops and administration in Durrës and Gjirokastra¹³¹. In early March 1920, the Tirana government, through Hoxha Kadri, Minister of Justice and Chairman of the “Kosovo National Defense” Committee had drawn up a plan for the entry of government troops in Shkodra. This would be carried out with the help of the City Council and the Albanian gendarmerie of the city. It foresaw avoiding an armed clash with the inter-allied mission forces of General de Fourtou, which could stay and continue to carry out their mission. The second step would be to send an ultimatum to Serbian forces stationed in Tarabosh and on the Buna bridge. They had to leave, otherwise they would be attacked and forcibly expelled by the Tirana government troops¹³². However, events flowed peacefully. On March 13, the last French contingent headed by General Joseph de Fourtou, commander of the Allied forces in that city, left Shkodra¹³³. The day before he notified the City Council that his contingent was moving out, thus leaving the city at the hands of that Council¹³⁴. The city’s civil administration was handed over to the municipal authorities, who announced their union with the Tirana government¹³⁵. Subsequently, the gendarmerie and the Tirana government administration were dispatched in Delvina, Saranda, Fier and Leskovik¹³⁶.

On May 17, the High Italian Commissar in Albania, F. Castoldi, notified the Albanian government that he could take over the administration of Durrës city¹³⁷.

In this new stage of the Albanian question, when the development of events and attention shifted from the Paris Conference to Albania, the role of associations and diaspora personalities began to fade. Lack of communications and unfamiliarity with the circumstances forced many of them to follow the perplexing course of events from afar and belatedly, without being able to get involved. Perhaps for the better, if one is to recall the confusion that the well-intentioned but often contradictory and misleading pressures of the diaspora associations brought about, frequently “at war” with each other, pressures that clashed over the already ambivalent Albanian Delegation in Paris¹³⁸. The latter, at some point, was forced to decide “to reject the genuine help of Albanian colony representatives, if their position was contrary to the policy of the Albanian government”¹³⁹. The decision to shift the solution of the Albanian question

¹³¹ *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. II, p. 125-126.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 152-154.

¹³³ R. Gurakuqi, *Shqipëria dhe çështja shqiptare pas Luftës së Parë Botërore*, [Albania and the Albanian Question after World War I], p. 111-114.

¹³⁴ *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. II, p. 156.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 244, 260.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 279.

¹³⁸ Certainly exaggerating, a concerned observer, such as the representative of the Italian delegation to the Conference, Col. Castoldi, declared to Luigi Gurakuqi on June 2, 1919, that “the Albanian delegation in Paris does not follow a line, but changes its position every hour”, see: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 221.

¹³⁹ Decision of the Provisional Government on the change of the Albanian delegation composition and the political line to be followed by said delegation, Paris, June 28, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për*

from Paris to Albania, by expelling foreign troops and uniting the cities and territories coveted by the neighbors with the Tirana government, was a unanimous decision of the Congress of Lushnja and the emerging government thereof. On those grounds, a bold national project was established for the restoration of independence and territorial integrity of the country, even through the use of force as *ultima ratio*. Yet again, there was no lack of internal voices who would occasionally oppose certain important decisions of the government, as in the case of the war for the liberation of Vlora¹⁴⁰. There was also a controversial voice from the diaspora, such as that of Faik Konica, who often did not grasp the political developments in Albania. Even after the great national achievements of taking Gjirokastra, Korça and Vlora under the administration and protection of the government that emerged from the Congress of Lushnja, Konica made the subsequent gaffe by echoing the propaganda of Athens that “Albania had become a pan-Islamic hearth”¹⁴¹, or calling the national government of Sulejman Delvina as “the phony Turkish government of Tirana”¹⁴². Nonetheless, against the lightning successes that the popular movement and the government that emerged from the Congress of Lushnja achieved in its first months, such voices were bound to remain forlorn.

The Vlora epic of Summer 1920 had a defining prelude to the resistance that the people and patriotic circles carried out for about a year against Athens’ attempts to annex the city and region of Korça. When Venizelos left Athens in October 1916 and settled near the Allied headquarters in Thessaloníki, where he established a “revolutionary” government that, unlike the Athenian government, sided with the Entente, one of his first actions was to send his man, Argyropoulos to Korça, with a military troop. In French-occupied Korça, Venizelos’ troops began work in organizing a Greek militia, which was to suppress the Albanian national movement in that region. But the French General Serrail ordered the disbandment of that militia and the removal of Venizelos’ men from Korça¹⁴³. Until the end of the war, decisions on Korça were made by the French occupation troops, which, recognizing the relation of power on the ground, chose to cooperate with the representatives of the city and its surroundings. In agreement with the Albanian patriots of Korça, the French allowed the establishment of the “Autonomous Province of Korça”, led by a Council of 14 members, half Christian and half Muslim, and entrusted the keeping of order in the city and the region

çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920], vol. I, p. 241.

¹⁴⁰ In a strange setback, on June 12, 1920, Kadri Hoxha, Minister of Justice, wrote that Albania’s independence and territorial integrity, including Vlora, could not be achieved “with resistance and stubbornness in the likeness of the Young Turks”, but using the flexibility of diplomacy (see: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. II, p. 351). Sejfi Vllamasi praises the figure of Kadri Hoxha and his active and irreplaceable role in the events of 1918-1920, and his skills of a fine diplomat and politician. However, he also points out his impulsive and ambitious character, which sometimes pushed him to make wrong decisions. See: S. Vllamasi, *Ballafaqime politike në Shqipëri, 1897-1942*, [Political Encounters in Albania] p. 111.

¹⁴¹ Letter of F. Konica to F. Noli, Rome, September 22, 1920, in: Nasho Jorgaqi, *Letërkëmbimi i Fan Nolit [Fan Noli’s Correspondence]*, Tirana: Erik, 2012, p. 253.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 252.

¹⁴³ N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)*, p. 50; A. Puto, *Shqipëria politike 1912-1939 [Political Albania]*, p. 50.

to an Albanian gendarmerie under Themistokli Gërmenji. The Albanian language was recognized as an official language, while the flag of the autonomous province would be “the traditional flag of Skanderbeg with the tricolor stripes of the French flag”. The autonomous province printed postage stamps and coins, whereby it was named “Republic”. In a few months, dozens of Albanian schools were opened in the city and its surroundings, and on October 25, 1917, opened the Lyceum of Korça, an elite school that left its mark on the educational and cultural history of Korça and all of Albania¹⁴⁴.

However, over time, and especially with the end of the war, the pro-Greek position of French diplomacy began to prevail with regards to the Korça question. On June 14, 1919, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, S. Pichon, complained to the Prime Minister and the Minister of War about the behavior of the French military occupation authorities in Korça, whereby, according to him, they “do their best to emphasize the Albanian character of this region and are hostile to the Greeks”. And continued further: “I know quite well that the methods employed by Greek propaganda often go overboard. However... we have no interest in seeing Korça become Italian under an Albanian label, therefore we should not support the Albanianization of this province”¹⁴⁵. Conveying his position, on July 7, 1919, General de Bourgon, commander of the French troops in Macedonia, reported that “the neutral position taken by our administration in the Korça province has allowed the free development of Albanian national feelings, thus damaging the Greek question; on the other hand, we cannot conceal the fact that most, if not all, of the French officers present in this territory are biased towards the Albanian question”¹⁴⁶. To change the situation in favor of the Greeks, the general suggested, albeit not fully convinced, to exert strong pressure in favor of Greece, by allowing only Greek schools, banning the teaching of Albanian, eliminating any Albanian symbol, as had been done in March with the banning of the Albanian flag¹⁴⁷, and disbanding the Albanian gendarmerie and replacing it with the Greek gendarmerie¹⁴⁸. On July 24, the Foreign Minister of Athens, Politi, asked his French counterpart to establish in Korça the “regime that existed there before the arrival of the French army”, i.e. to deploy the Greek occupation troops, and in order to achieve this, as an initial step, he proposed the transfer of those French officers “responsible” for favoring Albanian nationalism¹⁴⁹. Apparently, the military also supported this position, and on August 10, the French Ministry of War informed de Bourgon, the Commander of the French troops in Macedonia, that within 15 days the province of

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 172-177.

¹⁴⁵Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 226, and the French original.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., p. 261.

¹⁴⁷ The Albanian flag was removed from official buildings in Korça on March 29, 1919. According to the French commander Reynar-Lespinasse this angered the people. See: Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 154, 157.

¹⁴⁸Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 261.

¹⁴⁹Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 274.

Korça was to be handed over to Greek authorities¹⁵⁰. The news had to be kept “in absolute secret” (*tenir la nouvelle absolument secrète*), so as not to worry the people of the province and not to provoke its reaction¹⁵¹.

The British were part of this Franco-Greek conspiracy to annex Korça, which was being connived in the hope of becoming a *fait accompli*, without the knowledge of the Americans, who had vetoed Greek Korça since February. However, even among the British, divergences between the military and diplomats had emerged. Thus, when Captain Spencer, in a letter to the Times, dated April 23, 1919, declared that the province of Korça, which Britain wanted to cede to Greece, was entirely populated by Albanians, the head of the British delegation to the Peace Conference, E. Crowe was so irritated by this statement that revealed the “secret” and went counter the scheme of British politics, that he demanded that the Captain be sent before the military court¹⁵². By approving the transfer of power in Korça from the French to the Greeks, however, the British did not want this operation to be associated with the atrocities committed by the Greeks in 1914 in the province of Korça and throughout the Albanian south. Therefore, on August 5, the member of the British delegation, Nicolson, made it clear to Venizelos that in case of the entry of Greek troops in Albania, they would be accompanied by allied military observers “to avoid unpleasant incidents”¹⁵³. At the end of May, the very same Nicolson had presented a proposal for the partition of Albania according to the borders drawn by the Treaty of London 1915: Northern Albania would pass under Yugoslavia, Central Albania would establish an autonomous Muslim state under an Italian protectorate, and Southern Albania would be given to Greece. To ensure US approval of this plan, Nicolson envisioned that the province of Korça “would become the center of an Albanian Central University under the protectorate of the United States, where the idea of an eventual Albanian union would be preserved and promoted”. But such a solution prompted other members of the British delegation to question their colleague’s mental health. As for the Americans, they did not even consider it¹⁵⁴.

While receiving the dim warning of the British “to avoid incidents” as a permission to act, on August 6, Venizelos ordered his own “to act at the speed of light” to take power in Korça, take measures to disarm the Albanian irregulars, reorganize the local gendarmerie and eliminate all those who were against the Greek occupation¹⁵⁵. In 3 special telegrams, dated August 7, 11 and 12, Venizelos addressed the issue of appointing a metropolite to Korça, the Greek prelate, Jakov, who until then had been

¹⁵⁰Ibid., p. 301.

¹⁵¹ Letter of the French troops commander in Macedonia, de Bourgon, to the Greek general, Parasqevopoulos, August 21, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 317, 318.

¹⁵² E. Goldstein, “Great Britain and Greater Greece 1917-1920”, p. 344, where it cites the document: P. R. O., FO 608/46/108/1/1/10041. Crowe’s statement, May 18, 1919.

¹⁵³ N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)*, p. 139, 167, 291, 292.

¹⁵⁴ E. Goldstein, “Great Britain and Greater Greece 1917-1920”, p. 348, and the relevant document: P. R. O., FO 608/29/76/2/3/11124. Nicolson, “Albania”, May 28, 1919.

¹⁵⁵ N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)*, p. 292 (which includes the respective document of the Greek Foreign Ministry).

the metropolite of Durrës¹⁵⁶. For this transfer, Venizelos had previously intervened with the Patriarchate of Istanbul, which did not hesitate to grant the Prime Minister's wish. Jakov, a Greek nationalist close to Venizelos, had to prepare the conditions for a more peaceful and uncontested entry of Greek troops into Korça¹⁵⁷. According to the statements of the French lieutenant colonel Cretin, Jakov had come on a mission to prepare the Greek occupation of Korça; therefore, he had talked with the Orthodox leadership of the city trying to convince them that nothing would change with the arrival of the Greeks. Meanwhile, he could not conceal his nationalist mark, as he had promised the French; instead he worked for the opening of Greek schools in Albanian villages of Korça¹⁵⁸.

This loud prelude to the power transfer in Korça worried the French. On August 21, French General de Bourgon made clear to Greek Army General Paraskevopoulos the terms of the occupation of Korça by Greek troops. The operation had to be carried out under utmost secrecy. French troops would be replaced by regular Greek army troops.

They should not be accompanied by "Epirote" *andarts* and volunteer irregulars. Their presence in the Korça occupation operation, would compromise the successful implementation of the project, because of their ominous role in the events of 1913-1914¹⁵⁹. The French troops undertook to attack, disband and destroy any Albanian irregulars that would try to oppose the transfer of the province into Greek hands. Greek troops had to quietly enter Korça, un pompously, without manifestations and expressions of joy¹⁶⁰. Clearly, the French military were clear about the people's feelings towards an eventual Greek occupation, so they sought to avoid at all costs its clashing with the Greek occupation forces, which would complicate the successful conduct of the operation.

However, this did not imply that Greek authorities and public opinion should contain their enthusiasm and show the restraint promised to the French. The presence of the Albanian-speaking prefect of Larissa, Kalevras, as the head of a political delegation sent by Venizelos, caused concern among the inhabitants of Korça¹⁶¹. The suspect visits of the Greek military in that province, their meetings with the French occupation authorities and with the Greek Metropolitane Jakov, the gathering of Greek military troops at the border and the Greek press announcements about the Franco-Greek agreement for the surrender of Korça, alarmed the residents of the city and rural areas, whereas the French commander Reynar Lespinasse warned that the

¹⁵⁶ Information of Berat Prefecture for the Ministry of Interior regarding the Korça developments, Berat, September 1, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirim kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920]*, vol. I, p. 350.

¹⁵⁷ Report dated September 14 of the French Troops Commander in Korça, Reynar-Lespinasse, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirim kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 375; N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)*, p. 293.

¹⁵⁸ *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirim kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920]*, vol. I, p. 454.

¹⁵⁹ N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)*, p. 293.

¹⁶⁰ De Bourgon for Paraskevopoulos, August 21, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirim kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 319-321; N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)*, p. 294.

¹⁶¹ N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)*, p. 295.

implementation of the plan to hand over Korça to the Greek authorities was being jeopardized¹⁶². On October 11, 1919 he reported that Metropolitan Jakov and his agents had been the first in the city to disseminate the news of the quick arrival of the Greek army, greatly troubling the Korça residents¹⁶³. His successor, Lt. Col. Cretin, also blamed Metropolitan Jakov for the city turmoil as a result of the propaganda and intrigues orchestrated by him¹⁶⁴. As Jakov himself declared to French Lieutenant Colonel Cretin, on November 11, 1919, he feared an assassination attempt against him by Albanian activists¹⁶⁵.

In fact, a whole front was established for the defense of Korça, which included the inhabitants of the city and the region, patriotic activists and armed groups. In early August, the Korça people forced out of the city the prefect and the military commander of Follorina, who had come to coordinate the preparations for the capture of the city¹⁶⁶. At that same time, members of the Albanian representation of Turkey at the Peace Conference, which now included Sulejman Delvina, wrote to the US delegation that “it would be the most unjust act to leave the Albanians under Greek captivity. The people of Korça and all Albanians, who have not forgotten the criminal acts and bloodshed caused by the Greeks in 1914, shall certainly not fall once more alive under the clutches of the rule and tyranny of the Greek army. The Greek army shall not enter Korça without stomping upon the dead bodies of Albanians”¹⁶⁷. On August 31, the “Kosovo National Defense” Committee called on the Albanian people to run in defense of Korça and Gjirokastra¹⁶⁸. In the letter to the American Delegation at the Peace Conference, the Committee stated that “Korça, which is and shall remain the Jerusalem of the reborn Albania, shall not endure the shameful yoke and shall pay dearly for its freedom. She lived Albanian, she shall live Albanian and she shall die Albanian”¹⁶⁹.

The threat of the handover of Korça into Greek hands galvanized the popular resistance¹⁷⁰. By early September, in Elbasan, Berat, Skrapar and Pogradec, on the initiative of patriots Xhevdet Mehqemea, Neki Libohova, Zarif Haznedari, Ali Koprencka, Riza Cerova, Kasem Radovicka, Isuf Sulejmani, Kristian Kole, etc., “Korça Liberation Committees” had been established, which started the rallying of

¹⁶² Report of Reynar-Lespinasse, August 24, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920* [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920], vol. I, p. 327-328.

¹⁶³ *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 429.

¹⁶⁴ November 1919 report of Lieutenant Colonel Cretin, Korça, December 1, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920* [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920], vol. I, p. 471.

¹⁶⁵ Information of Lieutenant Colonel Cretin, Korça Commander, Korça, November 11, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar 1918-1920*, [The struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920], vol. I, p. 453.

¹⁶⁶ Letter of the “Kosovo National Defense” Committee sent to the Korça elite, Shkodra, August 12, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. I, p. 304.

¹⁶⁷ The letter, written on August 28, 1919, published in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920* [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920], vol. I, p. 336-337.

¹⁶⁸ *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920* [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920], vol. I, p. 345-347.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 359.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 341, 348, 361.

armed volunteers. On September 3, the Commander of the French forces in Albania, Reynar-Lespinnasse, reported that Sali Butka had appeared in the Gjergjevica area with about 1,500 armed men¹⁷¹. The report of the the mobile gendarmerie commander, Captain Longin, dated September 7, made after an inspection in the Korça region provided even more details. According to him, a general uprising was being prepared in the country, and the entry of Greek troops in Korça would ignite not only the Korça area under French administration, but the entire South, which would be joined by the North. The insurgents, led by the well-known Sali Butka, would be joined by Albanian gendarmerie troops, both from the French and Italian occupation zones, as well as groups of volunteers recently arrived from America. "The truth," Longin's report concluded, "is that the idea of national independence has penetrated very deeply into the hearts of the people and we are unable to halt this flow". All old conflicts were abated and the idea of the homeland united everyone¹⁷². Beyond the diligence shown by the French authorities to conceal the preparations for the surrender of Korça into the hands of the Greek army, and despite the efforts of Bishop Jakov to quell the anti-Greek revolt of the citizens of Korça¹⁷³, the city plunged into chaos. Against the news of the imminent arrival of the Greek army, thousands of residents of Korça and its rural surroundings began to flee¹⁷⁴. By now, the French Commander Espinasse had lost his earlier confidence and declared that "any sudden invasion of the Korça province by Greek troops would cause turmoil"¹⁷⁵.

Meanwhile, the nationwide popular movement in defense of Korça pushed the Durrës government to more determined positions. On September 25, it ordered the sending of an armed force to Korça, to militarily oppose any Greek attempt to occupy that area after the French had left¹⁷⁶. On October 9, 1919, Albanian military troops of 150 soldiers under the command of Major Tatzat had advanced near Korça, despite the protests of the French Commander of Korça, Reynar-Lespinnasse, who threatened to consider this act as a hostile gesture against France and as a "casus belli"¹⁷⁷. According to the "Kosovo National Defense" Committee, the taking of Korça under the Albanian

¹⁷¹ Information of Reynar-Lespinnasse, Korça, September 3, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920]*, vol. I, p. 357.

¹⁷² Information of Captain Longin, Korça, September 7, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920]*, vol. I, p. 364-365.

¹⁷³ Report dated September 14 by the French troops commander in Korça, Reynar-Lespinnasse, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920]*, vol. I, p. 375.

¹⁷⁴ Report of commander de Bourgon, Thessalonki, September 10, 1919, and of the French troops commander in Korça, Reynar-Lespinnasse, September 14, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920]*, vol. I, p. 371, 374-375, 385.

¹⁷⁵ Letter of commander Reynar-Lespinnasse, Korça, September 17, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920]*, vol. I, p. 385.

¹⁷⁶ *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920]*, vol. I, p. 399.

¹⁷⁷ Report of Lespinnasse, Korça, October 9, 1919, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920]*, vol. I, p. 426-427.

government authority “would electrify and revive Albania from the bottom to the top, and would even instill some spirit and vitality to the disheartened and weakened region of Shkodra”¹⁷⁸. The protection of Shkodra and Korça from the annexation attempts of Serbia (Yugoslavia) and Greece, would create the necessary premises for the Italians to give up Vlora and the mandate over Albania¹⁷⁹.

Preparations for armed resistance on the ground followed the utterly unfavorable developments that took place at the Paris Conference. On December 9, 1919, a joint Anglo-Franco-American memorandum was agreed on the Adriatic question, which recognized at best the Italian claims in the spirit of the secret Treaty of London of 1915. It explicitly stated that the League of Nations would grant Italy the mandate over Albania as well as full sovereignty over Vlora and its hinterland. The memorandum also satisfied Athens’ ambitions, since it left open the question of the southern border, which it had already settled with Italy through the secret Tittoni-Venizelos agreement of July. Yugoslavia was not left without anything either, as the memorandum recognized its right to build transport routes in Northern Albania to cross the Adriatic¹⁸⁰. The memorandum represented one of the most negative developments of the Peace Conference pertaining to the Albanian question. Unlike other documents discussed and agreed upon earlier, this document risked taking a definitive shape, as in addition to the signature of the Frenchman G. Clemenceau and Englishman E. Crowe, also bore the signature of the American representative, Frank Polk.

But despite efforts to make Yugoslavia “part” of the solution given to the Adriatic question of the December 9 memorandum, the new Serbo-Croatian-Slovenian state disliked its content. In a note dated January 8, the Yugoslav delegation compared the Italian mandate over Albania with the mandate given to Austria-Hungary over Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908, inferring that it led to aggression against Serbia and the outbreak of World War I. “The aforementioned arrangement”, the note stated, “provides Italy with a border whereby it can undertake attacks against our state, which in this case is left without any protection means. This creates, on the one hand, an offensive advantage, and, on the other, a complete strategic submission”. Yugoslavia continued to consider the most appropriate solution that would preserve Albania as an independent state with an autonomous administration within the borders recognized in London in 1913. “We think that Albania has enough elements to self-govern and that it will know how to be administered from an economic and political point of view better than if it were subject to any foreign administration”. The note concluded on a threatening tone: “Should this solution not be accepted and should the southern part of Albania be given to other states, then our delegation shall make a claim on the northern part of Albania up to the Drin River...”¹⁸¹.

¹⁷⁸*Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of the Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920]*, vol. I, p. 406.

¹⁷⁹*Ibid.*, p. 406.

¹⁸⁰Published in: A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare pas Luftës I Botërore* [The Albanian Question in International Acts after World War I], vol. III, p. 235-236.

¹⁸¹Published in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920]*, vol. II, p. 17-20.

The Yugoslav reaction thwarted the whole scheme built so arduously and for so long by the protagonists of the Peace Conference, who pretty quickly, on January 14, 1920, reached a new agreement which this time more clearly reflected the Yugoslav claims over Northern Albania, while the provinces of Korça and Gjirokastra were explicitly granted to Greece¹⁸². It was the “perfect partition” that even the secret Treaty of London had failed to provide. It is noteworthy, however, that the head of the US delegation, F. Polk, who had been urgently summoned to Washington, did not partake in the drafting of this document. Apparently, even in Washington they were reminded that following President Wilson’s departure, the US delegation to the Paris Conference was implicated in the endless and unscrupulous intrigues web of Europeans¹⁸³. In fact, on January 20, the US government position marks a sharp turn. Through a succinct memorandum, the US stated that with regards to the Adriatic question, President Wilson had been confronted with the decisions taken by his colleagues, Lloyd George and G. Clemenceau, as long as the relevant sessions “were not possible to be attended by any American official holding the same authority as the prime ministers in question”. Consequently, the memorandum continued, “The US is being put into a position where matters are decided before the American government can express its point of view, since, apparently, Mr. Clemenceau and Mr. Lloyd George took into account only the views of the Italian and Yugoslav governments before learning the opinions of the United States government”¹⁸⁴. This stir-up of American diplomacy froze the process of secret treaties. The lengthy January 22 reply that Prime Ministers Lloyd George and Clemenceau sent to the US government sought to assure the latter that “the French, British and Italian governments have never considered reaching a final settlement without taking into consideration the views of the US government”¹⁸⁵. Nonetheless, in his February 10th note, President Wilson was even blunter.

“The Anglo-Franco-Italian memorandum,” he wrote, “divided the Albanian population, despite its strong protests, between three foreign powers. These provisions and many others, negotiated without the knowledge and approval of the US government, change the whole aspect of the settlement of the Adriatic question”. The following phrase marked the resolute return of the US to the position expressed in the well-known Fourteen Points of the President: “The fact that the representatives of Yugoslavia, faced with the alternative of the Treaty of London, could be forced to accept a solution that seems to me completely unfair in principle and unfeasible in reality, would not change at all our conviction that we cannot give our consent to an arrangement which, whether in terms of provisions or in the methods used to impose it, constitutes an absolute denial of the principles on which America entered the war”¹⁸⁶.

¹⁸² Ibid., p. 235-236.

¹⁸³ Hans Herzfeld, “Erster Weltkrieg und Friede von Versailles”, in: *Propyläen Weltgeschichte*, Hrsg. Golo Mann, 9. Band: Das zwanzigste Jahrhundert, Berlin: Propyläen Verlag, 1991, p. 124.

¹⁸⁴ Published in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. II, p. 237.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 238-240.

¹⁸⁶ See the note, in: A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 244-245. This note is not addressed at all by R. Gurakuqi, who in his book gives more importance and visibility to the justifying responses of London and Paris to the President’s notes, than the latter, which constitute the cause of the turn that the Albanian question took in the Paris Conference,

Wilson returns to the issue of Albanians' rights in the February 25 note addressed to the Prime Ministers of France and Great Britain. "The President," it said, "notes with pleasure that the British and French governments shall not neglect the future interests and welfare of the Albanian people". The American government understands quite well that the partition of Albania into three parts, as provided by the Franco-British agreement, could be gladly accepted by the Yugoslav government, but it is resolutely against hurting the Albanian people in favor of Yugoslavia, just as it is against the Yugoslav people being hurt in favor of Italy. She is of the opinion that the difficulties between Christians and Muslims would only increase if the north and south of the country were brought under the control of nations that have neither a common language, nor the same government, nor the same economic potential"¹⁸⁷. "The Albanian question", President Wilson underscored in a last note of March 6, 1920, "should not be included in the proposed discussion between Italy and Yugoslavia, and the President is compelled to declare yet again that he would not approve of any plan that would grant to Yugoslavia territorial compensation in the northern part of Albania, instead of something that could be severed elsewhere"¹⁸⁸. In all these exchanges, President Wilson does not fail to explicitly denounce the Anglo-French Syndrome of the secret Treaty of London of 1915, which was openly unfolding at the Peace Conference and which was being devised without US knowledge. To the poor justification of the Prime Ministers of Great Britain and France, that the "secret" character of the Treaty in question stemmed from strategic considerations, as in wartime the basis of success lies in keeping the secret of our plans from the enemy", Wilson ironically that this was not about informing the "enemy", but an allied country like the US, which joined a common front with the signatories of the Treaty to face the tremendous task of defending freedom and whom was asked for unlimited help and incalculable funds"¹⁸⁹.

The great turn of January 21, 1920 of the American government in the spirit of President Wilson's Fourteen Points, coincided with the equally decisive event that took place in Albania on January 21 of that year, with the convening of Congress of Lushnja and the establishment of the Albanian national government. Korça patriots organized in the "Korça National Defense Committee" immediately turned to Sulejman Delvina's government, wherefrom they expected the main support for saving Korça from Greek annexation¹⁹⁰. On April 3, 1920, the Mayor of Korça, Sotir Kota and City Council members asked the French Commander De Fourtjou to unite Korça and its region with

see: R. Gurakuqi, *Shqipëria dhe çështja shqiptare pas Luftës së Parë Botërore*, [Albania and the Albanian Question After World War I] Tirana: UET Press, 2013, p. 73-77.

¹⁸⁷ President Wilson's reply to the Memorandum of the Prime Ministers of France and Great Britain of February 17, 1920, in: A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare [The Albanian Question in International Acts]*, vol. III, p. 252; M. Macmillan, *Paris 1919*, p. 363; R. Gurakuqi, *Shqipëria dhe çështja shqiptare pas Luftës së Parë Botërore*, [Albania and the Albanian Question after World War I], p. 76.

¹⁸⁸ President Wilson's reply to the Allies' note, dated February 26, 1920, Washington, March 6, 1920, in: A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare pas Luftës I Botërore* [The Albanian Question in International Acts after World War I], vol. III, p. 256.

¹⁸⁹ A. Puto, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare pas Luftës I Botërore* [The Albanian Question in International Acts after World War I], vol. III, p. 256.

¹⁹⁰ Letter of the "Korça National Defense Committee" addressed to Deputy Prime Minister Eshref Frashëri, Korça, April 1, 1920, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. II, p. 180-181.

the rest of the Albanian territory and their transfer under the administration of the Tirana government, as had happened a few days ago, on March 13, with Shkodra, when the same De Fourtou, then commander of the inter-Allied mission in Shkodra, accepted to hand over the city to the Tirana government forces¹⁹¹. In a lengthy report, dated April 11, 1920, De Fourtou reported that Përmet, Leskovik, and Kolonja had been captured by the Tirana government gendarmerie. Meanwhile, it appeared that the Albanian forces did not intend to enter Korça. “However,” De Fourtou specified, “these developments clearly indicate the strengthening of the Albanian national movement and Albanians’ will to fight for their country’s independence”. The national idea in the region of Korça, de Fourtou stated, was even stronger than in Shkodra. “It is surprising that here religion has taken a back seat; the Homeland definitely comes first”. Quite astutely for a foreigner, the French general said, that “the strong individuality that the Albanians have so jealously maintained, was a sure guarantee that they would gain their national sentiment the day that they would have the material and moral conditions that would allow them to do so, and that day has come: we should not be surprised, then, by the importance and real strength of the current movement”. Further, he informed that as early as August 1919, a plan for the protection of Korça by the Greeks had been prepared by Sali Butka and other activists, of which he gives interesting details. An eventual clash with the Greek army, would engage all the people of the province, even the inhabitants of the Macedonian villages of the Prespa area, who did not separate themselves from the rest. As for the Greek cause proponents, these were insignificant and were represented by less than 100 Greek families, who mainly came to Korça from the territories that were handed over to Greece after 1913. Under these circumstances, De Fourtou meaningfully warned: “It is, therefore, the case to predict the future by taking into account the events that may unfold”. And for his part, he suggested that in case a decision was made to hand over Korça to the Greeks, the French contingent would better leave before the Albanians found out about such a decision: otherwise he would find himself in crossfire. Moreover, he added, the French could withdraw forthwith, without fear that order and peace in the city and province of Korça would be disturbed. “The security of the region”, he concluded, “would not be in danger due to our withdrawal, as the Albanian gendarmes, assisted by the residents, would suffice to maintain peace”¹⁹².

The option strongly supported by General De Fourtou for the immediate withdrawal of French troops from Korça, became the dominant idea both in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and of War. On May 10, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mitterrand ordered the Ministry of War to prepare for the withdrawal from Korça. The move could not be further postponed, as Greek Prime Minister Venizelos continued to pray, hoping for a last-minute deal with the Italians. “I think we cannot fulfill Mr. Venizelos’ wish on this point; we have delayed the withdrawal of our troops from Korça several times, but to this day we have not seen any agreement between the Italians and

¹⁹¹ Letter from the representatives of the Korça people to General De Fourtou, Korça, April 3, 1920, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. II, p. 187-188.

¹⁹² Report of Gen. De Fourtou, April 11, 1920, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. II, p. 202-207.

the Greeks regarding the replacement of the French troops”¹⁹³. The evacuation was supposed to take place by May 18, but on that very day Colonel Crétin was ordered to delay the departure for another 10 days¹⁹⁴. Apparently, Venizelos had convinced Paris yet again that he would soon get the Italian approval to proceed with the implementation of the Tittoni-Venizelos agreement of a year ago. Interestingly, this new “postponement” was announced to the French colonel, not from Paris, but from Athens, by the Greek Foreign Minister, Politis, who assured him that he was authorized by the French government to do so in order “to gain time”¹⁹⁵. But Colonel Crétin should have been more attentive to the pressures coming from the Albanian environment, than from the messages of the Greek government conveyed through Paris, or those of the Paris government conveyed through Athens. On May 24, he received a new warning from the Korça representation, expressing its determination to resist by all means, “even with the worst means”, the arrival of Greek troops¹⁹⁶. Exactly two days before the expiration of the May 28 deadline for the transfer of the Franco-Greek relay of power in Korça, a National Assembly convened in the Municipality building that announced the unification of Korça with the national government of Tirana, The announcement, signed by Jorgaq Raci, Haki Mborja, Niko Joangjeli, Efthim Marko, Qani Dishnica, Kristo Kosturi, Dhosi Havjari, Tefik Rushiti, Emin Menkulasi, Neki Frashëri and others, was forwarded to the French command on the same day¹⁹⁷. Conveying this serious development to Paris, Colonel Crétin explained that “the decision for resistance is not so much due to the incitement of some individuals over the exalted people, but it is a decision taken calmly by the people themselves, who peacefully dictates to the leaders the decisions to be taken, by first declaring their will to resist to their very last breath”. He also informed that the day before, the inhabitants of the Muslim and Christian villages had gathered around the city and on the following day, in the early morning hours, they started entering the city, without any noise or fuss. In the afternoon, at 17.00, the demonstrators, about ten thousand of them, including Muslim and Christian women of Korça as well as school girls, gathered in front of the Municipality. The Albanian and French flags were raised on the balcony and the city leaders appeared, as well as Eshref Frashëri, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Tirana government. Speeches were held, whereby while declaring the determination to defend Korça from any attempt to hand it over to Greece, there were also expressions of consideration for France and the French military authorities of the city. Colonel Crétin concluded his report with the protest he had presented to the representative of the Tirana government, Eshref Frashëri, for the step taken to unite Korça with the Tirana government. But, it was a completely formal protest. As he himself wrote, behind that decision lay the will

¹⁹³*Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. II, p. 264, 265, 281

¹⁹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 285.

¹⁹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 289.

¹⁹⁶*Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. II, p. 293.

¹⁹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 301, 302.

of an entire people¹⁹⁸. And there was nothing he could do but “take note of the act committed”¹⁹⁹. As ordered, on May 28, Colonel Crétin ordered the withdrawal of the last French troops from Korça. On that same day, the Korça City Council met under the leadership of the Tirana government representative, Eshref Frashëri, whereby it was decided to send a delegation to Kapshtica for talks with the Greeks. The Kapshtica meeting resulted in an agreement signed by the governor of Western Macedonia S. Iliakis and Gen. N. Trikupis, on behalf of the Greek side, and by Eshref Frashëri, Jorgji Raci, Pandeli Cali, Qemal Dishnica, N. Zoi and Captain Selahedin Billoshmi, on behalf of the Albanian side²⁰⁰. The agreement recognized the current situation (*sic stantibus rebus*), pending the final decision of the Peace Conference. But it was already clear to everyone that the fate of Korça had been written. Already everyone’s eyes were on Vlora, where the last, decisive battle would take place, for the restoration of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Albanian state.

¹⁹⁸ See the report of Col. Crétin, Korça, May 27, 1920, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920]*, vol. II, p. 304-307.

¹⁹⁹ Letter of Colonel Crétin to Korça Municipal Council, May 28, 1920, in: *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920 [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920]*, vol. II, p. 316-317.

²⁰⁰ *Lufta e Popullit Shqiptar për çlirimin kombëtar, 1918-1920*, [The Struggle of Albanian People for National Liberation, 1918-1920] vol. II, p. 319-320.

Catalina VĂTĂȘESCU*

LEXICAL AND MEANING SIMILARITIES BETWEEN ROMANIAN AND ALBANIA (St. Martin Day)

The popular Christianity among Albanians and Romanians is still longing for a systematic comparative research. An aspect worth of further attention is place of saints in the popular culture of the two peoples, in their folk calendar. Let's take for example the role of wolf's protector named *San Martin - Sân (Sfânt(ul))¹ Martin, Martini(i)*. Albanians celebrate St. Martin on 11 and 12 November. Romanians celebrate this day not only on 12-14 November (*Martinii de Toamnă*, "Martins of Autumn"), but also in February (on 1-3, *Martinii de Iarnă* "Martins of Winter") and in summer (August 22) *Martinul* "Martini")². In Romanian tradition, not only *Sfântul Martin* (or *Martinul*), but also *Sfântul Filip*, whose calendar day is very approximate, emerges as the wolf's protector. The beliefs about the two saints are the same and similar to those of Albanians regarding St. Martin³. In the last quarter of the 19th century, B.P. Hasdeu sent to village teachers a rich questionnaire with 206 questions (*Chestionarul Hasdeu*), to collect the language richness and the people's beliefs and customs and to develop a vocabulary of Romanian language as complete as possible⁴. Based on the answers to the question about beasts, among which wolf appears too (No. 78), it is noticed that wolf food can be provided by St. Peter, St. Andrew, but also God himself⁵. It is interesting to note - at first view, at least- that the beliefs related to wolves emerge only in mountainous and hilly places, where pastoral life is developed, and not in the villages of plain area. The question about saints (no. 170) was responded appropriately only in

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¹ It is known that the old form *sân(t)*, and the Albanian version *shën* originating from Latin *sanctus*, was substituted with *sfânt* influenced by Slavic language.

² Ion Ghinoiu, *Sărbători și obiceiuri românești*, Editura Elion, București, 2003, p. 87, 88, 94, 95, 281, 365. The most celebrated holiday is on 2 February.

³ According to Romanian shepherds belief, other saints also were protectors of wolves: St. Peter (Sfântul Petru), St. Todhri (Sfântul Theodore) or St. Ndreu (Sfântul Andrei). On the other hand, *Sfântul Martin* protects not only wolves, but also bears (Ion Ghinoiu, *Sărbători și obiceiuri românești*; idem, *Mitologie română. Dicționar*, Univers enciclopedic. Gold, București, 2013).

⁴ He has published only the letter A and the beginning of letter B of the dictionary. The notebooks with the replies he collected are stored manuscripts at the Library of Romanian Academy and later used in the *Romanian Language Dictionary of the Academy*. A summarized part of the folklore and ethnographic part was published in the volume *Tipologia folclorului din răspunsurile la chestionarele B.P. Hasdeu*, by Ion Mușlea, Ovidiu Birlea, Introduction from Ion Taloș, second edition revised and supplemented by Ioan I. Mușlea, Editura Academiei, București, 2010.

⁵ *Typology*, p. 265-266; 372-374; 376.

areas with pastoral life⁶. Therefore, it is necessary to make a thorough research comparing the situation between Romanians and Albanians concerning the areas where the saints ruling wolves and protecting people from wolves.

Below is given a description of how Albanians celebrate St. Martin's Day and what kind of beliefs are associated with it in the northern part of the country⁷. Women do not work, in particular do not knit, tease, do not cut woolen clothes with scissors. These restraining rules and gestures of symbolic value (the scissors presumably symbolize the mouth of the beast that should not be opened so as not to eat livestock) have the role of protecting livestock from forest beasts, wolves in particular. Likewise, Romanian women do not sew, spin, knit, use any sharp tools for fear that wolves may take all the sheep or goats.⁸ As it is evident, both Albanians and Romanians have a key role in preserving these celebrations⁹.

An important emerging fact is that St. Martin is imagined by both Albanians and Romanians as having power over wolves. In both traditions of the two peoples, he feeds the wolves and the wolf left without food is allowed to prey on sheep or goats. The saint opens the mouth of the so called *Tied-Mouth* wolf, as otherwise the wolf himself cannot eat any animal, if it finds a herd of animals. Among the ritual gestures made during St. Philip/St. Martin days, Romanians have also the tightening of two brushes to tease wool while saying *Așa să se încleșteze gura lupilor, să nu poată mânca vita cutare*, i.e. "So is tighten the mouth of wolves not to eat anything"¹⁰. According to another popular belief, in Romanian is said that "wolves mouth is closed tight when in wedding, mating" (*lupii au gura încleștată când au nuntă*) so they cannot prey on animals. The expression *legatul lupilor* "wolf-binding"¹¹ is also close to Albanian language.

The relationship between St. Martin and the wolf in the mythical Albanian legends is detailed by Mark Tirta¹². Wolves are under the protection of saint who feeds them or assigns then a domestic animal to eat¹³, or the wolf's mouth is *locked*, because *St. Martin has locked it*¹⁴. M. Tirta shows, alas without details, that people believe the wolf would eat only what he is entitled to, that the saint has allowed him to, and if he eats sheep, later on they will prosper¹⁵. In the south-east of Transylvania (Țara Hațegului), to show mercy, the shepherd gives a lamb saying that it belonged to the wolf, so it would not

⁶ It is the case, for example, of a lowland area near Tuna, Brăila, where the customs regarding wolf patron saints are not mentioned in any reply; moreover, the saints Martin and Philip are not even found among the mentioned saints (*Documente privind istoria Brăilei. Răspunsurile la Chestionarele Odobescu și Hasdeu pentru județul Brăila*. Publication by Ionel Cădea and Costin Croitoru, Muzeul Brăilei "Carol I", Editura Istros, 2015).

⁷ *St. Mert*, in *Folklore. Summary of observations on the folk customs and language published "Leka" magazine in the first 11 years*. I. *Customs and mores*, "Zoja e Paperlyeme" Print house, Shkodra, 1940, p. 60-61.

⁸ *Typology*, p. 373. Marcel Lapteș, *Anotimpuri magico-religioase. Schițe etnografice*, Editura Corvin, Deva, 2011, p. 232.

⁹ For Romanians see *Typology*, p. 372.

¹⁰ Antoaneta Olteanu, *Calendarele poporului român*, Editura Paideia, București, 2001, Marcel Lapteș, p. 256, *Typology*, p. 373.

¹¹ Marcel Lapteș, p. 39, 59. For spells made to close the wolf's mouth see *Typology*, p. 265.

¹² Mark Tirta, *Albanian Mythology*, Tirana, 2004.

¹³ M. Tirta, p. 66, 117. A story about the Saint instructing wolves where to eat, in *Folklore*, p. 60.

¹⁴ See above in Albanian *Tied mouth*, Romanian *gură încleștată*.

¹⁵ Mark Tirta, *Mythology*, p. 67.

eat other animals from the herd¹⁶. The replies collected by Hasdeu contain many similar situations, which deserve to be mentioned, despite they not refer to St. Martin but God, for example, when barking, the wolf is praying God to eat something. God assigns or sends him an animal to eat; God gives grains to the wolf to satisfy his hunger, so that the wolf does not prey on sheep or goats; God has allowed wolf to prey on man; it is a sign of prosperity when the wolf eats an animal from the herd, or when someone crosses his path.¹⁷

The meaning and importance of the use of green in the presentations of beliefs in concern are interesting for further research. According to M. Tirta, in mythical legends, wolves are under the protection of St. Martin, who feeds them with some *green fruits*. In some versions, St. Martin (or St. Mert in Tosk language) emerges as a giant wearing *green robes*¹⁸. In Romanian, *verde* “green” is used in the expression *joia verde* - “green Thursday”- meaning a dangerous day for livestock, similar as in case of *Martinii*¹⁹.

The wolf, in Albanian and Romanian shepherd tradition, is a crucial mythical being and his power is preserved also in toponymy. Mark Tirta²⁰ highlights ancient faiths by drawing attention to the old toponym on the Adriatic coast (*Ulcinj*, *Ulkinion*, *Ulcinium*, *Olcinium*). This toponym is closer to the old Albanian word: *ulk*. Likewise, Emil Lafe²¹ stressed the possibility of preserving pre-Roman toponymy during the time of Roman rule. Romanian toponymy formed by “wolves” is rich, including derived words preserving on the one hand the Romanian name and on the other hand the Slavic and Hungarian names (which translate): e.g., *Lupeni*, *Vâlcea*, *Vâlcan*, *Fărcașele*. Romanian and Albanian have kept together many expressions and wise words related to experiences of herbal life: *lupul își schimbă părul dar năravul ba, the wolf may lose his teeth but never his nature*²².

In the opinion of M. Tirta, the wolf, as a deity, is part of “an ancient Paleo-Balkan past, preserved as in various peoples”. Tirta talks about Illyrians and Thracians' cult of wolf-god, quoting Mircea Eliade²³. The problem is how to understand how Thracian-Illyrian deity appears together with Christian saints. Can we talk about Christianizing

¹⁶ Marcel Lapteș, *Anotimpuri*, p. 119, 120, 286. In some mountainous villages, shepherds slaughter an infertile sheep and let the wolf eat it (*idem*, p. 175, 231). A Romanian poet, the author of a series of poems inspired by village traditions, constructed as a series of memories from childhood, shows that the head of household gives wolves a sheep to eat. His gesture is not understood by the village and is, perhaps, a remnant of the old belief that it only makes sense to the one who does that. It is difficult to tell, by reading poetry, whether the author remembers the act for its strangeness or still knows its magic meaning. However, he frequently mentions the remote shepherd past of the village (Marin Sorescu, *La Liliaci*, *Cartea I* (1973). We have used the publication of Marin Sorescu, *La Liliaci* (I-III), vol. I, preface Ion Pop, Jurnalul Național, Editura Art, București, 2012, p. 129-131).

¹⁷ Typology, p. 265-266.

¹⁸ Tirta, p. 66, 117.

¹⁹ Ghinoiu, *Sărbători și obiceiuri*, p. 67, 69, 88.

²⁰ Tirta, p. 66.

²¹ E. Lafe, *Latin-Roman toponyms in Albanian lands*, “Philological Studies”, XXVII (X) (1973) 3, p. 111-118 (especially p. 116).

²² For other examples and the importance of the wolf in the Albanian and Romanian civilization and traditions see Gr. Brâncuș, *Concordanțe lingvistice româno-albanian*, Bibliotheca Thracologica, XXX, București, 1999, p. 110.

²³ Tirta, p. 118, 119, 144. He quotes Mircea Eliade, *De Zalmoxis à Gengis-Khan. Études comparatives sur les religions et le folklore de la Dacie et de l'Europe Orientale*, Paris, Payot, 1970.

an ancient deity? The question that would be put to you concerns the conditions in which the wolf was connected to a Christian saint and became, by a pagan deity with full power, a phenomenon, say, subordinate to the power of the saint. In the popular Christian Albanian and Romanian mentality, we see that the pagan deity leaves the place to the Christian saints. The fact that it is about the same saint, Martin, is of interest. In Albanian language, the name of the saint has the same proclamation as family names. In the proverbs: “*Why you don't you speak, did St. Martin locked your mouth? Wolf's mouth is locked by St. Martin*”²⁴. In Romanian, the names of saints may be used without the word *sfânt, sânt*: *Martinii, Martinul, Filipii*. It is interesting how in Romanian many Christian holidays have plural names (*Florii, Rusalii, Sânziene*) and the holidays of *Martinii, Filipii* are also in this category. The holiday names in plural are a phenomenon inherited from the Latin. We believe that all these indicate popular saints among Albanians and Romanians.

²⁴ Tirta, p. 66.

Seit MANSAKU

THE ISSUE OF THE ORIGINS OF THE ALBANIAN LANGUAGE IN THE WORK OF VITTORE PisANI

Abstract. This article deals with the special interests and insights of Vittore Pisani in the study of the ancient history of Albanian language, specifically in the various aspects of looking at the origins of this language.

Early, historical, economic, political, cultural, linguistic and religious ties between the Illyrians-Arbanian and Albanians, on one hand, and the Latin-Italians, on the other, have long attracted the attention of scholars from both sides of the Adriatic. Both countries and people have been part of the Roman Empire for many centuries.

An important factor that has influenced the attention attraction of Italian scholars to the Albanian world, has undoubtedly been not only the ancient vicinity here in the Mediterranean basin, but the existence of an early Arbëresh community in Italian Peninsula. Coexistence between the two communities definitely required mutual knowledge of the history, language and culture of the two peoples. Even before the Arbëresh, the Illyrian tribes, the first ancestors of the Albanians, had crossed the Adriatic and settled in Italy and left there a valuable linguistic and cultural heritage, such as the Messapian inscriptions that have been studied by Italian scholars like F. Ribezzo, Carlo de Simone et al. The attention of Italian scholars has been especially drawn to the Arbëresh dialects.

The new Italian environment where the Arbëresh settled after emigrating to Italy, enabled them, more than their compatriots in the motherland, to come in contact with the scientific and cultural developments of the civilized European world. On the other hand, the love for the homeland and the pride for the history, language and culture of their progenitors that they kept unquenchable in their hearts and minds encouraged them that the opportunities created by the new Italian settings, closer to the new scientific and cultural developments, to use them for the benefit of their nation, to make it known in the new homeland and beyond, and to put it on the path of development and social and cultural progress alongside other nations of Europe.

Genuine scientific studies on the history of the Albanian language in the Italian environment have begun since mid-nineteenth century, when it was included as the object of study of comparative historical linguistics. Establishment of comparative historical linguistics, compilation of comparative grammars for languages and language groups of the Indo-European family with scientific methods prompted the well-known Arbëresh scholar Demetrio Camarda to systemize himself a comparative grammar for the Albanian language, *Saggio di grammatologjia comparata sulla lingua albanese*,

Pratto 1864, and two years later, *Apendice al Saggio di grammatologia comparata sulla lingua albanese*, Livorno 1866. This Arbëresh author has the special merit of giving Albanian a comparative grammar since the mid-nineteenth century, when comparative grammars had just begun to be systemized with scientific methods for other languages of Europe too: *Grammar of Romance languages* (1836-1847) by Diez, *Grammar of Slavic languages* (1852-1875) by F. Miklosich, *Celtic Grammar* (1853) by Johan Kaspar Zois, etc. . With the work of D. Camarda, published in 1864, along with these other languages, Albanian is also listed with a comparative grammar, compiled by a researcher of its land, proving before the scientific world of the time that even the Albanians themselves were able take ownership of the study of their language in the comparative historical plan too. He thus gave a serious proof of the truthiness of that opinion expressed one year earlier by the Italian linguist and Albanian language history scholar D. Comparetti that "Albanian language studies can expect a lot from Albanians themselves, if they would like to scientifically examine their language following the methods that these kinds of observations require today".

Since that time Camarda's work has caught the attention of the well-known Italian linguist G.I. Ascoli, who is also considered to be the founder of comparative historical linguistics in Italy and one of the well-known figures of Indo-European comparative historical linguistics. In his work *Studi Critici* he did not hesitate to evaluate Camarda's work as "the broadest work of comparative grammar that has seen the light of publication in the Apennine Peninsula", "a true jewel of the philological literature of present-day Italy" and a standing monument that D. Camarda devoted himself to the language of the Arbëresh, who can rightly boast with it. But Ascoli, in addition to the assessment, made him some important remarks on the methodology of scientific research and on the conclusions he drew on the inclusion of Albanian language in the branch of Pelasgian languages along with Greek and Latin, by placing Albanian closer to Greek than to Latin; a thesis advocated by A. Schleicher dhe G. Stier.

On this occasion I would like to point out that most of the Italian scholars of the last century (Ascoli, M. Bartoli, Pisani, G. Bonfante, Pellegrini, etc.), who have dealt with the issues of the ethnogenesis of the Albanians and Albanian language and of its place in the Indo-European language family, have paid attention more to the methodological scientific aspect of researches in this field than to the actual analysis of the linguistic material of Albanian language. The methodological requirements have certainly brought substantial results in supporting and justifying various theses about the above issues, or to overthrow those who did not comply with the scientific methodology.

The general conclusion of the author (Camarda's) could be summarized, according to Ascoli, as follows: the Albanian language is quite closely related to Greek; both languages stand by each other as twins, but the first, especially in lexicon, participates more broadly than the second one in the element that can be called Pelasgian-Italian. Linguistic and historical reasons, traditions and customs prove that the Albanians are the direct descendants of the Illyrian-Macedonians and of the Epirotes of antiquity, thus making more acceptable the view that the Albanians were descendants of the Pelasgians; they are Neopelasgians, as today's Greeks are called Neogreeks (*Studi critici*, 63). However, Ascoli finds it difficult to attest the thesis of Demetrio Camarda on the connections of proximity of the Albanian language with Greek and Latin and

their inclusion in the branch of the Pelasgian languages. That the Albanian language has many elements in common with Greek and Italian languages, this is something so obvious that no one can deny. But Ascoli rightly notes that it is necessary to distinguish whether these common elements have their source in an ancient language, in a common substratum, or are the result of meetings, their subsequent contact with these languages.

A special article by Faik Konica's magazine "Albania" was dedicated to the life and work of Graziado Isaia Ascoli on the occasion of the anniversary of his death, written by Kole Kamsi under the pseudonym Komneni. The author, after evaluating Ascoli's contribution in various fields of linguistics, concludes his writing with the following words: *Ascoli has known well the Albanian language and with a book of his own Studi critici (frammenti albanesi), he tells and develops his own thoughts and on our language. Therefore, this star that extinguished, this true scientist born out of Italy, was not only a misfortune for his compatriots, but for the whole world, and it's a duty to Albanian nation to pay tribute to him* (Albania, year 11, no. 4, 1907, 95-96).

Another well-known Italian linguist who has been involved quite extensively with the issues of the ethnogenesis of Albanians and their language, as an Indo-Europeanist and as an Albanologist, is Vittore Pisani. He belongs to that generation of Indo-Europeans who in their studies combine the achievements of traditional comparative historical linguistics with the linguistic direction of linguistic geography and Indo-European dialectology. Exactly for this reason his works on Albanian language are of interest to research methodology and actual achievements.

One of the first writings of this author related to the ancient history of the Albanians, with their first homeland, was published in the early 1940s in Albanian language in the well-known magazine *Hylli i Dritës (The Star of Light)*. Is a critical article entitled "About a publication of Prof. Dr. G. Stadtmüller on the Early Albanian History, which is written as a review of the paper *Forschungen zur albanischen Frühgeschichte*", published in VIIth edition of the *Archivum Europae Centro-orientalis* magazine. In this article, V. Pisani, after making a general evaluation of the research work of G. Stadtmüller, maintains a critical attitude towards the thesis of this author regarding the early homeland of the Albanians and the pastoral disposition of this population and its Romanization. V. Pisani does not agree with the methodology followed by the author to draw such conclusions of ethnic nature, starting from the linguistic analysis of some Latin and Slavic borrowings in the Albanian language in some realms of its lexicon. Specifically, he disagrees with Stadtmüller's thesis that the early Albanian population was a nomadic pastoral one that lived in the mountains where it could escape Romanization, and that Albanians learned agriculture in a later stage, after contacts with the Slavs. He reminds the author that the Albanians have borrowed a key word of the agricultural lexicon, *the plow*, from the Latins and that the word for *sea* is an inherited word in the Albanian language. "No one - says the author - is authorized to hold the early Albanians only as nomadic pastors as a people that have only one way of lifestyle" (HD, 22). He also reminds the author that the mention of the Illyrian tribe Albanoi and the city of Albanopolis in the second century AD by Ptolemy does not support his thesis about the nomadic pastoral nature of the first Albanians. Likewise, V. Pisani opposes Stadtmüller's argument according to which "the theory that holds the Albanians as the descendants of the Illyrians has been rejected once and for all since

the Venetian language was found, which, according to the majority of scholars, is Illyrian". Pisani answers the author that the issue can be addressed differently and we can say that Venetian is not Illyrian, because Venetian is not explained by Albanian language (HD, 22) and concludes that "all these things are quite uncertain, because the Venetian language tradition is pitch black". Subsequent researches have given right to V. Pisani. Today Venetian is included in the Italian languages.

In a more direct way Vitore Pizani has treated the issues of the ethnogenesis of the Albanians and of the origins of the Albanian language in his generalizing works on the Indo-European linguistics where Albanian is included, such as *Linguistica generale e indoeuropea* (Milano, 1947), *Saggi di linguistica storica* (Torino 1959) *Glottologia indoeuropea* (Torino, 1971), as well as in some lectures held in some scientific events held in Albania, where he has been invited to participate. His basic conclusion about the origin of the Albanian language expressed in the general works is the following: "In its basic nucleus, Albanian continues the language of the ancient Illyrians, known to us by some names and glosses and by the Messapian inscriptions; a language spoken by the Messapians and Iapygians of the Salentian Peninsula, originating from Balkan Illyrian", a conclusion that we find in an early article from him entitled "The Illyrian Problem", first published in "PANNONIA" magazine in 1935, p. 276.

The author has elaborated in more detail and with more arguments the thesis on the origin of the Albanian language in the First Conference of Albanological Studies, held in Tirana in 1962, where he delivered the paper: "The origin of the Albanian language, an issue of principles and methodology".

After some general considerations on the nature of languages, their connections with the populations and lands where they are spoken and their evolution over time, the author dwells on some important principled issues of the methodology of dealing with the origin of the Albanian language. To the question posed by scholars for a long time: "Is Albanian, at least in its essential part, a continuation of Illyrian or Thracian language?", the author responds as follows: "If in ancient times in Albania an Illyrian language was spoken, I don't see any reason (way) for the population of Albania to have replaced this language with Thracian. I would have accepted more easily that these Illyrians had been Romanized, or had embraced a great cultural language like Greek, but, acknowledging that until the time of the Roman conquest they spoke Illyrian, I see no reason for them to have exchanged their language with the language of a people who have not violated or ever invaded Albania. Regarding the sources for exploring Illyrian and Thracian, the author thinks that "about Thracian we know almost nothing; about Illyrian we know very much what the Messapian inscriptions tell us", thus acknowledging the Illyrian belonging of these inscriptions; a quite controversial issue.

V. Pisani treats the thesis of the Illyrian origin of Albanian language related to the place of Albanian in the family of Indo-European languages. The author dwells on the *Centum* and *Satem* grouping of the Indo-European languages and on the position of Albanian, Illyrian and Thracian in this grouping. It is known that from Carl Pauli and, especially, from Herman Hirt and later from Henrik Barić and other supporters of them, it has been claimed that since Albanian is the language of the Satem group, while Illyrian is thought to belong to the Centum group, Albanian cannot have its origins in

Illyria. It is derived from Thracian, which is considered a Satem language just like Albanian.

V. Pizani somehow quotes and supports the opinion of the Arbëresh scholar Marco La Piana, who had come to the conclusion that in the Albanian language are mixed two Indo-European dialects, which are related respectively to the Satem group and the Centum group. Referring to an earlier study of his, *Studi sulla preistoria delle lingue indoeuropee*, published in 1933, he thought that "the assimilation of the hard palate sounds into the languages of the Satem group is a relatively new fact, which has spread by Iranian, by passing through, on the one hand and only partially, to Indian, and on the other hand, to Armenian and hence to Frisian, Thracian, future Albanian and Balto-Slavic languages, at a time when the original unit had been settled since long" (p. 112). After these explanations V. Pisani concludes that "*a language can be Satem not because it has always been such since the time of Indo-European unit; it may have become so affected by the wave of relocations that brought with it the assimilation of the hard palate sounds. It can be said that this wave arrived in Illyria quite late, therefore it is understood why Illyrian seems to us as a Centum language, while Albanian as a Satem language*" (p.113).

Closely related to this thesis and to Indo-European dialectology, V. Pizani has made interesting remarks about the different chronological layers of the Albanian lexicon, not only of the loaned lexicon, but also of the inherited lexicon. In the Indo-European elements of Albanian language, the author discerns those that are common to most Indo-European languages and a number of elements of an earlier era that connect Albanian with Germanic, Baltic and Slavic, and with an Albanian that is related to Thracian, and through it with Phrygian, Armenian and Iranian. As for Albanian language - the author concludes - we can say that with all the influences of every kind, which have defined its outlook, in its Indo-European elements, it continues a dialect that was more Sanskritized than, e.g. Germanic and Baltic languages. (f.115). He also talks about early Mediterranean elements in the Albanian language.

With these explanations V. Pisani disproves one of the arguments of the supporters of the thesis of the Thracian origin of the Albanian language. Eqrem Çabej also in the lecture "Some essential issues of the history of the Albanian language", held at that Conference, spoke about the problematic character of the dialectal division of Indo-European languages into Satem and Centum languages. He even supported Norbert Jokl's thesis that "spirants, which are characteristic of Albanian as a so-called *Satem* language, appear relatively late in this language, partly in the middle of the time period, so we must admit that the *Satem* character often it is not a genealogical work, but a chronological work. From this it follows that the way of dealing with the Indo-European palatals does not constitute a reason to connect Albanian with Thracian and to separate it from Illyrian. Just as there is no one who would think of separating Spanish or French from Latin, just because, for example, lat. Centum in the first one has given rise to *ciento* (pronounced *thiento*) and in the second one the word *cent*, so because the Latin guttural in these two languages has ended in spirants. See E. Çabej, Linguistic Studies IV, Prishtina 1977, p.174.

Prof. Selman Riza in his discussion of Vitore Pisani's paper delivered at that Conference would say: *Eliminating the serious lack of distinction between Indo-*

European language Satem and Indo-European Centum language from the way of scientific confirmation of the scientific thesis of the Illyrian origin of the Albanian language and the Albanian people; this avoidance can be called almost a finished work beginning from this Conference, where our prominent Indo-Europeanist prof. Eqrem Çabej described the above difference not only as genealogical, but also as chronological. And it seems to me that the removal of this obstacle from this path will constitute one of the most important results of this Conference” (Conf. p. 850). Thus, acknowledging the not only genealogical but also chronological character of the division of Indo-European languages into Centum and Satem. This means that even if Illyrian was a Centum language and Albanian is a Satem one, it does not constitute an argument against the Illyrian origin of Albanian. A once Centum language may over time acquire the features of Satem languages.

In addition to what said above, as recently noticed by prof. Shaban Demiraj in “Albanian Language and its History”, Tirana 1988, p. 170, the Centum character of southern Illyrian has been questioned by many linguists who have dealt with its typology. He even pointed out that the examples given to prove the Centum character of Illyrian, names such as *Ves-cleves*, *Acra-Bannus*, *Bal-acros* and others, do not belong to southern Illyrian and cannot prove its Centum nature.

V. Pisani has treated the issues of Albanian people and Albanian language ethnogenesis through a special and original point of view in a speech entitled “Illyrians in Italy”, held at the First Assembly of Illyrian Studies, convened in Tirana in 1972 and published in the Acts of this Assembly. In this work, too, the author first tries to theoretically clarify the Illyrian concept in the political, linguistic, cultural and archaeological perspective, which is used by scholars of the respective disciplines with different meanings. When archaeologist speaks of the Illyrians, he has in mind some aspects of the material culture prevalent in a certain area and not the language or languages spoken by the peoples who possessed this culture, and cannot tell us to what extent these populations constituted one or more political units, while the glottologist who speaks of the Illyrians, refers to linguistic phenomenon, but doesn’t tell us a great deal about the ethnic and cultural cohesion of the people to whom these phenomena are prevalent (p. 66).

After these explanations of theoretical nature, the author dwells on the linguistic point of view, addressing the routes of penetration of the Illyrians in Southern Italy, according to him, through the Adriatic, and the linguistic traces they have left in this country. For our topic it is important to emphasize that the author has admitted that of the languages we can say belong to the Illyrian group, in addition to Albanian, evidenced in written form since the XVI century, Messapian can be included too, a language is known from some short and not sufficient inscriptions on monuments. (p. 67). Furthermore, the author in this article deals with the linguistic relations of Messapian with Albanian, pointing out some elements of Messapian inscriptions that are likely to be explained with Albanian as: mesap. *bilja*, Alb. *bilë bijë*; mesap. *Brendon*, Albanian *bri brinj*; mesap. *Iuppiter Menzana*, Albanian *maz, mēz* etc.

Vittore Pisani addressed the issue of the ethnogenesis of the Albanians and the Albanian language in an International Albanological Colloquium, held in Innsbruck in 1972, dedicated to Norbert Jokl. In this Colloquium the author delivered the paper

“*Sulla genesi dell’Albanese*”, published in the acts of this Colloquium, entitled *Akten des internationalen albanologischen kolloquiums*, Innsbruck 1972, p. 345-366. The author addressed the problem of the ethnogenesis of Albanians and the Albanian language more in a general theoretical plan from the perspective of Indo-European dialectology.

In conclusion, we can say that the well-known Italian linguist Vittore Pisani becomes part the history of Albanological studies as a scholar who was seriously engaged in addressing the problem of ethnogenesis of the Albanian people and the Albanian language and made valuable contributions, especially to scientific methodology of their treatment. He supported the thesis of the Illyrian origin of the Albanian language and of the Albanian people, recognized the Illyrian affiliation of Messapian language and its inscriptions, relativized the importance of the Centum and Satem division of Indo-European languages in the issue of the Illyrian origin of the Albanian language, etc.

Rexhep ISMAJLI

ITALIAN SCHOLARS ON THE ORIGIN OF THE ALBANIAN LANGUAGE

Abstract. There have been discussions in Italian studies about the Albanian language, its history, the geography of its formation and its relations with the languages of antiquity. There have been wide-ranging opinions about its old age in the early stages in the areas where it was still used later in time. Competent scholars in comparative linguistics such as V. Pisani have leaned towards the thesis of its connections with Illyrian. There are important scholars of the XX century on Roman, Balkan and Albanian studies, such as C. Tagliavini, who favor N. Jokl's theory of 'compromise'. There have been interesting discussions about the relationship between ancient Albanian and Messapian language, but later there were others who preferred to cast their gaze away from the horizons which stuck to old designations. Nuances of ideas are encountered in P. Ribezzo, V. Pisani, G. Bonfante, E. Banfi, P. di Giovine, G. B. Pellegrini, etc. Such aspects will be taken into consideration, but first we will discuss the ideas of V. Pisani, E. Banfi, G. Bonfante, etc.

The discussions developed in the studies within the Italian territory about the place of the Albanian language within the Indo-European languages and its eventual relations with the languages of antiquity in the Balkans have a history and cannot be summarized in a few minutes without leaving in shadow essential aspects. In the earliest stages, starting from the assumption that Albanian must have been spoken in these areas since ancient times there have been various discussions about its early interrelations with other languages and linguistic complexities. There have been scholars who included Albanian in the discussions about Paleo-Balkan and Mediterranean substrates¹. Links to the Pelasgian complexity, a term in which various things are usually summed up, were often favored by intellectuals who fed the myth on the pre-greek origin of the Albanian Language. These intellectuals included arbëresh, arvanites, and intellectuals from the period of Renaissance as well as Albanians during the XX centuries. There could have been various motives for this².

¹ See H. Barić in chapter *Ndikimet e substratit paraïndoevropjan*, of his work *HËmje në historinë e gjuhës shqipe*, Prishtina 1955, 53-58 (botimi serbok.: *Istorija arbanaškog je- zika*, Sarajevo, 1959, 33-36). Among the Italian scholars, he referred to A. Trombetti 1925: *Le origini della lingua basca*, Bologna dhe *Saggio di antica toponomastica mediterranea*, në *Arhiv za arbanasku starinu, jezik i etnologiju III*, Beograd, 1926, 1-116. The position of Çabej is in *Hyrje në historinë e gjuhës shqipe*, in *Studime gjuhësore III*, Prishtinë, 1976, 41-44.

² The myth about the Pelasgian origin of the Albanians and the Albanian language is old; it has served to various, ideological, nationalist functions, and as an inspiration for liberation. There may be motivations

There have been observations about Albanian and the Paleo-Balkan languages while researching the Messapian inscriptions, and based on reasonable grounds, hypotheses were made on the connections between the Messapian and the Illyrian language on the other side of the Adriatic, with regard to the potential and eventual explanation of the phenomena encountered there in the early stages of the Albanian language. Albanologist JG von Hahn,³ based on the writings of Strabo who described the Epirotes, Macedonians and Illyrians as non-Greeks, barbarians, on the assumption that the Epirotes, Macedonians and Illyrians were related, and that the Epirotes and the Macedonians made up the core of the Tireno-Pelasgian tribe in Italy and Thrace, believed that Illyrian was a Pelasgian language in the broadest sense and that the Illyrians, the Epirotes of the Macedonians were Pelasgians.

But one thing is the relationship between Macedonians, Epirotes and Illyrians, another is the relationship between the Illyrian and Pelasgian languages. Referring to the idea of von Hahn, Çabej said⁴ that the "*Albanian writers of the Renaissance took it with enthusiasm ... and spread it in their books*". Comparator A. Schleicher noted that Albanian was an Indo-European language, which was considered a descendant of Illyrian language. He had used the term "*the couple of the Pelasgian family*" in which he saw the Greek-Latin group, descending from an ancient base. *Pelasgisch* to him meant archaic.⁵

In the Indo-European genealogical tree, Schleicher singled out the branch of *Aryan-Greek-Italian-Celtic* languages which was further divided into *Greek-Italian-Celtic* and *Aryan* branches, while *Greek-Italian-Celtic* into the *Italian-Celtic* branches further into *Celtic* and *Italian*, while the other branch had two ends - *Albanesisch* and *Griechisch*,

that require closer examinations of complex cultural-political relations in the Balkans. Among the Arbëresh, one could mention the discussions of A. Masci (1758-1821), who saw the Albanians with a distant Pelasgian origin by having more direct connections with the Macedonians, Illyrians and Epirotes. The assumption about having connections with the Albanians of the Caucasus was rejected. According to M. Mandalàs, at such points there was a series of discussions from N. Keta, Gj. Crispi, and E. Bidera, who had had contacts with J. De Rada and must have had an influence on him, who ardently defended the idea. Mandalà, M. 2013: *Prejardhja e mitit pellazgjik: Jeronim de Rada dhe Giovanni Emanuele Bidera, në Shkodra, arbëreshët dhe lidhjet italo-shqiptare*, Shkodër, fq. 47-71. Për aspekte të mitit në kohë të vona shih G. de Rapper 2009): *Pelasgic Encounters in the Greek-Albanian Borderland: Border dynamics and eversion to Ancient Past in Southern Albania*, në *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures* 18 (1): 60-61, cp. Ismajli 2019: *Bashkësi gjuhësore, njësi varietet*, 166-167.

³Johan Georg von Hahn, *Albanesische Studien I*, Jena, 1854:215.

⁴E. Çabej: *Hyrje në historinë e gjuhës shqipe*, in *Studime gjuhësore III*, 1976:44.

⁵There have been discussions on the issue of pre-Indo-European and Mediterranean substrates in the Balkans, while on the so-called Pelasgian the various waves of movements of pre-Indo Europeans, pre-Greeks and others have been interconnected. The discussions of scholars P. Kretschmer, M. Budimir, etc. are well known. V. Georgiev has supported the hypothesis of Pelasgian as an Eastern IE language (*satem*), with a place between Albanian and Armenian. Discussions have taken place in Bulgaria about Pelasgian, or pre-Greek, as pre-Tracian. A. van Vindekens had previously seen it between the Germanic languages and the Balto-Slavic languages, arriving in the Mediterranean areas before the Greeks, Illyrians and Italians, at the time when the Hittites were marching towards Anatolia (2000-1500 BC). We recall Çabej's assessment: "*Duke i shikuar teoriën e fundit rreth pellazgjishtes... shihet se ato ecin nëpër shtigje të pasigurta, aq sa... mund të thuhet se gjindemi ende në një fazë parashkencore*". Çabej, *Studime gjuhësore*, 1976:44. His assessments of the Mediterranean substrate can be seen there. Të shihet Katičić, R.: *Ancient Languages of the Balkans, I-II*, Hague, 1976, and in Ismajli, R.: *Studime për historinë e shqipes në kontekst ballkanik*, Prishtinë, 2015, etc.

in which Greek was divided earlier, while Albanian some time later.⁶ The place of Albanian was determined mainly on the basis of geographical proximity.⁷

In 1864, Arbëresh linguist Dh. Kamarda⁸ radiates some of the ideas of linguistics at that time. According to W. Fiedler's observation, he tried to prove "a genetic overlap of Greek and Albanian."⁹ Even well-known scholars such as G. Ascoli, A. Trombetti, etc. have expressed their ideas on these aspects of Albanian history. Italian XIX and XX century novelists have exchanged interesting ideas on the history of Albanian. The view that Albanian is an Indo-European language with an ancient past in the Balkans has prevailed. The views of eminent linguist Carlo Tagliavini are well known. With regard to the early period and the position of Albanian in relation to the ancient languages of the Balkans, he followed the line of N. Jokl (which was called the 'compromise') who believed that Albanian originated from Illyrian and Thracian languages and it was first found in Dardania.¹⁰ Later he followed also the ideas of scholars P. Ribezzo,¹¹ M. Bartoli,¹² V. Pisani, and others. In the 1930s Albanians were interested in the knowledge and theories of Italian neolinguistics and the ideas of Matteo Bartoli. In Albania, Ressuli and Çabej had closely followed the developments of Bartoli's areal linguistics. Çabej had followed in Jokl's footsteps, while Ressuli had amassed significant knowledge on the ideas of Bartoli. Later there were interpretations by R. Ambrosini,¹³ G. Restelli, G. B. Pellegrini, P. di Giovine, etc. E. Banfi's view on the Balkan situation in relation to Albanian language should be highlighted.

Vittore Pisani

Vittore Pisani expressed his ideas about the place of Albanian within the Indo-European languages and in relation to Illyrian language and in some cases to other

⁶Schleicher, A. 1861: *Compendium der vergleichenden Grammatik der indogermanischen Sprachen*, 4. Porzig, W. 1974: *Die Gliederung des indogermanischen Sprachgebiets*, Heidelberg, p. 22-23.

⁷Franz Bopp in 1855 had expressed the opinion that Albanian had no closer affinity with any of the other "other Sanskrit sisters".

⁸Demetrio Camarda 1864: *Saggio di Grammatologia comparata sulla lingua albanese* Livorno dhe 1866: *Appendice al Saggio di Grammatologia comparata sulla lingua albanese*, Livorno. The work was anastatically reprinted in Palermo, 1989.

⁹Fiedler, Wilfried 2006: *Einführung in die Albanologie*. See Ismajli 2015:28-29.

¹⁰Tagliavini, Carlo 1968: *La stratificazione del lessico Albanese*, Bologna; *Gli elementi latini nell'albanese*, në *Cultura neolatina I, II*, fp. 90-94; Ismajli, R. 2015:247-252. See Prikü, M. 2011: *Carlo Tagliavini dhe studimet albanologjike rreth shqipes*, Shkodra.

¹¹Francesco Ribezzo (1875-1952): *La lingua degli antichi Messapi*, 1907; *Corpus Inscriptionum Messapicarum*, Palermo 1938. See: *Italia e Illiria preromena*, in *Italia e Croazia*, Roma, 1942, 21-83 e *Premesse storico-linguistiche sull'autoctonia illirica degli Albanesi*, në *Rivista d'Albania*, 1940, 1, 114 and on.

¹² Namik Ressuli in 1933 (in *LEKA V, III*, p. 54-56, 89-90 and 152-156), *Parime dhe metode të neolinguistikës*, had made a kind presentation of Matteo Bartoli's theoretical ideas. See works of interest for Albanian: Bartoli, M. 1932: *Accordi antichi fra l'albanese e le lingue sorelle*, në *Studi albanesi* 2, 5-73; Bartoli, M.: *Dalmatico e albanico-romanic*, in *Italia e Croazia*, Roma, 1942, 109-185. *Known for the Dalmation (Das Dalmatische, Vjein, 1906), for the Italian atlas and theoretical works Introduzione alla neolinguistica, 1925; Saggi di linguistica spaziale, 1945.*

¹³Ambrosini, R. 1983: *Elementi conservativi ed innovativi nella struttura dell'albanese*, in Guzzetta, A. (ed.): *Etnia albanese*, Palermo, p. 159-169.

languages of Balkan antiquity.¹⁴ In 1933, while reviewing the prehistory of Indo-European languages, he had placed ancient Indo-European area roughly along these geographical lines: North Sea - Rhine - Danube - Carpathians - Black Sea – Dnieper - Riga Gorge - North Sea, not hesitating to scetch these relations not as one-way relations, as Stammbaum's theory implied, but in more complexity¹⁵¹⁵:

irish, british, gaulish	germanic	Baltosllavic	aryan
latin, sikulian		Illyrian	Thracian- phrygian
		oskian, umbrian	Greek
			hittite

The sketch implies that Illyrian, being close to Thracian-Phrygian, was placed somewhat in the center in relation to the northern (eastern Balto-Slavic) and western (Germanic) languages, on the one hand, and with the non-northern western (Latin) and eastern languages (Thracian-Phrygian and Armenian), Greek a little further south (being close to Thracian-Phrygian-Armenian group) and oskian-umbrian.

W. Porzig had spoken about this,¹⁶ while Pisani thought that Albanian is a descendant of Illyrian, whose place in that context he tried to prove through phonetic innovations which spread like waves beyond dialectal borders. That movement would have started from the East around 1000 BC and through Phrygia had reached Thrace around 500 BC and from there influenced the Illyrian, but not the Venetian.¹⁷ He saw opposite movements from west to east long before the Celts were separated from the Germans. From the germanics it then passed to the balts, slavs and thracians and then reached the Aegean Sea around 1.000 BC, and from there, through Phrygian and Armenian, towards Iran, and then to Illyrian, Venetian and Osko-Umbrian, at a time when Latin had already been affected by indirect contact with Celtic. Another wave brought the labialization of the Labiovelars, which included the Greek-Macedonians, Osko-Umbrians, Ligurians, Galicians and Irish. This may be the time when the Celts and Ligurians on the northwest and the Ossetians and Umbrians on the northeast came close in Northern Italy. The ties between the Greeks and the Ossetians and Umbras, in this view, were severed by the penetration of the Illyrians. Further, the Greeks came closer to the Phrygians and the Armenians, producing at the time some linguistic

¹⁴Ismajli, R. 2015:32 dhe 44: Pisani 1964: *Les origins de la langue albanaise*, in *Studia al-banica* 1, 63; Ismajli, idim, 46, with a report on Pisani 1950: *L'albanais et les autres langues indoeuropéennes*, in *Annuaire de l'Institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales et slaves*, t. X, *Mélanges Grégoire II*, Bruxelles; on the Illyrian 'hipertorphy', 115; 135-137 for relations with the Illyrians and for the relations with the ideas of Stadtmüller, Ismajli: *Pisani për Stadtmüller-in dhe atdheu i parmë i shqiptarëve*, cited book 241-246.

¹⁵V. Pisani, *Preistoria delle lingue indeuropee*, Atti del Reale Accademia dei Lincei. Memorie. Cl. dei scritti mor., storia e filologia, Ser. VI, vol. IV, fasc. VI, 545. W. Porzig, *Die Gliederung des indogermanischen Sprachgebietes*, Heidelberg, 1974, 48-49. See Ismajli, R. 2015: *Studime për historinë*, 32-33. Pisani was influence by the ideas of Italian comparatists and had extensive knowledge on philology.

¹⁶Porzig, W. 1974: *Die Gliederung des indogermanischen Sprachgebietes*, 48-49.

¹⁷This is how we should view the discussion with regard to the *centum/ satem* of Illyrian, and specifically the *satem* nature of Albanian.

innovations. According to Pisani, interpreted by Porzig, the Indo-European movement to the east would have started around the middle of the third millennium with the split of the Aryans and the Tochars, while the Hittites under the pressure from the Thracians would have moved to Asia Minor by the end of third millennium. The Germans, the Balts, the Slavs of Thrace will have remained in the areas in front. This is related to a scholar who has consistently dealt with the issues of the unification and spread of Indo-European dialects.¹⁸

Pisani had dealt with the issue of the place of Albanian within the IE languages, with the issue of its origin and had pointed out the conviction that this language is a descendant of Illyrian (with assumptions for an influx from the east - Thracian). Professors Banfi and Mansaku spoke about his ideas

Pisani had dealt with the issue of placing Albanian within the IE languages, the issue of its origin and had pointed out the conviction that this language is a descendant of Illyrian (assuming an influx from the east - Thracian). Professors Banfi and Mansaku spoke about his ideas.¹⁹

In the article on the place of the Albanian language, V. Pisani would conclude:

*“Among the I.E. elements of Albanian, beyond those that characterize most or all of the IE languages, we can single out a certain amount of elements from earlier times which bring it closer to the languages of northern central Europe, respectively, in increasing order of importance, Germanic, Baltic and Slavic; another layer later in time shows us a temporal connection with Thracian and, through it, with Phrygian and Armenian (and Iranian), among others with Greek, or rather with some of the dialects which have later helped for the constitution of the Greek unit, and with the future oskian-umbrian dialects; finally a third subsequent layer, at a time when the Phrygian-Armenian, totally gone to the east, ceases to communicate with European languages while Scythian-Iranian continues on the north, and Greek unit is constituted to the south.”*²⁰

His views were expressed at various times and may require an evolving interpretation, which we cannot do here. Pisani talked about the difficulties that appeared in the reconstruction of the relations of early Albanian with languages that we do not know well, to the extent that in one case he described Illyrian as *"a language that unfortunately can be defined as a phantom"*, while Thracian a language that we do not know.²¹ According to him, in the ancient Balkans appeared a geolinguistic area consisting by the Phrygian, Thracian and Illyrian languages. Nevertheless, the possibility of a dual origin of the Albanian ethnos within east-west relations should be considered: in addition to the Illyrian affiliation of the Balkans, attention would have to be paid to the elements coming from the East due to the contacts with Armenians. As a clue he recalled the names *Ἀλβανοί* and *Ἀλβανία*, which may be related to a tribe travelling from there. The relationships with Armenian and Greek also seemed important to him. With regard to the lexicon, he emphasized the connections of Albanian with the languages of Northern Europe (Germanic and Balto-Slavic, in the field of phonetics) and with Greek, with relation to pastoral life, handicrafts, religions.

¹⁸Porzig, W.: *Die Gliederung.*, 1974, 40-52, këtu 48-49.

¹⁹Ismajli 1987: *Artikuj për gjuhën shqipe*, Prishtinë; *Studime për historinë e shqipes in kontekst ballkanik*, 2015, 32, 44-46, 89-90, 135-140 and 241-246.

²⁰Pisani, V. 1959: *L'albanais et les autres langues indoeuropéennes*, in *Saggi di linguistica storica*, Torino, 113, referuar edhe te Pellegrini, 1998, 156.

²¹Pisani, V. 1964: *Les origines.*, in *Studia albanica* 1, 66.

I think it is interesting to point out two advanced ideas that he came up with: in the study of the history of languages it is often worthwhile to start from the present and descend further into history. The other idea has to do with how to treat the ratio between the language and the dialect, in which case the dialect has priority and then moving on to the problem of the existence of an Albanian proto-language from which dialects would have originated.

In the *Për problemin ilirik*,²² Pisani dealt with the issues that the linguist faces regarding some of G. Stadtmüller's concepts reflected on his work on the early history of the Albanians. One such issue was the use of the concept of 'first homeland' of Albanians, interrelated with the idea that these or those words were borrowed from other languages, so that the 'proto-Albanians' did not know those concepts. One argument that he uses is that while *zgjojn* (beehive) is a Latin term, and the terms for *bletë*, *mjaltë*, *dyllë* (bees, honey, wax) are indigenous means that the proto-Albanians would have known wild bees, but apiculture would have been learned from the Romans. More broadly, he argues that the words denoting 'valleys' and the like are of Latin origin, because "Albanians knew the plains in the forest regions at the time when they were already Romanized". However, in this case one could make the question how could the 'proto-Albanian' highlanders really have been so far from the valleys?

Pisani expressed his disagreements in other ways as well. In his discussions, he distanced himself from Stadtmüller's ideas regarding the Slavic borrowings of Albanian. Based on the Slavic borrowings, Stadtmüller, as part of a tradition followed by many slavs, concluded that the early nomadic Albanians would have learned them through contacts with Slavic farmers and craftsmen. But he knew that the proto-Albanians would have mastered a large number of these goods earlier through contacts with the Romans. The Slavic conquest (600) had supposedly interrupted this fruitful coexistence of cultures and had stopped the nomadic shepherds from developing; only after the beginning of a cultural coexistence with the Slavic agricultural population of the fields would have begun the fruitful influence of new cultural goods, according to the Stadtmüller's stream of thought. Pisani was right when he asked how was it that the numerous Latin expressions for agriculture were preserved, among them the word *parmenda* (plow), if the relevant concepts would have disappeared? Here he would observe:

"It is clear that Stadtmüller relies on a postulate he forgot to mention: that is that Albanians today are, except for the language, exclusive successors of their wandering shepherds. No one has ever claimed that the population of the valleys had forgotten their national language even though they introduced many latin words in their language and that the most culturally developed classes used Latin," 101.

He also contradicted Jireček who propagated the idea that there was a cultural division near via Egnatia Road based on the predominant greek inscriptions in the south and Latin in the north. He opposed the use of terms with exclusively ethnic connotations such as "Bulgarian" in the Byzantine period, while this term was purely political, not ethnic and linguistic. It is worth repeating the conclusion of Pisani:

²²Pisani, V.: *Il Problema illirico, Appendice 2: Su Georg Stadtmüller, Forschungen zur albanischen Frühg.*, 1941, in *Linguistica generale e indoeuropea, Saggi e discorsi*, I. Torino, 1959, 100-101, Archivio Glottologico, XXXIV, 1942, 128. Ismajli 2015:241-246.

“The whole so-called ‘first homeland’ problem has been misrepresented in Balkan historical or prehistoric research, and is well paired with the difficult ‘Urheimat’ Indo-European ‘problem’: we have stuck to concepts created in eighteenth-century Romanticism; this time has already passed. Thus, no one authorizes you to attribute ancient Albanians only the quality of nomadic shepherds, just as if a people had to have a single form of life”, 101.

Pisani further recalled that *Albanopolis* and *Albanoi* were known to exist in the Albanian national territory since Ptolemy. Therefore, the eventual assumption that the theory that the Albanians were the descendants of ancient Illyrians had received a decisive blow from the discovery of Venetian, to him was simply meaningless because if the statement was overturned, then we would come with the conclusion that Venetian is not Illyrian, because it does not correspond to Albanian.

With regard to the discussions about the Albanian node and its history, while examining the ideas of A. V. Desnickaja on Balkanistics, he thought that the whole issue needed to be addressed at the relations with Rumanian and the "*Albanian-Romanian bilingualism*" of nomadic shepherds.

In general, it is possible to say that the Albanian research made by this linguist, who is among the most prominent linguists of the XX century in Italy, deserve our attention today, both for the results and for the spirit and breadth that pervades them. His breadth of knowledge and understanding of linguistic traditions, mastery of Indo-European materials, and his objectivity on language conception and development give even greater value to his ventures.

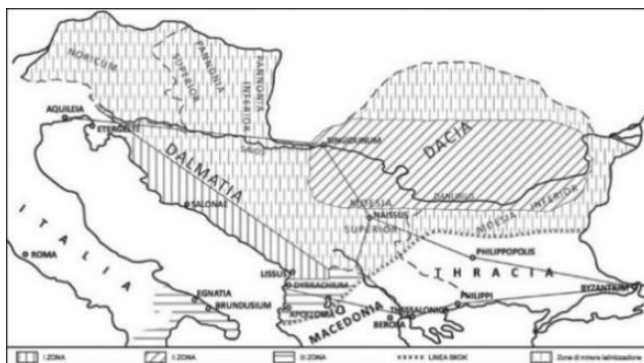
Emanuele Banfi and latinised areas

Emanuele Banfi (1946-) a Grecist, romanist, dealt with issues of ancient Albanian history, especially in relation to Romanization and the Balkan context. His treatise on the Balkan languages is considered one of the best of the time. Yes – let’s bring to our attention moments of interest, which, as far as I can see, are not being discussed.²³ According to him, we should have first kept into account that at the time of the Slavic invasions, as Latin had long penetrated the Balkan Peninsula in the V and VI century, "*we cannot talk about an equally homogeneous Latinization of the whole Balkans*".²⁴

²³Ismajli 2015: *Studime për historiën e shqipërisë në kontekst ballkanik*, 2015, 284-5, etj.

²⁴Banfi, E. 1972: *Aree latinizzate nei Balcani e una terza area latino-balcanica*, in *Accademia di Scienze e lettere, Estratto dai rendiconti. Classe di lettere*, vol. 106, 1972, Milano, 185- 233: "*non si può tuttavia parlare*

di una latinizzazione egualmente omogenea per tutti i Balcani" 215. Banfi: *Linguistica balcanica*, Bologna, 1985; *Cristianizzazione nei Balcani e formazione della lega linguistica balcanica*, in *Zeitschrift für Balkanologie*, 23 (1986), 1- 11; *Storia linguistica del Sud-Est europeo. Crisi della Romania balcanica tra alto e basso medioevo*, Milano, 1991; *Le futur dans les systèmes balkaniques entre types romans et greco-byzantin*, in *Balkan-Archiv NF*, 17/18, 1992-93, 81-91. *di una latinizzazione egualmente omogenea per tutti i Balcani*" 215. Banfi: *Linguistica balcanica*, Bologna, 1985; *Cristianizzazione nei Balcani e formazione della lega linguistica balcanica*, in *Zeitschrift für Balkanologie*, 23 (1986), 1- 11; *Storia linguistica del Sud-Est europeo. Crisi della Romania balcanica tra alto e basso medioevo*, Milano, 1991; *Le futur dans les systèmes balkaniques entre types romans et greco-byzantin*, in *Balkan-Archiv NF*, 17/18, 1992-93, 81-91.



The following phases could be mentioned with regard to the penetration of Latin in the Balkans from the III Century B.C (Illyrian wars): in 219 BC the conquest of Istria; in 186 B.C the conquest of Illyricum; in 146 BC the subjugation of Greece and Macedonia; in 29 BC the conquest of Mezia; in 9 A.D. the conquest of Pannonia; in 56 A.D. the conquest of Thrace; at the beginning of II century the submission of Dacia. Routes of Latinization: 1. from via *Aquileia to Singidunum* through the Sava valley with branches to Naissus and Serdica to Thessaloniki and Constantinople; 2. *the connection between Aquileia and Durrachium* along the Dalmatian coast; 3. *via Durrachium - Thessaloniki* towards Constantinople via Egnatia. Latin, the language of administration, spread like a *lingua franca* in the ethnically heterogeneous area of exchange and trade. The spread of Christianity starting from the II and III century delayed the process. Slavic invasion influenced the latinized Balkans, "*the Slavs settled in those regions of the Balkans where Latinism was less powerful.*" They made efforts with the un-romanized locals.

An inscription of the border between Greek and Latin according to Jireček,²⁵ Philippide e Skok (Banfi 1983, retrieved by Mihăescu 1993. After Mihăescu-t, the Line drawn by Jireček did not have very important divisions), Ismajli 2015:182.

²⁵Jireček, K. 1901: *Die Romanen in den Städten Dalmatiens während des Mittelalters I*, Wien, p. 13. Banfi, E.1972: *Are latinizzate.*, 219.



Slavic invasions promoted the development of three mainly Latinized areas with the Balkan Latin: 1. *Adriatic coast* Dalmatia- Epirus; 2. *areas downstream Danube*, of strategic importance; 3. *The area along Via Egnatia*, communicating with the southern coast of Italy in the Latinized area of Dalmatia. As Balkan Latinism was strong in the V and VI centuries in these areas, the part which had a weaker Latinization was more easily assimilated by the Slavic wave.²⁶ Those areas had contacts among them until the Slavs came, and then those contacts were significantly reduced. 1. The Roman area with the Old Dalmatian developed along the Adriatic coast; 2. The nucleus of Romanian dialects was formed along the Danube, while 3. the Latin area developed in the Epirote and Macedonian regions. Some elements of modern Greek and Albanian emerged in the Latin area.²⁷ In the third area there were problems with the definition of the border between Latin and Greek. According to Jireček, based on the inscriptions, it set off in Lissus.

With regard to the formation place of Romanian, si I. P. Sulzer, *Geschichte des trans- alpinischen Daziens*, Wien, 1871, sidomos R. Roesler (*Rumänische Studien. Untersu- chungen zur älteren Geschichte Rumäniens*, Leipzig, 1871) they think it is Mezi, while N. Tomaschek (*Zur Kunde der Haemus-Halbinsel*, Wien, 1881) in Dardani, O. Den- sușianu (*Histoire de la langue roumaine I*, București, 1929, p. 294) in Illirya. M. Fried- wagner: *Über die Sprache und Heimat der Rumänen*. Later Romanian studies favour the dakomiz region as the formation place of Romanian between the VII-IX centuries. Skok reconsidered the issue, claiming that the area of Latin influence and the area of Greek influence bordered further south.²⁸ Banfi was of the opinion that

²⁶Banfi, E. 1972: *Aree latinizzate.*, 217-218.

²⁷Banfi, E. 1972: *Aree latinizzate nei Balcani ed una terza area latino-balcanica.*, 218-219.

²⁸Skok, P.: *Zum Balkanlatein IV*, in *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie LIV*, 1934, 175- 215; po ai *Bysance comme centre d'irradiation pour les mots latins des langues balka- niques*, in *Byzantion VI*, 1931, p. 371. Banfi, 1972:219.

“the presence of numerous Latin elements in the Albanian language proves that that language was formed in a strong Latinization area”

and continued with the ideas of Stadtmüller to emphasize that the formation place of Albanian was amidst 1 and 3 Latin-Balkan areas, i.e. the areas of Dalmatia and Via Egnatia. Relations with the Dalmatian area intensified with the spread of Christianity:

“The ecclesiastical concepts, which Albanian borrowed from Latin, have such an imagination which leads undeniably to the old Roman language of Dalmatia”²⁹,

This is the conclusion that was heard of and which speaks loudly about the space in which Albanian would have been spoken in the Balkan context.

It needs to be understood that in the Latin-Balkan area there spread a Latin similar to that of southern Italy. The settlement of Slavs at the end VI-VII centuries in the Ionian lands reduced the political influence of Byzantium there and the Greek-speaking population fled to the Aegean and then. As such, according to Banfi, 224, 225, *“the Greek contingent separated from Latin, which remained more stable in the Romanized territories”*. During the VI-VII centuries, in the Latin-Balkan zone 3. *“gathered a significant contingent of Latinized people coming from the areas along the Danube river”*. This population descended through the Vardar valley to the mountainous territories of Northern Greece and composed

“the founding nucleus of the Macedonian-Romanian dialect: a dialect that still survives today in some centers of northern Greece (Epirus, Thessaly, Macedonia), southern Yugoslavia (around Lake Ohrid) and southern Albania”.

Banfi's research in the field of Balkan Latinism purports the idea that Albanian was placed in a clear geographical area, in the non-eastern Balkans, i.e. in the areas which were previously connected with the Via Egnatia which were interconnected also with the Dalmatian Romanism and the more eastern one which then became Rumanian.

In Emanuele Banfi we find a series of valuable observations on Albanian and its relations with other languages with regard to Balkan linguistics studies, as well as observations on Arvanite language.

Others

Giovan Battista Pellegrini, who considered himself a student of Tagliavini, in his *Hyrje in studimet albanistike* work suggested a series of ideas about the place of Albanian within the IE languages and its relations with the ancient Balkan languages. He echoed more the ideas of E. Çabej and then the breakthroughs of Sh. Demiraj. Paolo di Giovine had undertaken a further more detailed examination regarding the supposed affinities of Albanian with Thracian, Dacian.³⁰ He then made a presentation of these critical observations: the history of the idea that Albanian had a Thracian origin based on the *centum* nature of Illyrian language,³¹; the concordances, which were considered

²⁹Stadtmüller, G. 1966: *Forschungen*, 83; Banfi 1972, *Aree.*, 221.

³⁰di Giovine 1979, Paolo: *Tracio, dacio ed Albanese nella prospettiva genealogica*, in *Re-ndiconti della Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche dell'Accademia nazionale dei Lincei*, serie VIII, vol. XXXIV, fasc. 7-12, Luglio-dicembre, 397-412.

³¹Hirt 1898, H.: *Die sprachliche Stellung des Illyrischen*, in *Beiträge zur alten Geschichte und Geographie*, in *Festschrift für H. Kiepert*, Berlin, p. 181 e vijim; Hirt 1905, H.: *Die Ingotgermanen*, Strassburg, I, 140 and onwards.

to belong to the Thracian substratum, among Romanian, Bulgarian and Albanian and the lexical affinities between Albanian and Armenian mediated through Thracian language, which were discussed by H. Barić (di Giovine 1979: 397); the hypothesis of Jokl about the origin of Albanian, while not going against the formation of this language by the convergence of Illyrian and Thracian elements (Illyrian-Thracian origin) out of the numerous affinities among these ancient Balkan languages³² etc.; the ideas of stout supporters of the Thracian origin of Albanian and Albanians, such as G. Weigand, who based their positions on indicators of ethnographic and linguistic nature, such as the Romanian-Albanian similarities with Latin and pre-Latin words of Rumanian language; the analysis of Thracian toponyms and anthroponyms through the Albanian lexicon and vice versa.³³ In addition he presented the arguments of Barić, Dechev, Georgiev, Poghirc, Russu, regarding the phonetic nature. Before arguing on the unreliability of the Thracian-Dacian thesis, di Giovine considered it necessary to affirm the insufficient arguments in favor of the Illyrian thesis, without implying that the denial of the connections with the Thracian-Dacian does not mean anything about Illyrian origin. He thought that he had managed to see that the thesis about the Illyrian origin of Albanian was based on very fragile arguments:

“It seems to me that these divergences not only do not justify the hypothesis that Illyrian was the ancestor of Albanian, but also question the possibility that there was a closer relationship between the two languages compared to that between Albanian and Balto-Slavic, to give an example”, di Giovine 1979: sh. 15, 400.

After an extensive critical examination of the arguments on the historical phonological nature of Albanian and on the potential origin of Albanian from Thracian / Dacian, Di Giovine came to conclusion that he found it interesting. Based on the above-mentioned data, he concluded, it is difficult to draw a conclusion about a genetic relationship between Thracian (or Dacian) and Albanian.

He thought these examinations need to take into account the relationships between different cultures. To him one of the important elements was the confrontation between phonological systems. It therefore seemed to him that Hirt's hypothesis, the discussions of Weigand et al. were weak in the field of comparative phonology, since concordances are considered less significant, while there are inconsistencies on important elements of the phonological system. On the most detailed reflections of di Giovine, see more extensively our book *Studime për historiën e shqipes in kontekst ballkanik*, 2015, p. 92-100, while on his important and interesting contributions to Latin groups *cs*, *ct* in Albanian see the same work p. 391-399.

Let us also say that Paolo di Giovine's discussion on the relations between Albanian and Thracian and his conclusion against the possibility that Albanian could have

³²Jokl, N.: *Albaner*, B. *Sprache*, in Ebert: *Reallexikon der Vorgeschichte* I, p. 84 e vijim; S. Mladenov 1938, S.: *Albanisch und Thrako-Illyrisch*, in *Balkan-Archiv* 4, 181; Ribezzo 1940, P.: *Premesse storico-linguistiche sull'autoctonia illirica degli Albanesi*, *Rivista d'Albania* 1, 114. Thoshte: teza e një prejardhjeje ngusht ilire e trakase nuk gëzon përkrahje, Georgiev 1963, V.: *Thrace et Illyrien*, in *Balkansko ezikoznanie* 6, 1963 71 e vijim.

³³Weigand 1927, G.: *Sind die Albaner Nachkommen der Illyrier oder der Thraker?*, *Balkan-Archiv* 3, 1927, p. 227 e v., shën. 7, 398.

originated from Thracian, as well as the distance that he keeps on the relations of Albanian with Illyrian, seem to speak of the need of taking into consideration ideas that suggest another different path for Albanian, as opposed to the large Illyrian and Thracian groups.

Giuliano Bonfante

We will deal a little more with the views of one of the great Italian neolinguists of that time, the prominent Indo-European, Giuliano Bonfante (Milan 1904-Rome 2005), who dealt with the problem of the origin of the Albanian language in some cases, either as a scholar of Indo-European problems under the auspices of the spatial theories of Matteo Bartoli and others, in which he himself played a central role, or as a scholar of Romanian and Eastern Romanticism. G. Bonfante, professor of linguistics in Italy until 1939, fled to Geneva, USA (Princeton) after the advent of fascism and returned to Genoa and Turin as a professor (1952-1969), a well-known specialist for Hittite, Latin, Baltic and Romanian languages and the dialectal history of Italian language. I had previously had the opportunity to read his writings on this issue and on the principles of geolinguistics, especially after the *Kuvendi i Ilirëve* in 1972, where I had the opportunity to meet him in person.³⁴

If we follow Walter Porzig's presentation on the unification of Indo-European languages, we will see that Bonfante's discussions on these aspects of Indo-European linguistics relate initially to Antoine Meillet's ideas, especially as regards the attribution of Armenian to peripheral languages (Randsprachen), while he together with Matteo Bartoli noticed in them elements which are typical for the central group. Bonfante himself gave in to Holger Pedersen's idea of the close connection between Armenian and Greek (Porzig 1974: 44-45). And this was the time when Emile Benveniste was coming up with the idea that Greek, Armenian and Thracian-Phrygian formed a closer group, which could not have the status of peripheral languages. Bonfante's discussions go further into the relations with the Arish, Tokari and Hittite and the languages that were called central (Porzig 1974: 45). Other authors, such as Norbert Jokl (who dealt with analyzing languages such as Albanian, Illyrian, Thracian and Phrygian under the general order of Indo-European languages) were helping more specifically with the study of the dialectal remnants of such languages as Illyrian and Thracian. New materials on Illyrian and its spread were developed by Hans Krahe, who included the Illyrian language among the *centum* languages, close to Germanic, Italian and Celtic, while he saw Venetian as a separate language between Latin, Illyrian and Germanic. Anton Mayer, on the other hand, thought that Illyrian had a *satem* nature (Porzig 1974: 46-7).³⁵Wacław Cimochoński and others think that Illyrian was *satem*, while Eric P. Hamp and others later noted the conditional velarizing developments of the palatals which were close to the sonants. There was also a relativization of the *satem* / *centum* isogloss. There was also a relativization of the *satem/centum* isogloss.

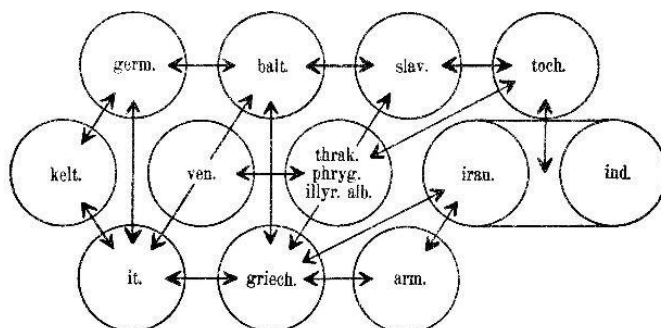
³⁴ An interesting source: *I dialetti indoeuropei*, 1931; *La dottrina neolinguistica*, 1970; *Studi romeni*, 1973, etc.

³⁵Krahe, Hans 1925: *Die alten balkanillyrischen geographischen namen*, Heidelberg; Krahe 1929: *Lexikon altillyrischer Personennamen*, Heidelberg; Mayer, Anton 1957, 59: *Die Sprache alten der Illyrier*, I-II, Wien.

In the early observations concerning the Indo-European dialects G. Bonfante relied on A. Meillet, while he followed linguistic geography as a method. Porzig summarized his theories as follows:³⁶

1. There is a closed western group of IE dialects (Italic, Celtic and Germanic);
2. Arisht and Slavic in the east are also a closed group;
3. The Baltic in the north and the Greek in the south act as connecting nodes between the two groups; the baltic leans on the east, while the greek on the west.

Giulio Bonfante saw Albanian somewhere in the middle. According to him there was a closed western group of IE dialects: Italic, Celtic, Germanic and a closed eastern group: Armenian and Slavic. In the middle, as a connection, was the Baltic in the north from the east, and Greek in the south from the west. Albanian came in the middle, neither north nor south, but from the east along with Thracian, Phrygian, Illyrian.³⁷ Following is the general overview of the Bonfante concept as presented in Prozig 47,38,³⁸:



The *Thracian-Phrygian, Illyrian, Albanian* complexity is in the second order between Celtic and Venetian on the west and Iranian-Indian on the east. Arrows indicate that the Thracian-Phrygian-Illyrian-Albanian group has relations with Venetian and further Celtic in the west, not with Iranian-Indian in the east; one could note the indications of relations with the eastern part of northern languages - Slavic and Tokarisht - and Greek as a southern language. The relationship with Armenian remains implicit within the Greek-Armenian relation which has been noted, as well as the Greco-Baltic relation. The basics of this scheme are reminiscent of that of A. Meillet.

In his speech at the Assembly of Illyrian Studies in Tirana in 1972 on the topic *Albanian and Illyrian*³⁹, Giuliano Bonfante presented his ideas on the origin of the Albanian language:

³⁶Porzig 1974: *Die Gliederung*., p. 47.

³⁷Giulio Bonfante, *I dialetti indoeuropei, Annali del Reale Istituto Orientale di Napoli IV*, 1931, 69. See W. Porzig 1974: *Die Gliederung*., 47

³⁸Reported by Ismajli, R. 1987: *Artikuj mbi gjuhën shqipe*, Prishtin, 34.

³⁹Giuliano Bonfante: *Shqipja dhe ilirishja*, in *Kuvendi I i studimeve* (Tirana 15-20 shtator 1972) II, Akademia e Shkencave e RPSH, Tiranë 1974, according to *Studime ilire II*, Rilindja, Redaksia e botimeve, Prishtin 1978, 93-96.

In ancient times there were two great peoples in the Balkans: the Thracians in Bulgaria, European Turkey, Romania and the Illyrians in present-day Albania, Yugoslavia of the time, but also in Greek Macedonia, Epirus, Aetolia and Akarnan which were populated with Illyrians partly mixed with Greeks - *mixobarbari*. Of the two large IE isoglosses - *centum/satem*, he saw Thracian in the Balkans as *satem* and the Illyrian as *centum*; being *satem*, Albanian could not be a descendant of Illyrian (*Studime ilire* II: 93). Therefore, Albanian is related to Thracian, Albanians are descendants of the ancient Thracians. So far there is nothing new from the heritage studies of the first part of the XX century according to C. Pauli and others, especially after the G. Weigand's thesis hardened more.⁴⁰

For greater clarity of these reports, according to him, it is necessary to look at the relations between Albanian and Romanian. Romanians are Thracian or Thracian-Dacian who have learned Latin, but have 160 words in their language that are not Latin, Slavic, Germanic, Hungarian, or Turkish – they belong to the '*ancient Thracian-Dacian substratum*' he would say.

Of these, no more than 70 are in Albanian; their phonetics does not allow us to think that they would have entered from Albanian into Romanian or vice versa, he claimed. Referring to I. I. Russu-it,⁴¹ he brought these examples: *viezure - vjedullë, bască - bashkë, buză - buzë, copil - kopil, guşă - gushë, moş - moshë, mugur - mugull, gălbează - këlbazë, ghiuj - gjysh, gog - gogë, strungă - shtrungë, zară - dhallë*⁴²

Based on his analysis it turned out that we are dealing mainly with words from a people of shepherds, so these are Thracian words in Romanian. With regard to the pronunciation characteristics he noted that Albanian *dh* corresponds to Romanian *z* (*zara-dhallë, viezure-vjedullë*); Albanian *ll* corresponds to *r*, therefore we have ancient words, earlier than the Roman conquest (*Studime ilire* II: 94). The only Romanian-Albanian isogloss according to him are: unstressed *a* becomes *ă* in rumanian, *i* in Albanian; *án e ám* become *ăn, în* or *ăm, îm*, while unstressed *e* becomes *ă*; *n* becomes *r*, in Tosk Albanian and in the Istro-Romanian dialects in Banat, which means that we have to move the first homeland of the Albanians to the north, to Dacia, so Albanian has a Thracian origin, according to him (*Studime Ilire* II: 94).

He discusses the issues of the latin elements in Albanian and Rumanian: he confirmed that there were phonetic similarities:

1. Unstressed *o* becomes *u*
2. Short latin *u* is preserved
3. *li* in front of the end vowel becomes *l'* (it. *foglio, capei*)
4. *o* in front of consonant groups becomes *u*;

⁴⁰The flows are well reflected in the works of E. Çabej (*Hyrje in historiën e gjuhës me fo-netikë historike*, Prishtina 1976), Sh. Demiraj (*Gjuha shqipe dhe historia e saj*, Tirana 1988, Tirana 2013) and we have expressed our view in *Artikuj për gjuhën shqipe* 1987 and *Studime për historiën e shqipes in kontekst ballkanik* 2015.

⁴¹*Beziehungen der rumänischen Sprache zum albanischen und zum Substrat*, in *Revue de linguistique* 8, 1963, p. 262, p. 93.

⁴²Let's elaborate more a few of these words: *bashkë* is related with Albanian *bashk*, *moshë* with *mot*; Çabej has explained *këlbazë* as a construction of *kalb+azë*: *këlbazë*; *shtrungë* from *shtroj*, such as *shtëllungë* from *shtëlloj, shtëll*.

5. latin *ce, ci (ke, ki)* and *ge, gi (ge, gi)* are less palated in Albanian (*qind, centum, gjind gentem, më shumë* in rumanishten);

6. *kl* becomes *kj, gl gj, chiema* from *clamare*, italian *chiamare*, p. 95.

In the lexicon, he makes surprising connections: Latin words that are preserved only in Romanian and Albanian, words that change meaning only in Romanian and Albanian: *conuentum*⁴³, draco with a look of evil.

In the morphological structure, the neutrality in Romanian, Italian and Albanian is the same. It has a Latin origin, but renewed: lat. *fructus e murus* masculine italian *il frutto: la frutta, il muro le mura*. This shows that it is evident that Albanians and Romanians were once one, spoke one language and this people was then Romanized, more the Romanians, less the Albanians.

They were romanised later, in the II century, which explains the concordances with Italian. Since Romanian is a continuum in Dacia, Albanians once inhabited Dacia (western, Rotacism) and from there migrated south.⁴⁴

He came to this conclusion because of some considerations (Illyrian Studies II: 95), such as: Çabej mentions only three or four words from ancient Greek; according to Rossetti, inscriptions in north Albania were written in Latin, while in the south in Greek. They were never written in the local language. In a country where the official language was Greek, it would seem surprising to have its influence disappear altogether. This means that Albanians are not autochthonous in Albania, while they had contacts with the Greeks at later periods of time; if they were seen coming from Dacia, it turns out that those three or four Greek words could be from the Illyrian substratum, therefore:

“Albanian is essentially a Thracian-Dacian language with many Latin, Slavic, Turkish, Venetian influences”, idim, 96.⁴⁵

According to him, the toponymy of Albania is mainly Slavic (he referred for this to the work of Puşcariu, *Die rumänische Sprache*, 206); there are names from Illyrian-such as Shkodër, Durrës, but they do not reflect changes in modern Albanian as they should have shown as if they originated from Illyrian to Albanian; *sk-* cannot be Albanian, because the ancient *sk* became *h*: *njoh – gnosco, gr. γνώσκω, gnōskō, σκιά hije*. Marine and fishing terminology are of Latin or Venetian origin and Italian or Slavic, so we are dealing with a people of continental shepherds. On the contrary, the Illyrians were sailors and pirates, their heirs could be the Uskoks of Narenta (Neretva).⁴⁶

⁴³We are dealing with partially accurate notes: *conuentum* in Albanian means *kuvënd/kuvënd* (meeting), later it might have acquired the other meanings such as *fjalë, besë*. Northeastern Tosk Albanian can be found in both Arumanian and Romanian, but this seems to be explained through contact.

⁴⁴For the extensive discussions on Romanian and other similar ideas regarding the movement/transfer of a part of the Albanian speaking community, or its entirety from the areas north of the Danube to the south, where it is located in the historical period, see Ismajli, R. 2015: *Studime për historinë e shqipes në kontekst ballkanik*.

⁴⁵As it will be seen, Çabej had not mentioned only three or four ancient Greek words, but a few more, and the story about borrowings from ancient Greek started much earlier. Such partial use of data could have been motivated by other reasons.

⁴⁶*uskoci*, skr. *uskociti* (to jump, to jump over). Fugitives from the South Slavic areas conquered by the Ottomans, who returned with others from the Habsburgs and Venice areas to plunder and fight against the Turks within the Ottoman territory. The first are mentioned in the XVI century from Herzegovina located in the regions of Split. The province of Senji is known.

The heirs of the Illyrians were the Dalmatians, whose language disappeared. Dalmatian preserves the Latin velars intact *kenuór* from *cēnāre*, in Albanian – *qind* came from *centum*, 96. Therefore

*‘Dalmatian is Illyrian-Roman, while Romanian (and within the boundaries of its Romanism, Albanian) are Dakoromanian, or, if we prefer, Thracian-Roman’.*⁴⁷

Up to this point, especially with regard to issues of the Romanian-Albanian lexicon, he followed the ideas of Ion Iosif Russu, whose views had been contested. As for the words, as Çabej had insisted from the beginning, it should be said that some of them in Albanian have a transparent construction: *këlbazë, shtrungë, hamës, drojë*, etc., so it does not make sense to speak of them as words of the substratum.⁴⁸

As a further example Bonfante took rotacism: in the Romanian *-l-* intervocalic rotacism he saw the possibility of some Iranian influence (already highly speculated), which could then influence the change of *n: r. n* becoming *r* in Tosk Albanian and in the Istro-Romanian dialect in Banat. This means, according to him, that we should move the first homeland of the Albanians to the north, to Dacia, so Albanian has a Thracian origin, 94.⁴⁹

Aexandru Rosetti had reacted long ago on these allegations of rotacism in Romanian. According to him, the rotation of *-l-* to *-r-* in Romanian took place earlier than the Slavic invasion and there is evidence which we can use as the basis that would indicate the Iranian influence. The rotacism of *-n-*: *-r-* in Rumanian and Albanian indicate that there is a parallelism but not a similarity. Tosk rotacism, according to him, took place at a later period of time.⁵⁰ We have also expressed a different opinion on this issue long ago.⁵¹

Further, Bonfante emphasized that the fact that Latin elements in Albanian and Romanian languages show remarkable phonetic similarities speaks for such connections. Albanians and Romanians used to be one people, they spoke one language and these people were then Romanized, more Romanians, less Albanians. The latter were romanized later, in the II century A.D, and this explains the similarities with Italian.⁵² Since Romanian has a continuity in Dacia, Albanians once inhabited Dacia (western, Rotacism) and from there migrated south. This is how approximately can be summarized the thread of his idea.

Albanian has few borrowings from ancient Greek (2-3, be them even 10), he said. In a country where the official language was Greek, it would seem surprising that its influence would disappear altogether. This means that Albanians are not autochthonous in Albania, while they came into contact with the greeks at a later period of time; if they

⁴⁷For such aspects see Banfi's discussions cited above.

⁴⁸On the history of ideas with regard to the relations between Albanian and Romanian, including the ideas of I. I. Russu see Ismajli, 2015:271-268.

⁴⁹There is no consistency in the definitions *Thracian or Dacian, Thracian-Dacian*, because it is one thing to say that it has Dacian origins and this definitely leads to the north of the Danube, and another to say that it has Thracian origins reacted with the areas south of Danube and around the Balkan Mountains; there are already plenty of linguists who see a significant difference between Dacian and Thracian.

⁵⁰A. Rosetti 1974: “*Rhotacisme*” et “*pseudo-rhotacisme*” en roumain, in *Revue Roumaine de linguistique XIX*, 399-400, dhe te: *Mélanges linguistique*, București, 1977, 137-138.

⁵¹On rotation see R. Ismajli 1971: *Edhe diçka rreth rotacizmit in gjuhën shqipe*, in *Dituria*, Pri- shtiin, 2-3, and Ismajli 1987: *Artikuj mbi gjuhën shqipe*, Prishtina, 184-192.

⁵²But, what about the borrowings of Albanian from Latin before the II century?

were considered to come from Dacia, it turns out that those three-four greek words could also be from the Illyrian substratum:

“*Albanian is essentially a Thracian-Dacian language with many Latin, Slavic, Turkish, Venetian influences*”, 96. However, we know from A. Thumb⁵³ that the number of borrowings from ancient Greek borrowings could be over 30 and they could not have become part of the Albanian in Dacia.

In the treatise *La dottrina neolinguistica*, Torino 1970, while discussing the transition from one language group to another, Bonfante had concluded that, because of a strong influence, one language could pass from one group to another:

“*Romanian is probably nothing more than a Romanized Albanian, because if Latin influence on Albanian had been a little stronger (it was already strong), Albanian today would be a 'Roman' language (it so was classified among others in the Grundriss of Gröber). Romanian itself had then taken the serious dangerous course of becoming a Slavic language...*”, idim, 21-22.

This attitude, which echoes the idea of Gustav Meyer at the end of the XIX century with regard to Albanian as “*eine halbromanische Misssprache*”, revived in 1970 after the discussions by Holger Pedersen at the beginning of the century, seems anachronistic anyway. In this statement there is something else that deserves to be discussed: “*il romeno non è che un albanese romanizzato*” (Romanian is nothing but a Romanized Albanian), which we find it in some form in E.P. Hamp, and later in B. Joseph, regarding the position of the accents. Let’s just that there is a rather early opinion which highlights the significant structural differences between the two languages, which make the quoted statement unreliable.⁵⁴

Let us go back to the *Kuvendi i ilirëve*. The ideas he presented there were similar to those of Mr. G. Weigand, and partially to V. Georgiev present in the hall of the Assembly. W. Cimochoowski, R. Katičić, V. Pisani, R. Crossland, etc. were also present with ideas already manifested quite differently. Discussions, however, were held only from Katičić, Çabej, Kostallari and Beci.

Another supporting point is: the toponymy of Albania is mainly slavic (according Pušçariu-t); there are words from Illyrian such as Shkodër, Durrës, but they do not reflect changes in modern Albanian as they should have shown as if they originated from Illyrian to Albanian; *sk-* cannot be Albanian, because the ancient *sk* became *h*: *njoh* – *gnosco*, *gr.* γνώσκω, *gnōskō*, *σκιά* *hije*. With regard to this argument, his attention was drawn that he was not taking into account the chronology.

⁵³Thumb, A. 1909: *Altgriechische Elemente des Albanischen*, in *Indogermanische Forschun-* gen 26, 10. Shih përmbledhjen e paraqitur te Çabej, E. 1960: *Hyrje in historiën e gjuhës shqipe*, published Prishtina in *Studime gjuhësore III*, Prishtina, 1976, 45-50; Mansaku, S. 1997: *Quelques caractéristiques des éléments du grec ancien en albanais*, in *Zeitschrift für balkanologie* 33, 182-186; Ölberg, H. 1972: *Griechisch-albanische Sprachbeziehungen*, in Muth, R. (Hg.): *Serta philologica Aeniponanan II*, Innsbruck, 33-64.

⁵⁴With relation to the ideas of Hamp in this aspect see Hamp, E. P. 1989: *Yugoslavia – as crossroads of Sprachbünde*, in *Zeitschrift für Balkanologie* 25, 47: “*historically Romania nis Latin spoken with an Albanian stres system*”; Joseph, Brian 1999: *Romanian and the Balkans: some comparative perspectives*, in Embleton, S. & Joseph, J. & Niedereh, H. J. (eds.): *The Emergence of Modern Language Sciences. Studies on the Transition from Historical- Comparative to Structural Linguistics in Honour of E. P. K. Koerner*, V. 2, Amsterdam, 218-235. On Hamp see Ismajli 1996: *Ballkanistika dhe prejardhja e shqipes*, in *Studime* 3, Prishtina 1997, 255-274.

Bonfante had also expressed his views in his book *Studi romeni*, 1973, Romanian 2000; even after the discussions he had with Katičić Çabej, Kostallari and Beci in the Illyrian Assembly he had not changed his views.

Giuliano Bonfante and Eqrem Çabej, a fragment of a photo in the Assembly of Illyrian Studies, Tirana 1972.

In that Assembly, Çabej (op. Cit. 310-312) made several remarks.

Regarding the relations between Albanian and Romanian, he stated that since Miklosich in the XIX century and henceforth we operate based on the concept of an ancient Thracian/Dacian substrate. We have an equation with two unknowns, we know nothing of the substrate; however, in Albanian such words can be explained within its own development, so they are from the early Middle Ages, we have no pre-roman elements. (*bashkë* similar to romanian., but in Albanian it derives from **barshkë; këlbazë, kalb; moş* in rumanian is 'old man', *moaşă* 'old woman', in Albanian is related to *mot, shtrungë to shtroj*, such as *shtëllungë to shtëlloj*, etc.



Çabej agreed that the Latin words of Albanian are close to Romanian, but have an intermediate position between Romanian and Dalmatian. Albanian has Roman words which Romanian does not have, as such it was formed in a different area, not in the Eastern Balkans. Latin *k* before *i*, was palatalized but did not become *ç*: *qiqër*, therefore it is from an earlier period; *kuvend* shows the influence of Greek; it is now possible to see that many elements which were considered to be latin are not latin. He added they are Italian, local or other. He added Albanian has about 30 borrowings from the old Greek, while Albania was influenced from Italy, not from Greece; in Albanian there are Dorisms (*drapen, qull, mokër*), which it did not borrowed from Dacia; They arrived from Greece by sea through Lissos, Dyrrachion, Apolonia, or from the dialects northwest of Greece, or both. This is where Çabej ended his discussion. Radoslav Katičić-i, p. 316, had also made a suggestion: in the Balkan romanism Bonfante would on one hand identify the Illyrian-Romanian (dalmatian) and Thracian-romanian (Romanian), on the other. P. Skok, V. Vinja and Ž. Muljačić showed that there was one Dalmatian romanism and another Thracian romanism, dacian-roman. Continental Romanism had spread equally in Thracian and Illyrian territory, Vlachs are everywhere. This cannot be an argument for the eastern origin of the Albanian language (see Banfi above on these aspects in).

A. Kostallari held a wider discussion p. 318. He dealt with the hypothetic Thracian origin of Albanian and discussed the issue of toponyms *Shkodër, Durrës* and their derivation from *Scodra, Dyrrachion*. In the case of *sk-* in *Scodra* in relation to *sk> shk* or *sk> h* he brought the argument that in *njoh/gnosco* there is no initial *sk-*. He said that *sk: h* belongs to an ancient period, while in *Scodra: Shkodra* we are dealing with a later period of time, the antiquity period, such as in the Latin elements (*scamnum: shkam*, not *shkamb*). There are other names as well: *Astibus: Shtip, Drivastum: Drisht, Naissus:*

Nish, Scupi: Shkup, Scardus Mons: Sharr, Lissus: Lesh, Isamnus: Ishëm, Scampinus: Shkumbin, Ragusium: R(r)ush (in fact Rushë), Pirustae: (Qafa e) Prushit, Aulon: Vlorë, Thyamis: Çam, etc. His observation had to do with the chronology, p. 319. He recalled that borrowings from ancient Greek are over 30, up to 40. It is not 3-4 words, and that number for the time is not small. He mentioned Jokl, who, in the manuscript published after his death, had expressed the opinion that Albanian had more borrowings from Old Greek, p. 319-20. Kostallari also discussed the issue of Slavic toponymy in Albania. He expressed the opinion that the number of those toponyms would be smaller than previously thought. He admitted that there are many Slavic toponyms in southern Albania. He distinguished between macrotoponymy and microtoponymy, which is dominated by Albanian language. Some names with an appellative origin could be borrowings. A number of toponyms that seem to be Slavic are in fact part of the Albanian lexicon and as such have been used for naming places, such as *Korita, Gorica*, etc. In short, Kostallari brought arguments that circulated in Albanian studies and that oppose the general and concrete concept of Bonfante.

Meanwhile Bahri Beci, p. 324-, discussed on the arguments presented earlier. He dealt with the discussion of the basic thesis supported by Bonfante: Albanians are the descendants of the Thracians. He demanded that those who speak in favor of autochthony be taken into account. He thought that Weigand's thesis on the Thracian origin of Albanian had been sufficiently criticized by Çabej and Çimohovski. He did not consider that the *centum/satem* dispute on Illyrian language had ended. Some think one thing, the other another. He supported the idea of Çabej, both for Scodra-Shkodër, and marine and fishing terminology. He supported the arguments of Çabej even with regard to Albanian-Romanian relations. He did not accept the idea that the dialectal division of Albanian was created elsewhere and then transferred to these areas.

Giuliano Bonfante had replied in the Assembly that during the discussions he did not see any new arguments, so he held on to his opinion, p. 329.

In order to be more familiar with the idea of the Indo-European neolinguist G. Bonfante regarding the origin of the Albanian language and its early place, I consulted his late study *La posizione linguistica dell'Albanese fra le lingue Indo-europee*, published in *Convegno internazionale di studi albanesi, Palermo 1973*, published by A. Guzzetta in Palermo in 1978, which M. Mandalà had the kindness to send me these days. In the spirit of neolinguistics, that is, through what M. Bartoli called *figures*, that is, special coincidences, he saw early Albanian as a *satem* type, located somewhat in the center, close to Greek and Armenian, but close even with the northern Balto-Slavic and Germanic languages. He criticized Jokl, who, according to him, had favored the connections of Albanian with the Baltic languages, so to say, had seen the history of proto-Albanian with Baltic glasses. In general, this whole theory is very reminiscent of Antoine Meillet's scheme in the *Les dialectes indoeuropéens* of 1908. At one important point in the context of the relations with the Armenians, the whole idea goes back to Holger Pedersen (1900), who had singled out some isoglosses, which were recaptured with much fanfare by Henrik Barić, while more recently developed with a greater

systematicity by Gert Klingenschmitt.⁵⁵ Bonfante was not referencing them, although we must say that all the material brought by Barić seemed not very reliable.

In any case, it does not seem that the supposed affinities of Proto-Albanian with Proto-Armenian (perhaps Phrygian) would have been of such a nature as to justify the assumption of the origin of Albanian from Thracian, or simply its continuation from Thracian. This can now be said with more probability, because those few Thracian inscriptions, which are more than the Illyrian remnants, clearly show that their language has nothing to do with Albanian. This is shown by Hamp, di Giovine, Ködderitsch,⁵⁶ Brixhe-Panayotou⁵⁷, etc. To the connoisseur of the *whole Paleo-Balkan language* (which can so be called), Radoslav Katičić, all this seems to be nothing more than an interesting construction.

Bonfante's idea was that, proto-Albanian, being more on the east, near Greek and Armenian, had to be identical with Thracian, that is, more similar to a place in the east, while Illyrian was *centum* and more western.

It is understood that there have been various discussions regarding the place of Albanian in the earliest stages. It is striking to see how Bonfante, and perhaps even Georgiev, build their case based on a historically relatively static view, despite Hamp following a more dynamic path, reconstructing earlier stages of a non-genetic but *Sprachbund* group in Central Europe along with Germanic, Tokarist, near Baltic and Slavic languages.⁵⁸ The relationships with Baltic, which Bonfante did not seem to like very much and for which he criticized Jokl, were privileged in historical studies of Albanian also by Desnickaja and Hamp⁵⁹.

As such, in general, an early lineage with the northern languages has been emphasized, while in the Balkans important connections with Greek and Armenian (Phrygian) have also been pointed out, but it has always been emphasized that Albanian was placed further west of the IE paleo-balkan area. The relations with ancient Greek were also emphasized by Dhimitër Kamarda⁶⁰, while Selman Riza⁶¹ insisted, unlike Çabej, on the need to investigate the connections with Greek on antiquity (for example, the development of the distinctive *nde*), and with Romanian on the Middle Ages.⁶² In

⁵⁵Klingenschmitt, G. 1994: *Das Albanische als Glied der indogermanischen Sprachfamilie*, in Rasmunsen (Hrg.): *In honorem Holger Pedersen*, Wiesbaden, 221-233; Klingenschmitt, G. 1994a: *Die Verwandtschaftsverhältnisse der indogermanischen Sprachen*, in Rasmunsen (Hrg.): *In honorem Holger Pedersen*, Wiesbaden, 235-251; Klingenschmitt, G.: *Albanisch und Urindogermanisch*, in *MSS* 40, 93-131.

⁵⁶Ködderitsch, R. 1985: *Brygisch, Päonisch, Makedonisch*, in *Linguistique balkanique* XXVIII, 18-41.

⁵⁷Brixhe, C. & Panayotou, A. 1997: *Le thrace*, in P. Bader (ed.): *Langues indo-européennes*, Paris, CNRS, 181-205.

⁵⁸Ismajli 1996: *Ballkanistika dhe prejardhja e shqipes*, in *Studime* 3, Prishtina, 255-274.

⁵⁹Për idetë e Desnickaja-s e të Hamp-it see Ismajli 2015: *Studime për historiin.*, 39-57; Liukkonen, K.: *Albano-balto-slavjanskije etimologiji*, in *Scando-slavica*, 35, 197-202. Hamp 1982-3, E. P.: *Indo-European *laugh- in the Ponto-Baltic Region*, in *Ponto-baltica* 2-3, Academia Toscana di Scienze e Lettere "La Colombaria", 7-8; Desnickaja 1984: *Drevnie balkan-baltijskie sootvestvija i albanskij jazyk*, in *Sravnitel'noje jazykoznanije i istorija jazykov*, Moskva, 192-210, in page 195.

⁶⁰Camarda, D. 1864: *Saggio di gramatologia comparata sulla lingua Albanese*, Livorno, 188- 189.

⁶¹Riza, S. 2004: *Mbi një bashkëpërkim gramatikor të posaçëm të gjuhës shqipe me gre-qishten*, study completed in 1966, as a report for the Congress of Balkanologists which was to be held in Bulgaria, but which was not allowed by the Albanian authorities and remained unpublished until 2004. This is according to the version of November 1977, when we could include it S. Riza: *Vepra IV*, ASHAK, Prishtina, fp. 91-114.

⁶²This does not contradict the idea of earlier connections with the Balto-Slavic complexity.

general, Bonfante's theses on the early relations of Albanian with other IE languages already appear to belong to an earlier stage of these studies, while with regard to the relations with Romanian they entirely dependent on his ideas of the early place of Balkan Romanism, or Eastern Romanity. Indeed, he thought that Eastern Romanity followed along two major lines: in the west, on the Dalmatian coast of the Illyrians, Romanization created the Dalmatian language, while in the other parts a Romanity that should have been seen as unifier between Romanian and the Albanian roman element.

He thought that complete romanization would have taken place after the II century A.D. and that the pre-Albanians were Romanized as Dacians, while later they moved to the south. He even favored the hypothesis that elements such as rotacism, specific to Tosk Albanian and Western Daco-Romanian and Istro-Romanian, speak of such a displacement of Tosk Albanian language. But further he forgot that the common lexical elements are not specific to any dialect of Albanian, except for two cases which have different explanations. This and other elements speak against the idea of the displacement of the Toskarian already differentiated from the northern Balkans to the areas where it was later identified.

There have also been fruitful discussions regarding Romanization. I will mention the report of H. Mihăescu,⁶³ who, in the Latin elements of Albanian, even though it is earlier than II century A.D., saw a layer that separated them from Western Latinism and brought them closer to Romanian, but also saw an important group that appeared only in Albanian and not in Romanian, as there were other groups that appeared in Albanian and Western Roman languages and not in Romanian. E. Banfi had already investigated a third area of Romanization around the Egnatia line, which included the Latin elements of Albanian and the Greek elements to a lesser extent. *Summa summarum*, the issue of Roman space in the Balkans seems to be more complex than this and it cannot be taken as an argument to prove the Thracian-Dacian origin of Albanian.

Other Italian scholars have largely gone the other way. Tagliavini followed the path of Jokl, i.e. he leaned on Dardania as an area in which pre-Romanian and pre-Albanian would have met, while later Indo-Europeans, such as Ambrosini, Restelli, etc. followed more the lines that speak of Illyrian or Thracian origin and found that there was no evidence for any of them, so it may be better to talk about an *filiacion alban*. All of these are supported in great detail. The great neolinguist Giuliano Bonfante, a prominent Indo-European, seems to me to have dealt with the issues of Albanian prehistory at later stage of his activity, being himself more on the sidelines and with a Romanian outlook. His other colleague of areal linguistics and neolinguistics V. Pisani had thought completely differently.

Giuseppe Restelli, in *Problemi di linguistica albanese*, p. 19 would write:

⁶³Mihăescu, H. 1966: *Les éléments latins de la langue albanaise*, in *Revue des études sud-est européennes* 1-2-3-4, București; Mihăescu, H. 1981: *Locul elementelor lexicale latine din albană în cadrul romanității sud-est europene*, in Coteanu I. & Wald, L.: *Semantică și semiotică*, București, p. 216-235; Mihăescu, H. 1993: *La romanité dans le sud-est de l'Europe*, București.

“The disputes whether Albanian is modern stage Illyrian or Thracian is antihistorical: they start from one or more stages in the history of the language, not from ancient origins and roots”.

According to him, Albanian should be seen as an Indo-European language *tout court*, which has preserved its ancestral identity.⁶⁴

Meanwhile, the only author there at this time who created a work on the study of the Albanian language, Giovan Battista Pellegrini, gives more weight to this issue, presenting the various hypotheses that have been put forward on this issue and placing it in a broader context. Pellegrini, too, did not lean on the idea represented by Giuliano Bonfante.

⁶⁴ In *Atti del 3^o Seminario internazionale di studi albanesi*, a cura di P. Altimari e P. De Rosa, Rende, 2004.

Remzi PËRNASKA
Tomorr PLANGARICA

**LOUIS LUCIEN BONAPARTE – THE PHILOLOGIST WHO
OBSERVED, COMPARED AND TESTIFIED TO ALBANIAN
LANGUAGE AND ITS DIALECTS**

Abstract: *Louis Lucien Bonaparte (1813-1891), a comparative linguist and dialectologist, is one of those European scholars of the XIX century who brought in information, testimonies and interpretations valuable for Albanian language and its dialects. Besides his scientific contributions to history, ethnology and even chemistry, mineralogy etc., and to linguistics (with research and special commitment to Bask, Finnish, the dialects of English language and roman languages etc.), he passed down to the fund of Albanology, like his swan song, even writings which examine this language and especially the dialects of Arberesh language. Bringing forth and discussing the values of this contribution is helpful for creating a bigger picture of Albanological thought; this attention shows also respect for those contributions and the dimensions of this scholar (author of 216 works in chemistry and linguistics, in French, Italian and English, and a dictionary of 70 languages – including Albanian – which is useful to this day).*

There are personalities in the field of research, who thanks to their persistent skills and interests, aim at many different aspects of scientific research, even if these aspects are distant from one another and bear no direct connections to each other. Their written work and their commitment to learn and work on various fields results in the development of an impressive encyclopedia, which inspires adoration and respect, but which imposes standing at a distance necessary to perceive it in its entirety; this distance on the other hand prevents us also from showing these contributions in the required depth and width.

It happens that this broad scientific reality, is additionally supplemented with other important extra-scientific dimensions and indicators, related to contributions and commitments of a social, political, etc. nature. In these cases, the full grasp of the values of the respective personality appears even more problematic, making even more mandatory to present in detail all of his profiles, but thus making this presentation even more difficult.

This is how we come to see the personality of prince¹ Louis Lucien Bonaparte, heir of the Bonaparte family, son of Napoleon Bonaparte's second brother.

¹It happens from time to time, however not often, that the personalities who hold inheritance titles or official duties, create an affiliation with a certain field of science and the title that they have before their name, and not only by force of habit, still remains; and we have such cases in the field of Albanistics, where the titles *prince*, *baron* or *consul* remain part of the name. The

The halo of the scholar, as the most significant mark of the complex personality of L. L. Bonaparte

Even at this time, a hundred and a few years after the death of L. L. Bonaparte (1891), his name remains present in the Albanian scientific circle (but certainly even beyond) with the aura of the prominent researcher, scientist, scholar and intellectual of that time, even though there are more aspects which complete his profile, such as his participation in the social and political hierarchy, his origin, heredity, etc.

The predominance of his commitment *to* scientific research and *for* scientific research in his life seem to overshadow the other aspects: a) the origin - he is of Italian, Corsican, and French origin (in fact, he was accidentally born in England, in Thorngrove (Worcestershire), on January 4, 1813, while his parents were held hostage by the Queen of England²; b) the heredity - he was the grandson of Napoleon Bonaparte, but the son of another figure who excelled especially in the field of culture, Lucien Bonaparte, who, while leading a hectic life, with financial and administrative successes and failures, made a contribution in the cultural environment with his literary work, more than with his administrative and public functions.³

Even for Louis the contribution goes beyond the origin, the social class or official title, although he had a very active life as a politician⁴ and deserved a number of honorary titles.⁵

same thing happened with Louis Lucien Bonaparte, who was first presented to the public on May 24, 1897 in the newspaper "Shqipëria" of Bucharest under the announcement: "Prince Lucien Bonaparte, nephew of the great Napoleon, also wrote about the Albanians"; and in October of the same year: "Shkronjëtorë që kanë shkruar për shqiptarët: Ndë Anglitarë: Princi L. L. Bonaparte [nga fëmijë e Napoleonit të math]". However, if at the time when the article was written and published, the title he held carried a kind of weight or was suggestive to the reader, today it is the contribution to science and the value of his studies that have given longevity to his name and personality; it is this contribution that stands as a halo setting them apart and inspiring the respect and adoration of generations.

² For more detailed data see Artan&Remzi Përnaska, "Louis-Lucien Bonaparte, gjuhëtar dhe dialektolog krahasues (Me rastin e 120-vjetorit të vdekjes)", in Hylli i Dritës, 3, 2011, p. 93-113).

³ Lucien Bonaparte dealt with literature, and wrote some works, such as among others *La Tribu indienne, ou Edouard et Stellina*, novel, Paris, 1799, translated into English and Spanish; *Charlemagne ou l'Eglise sauvée*, an epic poem with 24 songs, Paris, 1815, translated in English; *La Cyméide ou la Corse sauvée*, Paris, 1819, poem with 12 songs; *Aux citoyens français membres des collèges électoraux*, Le Mans, 1834; *La vérité sur les Cent-Jours*, Paris, 1835; *Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte, Prince de Ca-nino, écrits par lui-même*, Paris, 1836; *Le 18 Brumaire*, Paris, 1845 (post mortem). He showed special interest in the Etruscan world, as evidenced by a number of his writings, such as *Mémoire sur les vases étrusques*, Paris, 1836, etc. This cultural and scientific activity is, among other things, the reason why he became a member of the French Academy in the field of French language and literature (1803).

⁴ L. L. Bonaparte represented Corsica as a deputy in the French National Assembly (1848-1849); representative of the people of the Department of Sena (1849-1851); senator (1852); president of the General Council of Corsica (1867-1870).

⁵ He was granted with these title of Honor: *Grand Commander of the Legion of Honor* (January 3, 1860); *The Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor in France* (1852); *Imperial Highness*

Louis Bonaparte in the first place is a personality of natural sciences, and then linguistic sciences, with outstanding contributions in Basque studies and in the field of Albanian studies, especially regarding the Arbëresh dialects.

He was not only a talented chemist (invented *the valerate of chinchina*), but also a world-renowned linguist, specialist of Finnish, Basque and English dialects and Romance languages. He attended the first Meeting of Italian scientists in Pisa.

He is the author of 216 works on chemistry and linguistics, in French, Italian and English, including a dictionary of 70 languages (including Albanian), which is still useful today.⁶

In fact, these last two decades the personality and contributions of Louis Bonaparte have been many times on the desk of our researchers, either to be studied on purpose and directly, or to provide a bigger picture and context for the emergence of various phenomena, for which Bonaparte's work is valuable. Let us mention in brief the studies and the considerations expressed for Bonaparte by Xhevat Lloshi⁷, Shaban Sinani⁸, David Hosaflook⁹, and the treatise written by Bejtulla Destani in London¹⁰. On the other hand, let us apologize for not being able to know more in depth the research work of this personality in the university research institutions of Arbëresh philological studies, even though we have mentioned and announced him on our studies.¹¹

The contributions of Bonaparte as representations of the Humboldtian model in research and publications

To our knowledge, researchers have approached this personality within the contexts of the phenomena they were focused studying, but without fully examining his

Prince of the Court (1852); A special pension from the Queen of England; A Doctor of Honor on civil rights by the University of Oxford.

⁶For a more detailed description of his family, education and his first steps in scientific research see Artan & Remzi Përnaska, cited art.

⁷Xhevat Lloshi, Përkthime shqip nën kujdesin e Princit Bonaparti, in Shqiptarja.com newspaper, June 19, 2016.

⁸Shaban Sinani, Alfabetet si kufi: kur dhe si u shthurën qarqet, in *Studime, Revistë për studime filologjike*, 21, Pristina, 2014, page 163-192.

⁹David Hosaflook, Lëvizja Protestante ndër shqiptarët, 1816-1908, ISShP Shkup, 2019, p.185-189.

¹⁰This is about the book of Bejtulla Destani (red.) *Albanian Dialects – Price Louis- Lucien Bonaparte*, London 2014, published by The Centre for Albanian Studies; and the presentation of this book in the written media in Albanian, in Myzejen Myftari, *Dialektet e shqipes, në një studim të rrallë të Princit Lui Bonapart*, in *Gazeta* 55, 30. 07. 2014, found in some Albanian websites.

¹¹Take into consideration the references of Sh. Sinani in the cited article, for: Gëzim Gurga, “Il Vangelo di San Mateo; variante inedita del manoscritto di Piana”, edizione critica, doctoral thesis, Università degli Studi della Calabria, Cosenza 2006. Idem, “Aspetti linguistici del manoscritto dell’Anomino Epirota”, in Atti del XXVIII Congresso Internazionale di Studi Albanesi, 16-19 Maggio 2002 (a cura di M. Mandalà), Università degli Studi di Palermo, Palermo 2003, pp. 281-289; also the unpublished Manuscript by the Anonym Epirote author, in Studi in onore di Antonio Guzzetta (a cura di Francesca di Miceli e M. Mandalà), Università degli Studi di Palermo, Palermo 2002, pp. 203-217. Maria Tereza Borgia, *The Gospel of Saint Mathew*, translated in Arbëresh by Giuseppe Camarda, a critique publication, doctoral thesis, Università degli Studi della Calabria, Cosenza, 2006.

contributions. So a bigger picture still remains a goal for the future; this more comprehensive goal can harmonize and create a more accurate idea of the nature of Bonaparte's work, taking into account his studies of Basque and other languages or dialects (studies which already exist but need to be examined), creating a broader view not only of the subject studied, but also of the methodology he used.

This comparative linguist is special mainly for two reasons:

First, because of his own linguistic research, as a comparative philologist and dialectologist, mainly as a Bascologist, even among the most prominent bascologists of the time. He ranks with Humboldt as the most prominent bascologists: he compiled and published a grammar of the Basque language; the study "*Le verbe basque selon huit dialects de l'Euskara*"; translated in Basque the "*Cantique des cantiques*" (London, 1863), etc.; investigated, also, the dialects of Italian and English (though not at the level of Basque, but with the same methodology). As a comparative philologist, he is prominent with the "*Specimen lexicum comparativum omnium linguarum euro- paeorum. Opera et studio Ludovici Luciani Bonaparte, Florentiae, 1847*" and with writings on the lexicon of viticulture, reptiles, etc.

This aspect of his work is of particular value because he captured, photographed the various languages, speeches and dialects of Europe in the early nineteenth century, leaving material for further studies on the history of languages.

Secondly, because of his efforts as a translator, reviewer and publisher of materials that evidenced on a synchronous plan the state of the dialects of different languages (among them the dialects of Albanian, mainly Arbëresh, and even evidencing them through the use of biblical texts specially translated into those linguistic variants)¹²; but also because of the attentive and passionate pursuit of language studies, leaving wonderful evidence that reflect the state of comparative linguistics for Indo-European languages until then.

He had a printing press of his own, in which he published some of his books and translations, of a very good quality paper and publication, thanks also to his in-depth knowledge of chemistry. He published two catalogs of linguistic books: "*Catalogues des ouvrages de la linguistique européenne*", edited by Le Prince L.L. Bonaparte, London 1858; "*Deuxième catalog of works intended to facilitate the comparative study of European languages*", 1862; as well as "*Remarques sur la classification des langues ouraliques*", 1878 and "*The parable of the sower of St. Matthew*", in 72 European languages and dialects, including in Albanian language, 1857.

The nature of his linguistic research and publications was in line with a successful approach in the field of linguistics which had been established by Humboldt and was creating a successful paradigm or model in that period. The insistence on recognizing, recording, and publishing different variants of the dialects of a language was in line with the approach, the spirit and methodology which was spreading slowly and which would gradually prevail over the contributions of Humboldt, who "after the discovery of language and Basque culture (after staying in Paris, 1797-1799), had outlined the *principles of modern linguistic description*: the study of languages in synchrony,

¹²Xh. Lloshi provides valuable data on this aspect of his work and puts this contribution under the totality of efforts made by various personalities in religious translations. For more see, Xh. Lloshi, cited article.

descriptive and non-prescriptive study, the importance of the corpus and informants, as well as the importance of grammatical categories which describe correctly the genuine phenomena of the studied language. This allows him to ignore the Latin grammar categories for a language such as Basque language. Later (1827-1829) he tried to rethink universal grammar in its entirety".¹³

Considering the studies, he made in the Basque language, Finnish, Italian and English, but also in the dialects of Albanian, mainly in Arbëresh, L. L. Bonaparte was an integral part of this scientific paradigm that would further give another status to linguistic thought itself. If we would refer to the position of Thomas Samuel Kuhn, it is precisely the outline of these paradigms that enable further developments in scientific research.¹⁴ Apparently, L. L. Bonaparte believed in that spirit, that model, so he listed himself as a contributor to that model and was part of that attitude that was inherent in that new methodology under consideration.

If we would refer to Kuhn, according to whom "the perceptions of scientists change while pursuing scientific revolution (going beyond the Bachelardian thesis, according to whom "observation depends on the theory that guides it ")¹⁵, then we can say that Bonaparte's reviews of Albanian also represented, from this epistemological point of view, an elaborate and attractive moment for the community of scholars (consulting his collection of documents in Chicago can bring interesting data and can prove the assumptions of this nature).

We find Bonaparte in the Humboldtian paradigm throughout his work; very expressive and real even while collecting materials for Albanian language. We can illustrate this even by mentioning some of the aspects that are present in his writings: recording directly on the field linguistic data, texts, sayings and words, even activating the most knowledgeable people who perform this mission and editing, further, the materials from competent editors (let us recall that the edits of two of the translations of "Matthew", for example, were made by Dhimitër Kamarda, for whose *Gramatika* Bonaparte shows a special appreciation; or let us recall the fact that in his writing "Albanian in the territories of Otranto", before going into the essence of his writing, Bonaparte thanks Monsignor Rafael Rossi, Grand Vicar of the Archdiocese of Taranto who helped him have the cooperation of the parishioners for the Albanian records

¹³H. Dilberman, W. von Humboldt et invention de la forme de la langue, në *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger*, n° 2, 2006 (consulted *en ligne*, September 2019).

¹⁴ In "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions" (1962) Kuhn insists that the development of a model, a search paradigm, is obtained by scientific authorities in a particular field; this paradigm regroups the researchers for a while; but will be replaced by another in the wake of a scientific revolution that will profoundly change the ways of research. Moving away from the prevailing idea in the 1950s, which presupposed a continuous evolution through the accumulation of knowledge according to the scientific method thanks to individual discoveries, for Kuhn "the new scientific form represents an internal coherence and it is not an individual issue; it is related to a group formed by masters, contemporaries and their followers. In "*La structure des révolutions scientifique*" he states that a paradigm / model arises from a universally recognized scientific discovery, which poses problems and solutions to the community of scholars for a certain period of time "(Kuhn, 1962: 11).

¹⁵ Cited by Patrick Juignet, *Les paradigmes scientifiques selon Th. Kuhn*, in *Philosophie, science et société [en ligne]*, 2015, consulted September 2019).

spoken there - in 1889; let us also remember the importance it attaches to data regarding dialect geography, dialect maps, description of story inheritors, etc.¹⁶

Bibliophilia as an incentive for the testimony of knowledge and communication between scholars

Of a particular value, however, is Bonaparte's library. It is indeed a memory of humanity on the languages and dialects known until then (even though it was not catalogued, which was further done by Victor Collins, to whom the data refer later; Collins published in 1894, in London, "*Essay on a Catalog for the Library of the late Prince Louis-Lucien Bonaparte*").

Thanks to his unrelenting bibliophilic commitment, and thanks to his friendship with the most famous linguists of the time, uninterrupted communication with antiquarians and booksellers in different countries, Louis Bonaparte managed to collect about 15 thousand books (13,657, according to the catalog of V. Collins), a real babel tower¹⁷. When the Newberry Independent Research Library in Chicago bought the library of Louis Bonaparte (1901), the New York Times sarcastically wrote: "Now Europe must come to Chicago to study its languages and its philological history".¹⁸

Impressive is the wealth of the Albanian collection as part of this treasury. There are 91 items for the Albanian language (pages 710 -715, catalog numbers 13567-13657). In the catalog there are other books that deal with Albanian language, as well as at least three gospels and the story of the Seed Sower in Albanian, which he himself had published in London. It is possible to see, therefore, that only a few books published until then for the Albanian language are missing in his library.¹⁹

Various evidences suggest that his library had become a suitable place for consultation and research for many of the scholars of the time. David Hosaflook-u points out: "The most well-known linguists of the time visited his library for research.

Bonaparte received, for example, Viscount Persy Smythe Strangford, a longtime specialist in European Turkey, the Middle East and Albania. Strangford studied the prince's books on Albanian, Bulgarian, and Vlach²⁰. He had spent several months at Bonaparte's house in London, during which time he had studied the collection of BFBS publications²¹ (while in the years 1868-1871 Bonaparte donated some special books to the BFBS library, including three translations of the "Gospel according to Matthew", each in a separate dialect of the Albanian language".²² The same researcher claims that Dhimitër Kamarda (philologist and editor of two Arbëresh variants of "Matthew", published at the expense of Bonaparte in 1868-1869 [...]) While Xh. Lloshi underlines: "He (Bonaparte) probably learned the name of Kamarda after the publication of his

¹⁶ For more data, see Artan & Remzi Përnaska, cited article; Xh. Lloshi, cited article.

¹⁷ Xh. Lloshi speaks of 18 thousand title collected by Bonaparte in his library; cited article.

¹⁸The Bonaparte Library That Goes to Chicago, New York Times, August 10, 1901. Cited by D. Hosaflook, cited work page 145.

¹⁹Regarding the full list of works, see Artan & Remzi Përnaska, cited article.

²⁰D. Hosaflook, cit. work, p 144.

²¹D. Hosaflook, cited work, page 146.

²² D. Hosaflook (page 144) refers to the collection of BFBS – AR 1869, Apendix 90; BFBS-AR 1871, Apendix 89.

Gramatologjia in 1864 and *Shtojca* in 1866. Both of these books are in Bonaparte's library, as well as a very small 1869 edition, eight pages in total, of the "The general Albanian-Epirotic alphabet". [...] For the version in the dialect of Shkodra, he relates that he relied on the works of F. Ross, introducing his improvements through long discussions with him and the editor, Gaspër Krasniqi, as well as consulting with the works of G. Jungg, J.G. Hahn and especially K. Kristoforidhi. [...] Synthesizing the data from different points of view, it turns out that Kamarda would have been in London for a few months in 1868."²³

Some characterizes of the linguistic contributions originating from the translations and studies of Bonaparte

Bonaparte's contribution to promoting the observation of dialectal peculiarities through the translation of biblical texts into different dialects of Albanian language has been emphasized. This is an extremely intelligent undertaking with numerous values, because a text was proven and obtained which had a wide range of uses and the text was inserted into the communication process in a field of use which had multiple receptors, and moreover, a wide process of use as well.

The experiences of other languages had proven the effectiveness and usefulness of this process for language development. However, Bonaparte intended to translate known passages from biblical texts into different Albanian dialects, especially in Arbëresh, and even in the dialects of other languages.

His aims had a scholarly nature, evidencing the language and its variants at a certain stage, on a certain sphere of use, conditioned by the canonical nature of its communication. This tendency of his fully resonates with his scholarly interests in the field of comparative linguistics, so a thorough examination of his legacy in this field would be a more objective approach regarding this personality. Moreover, the valuable information on the history of the language (including the Albanian language) is supplied by its contributions which are mostly based on the dialects. If we were to express ourselves through the assertion of A. Meillet, we would emphasize that "there is no history of the language without a dialectology and especially without a complete and well-delineated linguistic geography".²⁴

The materials he published on Albanian language can be **a)** direct studies (*Albanian in Terra d'Otranto* (1885), supplemented and corrected in 1891, *Shqipja, greqishtja e re, galo-italishtja, provensalishtja, dhe ili- rishtja*²⁵ *ende në përdorim (në 1889) si ishuj gjuhësorë në krahinat napolitane dhe siciliane të Italisë*); **b)** translations of biblical texts (the three variants of *Ungjillit sipas Mateut* and the *Parabola e Farëdhësit*); **c)** a list of words in the *Vocabularium comparativum...*, (56 words in Latin with the corresponding words in Albanian; especially the list with 166 words, with some grammatical aspects in the *Shqipja, greqishtja e re, galo-italishtja...* (page 341) or the

²³Xh. Lloshi provides further information on Bonaparte's cooperation and communication with the authorities of the British Bible Society and other Foreign Countries; for more see, cited article.

²⁴A. Meillet, Bull. de la Soc. De Ling. De Paris, t. XXX, 1929, p. 200.

²⁵With *ilirisht* duhen kuptuar gjuhët sllave të Adriatikut, kryesisht kroatishtja.

words in the many variants of *Lutja ndaj Zotit* (14 variants in different speeches of Arberesh dialect, in Tosk, in the dialect of Middle Albanian and in the dialect of Shkodra) or the words in Giovanni Boccaccio's narrative IX, First Day, The Decameron). Some very significant aspects stand out in these materials, among which we can mention: the reflection of phonetic peculiarities of Arbëresh dialects, intending the creation of the inventory of their sounds-phonemes, for example, when providing data for the adaptation of the orthography which, according to him, "aims at representing as much as possible and more accurately the pronunciation of the dialect of Piana dei Greci differently in pionite"; making efforts for selecting the most appropriate grapheme and explaining those selections that aim to reflect the peculiarities related to the articulation of the dialect sound, even comparing them with the articulation of similar or approximate, Italian, French, English, Greek, and even Dutch sounds-phonemes; making efforts for providing detailed explanations regarding the nature and place of the emphasis on simple and compound words in Arbëresh dialects, vowel characteristics in relation to length and nasality; the localization of the phonetic characteristics of dialects in certain geographical areas, even based on the age of the speakers; and also the characteristics of forms, based when they first appeared; etc.

A more comprehensive and systematic view of L. L. Bonaparte's contributions to Albanian studies will have to grasp, therefore, not merely the search and motivation for the publication (among other languages) of biblical texts, but, above all, his contributions in providing dialectal evidences, recording and publishing data for different dialects of Arbëresh language, and even pointing out the phonetic, morphological, lexical and syntactic peculiarities of certain dialects; providing as well evidences on linguistic geography by studying and classifying data through the compilation of dialect maps for almost 55 Arbëresh settlements where Albanian was spoken in the second half of the XIX century; even supplementing these materials with a series of other historical, ethnological and anthropological data.

Bonaparte's methodological quest to see the peculiarities down to minimal units (and the provision of a complete inventory of sounds-phonemes) and then to the level of words and even sentences and texts, becomes even more interesting as a legacy, because he was careful, and even had this at the core of his research methodology, to look at the discourse variations from one dialect to another; even, this methodology led him to evidence and approach the group dialects, the sub-dialects and the two basic dialects of Albanian: Tosk and Gegh.

A more comprehensive and systematic approach at the contributions of L. L. Bonaparte at the present time through the contexts and epistemological theories of the present period enables us to more naturally integrate his legacy to the benefit of Albanian studies as an asset which helped outline a study model in the field of Albanian dialectology, a model which has further enabled even a higher development of linguistic thought.

His contributions merit a special status, because, *in the first place*, through the research, descriptions and publications of Bonaparte we have information on Albanian, even on its various dialects. This information was published in mediums which had then a wide audience of specialists and scholars in the field of linguistics, history,

anthropology, etc. (this status is outlined not only because Bonaparte was a well-known personality with intensive communication with the European intellectual elite of his time, but also because in some cases he gives this data alongside other languages, which drew much interest at the time; also because he published two of his important studies on Albanian in one of the leading bodies of the time, such as the scientific journal *Transactions of the Philological Society*);

secondly, the subject of Albanian dialects had been examined in the “laboratory” of a renowned scholar, such as Bonaparte, a scholar who was enlisted with Humboldt in the field of Basque language studies (Albanian was also examined through the same successful methodologies, as such his work of the Arbëresh dialects had the greatest guarantee of being solid knowledge on the desks of European scholars; that laboratory, was collected, molded and processed by competent people, deep connoisseurs and scholars, such as Kamarda, Dorsa, Doçi, etc.);

third, the contributions of Bonaparte and his review methodology has benefited the Albanian studies not only because of the presence of a comparative linguist, but a linguist particularly prominent in this methodology, with reviews and comparisons reserved not for language as a whole, but for its particulars, variants or varieties, such as dialects; and for this reason, a better profile of the model or paradigm of the study was created, which enabled further examinations for other levels;

fourth, the integration of data for the Albanian language, next to the other European languages, and the studies on Albanian language next to other publications (and even their presence for consultation in America, after the collection of books and documents were purchased by the university of Chicago), makes this knowledge available to be absorbed even in other contexts beyond Europe;

fifth, the dialectological variation of the biblical messages or folk creativity and not only, such as the fragment of Decameron, provide us with important data not only for the examination of the primary system of Albanian but even its secondary system, the stylistic elements in different western spheres of Albanian, the written and spoken word, and the religious and literary style.

In conclusion

While appreciating the contributions of L.L. Bonaparte in Albanian studies, but also his passion as a bibliophile, his extremely rich collection currently found in the Chicago Library, we are encouraged to say that the homage to his remembrance in scientific gatherings (or even the publications of his studies, already) meet but partly the scientific obligation towards that legacy.

The observation and direct examination of the collection of Albanology which Bonaparte collected, could reveal facts and data which hide or bear surprises which might deepen and widen his contributions. The various pre-textual elements or certain documents that may be present in that collection may be elements which could help us expand our knowledge of those contributions.

In this period of intensified communication and with tools that enable us to review documents more easily, Bonaparte's work and diligence (during the difficult conditions of communication and review at that time) do not give us reason to delay the findings

and reviewing the wealth he has left as a result of his bibliophilia, which resonated and even expanded the dimensions of his own complex personality as a scholar.

Further delays on this case is an excuse to the past but not to the present.

If we reach or come close to Bonaparte's passion for languages and civilizations, and even to his passion, curiosity and love for Albanian, we further enable ourselves, in our age, to pay off the intellectual obligation to the past, but we also match the dimensions of the model this personality encourages and inspires for scientific research.

L. L. Bonaparte and his contributions imply and merit this attention and examination.

Shaban SINANI

THE HOMERIC ISSUE IN A NOVEL BY I. KADARE

Milman Parry and Albert Lord as historic protagonists and literary character in the novel *The File On Homer* (H File)

I.

When the *H File novel* was published in the *Nentori* magazine (1981), a novel which was widely known later as *The File on Homer*, with very few exceptions, almost nothing was known about the *founders of the theory of orality*, Milman Parry and Albert Lord, visitors to Northern Albania and to the more remote Sandjak during the 1930s. Both of them were renowned Harvard University scholars in the United States. Their names are still in the sidelines in the Albanian field of studies.¹ Not only the Harvard collection of the Albanian songs is still unpublished, but also the essential work of Albert Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, even though it was translated more than half a century ago by Nelson Çabej, entitled *The Singer of Tales*, it is still unpublished and its manuscript is preserved in the archive funds of the Institute of Cultural Anthropology and Art Studies (former Institute of Folk Culture). Before those tales, only the Frenchman Albert Dumont had thought to look into the Balkan area to find explanations for the *Homeric issue*².

A genetic history of the work would prove that the source of the novel itself is related to the participation of I. Kadare in the congress of AIESEE (*Association Internationale d'Etudes du Sud-Est Européen*) organised in 1978 in Izmir, Turkey. There, Kadare had the opportunity to present his essay *On the Kreshnik Songs* (*Krešnik'lerin destani üzerine*) and to get acquainted with the American homerologist Albert Lord, already in the last years of his life. Milman Parry had long since passed away (1935). The claim that Albert Lord was in Albania since 1966 to attend an AIESEE congress and that other scholars promoted the work of Milman Parry and Albert Lord before Ismail Kadare is easily proved not to be true, because this organization held no activity in Tirana before 2004³.

¹ There is no other work beside a research by Zymer Neziri, *Këngëtarët e Allbert Llordit (Albert Lord) nga Shqipëria e Veriut*, published in *Gjurmime albanologjike*, series *folklor dhe etnologji*, no. 38, 2008 (printed in 2009), p. 141-158; and a project designed to withdraw his collection from the Harvard University Library.

² Luan Rama, *Në malet shqiptare, duke kërkuar zakonet homerike: Albert Dumont, "Ballkani dhe Adriatiku"*, in *Milosao*, December 19, 2010, p. XIII-XV.

³ See Agron Fico, *Kuajt e Akilit apo kuajt e Kurveleshit*, published in *Telegraf*, November 19, 2014: *I was the first and fortunate to learn about the existence of this Albanian treasure in Harvard since June 1966, when Albert Lord came to Albania to participate in the symposium of the Association of Southeast European Studies held in Tirana.* By the same author see *Eposi heroik shqiptar dhe shkencëtari amerikan Albert B.*

This meeting was the first drive for the novel *The File on Homer*, written by Kadare during 1979-1980, as an attempt to reconstruct the *codification mechanism of the great oral heritages*, including the Homeric heritage, by looking at how these unset epic songs functioned, such as the as *the legendary Albanian heroic songs* and *Junačke srpske pjesme*. As for the acritic songs, the Greek epic of the Byzantine period, known as *Digenis Akritas* (*Διγενής Ακρίτης*, *Διγενής Ακρίτας*), they were codified in writing since the end of the Middle Ages. Furthermore, *Version E*, with the name *Escorsial* manuscript with 1867 verses, and *version G*, named the *Grottaferrata* manuscript, with 3749 verses, were even older⁴.

The Harvard scholars were well aware of this situation, so they turned to a more northern region, where also the legendary heroic songs bore the same name: *songs of border heroes, border songs, regional songs, rhapsodies of Serbian, Bosnian and Albanian epics*⁵.

M. Parry and A. Lord were not the romantic pilgrims of recent times, like most albanologists of that period, who, exalted by the antiquity of the rites and tribal order in Northern Albania, had proposed to turn it into a *live museum of human values, in a reservation of chivalrous virtue*, where the younger generations of the West could see their past, as the place where they lived with the past: *The Land of The Living Past*.⁶ The monumentalization of backwardness, on behalf of preserving a tribal order that had disappeared for centuries throughout Europe, pervades the studies of the Hungarian anthropologist Baron Ferenz Nopcsa, a paleontologist by profession, known in Albania as an ethnologist and anthropologist⁷. *I am a conservator, even reactionary. I would*

Lord, in *Dituria*, no. 8, 2008, p. 91-104. The first Congress of AIESEE-së was held in Sofia. The only Congress of AIESEE-së in Tirana was organised in 2004. See the official page www.aieese.org: *Une année plus tard, le 23 avril 1963, devait être fondée à Bucarest, avec l'appui moral et financier de l'UNESCO, l'Association Internationale d'Etudes du Sud-Est Européen (AIESEE). Le Congrès d'études du Sud-Est européen a pris place à: 1. Sofia (1966); 2. Athènes (1970); 3. Bucarest (1974); 4. Ankara (1979); 5. Belgrade (1984); 6. Sofia (1989); 7. Thessalonique (1994); 8. Bucarest (1999); 9. Tirana (2004).*

⁴ For more see among others the studies of B. Fenik, *Digenis: epic and popular style in the Escorial version*, Heraclei, Cretae 1991; H. Grégoire, *Autour de l'épopée byzantine*, London 1975; E. Jeffreys, *Digenis Akritas Manuscript Z*, Ioanina 1983; *The Grottaferrata versión of Digenis Akrites: a reassessment*, në *New Approaches*, 1993.

⁵ Corinne Jouanno, *Digénis Akritas, le héros des frontières. Une épopée byzantine (version de Grottaferrata)*, Brepols 1998; H. Ahreweiler, *La frontière et les frontières de Byzance en Orient*, Actes du XIV^e Congrès International des Études Byzantines, Bucarest 1974; Paolo Odorico, *L'Akrüte: L'épopée byzantine de Digénis Akritas*, edit. *Anacharsis*, Toulouse 2002.

⁶ See King, Charles, *Queen of the Highlanders: Edith Durham in "the land of the living past"*, in *Times Literary Supplement*, August 4, 2000, p. 13-14.

⁷ Some of Franz Nopcsa's studies on Albanians are still unpublished. They are kept in the manuscript department of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. We mention five of them, which have attracted the attention of scholars: 1. *Albanien: die Bergstämme Nordalbanien und ihr Gewohnheitsrecht - Shqipëria, fiset e malësorëve të Veriut dhe e drejta zakonore e tyre* (stored under siganture *Ser. nov. 9392*), published partially in the book of Fatos Baxhaku and Karl Kaser *Die Stammesgesellschaften Nordalbanien, Berichte und Forschungen österreichischer Konsuln und Gelehrter, 1861-1917 - Shoqëria tribale në Shqipërinë e Veriut: raporte dhe kërkime të konsujve dhe dijetarëve austriakë në vitet 1861-1917*, Vienna, Cologne & Weimar 1996. 2. *Religiöse Anschauungen, Sitten und Gebräuche - Vëzhgime fetare, etike dhe zakonore* (stored in *Ser. nov. 9393*), with 242 pages, which contains studies on the Albanian folklore. 3. *Gedichte des Colez Marku 1895-1932 - Rapsoditë e Kolec Markut 1895-1932* (stored in *Ser. nov. 11912*), with 110 pages, contains 160 rhapsodies. 4. *Dialektstudie - Studime dialektore* (stored in *Ser. nov. 11918*), on the northwestern accents of Gegh, mainly Gegh of Shkodra, with 32 pages. 5. *Reisen in den Balkan - Udhëtime në Ballkan* (stored in *Ser.*

like to preserve the Albanian mountains as they are, Rose Lane wrote after visiting the Peaks of Shala almost at the same time as the two well-known homerologists⁸. Milman Parry had earned his Ph.D. at the Sorbonne University in 1926 with the monographic study *The Traditional Epithet in Homeric Poems*. Two years later he had published another monographic study *Formulas and metrics in Homer's poems*⁹. His research on the epic of the Albanians and Southern Slavs deepened theoretical knowledge, and united the two experiences of the two most famous universities in the world then and today: the Sorbonne and Harvard. Milman Parry and Albert B. Lord thus became the founders of the theory of orality, poetics, and the aesthetics of oral heritage, eventually separating the study of folklore from the study of literature.

Even Albert Lord was not merely a student in search of his passion. As early as 1936, before setting foot on the Albanian territory, he had started the *Homer and Huso* comparative study, which was published in four parts in the journal *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, respectively in issues number 67 (1936), 69 (1938), 79 (1948) and the latest article, with a slightly more descriptive title, *Homer, Parry and Huso*, published in 1950 in the *American Journal of Archeology*, no. 52¹⁰. A. Lord chose to make comparisons between Serbo-Croatian and ancient Greek oral traditions through Huso Husovitch (*Huso Husović*), a rhapsodist from Kolashini, who had been even the teacher of guslar Sali Uгла (Salja Uglanin), a part of whose repertoire was Albanian. Widely known to the people by the name of *Ćor Huso - Blind Hyso*, he was first surveyed by Milman Parry. Albert B. Lord apparently had noticed his resemblance to Homer - as well as I. Kadare in his novel. Through Blind Hyso, A. Lord targeted the Balkan rhapsodists he had surveyed: *Salja Uglan* and *Avdo Medjedović*, who he considered to be bilingual rhapsodists, but also other rhapsodists with a more limited repertoire: Bosniaks, Serbs, Montenegrins and Albanians.

Based on theoretical knowledge and research into traditional Balkan areas, M. Parry and A. Lord, in their efforts to find a scientific answer to the long centuries-old disagreement between *unitarians* and *separatists* over the authorship of the heroic poems of ancient Hellenism, had referred to that law which would later be clearly formulated by structuralists, according to which unwritten assets, upon taking a literary form, lose their inner magic and further make the life of a literary work. It is precisely because the twentieth century had found the legendary epic of the Albanians and the

nov. 9368), travel writings by F. Nopcsa about the same region where M. Parry and A. Lord conducted their research. For more see Robert Elsie, *The Viennese scholar who almost became King of Albania: Baron Franz Nopcsa and his contribution to Albanian studies*, in *East European Quarterly*, no. 23, p. 327-345.

⁸ Rose Lane, *The Peaks of Shala*, in *Sfinga* no. 3, 1999, p. 217.

⁹ See Milman Parry, *L'épithète traditionnelle dans Homère: essai sur un problème de style homérique*, edit. Société d'éditions *Les belles lettres*, 1928. In addition: *Les formules et la métrique d'Homère*, Paris 1928.

¹⁰ For more see the studies of Albert Lord: *Homer and Huso*, part I: *The Singer's Rests in Greek and Southslavic Heroic Song*, in *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, no. 67, 1936, p. 106-113; *Homer and Huso*, part II: *Narrative Inconsistencies in Homer and Oral Poetry*, *ibid*, no. 69, 1938, p. 439-445; *Homer and Huso*, part III: *Enjambment in Greek and Southslavic Heroic Song*, *ibid*, no. 79, 1948, p. 113-124; *Homer, Parry, and Huso*, in *American Journal of Archeology*, no. 52, 1950; *Composition by Theme in Homer and Southslavic Epos* in *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, no. 82, 1953, f. 71-80; *Tradition and the Oral Poet: Homer, Huso, and Avdo Medjedović*, in *Atti del convegno internazionale sul tema "La poesia epica e la sua formazione"*, ediz. Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Roma 1970, p. 13-28.

heroic songs of the Serbs and Bosnians, known as *junačke pjesme*, *pjesme braća hrnjici*, uncollected by their last bearers, who in European studies were also called *the last homerologists of the Balkans*, the two Harvard scholars turned to the Balkan hinterland, believing that through this living museum of the dimmed past they could discover the mechanism for the creation of the great ancient Greek poems, the Iliad and the Odyssey.

M. Parry and A. Lord had found that rhapsodists, depending on the audience, might either preserve or change something: they add verses or make mistakes and forget. *They do not always sing with the same words, they remove some of them, and add some others. Two rhapsodists cannot sing the same song they have heard from a third rhapsodist, not neither the rhapsodist himself.* In addition to cliché formulas, travelling idioms, the singer can adapt the rhapsody verses, preserving their motive.

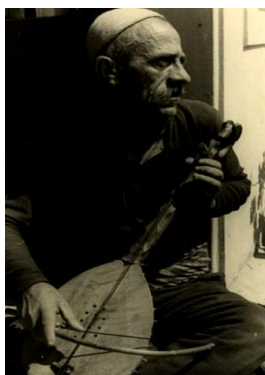


Photo of Avdo Medjedović, a bilingual rhapsodist, considered by Albert Lord "a veritable Homer". Right, photo of the Albanian rhapsodist from Novi Pazar with only one eye Sulejman Makić: "a one-eyed Albanian singer". Milman Parry Collection, Library of Harvard University.

It is based on this concept, which attaches to the Albanian area the fate to be *la seule région sur la planète où l'on produise encore un matériau poétique similaire à celui d'Homère*¹¹, that the plot is built in the novel *The File On Homer* by Ismail Kadare, later published under the title *H File*.

In 1937, Albert Lord traveled through northern Albania and stayed in Kukës, Shkodra, Bogë, Theth, Obot and Tropojë, where he collected a corpus of about a hundred legendary and historical heroic songs, including a song on Bajram Curri. This collection of his was enriched with more bearers, motifs and subjects during his second expedition, when he returned to the Balkans during World War II. The interest of Albert Lord on Albanian songs was increased even more by bilingual rhapsods.

In Novi Pazar, he writes, *I found a Muslim, Salih Ugljan, who had grown up in a widely bilingual area of southern Serbia. He could sing in both Serbian and Albanian. As such, I hope to bring clear evidence of the mutual transmission of songs between peoples who speak different languages*¹². In the collection of Parry-Lord there are 53 songs pertaining to the legendary heroic epic, 4 ballads, 18 historical epic songs and 2

¹¹ Ismail Kadare, *Le Dossier H.*, edit. Fayard, Paris 1989, p. 52 (translated by Jusuf Vrioni).

¹² Albert Lord, *The Singer of the Tales*, edit. Harvard University Press, 2000, p. 15.

lyrical songs. They contain a total of 22,645 verses. Of these, 20,445 verses belong to the cycle of the Kreshnik Songs.

II.

For a long time, the Milman Parry Collection, preserved at the Harvard University's Library, along with two collections of Albert Lord, one of 1937 and the other of 1950, have been considered not accessible to Albanian knowledge, due to the exclusive relations between Tirana and Washington, also expressed through the then constitution. But there were many scholars who knew what this collection meant for the Albanian world. Fan Noli should have known about Milman Parry's collection, because his student Albert Lord got the permission to travel through the regions of Northern Albania for this purpose, exactly from his friend F. Konica. But Noli, who did not forget to take an interest in the Codex of Berat, has left no trace of interest in the collection of Albanian heroic songs.

jpt 5 shk 1936. At Scutari (Shkoder)
 of Marku Katolik
 kala. Banao ne Shkoder rjez 49.
 nish drit me shkrues e me kendues
 shkollë nish ka ba.
 Kanga e Ali Pasha Gasinjë morre prej Bano.
 Kanga e Gjyn Lehas
 Kanga e Lek Jakinit

Dorëshkrim No. 116
 Kanga e Mujës e Halilit
 Kol Marku
 (jallam + o sue)
 (habotaja - kape)
 (argjet + shohi)

"Aman, i ka than Babes" jash lumin Zot!
 me ma gjet rje gjet per mejdan,
 edhe me ma gjet rje shpat per mejdan,
 se unë me qet me ju due me dal.
 "Druë me qet bab, qe po me jete,
 te pa ganat te njerim qe po me lan."
 "Hast anej kerpule kurros!
 Jher mejdan Zot! makt te ka fal,
 per me ndajt cardak ne cardak,
 e me path shkat e fut Bineso Jushineso,
 e ma te fortin Kunan e Desdarit.
 Kerp me plax djallit i ka ra.
 n'ode te argja ka rojt.
 "Aman, i ka than Anjor" jash lumin Zot!
 me ma gjet rje gjet per mejdan,
 me ma gjet rje shpate per mejdan,
 se unë me qet me ju due me dal,
 e druë me qet, argje, qe po me jete,

jallam ne kambë Mujës o sue,
 e ka manë puchton habotaja,
 dhe me puchte Mujja ka qete,
 edhe te shpija argjet i bashkijme,
 edhe u ka dhan me hangor e me pij,
 dhe po kalljor me qet duem me dal.
 "Kerje shka bani Ameri i Mujjet"
 si shtate rjet tjera s'ke pas,
 n'ode te Mujja ka shkue.

A legendary Albanian heroic rhapsody collected and transcribed by Albert Lord: "Kanga e Mujës e Halilit", listened and recorded from Kol Marku, Shkodër 1937. Albert P. Lord Collection, Library of Harvard University.

It is inexplicable why scholars such as Arshi Pipa and Stavro Skendi, who dealt seriously the Albanian epic verse, but also Bardhyl Pogoni, Nikola Pano, Isuf Luzaj and Peter Prifti, who lived in the US and were involved in philological studies; not to mention Ernest Koliqi and Martin Camaj, who had grown up in the epic region; or Karl Gurakuqi and Giuseppe Valentini, who had collected ancient epics themselves, never paid attention to these collections. All of them not only knew about the collection of Albanian epic folk poems, but also had direct acquaintance with Albert Lord. As the American Observer writes on May 1-2, 1982, on the 100th anniversary of the birth of Fan Noli, commemorated by the association founded by Archbishop Theofan Noli, A. Lord was not only present, but he delivered a Harvardian Salute to another Harvardian: *The ceremonies began with a symposium on Saturday, May 1, 1982, at the Ralph Waldo*

Emerson Hall on Harvard University campus. The day of long talks and discussions began with an introductory speech by prof. Albert Lord of Harvard University, who delivered the welcoming speech. After the Lord's speech, the audience of over 150 people heard praises from the short introductions by three other people: Arthur Liolin, chancellor of the Albanian Orthodox Archdiocese; Anthony Athanas, owner of a famous restaurant and honorary president of the Noli Association, and dr. Nicholas Pano, President of the Association of Albanian Studies. The first speaker was Arshi Pipa from the University of Minnesota. He presented a sharp discourse on "Noli as a national and international figure"¹³.

Text No.32
Mešedović
Avdo
May 23, 1950
recorded
Sept 74 (4-7)

P R I V A N J E I

MI: Kako se zoveš? **Avdo:** Avdo Mešedović. **MI:** A koliko si star?
Avdo: Skoro osamdeset. **MI:** Dobro Avdo. Je li pantiš ti hiljadu devet
sto trideset i pete godine kada si snimao pesme? **Avdo:** Pantin dobro.
MI: Pantiš dobro. A jesu li dolazio od tada, od hiljadu devet sto
trijest pete pa do danas u Bijelo Polje? **Avdo:** Jesam. **MI:** Često?
Avdo: Često do tr.. do čestrate, pa od čestrate slabo. **MI:** Pa koliko
si u zadnje vreme bio? **Avdo:** Ina dvije godine; nasad; šes' puta sam
iš'o. **MI:** Svega šest? **Avdo:** Svega šes'. **MI:** A nisi nigde putovao
okolo; van Bijelog Polja? **Avdo:** Jesam; čestrate osme bije u bolnicu,
operaciju od.. od bruha. **MI:** Aha! A gde si išao onda? **Avdo:** U Berane.
MI: A u Berane. To je najdalje? **Avdo:** Najdalje to. **MI:** Aha. I onda...
Avdo: Jesam, jesam prvije' godina iš'o i po Bosni, po Brčkovu. Inam
tamo sestru unuku. Umrle je sad; imam sestriče, Ljuce; otud' su. Te kod
nji' sam išao na obl..na 'bilasak. Bilq.. I sad su ne zvali, pa sad
nijesam kadar. A pos.. to je bilo prvo vrijeme; šes..trijest pete; dvajes
osme, dva pu' sam iš'o u Brčko, u Bosni, i pro'ostije sam i u Srbiju,
u Pazari; u palan.. ali proš; od čestres... od čestrate ovamo nijesam
nikud. **MI:** Dobro, Avdo, a da li si pevao posle hiljadu devet sto
trijest' pete godine često? U gusle; ovako; gudio? **Avdo:** Jesam...
jesam; pevao. Skupi se tako ljudi i monaka kod kuće, a u kafanama
nijesam. **MI:** Snaži više nisi po kafanama pevao. **Avdo:** Al' Nijesam;
nijesam; kako su otišli, od trijest pete ovamo; nijesam. **MI:** Dobro,
a da li sada još uvek pevaš? **Avdo:** Kako? **MI:** Da li' gudih us gusle
i pevaš? **Avdo:** Gudim, al' čekad; kod kuće, a na.. nigde ne gudim na
drugo mesto. **MI:** Da, al' možeš da mi kažeš, Avdo; koliko još znaš pesama?
Avdo: Pa to se ide naročito kad se uzmu gusli u šake, pa se počne pevati;
ovu pevan a onamo ni dođe druga; kao sad nešto se piše a .. iziše

From Albert Lord's scientific interview with the bilingual rhapsodists Avdo Mešedović.

To the Albanian-American scholar Stavro Skendi, as he himself affirms in the introduction of his dissertation *Albanian and South Slavic Oral Epic Poetry*, Albert Lord himself had made available for his research several volumes of rhapsodies from the famous collection produced by M. Parry and himself which were kept at the Harvard University library¹⁴. Stavro Skendi relied heavily on the theory of orality, on M. Parry

¹³ Compare also the Albanian publication of this analytical report in Shqiptarja.com, October 20, 2013.

¹⁴ I expressed my consideration and thanks to all the scholars: Professors Ernest J. Simmons, Gojko Ružičić and Karl Menges - all three members of the Doctoral Commission - for the care with which they read the

and A. Lord's concept of solid strolling formulas, devoting a chapter to this issue, Verses and Formulas¹⁵. But he did not publish any from the Albanian rhapsodies collected by them. And today, the only unpublished treasure from the collection of M. Parry and A. Lord is that of Albanian verses.

Very late, only after the 1990s, for the first time an interest arises in the collection of Albanian songs of Parry-Lord by scholars of the new Albanian diaspora in the USA¹⁶. In his study of the structure and genres of Albanian folk songs, referring at least once to the study of Albert Lord, he shows that he knows his theoretical work and the collection of heroic songs of the South Slavs.¹⁷

Along with the names of two American scholars, were lost in the dark the names of their two collaborators in the Albania of the kingdom period, Murat Paci and Qemal Hoxha; one from Gjakova Highlands and the other from Luma.¹⁸ The two tribunes of Albanian research in the West, both strongly linked to the tradition of collecting folk rhapsodies and to the environment where they are preserved: the magazine *Shëjzat* and the Albanian Catholic Bulletin, the first one published in Italy and the latter in the US (since 1979 without interruption), were never attentive to the existence of the collection of legendary Albanian heroic songs at Harvard.

Serbian and Croatian songs, Bosnian and Muslim songs, have been published decades ago in four volumes prepared by Albert Lord and two later on by David E. Bynum, with the joint title *Serbo-Croatian Heroic Songs*¹⁹, some of them bilingually. Two volumes of *Srpsko-hrvatske junačke pjesme* of the Parry-Lord collection were published in 1954 by Harvard University Press in Novi Pazar. The earliest of the bilingual editions of Serbo-Croatian heroic songs is noted in 1951. Serbo-Croatian songs were very lucky, because in this volume they were not only published under the auspices of Albert Lord, but also accompanied by musical transcripts of the well-known Hungarian composer Béla Bartók²⁰.

manuscript and for their invaluable advice; professor Albert B. Lord of Harvard University, who was kind enough to make some volumes of the Parry collection available to me. Stavro Skendi, Albanian and South Slavic Oral Epic Poetry, IDK publications, no year of publication, Tirana, p. 9. See also the publication in the original language: Albanian and South Slavic Oral Epic Poetry, edit. American Folklore Society, Philadelphia 1954.

¹⁵Idem, f. 235-273.

With all our research efforts, we found nothing published earlier than a notice of Nik Leshaj, entitled *The Milman Parry Collection at Harvard University: The Albanian Epic at Harvard from 72 years ago, but of which many do not know about, Zemra Shqiptare, September 10, 2008*.

¹⁷Arshi Pipa, Albanian Folk Verse: Structure and Genre, edit. Harrassowitz, 1978, p. 136.

¹⁸For the profile of these two associates, for their correspondence with Albert Lord and for their contributions as connoisseurs of the legendary heroic epic and its bearers see also: Isa Halilaj, Qamil Hoxha, Murat Paci, collaborators of Albert Bates Lord: an early friendship with Harvard University in Cambridge, USA, in *Ndryshe*, no. 968, July 7, 2009, p. 14-15.

¹⁹Albert B. Lord (edit. And translated by): *Serbo-Croatian Heroic Songs: Weddings of Smailagić Meho*, volume III, compiled by Milman Parry, January 1974; David E. Bynum (edit. and translated by), *Croatian Heroic Songs: Bijelo Polje, Three Texts from Avdo Mededović: The Wedding of Vlahinjić Alija Osambeg Delibegović Pavicević Luka*, compiled by Milman Parry, volume 6, October 1980; David E. Bynum (edit. and translated by), *Croatian Heroic Songs, Bihać Krajina - Epics from Bihać, Cazin, and Kulen*, volume 14, 1980.

²⁰Albert Lord & Béla Bartók (edit. and transl.), *Serbo-Croatian Folk Songs*, Columbia University Press, New York 1951.

I. Kadare's novel deserves credit for making known for the first time the existence of the mission of M. Parry and A. Lord and their collection of legendary epic songs in the Harvard library, comprising at least 100 motifs collected in the Albanian language. Four of the bilingual lute players, out of the five that were recorded by Albert Lord, despite singing these heroic songs in two languages, with lute and gusla, in Albanian and Serbo-Croatian, are identified as Albanians: Salih Ugljanin (Ugla), Djemal Zogić (Zogaj), Sulejman Makić (Makaj) and Alija Fjuljanin (Fulaj)²¹.

III.

The comparison between the two homerologists: as protagonists of a scientific initiative that focused on the Western Balkans hinterland, and as literary characters in Kadare's novel, makes it possible to observe constrains and escapes from each other, standing face to face with each other, each with his own life. We are Homerists, writes Max Roth in his diary on one of the short days of stay in the boreal regions of Albania. *We repeat every day, as if to remind ourselves that we did not come here to study the Albanian epic, but for the Homeric puzzle.* And this was the scientific mission of the two Harvard scientists, who, for the sake of truth, never managed to travel together in the Balkans, because in 1935 M. Parry had passed away, and the first arrival of A. Lord is recorded in 1937. The novel is part of the Trojan cycle, one of the longest cycles in Kadare's work, which would also be joined by the Monster, Laokoont, A Boring Season at Olympus, Aeschylus, this Great Loser. But equally it cannot be separated from the novels of the North, or the cycle on Kosovo, where are joined The Loss of the Balkans People in Fushë-Kosovë in 1389, the In-laws are Frozen, Broken April, among many essayistic and journalistic works. This dualistic belonging, as a work between two well-known cycles of the work of I. Kadare, inevitably leads to the question whether on the novel A File on Homer the essence of the scientific mission of the two expeditions of Harvard University is hidden, to discover the secret of the continuity of a literary key text through the turbulent currents of time²², differentiating, like in an palimpsest, the levels of authorship, including those levels of authorship usually underestimated, like the copier's own input, of the scribe (scribae): *Il copista come autore* (Luciano Canfora, Sellerio editore, Palermo 2002).

In comparative view and mutual light, the Irishmen of Kadare's novel and the two Harvard scholars, as is to be expected in a literary work, in many respects diverge from each other. Their basic goal was the Homeric question. Their hope was that, by analogy with a living epic verse, regardless whether they belonged to the South Slavs or the Albanians, to discover how they were created, how they were codified, how Homeric poems were preserved and inherited. Essentially, this was the question of the difference between Homer at source and Homer known to mankind through texts copied by Alexandrian school writers. Basically, this is the problem of the difference between

²¹ John Kolsti, *The bilingual singer, a study of Albanian and Serbo-Croatian oral epic traditions*, University of Texas in Austin, New York 1990.

²² Compare Gilles De Rapper, *Ismail Kadaré et l'ethnologie albanaise de la seconde moitié du XXe siècle*, në *Lectures d'Ismail Kadaré*, Presses universitaires de Paris Ouest, 2011, p. 43-70.

poet and the rhapsode, between author and authorship, between written culture and oral culture²³.

This issue, in Kadare's novel, although it remains primary, is rivaled by another question: Which epic can serve to answer Homeric puzzle - the epic of the Albanians or the epic of the Slavs? Which of them is the most original and most ancient? Which of them lives on the original way of life and which is motivated by the present? Which aedes are fatally associated with rhapsody, as is every human being fatally associated with the mother tongue, and who are court singers, Sarajevo singers, mercenary singers, following requests and payment? Thus, the view of two Harvard scholars that the epics of the peoples of the Balkans: of the Paleo-Balkan peoples and of later peoples, can serve to illuminate the historical protagonism of their creators and bearers, in a way changes register, taking on the character of an issue of antagonism, marked by the conflict of languages within the same bard, and somewhat more by the northern Albanian-Slavic conflict. If the first question couples the novel with the Trojan cycle, the second question joins it with the northern cycle, the Kosovo cycle, and this motivates the changes too.

As for the process of codification, which constitutes the essential node of the Homeric question, and which is identified with the passage from Homer's oral poems to the texts copied by Alexandrian scribes, which is a matter of the relationship between the author and the copyist, in Kadare's novel it takes on the character of conflict between the carrier and the technique, between rhapsody and new recording equipment²⁴. Thus, the technique replaces the scribe and the concept of authorship almost disappears.

Unlike the American scholars Milkma Parry and Albert B. Lord, who through the oral tradition of Albanians, Serbs and Bosniaks, but especially through bilingual populations, such as that of Sandzak, wanted to discover what came from Homer himself and which was the merit of the scribes of the Alexandrian school in the great heroic poems Iliad and Odyssey, which is the core of the debate between the Unitarians (defenders of the first author) and the separatists (advocates of scribes, codifiers), Kadare focuses on the ethno-typical code of Albanian rhapsode (as opposed to Slavic rhapsodes, who sing at parties, in courts, for a fee, etc.). And so, the file on Homer, little by little, changes scale again, turning into a file on the complex relations and historical antagonisms of the Albanians and the South Slavs. In the final edition this recent update becomes even more noticeable.

Another deviation of the characters of Kadare's novel from symmetry with the historical protagonists, has to do with the romantic fascination of the two Irishmen, Max Roth and Willy Norton, with the Albanian ethno-traditional world. This fascination is also expressed in their bias towards the Albanian chanter, who stand out from the Serbs and Bosniaks for their nobility, for their pure connection with the song and the tradition. This is not proven by the ratio of the collected songs in their collections. Albanian rhapsody is the last in terms of numbers and takes on some importance mainly when the song is bilingual. The order of priorities in the Parry-Lord

²³ See Dominique Casajus, *L'aède et le troubadour, essai sur la oral tradition*, CNRS Éditions, Paris 2012.

²⁴ Compare Galia Valtchinova, *Ismail Kadare's "The H-File" and the Making of the Homeric Verse. Variations on the Works and Lives of Milman Parry and Albert Lord*, in *Albanian Identities. Myth and History* (ed. St. Schwander Sievers and Berndt J. Fischer), Hurst, London 2002, p. 104-114.

scientific mission project is: the Homeric question, the epic of the South Slavs, and most recently, the Albanian epic. Even their studies are more oriented towards the comparison between the Slavic epic and the Hellenic one²⁵. The two Americans focused their attention on Serbo-Croatian songs, because they did not know Albanian: Albert Lord began learning Albanian in the last two months of his first expedition, in 1937, when he returned to the Balkans and made a trip from Shkodra to Kukës.²⁶

There is only one study by A. Lord dedicated to the Albanian epic verse in comparison with the Serbo-Croatian one, entitled *The Battle of Kosovo in Albanian and Serbo-Croatian Oral Epic Songs* and published in the collection of articles named *Studies on Kosova* prepared by Arshi Pipa and Sami Repishti, and published by Columbia University Press in 1984 (pp. 65-83).

It can be argued that, while Albert B. Lord and Milman Parry separated the tradition of European Albanology from late Romanticism, as did the British anthropologist Margaret Hasluck too, in I. Kadare's *A File on Homer*, occurs a fussless return of past romanticism, in the form of the glorification of the archaic values of the oral tradition as expressions of antiquity and as signs of possible connection with the civilization of ancient Greece. Scholars have rightly seen a resemblance between Martin Shkreli, a character who is the symbol of a generation raised with ethnic and, to some extent, romantic consciousness among Kosovo Albanians in the novel *The In-laws are Frozen*, with the characters of Max Roth and Willy Norton at *A File on Homer* (H File). Titles of his studies: Onomastics of the Albanian epic verses, Albanian Myths, Aeschylus and the Albanian Canon Law, Toponymy of Kosovo According to Ecclesiastical Chronicles, are quite similar to the titles of European romantics' studies who visited Albania in the first half of the twentieth century²⁷.

This is the ideal albanologist, who sees the Albanian world as the worthiest to explain the puzzles of antiquity. Not only George G. Byron of Alexandre Dumas, but also Franz Nopcsa and Edith Durham; not only Maximilian Lambertz and Norbert Jokl, but also Max Roth and Martin Shkreli with his expedition companion Willy Norton, who respond to A. Lord and M. Parry, are for the writer middlemen for his country's image to the West.

From viewpoint of thought evolution, the publication of the novel *A File on Homer* marks the final transition from the actualizing and to some extent demonizing use of

²⁵From Albert Lord's comparative studies of the South Slavic epics and the Homeric epic we highlight: *Composition by Theme in Homer and South Slavic Epos*, published in *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, no. 82, 1951, p. 71-80; *Homeric Echoes in Bihać*, published in *Zbornik za narodni život i običaje južnih slavena*, nr. 40, 1962, p. 313-320; *An Example of Homeric Qualities of Repetition in Medjedović's "Smilagić Meho"*, published in *Serta Slavica Aloisii Schmaus: Gedenkschrift für Alois Schmaus* (ed. Wolfgang Gesemann), Rudolf Trofenik, Muenchen 1971, p. 458-464; *The Heroic Tradition of Greek Epic and Ballad: Continuity and Change*, published in *Hellenism and the First Greek War of Liberation (1821-1830): Continuity and Change* (ed. Nikiforos Diamandouros), Institute for Balkan Studies, Thessaloniki 1976, p. 79-94; *Tradition and Innovation in Balkan Epic: From Heracles and Theseus to Digenis Akritas and Marko*, published in *Revue des études sud-est européennes*, no. 17, Bucharest 1980, p. 195-212; *The Kalevala, the South Slavic Epics, and Homer, The Heroic Process: Form, Function, and Fantasy in Folk Epic*, edit. Glendale Press, Dublin 1987, p. 293-324.

²⁶István Schütz, *Where did they start from and where did they return: some thoughts and remarks about the origin of the Cycle of Frontier Warriors*, in *Perla*, no. 4, 2006, p. 59-69.

²⁷Gilles de Rapper, Ismail Kadaré et l'ethnologie albanaise de la seconde moitié du XXe siècle, në *Lectures d'Ismail Kadaré*, Presses universitaires de Paris Ouest, 2011, p. 43-70.

the Trojan myth, which in Kadare's early work symbolized betrayal (The Monster, the Trojan Horse, Troy, Laocoön), to the myth of sympathy, still maintaining a mild opposition between the ancient Greek (Anteus in the *Twilight of the Steppe Gods*) and contemporary Greece, which, despite the already publication of *Two Friendly Peoples* book by E. Hoxha, still remained somewhat distant, as did the entire Western world.

But has Kadare modified history in his work? The author has not denied that he was driven by the story of the two scholars to write this novel. Of course, there are important differences, relating to the luxury of free and unconditional positioning of literature towards history, but there are none such that turn *history upside down*. There is nothing true in the assertion that Albert Lord and Milman Parry thought of the Ottoman context *as decisive in producing circumstances that made possible oral survival* of Balkan epic verses. Parry and Lord were theorists of orality and as such blessed whatever circumstances had led to the survival of the old mechanism. It can hardly ever be proven that Kadare *has avoided the Ottoman context*, especially with the goal of reorienting the reading of the historical and prehistoric messages of the epic. As for the judgement that he has broken the unity of this epic tradition that belongs to both parties, the *Serbs and Albanians*, and has '*rejoined*' an original *Greco-Illyrian oneness of the epic by nationalizing not only the artists but the epic itself*, which is presented as a great Albanian national testament legitimized by Illyrian roots, while according to the two scholars in question, if we will talk about the origins of this epic, it is Slavo-Muslim; this is an idea that can never come from the work of the author nor from the studies and research of the two Harvard missionaries²⁸. The truth is that in his novel Kadare is in search of antiquity, but not of Illyrianity, because these two notions are contradictory to each other: Illyrianity arrives till the VII-VIII century A.D, while antiquity goes back to Homeric times.



Photo of the bilingual rhapsode Sali Uglja (Salja Uglanin) associated with the file prepared by A. Lord.

²⁸ See Fatos Lubonja, *Albania: between identity mystifications and reality*, lecture held at the University of Bari in the seminar on: "Adriatic Identities", October 2009. And cf. Stavro Skendi: *Albanian and the South Slavic Oral Epic Poetry (Albanian and southern Slavic epic poetry, not Albanian and South Slavic oral epic poetry, as quoted by the author, Fatos Lubonja, in art. Cit. Here), USA, Philadelphia 1954.*



Montenegrin gusla (gudalo), photo of Albert Lord (associated with the file prepared by him).

Modification of history, which cannot be excluded from any act of literary creation, does not have a decisive relation with that of identity definition in relation to the other, the enemy. I. Kadare was left with the task to face a story that had been written out from a long time in the literature and science of the South Slavs. It is true that Albert Lord, in the late 1950s, wrote, commenting on the phenomenon of antagonisms of the Balkans, that the fever of nationalism in the nineteenth century led to the use of oral epics for nationalist propaganda; thus, the hero was born as a 'national' hero, and the poems themselves were labeled as "national" epic; defining oral epic as "national" is sadly as untrue as it is a diabolical deception²⁹. But Albert Lord makes this announcement not for Albanian science, nor for I. Kadare's novel, which would come much later, but for Serbian science and its abusive term of ambiguity: *narodno*, *narodnoje*, which can be equated with *popular*, but also meaning *national*. In this case it turns out that not history, but the opinion of Albert Lord has been turned upside down. For the same reason, the citation of the work of Stavro Skendi (1954), who did nothing to publish the Albanian collection of Parry-Lord, as an argument for the *expected modification of history* by the writer I. Kadare in his novel *A File on Homer* (1980), can be considered a manipulation of references.

²⁹Galia Valtchinova, *Ismail Kadare's Th H-file and the Making of Homeric Verse: Variations on the work and Lives of Milman Parry and Albert Lord*, Hurst & Company, London 2002, p. 104). Also, Ismail Kadare's *H. File and the Creation of Homeric Verses: Thoughts on the Work and Life of Milman Parry and Albert Lord*, in *Perpjekja*, no. 15-16, Tirana 1999, p. 172.

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MYTHOLOGY FIGURES IN THE ALBANIAN FOLK EPICS AND THE PROPOSAL FOR AN ALTERNATIVE ROUTE OF THEIR ARRIVAL IN EPOS

Abstract

While considering mythology as a system of symbols, the paper deals not only with the development stages of mythological systems and its elements as mythographic inventory, but it sheds light on some particular characters of classical mythology found into the body of Albanian epic traditional songs. Through several arguments, the paper explores mythological paradigms, focusing particularly on common heroes in conterminous cultures and looks at the motives, background, and traditions of epic traditional songs, which travelled round the region. Many of the songs' motifs may have originated elsewhere, but they are also found in the Albanian cultural area. Alongside the characters and cultural heroes of Homeric myths in the Albanian epic songs and fairy tales too, there are also some other arguments about the myths originating from the theater or myths inspired by theater motifs. This separation of "theatrical myths" from "Homeric myths" buttress the idea that in addition to singer-bards and itinerant-nomadic rhapsodist, the theater played also a placental role in feeding up and spreading out ancient myths in Albanian epic songs and in oral fairy tales. Among many other cases, there is the one regarding the presence of a variant of the Medea's myth in epic songs, typically sung in the Northern Albania. Besides the well-known ways of peoples' emigrating and "rhapsōidos", the article proposes at the same time other ways of myths' migration away from the known place of creation and their possible arrival in the Albanian Epos, while also highlighting the role of theater and theatrical repertoire.

Keywords: mythology, epic songs, cultural anthropology, Homeric myths, journey of myths, common cultural heroes, theatrical myths

Introduction

The tendency to examine myths and mythical tales devoid of the magical cloak of "nature allegories" or of the "Platonian reality" may be observed since the early European writing tradition.

Starting with Plato (to continue further with the scientific rationalization and then with the philosophical thought of the 20th century, according to which everything that may be named should exist beforehand, or it should have a kind of "existence" even though such a "being" does not result in existence) the request to understand a little

more of the legend has encouraged the finding of the “live sense of reality” even in the myths and mythologies of different cultures.

The starting point on this special existence gave to Bertrand Russell the reason to express belief not only in what we commonly perceive as real, but also in the existence of “numbers, Homeric gods, chimeras, four dimensional spaces and imaginary beings”, part of which is also the myths’ collection.

While not giving up from his point of view which may be summarized in the statement: “a noun is meaningful only if what it names exists”, Bertrand Russell offered an instrument to address mythological realities as existing beings because “if they were not such, we would not be able to make any proposal about them.” (Russell 2010, 455-456).

This special area of accepting myth as “an existing being” – and thanks to this fact even the acceptance of the possibility for a “new proposal” – attracts schools and scholars who consider the mythical text as a script with generalizing acts, within the variants of which are encountered many changes, deviations, distinctions and transformations.

In such creations within “illo tempore”, as an undesignated time of the past, the mythical scenario or imagination suffers historical and cultural changes not only within a culture, but also while carried in other hosting territories and cultures.

Amongst them there are authors who consider myth as a hypo text, whereas its deriving text is studied as a hypertext linked to a mythical scheme. In such definitions, which are circumscribed to the myth anatomy, there are meeting points with the term “mytheme” that Claude Lévi-Strauss uses for the myth while clarifying that apart from its features the myth has a stable kernel, which cannot be disintegrated, which is joined by everything else the myth gravity attracts in the form of fragments or survived variants from previous structures of the myth itself.

What for Claude Lévi-Strauss were mytheme, for Boris Thomashefsky in his study *Thematics* published in 1925 are called invariants. Both have the tendency to make us consider myth as a nomad system in relation to various cultures which exchange themes, fables, motifs, and characters with prime names or renamed ones.

To the above elements is also added language with artistic function and the images that the myth uses to justify the heteroglossia principle, a term used by Mikhail Bakhtin in the context of language as a social-political entity “which allows not only the novel genre, but also mythology to appear as real history of fictionalized social realities.” (Bakhtin 1981, 351-371).

The fact that the study of mythology has taken its place since a long time now among special disciplines of human sciences, elaborating the features of cultures that have displayed the explanation of realities through the metaphoric language thanks to which they interpreted, among others, even their psycho-social conditions, testifies that myths have already ensured their existence, even though they do not refer to the fundamental and final truth as some other disciplines attempt to do.

However, related to myths, mythology and whatever arrives as their survivals in the form of fragments or variants, Paul Ricoeur emphasizes that apart from affirming their being and existence, the greatest need of the literary myth is not simply its anatomic analysis, but at the same time the need for demythologization. Ricoeur wanted for the

myth to be the explainer of the world, of the happenings, of the history, of fate and routine of the everyday of ceremonials.

What is proposed is the use of mythology and its main myths in the function of Dedalus's wings which help us to find an exit route from the maze of questions and doubts, thus, to express "the consciousness that man has had about himself in relation to the foundation and the limit of his existence." (Ricoeur 1974, 391).

Arrived in this form, myths also appear as symbols of the essential unit of the spiritual and the natural within life and development of mankind in general, while accepting the myth's polymorphs or its recontextualizations in time as it has often happened.

A distinguished tendency is noticed in Albert Camus's retaking of the Myth of Sisyphus who, among other things, informs us on the evolutionary phases that can occur within a myth thanks to the social developments and the needs that societies have to deconstruct myth, to come with its re-interpretations.

While addressing myth cases, dreams and mysteries and their meeting points among contemporary beliefs and archaic realities, Mircea Eliade states that any short story related to what happened in the sacred epoch of the start is nothing but a variant of the archetypal history to be narrated as how the world is constructed and that in early societies there is an obvious existence of the relation between myth and divine reality, considered as the genesis truth. (Eliade 1975, 27-56).

Such viewpoints of myths and mythology in general arrive as an invitation or impulse to start a dialogue or to approach myths as forms of parallel history which attempt to be more than just a register or inventory of supernatural events. On the other hand, the myths itself present strong independence towards events such as phenomena and not always can be directly linked to the history as such.

Myths remain part of a closed system, where evolution and genealogy are completed, where heroes are classified and events are codified, leaving open the ways for new and continuous interpretations. Thanks to such developments, in the myths' catalogue we may find fragments of motifs, *motërzime* (alternative of the same), variants, partial or complete similarities, but it is not possible to encounter completely new and unknown arrivals anymore, with regards to the pantheon with other Gods and mythic-cultural heroes.

Apart from wanting the myth to explain the world and beyond the myth's independent power, in his work *Wild Mind*, Claude Lévi-Strauss suggests an indirect way believing that the myths travel within the same route and that they tell the bifurcated story of the same civilization which needs to self-describe.

According to him "the gap that exists in our mind, up to a certain extent, between mythology and history may probably be surpassed by studying the events that are conceived not entirely separately, but as a continuation of mythology" (Lévi-Strauss 2001, 18). This has been supported and opposed even by those who support the "proto mythology" thesis which brings *motërzime* (variants) in each culture, as well as a universalizing "mono mythology".

However, not always the mentioning of *Heracles/Hercules* and his braveries must be necessary linked to a designated historical epoch or to any natural phenomenon

which extinguished sea monsters, any special flying giant or flood that happened in nature, but it is also found in literature.

Referring to Rudolf Bultmann, the arguments lead us to the idea that myth interpretation is an open reading system, it transforms the presence of myths in raw material for that form of thought which is elaborated in anthropological, linguistic, literary and psychological terms as well as for other elaborations in existential terms. (Bultmann 1985, 9)

Therefore, confronted with a lack of enriching the mythic inventory with new characters and new events, myth scholars, from different schools and scientific research methods insist to find a link both between real events and among “allegory myths” to understand what is beyond *muthoi* and *logoi* of the first poets and history writers, to extend thus the internal circles of interpretation.

Such code-words in the use of Homer, Hesiod, Parmenides, and Pindar, or words with deformed or awry meanings, such as *skolioi*, with deceptive meaning such as *aimulioi*, pure words such as *catharoi* *logois*, word-language/true histories such as *logos alathes* or telling words for fictitious stories/false such as *pseudea*, cannot be explained by people but only by Muses, which had the power and ability to recognize a true word or speech from a false, fictitious or deformed one. (Brisson 2000, 46-47)

According to Çabej, it seems that in such point of views the myth-reality relation, the same as foreign influences-domestic treasure relation *which either cross or eliminate each other*, have been active.

From here new sources of other interpretations arise not only on the crosscut motifs, on the present *motërzime* (variants) or on those which were extinguished to leave some trace or mythic fossil behind, but even on timeless motifs, historical motifs related to those and separately on the way or migration routes of myths from their conceiving country towards other areas of the region or beyond that.

Homeric myth characters in the Albanian epics and tale

For more than 100 years scientific research in the field of Albanology has shed light extending the view not only towards the presence of figures, subject matter and style of Albanian folk poetry and the special relation of motifs and characters in the neighbor peoples' tales plot, but also on the analysis of the archetypal myth themes which are found scattered both in the narratives created in Albanian language and in the other Balkan countries' culture.

A summarized register or systematized bibliography is present thanks to the study *On the genesis of Albanian language*. (Çabej 1939, 149-180). In that study Eqrem Çabej summarized an important part of the arrivals, thesis, and knowledge of the time related to the study of myths, offering through it an anthology of the scientific thought on the relations between the literary folk creativity, ancient myths, and their spread in Albania and in the Balkans.

To the early observations of Gerog Hahn on the characters and common motifs between Greek and Albanian tales, in the text are attached also the remarks of Franz Nopsca on the presence of the mythical figure of *Polyphemus* in Albanian creative works.

Years later, the data was enriched even with other texts and research from Bernardin Palaj and Rrok Gurashi. Such studies provide an affirmative answer to the question “Is there real mythology among our mountains?” (Palaj dhe Gurashi 1941, 3-5).

In the meantime, it also mentions that the mythological subject matter was used not only by the itinerant bards, but also by the Albanian cultivated poets. At the time the poets’ texts were written, myths were encountered and honored as still living among the *bjeshkë* (Albanian mountains) as witnessed by the collectors of *Kreshniks*¹’ songs during the years 1930.

In our land, in songs, in variants or “mythological comparisons”, as Kolë Ashta calls them in the paper entitled *Rmuesi i shpirtit shqiptár*, published in the journal “*Shkëndia*” of the year 1941 and dedicated to P. Shtjefën Gjeçovi, “is firstly cradled the peoples’ ancient mythology.” Writing about the contributions of Gjeçovi in ethnography, the author mentions even Gods and firsthand mythological figures, such as Chronos, Rea, Titans, Zeus, by presenting the purpose of Gjeçovi to testify that such “mythological beings still live among the mountainous people.” (Ashta 1941, 59).

The Polyphemus figure is also found in the epic songs of the Albanians as it is also elaborated in the paper entitled “*Rreth Kishës s'Abatit e Fisit të Shalës*” by Bernardin Palaj and Rrok Gurashi, published in 1941 at “*Hylli i Dritës*”. (Palaj dhe Gurashi 1941, 375-376).

In the same paper, while writing about Dukagjin, the scholars note the fact that in the impenetrable mountains “the Indo-European finds the Thracian-Illyrian source colder than everywhere else in Albania; the tourist finds the mountains the most magnificent; the glottologist finds the most beautiful and pure language; the poet finds the Homeric rhapsodies with the Polyphemus tale and a theogony of orë² and fairies fighting against bitches or kulshedra³ and shtoj Zo’rreshta⁴ against the damaging Thôperk, and dragons and ganeca, as in the most ancient mythological times.”

In this statement we find that in Albania, on the verge of modern times, myths were not only transmitted by bards and only through songs, but also through poets and written forms.

Such methods, distinctly different from each other in terms of technology of myth transportation, addressed two different social groups, (those who acquired knowledge from the hearing-oral culture and those who acquired knowledge through reading), two distinct cultures (rural and urban) but also two versions of the myth (the myth acknowledging changes through abbreviations, additions or renaming and the formalized myth which does not undergo changes anymore.)

¹ *Kreshnik* is the name for a medieval valiant warrior in Albania

² In Albanian mythology, a figure of Albanian people’s belief, imagined as a woman, snake, etc., which was believed to live in the mountains, forests, fields, springs or near people. She helped or brought good luck to good people and punished bad people.

³ In Albanian mythology, a figure of Albanian folk tales imagined as a huge snake with seven up to twelve heads which devoured people and brought damage and destruction.

⁴ In Albanian mythology the *shtojzovalle*, also known as *shtojzorreshta*, *shtozote* is a small creature with supernatural powers and of extraordinary beauty. They are invisible woodland creatures, which can be seen by humans only on rare occasions and are fond of song and dance.

Even though the authors of the abovementioned papers do not designate the phenomena, to mention the poet's name, a distinguished case for the time remains the poetic creativity of Ndre Mjeda, in particular "Scodra", published in 1939, postmortem.

The verses of Song IV of the poem "Scodra" poetize the myth of "great grandfather" Polyphemus, declared as foremost god of the city to establish a relation with the earliest genealogy of the cosmology as per the myth (*Poseidon/Polyphemus*) as well as by extending, but also changing through it, the direction of communication of the myth users. The familiar form itself of respect such as "tatagjysh - tatëzót – tatëlósh – tatëmádh"⁵ shows affinity and consideration as a unit of the family and kin, apart from their uses in the families of Indo-European languages as explained by Eqrem Çabej. (1976, 166)

*Po qe prej shpелlet, ku n'qeti banote,
U shfaq tatagjyshi Polifem, e drodhi
Rrotullën e synit që mbi ball' i ndodhi
Vetëm, shkëlxote porsi hana e plotë.*

Likewise, this argument is further supported with the following verses:

*E ti smirën dfto që t'përzemruemit
Hyjt e Eladës gërmoi, e jasht' zakonit
Dergjë e rrënime grumbulluen e t'shuemit
E nipave caktuene t'Poseidoni*

This is also detected by the scholar Jolanda Kodra in the journal "Fryma" who, in her paper entitled "Themelimi kreshnik i Shkodrës në poezinë e Mjedjes" (Kreshnik foundation of Shkodra in Mjeda's poetry) adds to the arguments of Franz Nopsca on the other mythology figures and *Polyphemus* which "still has its shadows in Albanian tales"⁶.

On the other hand, apart from *Polyphemus* as a character of the essential catalogue of classic mythology, another mythology figure which is noticed early is that of *Circe/Kirke*. Both *Circe* and *Polyphemus* are part of the inventory of Homeric myths, but the first figure (*Circe*) has arrived in the Albanian narrative in the form of *E Bukura e Dheut* (The Beauty of Earth).

This form of "Persephone – Albanian Demetra", that is related to earth/underground, is treated early by Maximilian Lambertz and Holger Pedersen, and E. Çabej cites in his paper *On the genesis of Albanian literature*, referring to the paper entitled "Albanische Märchen und andere Texte zur albanischen Volkskund", 44, of such authors. (Çabej 1939, 153).

However, this figure is presented also as *Daughter of the Sun* by Auguste Dozon, "versus *the Beauty of Heaven and the Beauty of the Sea*", as underlined by Lambertz. In this sense, the cosmogony in Albanian fables or folk verses tackles not only the peripheral figures but belongs to a wide hierarchy of creatures of uranic, chthonic and sea creatures of classic mythology.

⁵ Different forms of words in old Albanian to denote great grandfather

⁶ Kodra, Jolanda. 1944. "Themelimi kreshnik i Shkodrës në poezinë e Dom Ndre Mjedjes." *Fryma*. 1: 17-20.

However, the case of Ndre Mjeda and the use of mythology in authorial poems is not a single model. Based on the work of At Gjergj Fishta, it can be believed that such tendency is followed any time we have to do with the epic spirit in creativity.

From the folks' belief and anonymous versification, the mythic figures were carried towards authorial poetry. Distinguished, among other cases, remains the work *Lahuta e Malcis*, in which verses "live the fairies, *Ora, E bukura e Dheut*", appear "*të Mirat*" (the Good ones), playful *Shtojzavalle*" and where "dragons fight with elementary powers against the seven-headed *kulshedra*, in waters *Floçka*⁷ e *Kshetza*⁸ are moving, witches pass by on huge turtles", as highlighted by Eqrem Çabej in the study "The Epics of Gjergj Fishta". (Çabej 1941, 3-40).

To *Polyphemus* and *Persephone*, as first order characters of cosmogony, is also added the character of *Odyssey*, one of the main myth figures deriving from Homer. All of them are added thus to *Circe/Kirke* and *Poseidon*.

However, traces of the *Odyssey* myth, as noticed, are encountered in the Arbëresh culture. The similarities are early detected not only in the features of the character of *Konstandinit të Vogëlith* (Little Konstandin) in itself, but also in the home-coming motif of *Odyssey*. Anyway, any time the definition stops on compared mythologies, it affirms the thesis of Kretschmer that "there are no ethnical borders when comparing common myths", because "there are strange similarities between the myth of *Odyssey* and that of Orendel in Germany". (Çabej 1938, 82).

Such arguments on the presence of mythical matter, apart from other scholars, are also expressed in the studies conducted by Ernest Koliqi in this field, as presented in the case when such author addresses to the "mountain amazons, as sung in the Rhapsody [...] with motifs taken by national life" (Koliqi 1939, 347), thus complementing the action of *Odyssey* even with the element of women fighters, the amazons.

The efforts of the 20th century early decades, especially by the Franciscan fathers, have shed light not only on *Kreshniks*' songs but also on those tale plots of Albanians where there is not only the presence of Gods of the earliest genealogy, already mentioned now, but also the presence of the heroes of the second genealogy in creativity.

Such a character is *Heracles* – the double nature, godlike and humanlike nature, descendant of the Olympians and a later hero in mythology who appears alongside the punished titan Atlas –also part of the old generation of gods, after titanomachy.

The uninterrupted presence of mythical characters in the ethnoaesthetics consciousness of Albanians, in which scholars have identified even the descendants of gods of the Golden legendary epoch of ancient Greece, the representatives of the foremost pantheon of gods who precede Olympus (*Atlas*), and Olympian gods, children or siblings of Zeus (*Persephone*, *Poseidon*), and their heroic descendants (*Heracles*, *Odyssey*, *Meleagri*, or *dioscur* siblings of the ancient Greek-Roman mythology *Kastor* or *Polideucu/Poluksi*), including here even other mythical and magical creatures such as *Circe/Kirke* and *Cerber*, provide additional data that the myths' migration process

⁷ In Albanian mythology, a beautiful woman with long hair who lived in lakes and rivers and appeared on the shore to comb her hair; also known as *gërshetëz*.

⁸ See 7

has not recognized any interruption or break amongst Albanians. It has continued until the end of local mythology creation cycle, recognizing meeting points and separation from neighbor source cultures, internal adaptations in terms of themes, gods' names, heroes, and demonology creatures.

The opinion of Çabej, Hahn, Lambertz, Jokl or of Idriz Ajeti on the common Indo-European linguistic fund transported, adapted, and preserved in different cultures may be used even with regards to the Indo-European mythological fund during transportation, adaptation, and its creation/recreation in the cultures where mythological heroes and magical creatures migrated acquiring special local features per each culture.

There are scholars who argue that the basic Albanian mythology figure names are of ancient Greek-Latin origin (but that do not correspond in content), or from the internal word formation of Albanian language.

The primary, secondary and tertiary designations themselves, as later influences, are also of Greek-Byzantine, Slavic, Roman, Turkish-Arab origin. (Tirta 2004, 111).

Returning our attention to tracking the presence of *Heracles* in the Albanian tales, it is noted that the same as in classic mythology, the hero comes accompanied by a creature or ancient anthropophagy demonology, closely related to their braveries and challenges. Such is the titan *Atlas*, punished to keep Soil on his shoulders, as noted in the tale *Shtatë pllambë mjekërr e tri pllambë shtat*, published in the journals of the time such as *Hylli i Dritës*⁹.

Another creature which is encountered in the narrative is also *Cerberi*, the three-headed beast guarding Hades – Hell, known otherwise as *Syqeni* (Dog-eyed) or even in its female form *Syqenëza*, as noted by Hahn and as found in the tale *Nusja dhe syqenëza* (The bride and the dog-eyed)¹⁰.

Symmetry is never reconciled. In the catalogue's description *Cerberi* is a monster, he is not anthropomorph, while at *Syqeni* or *Syqenëza* of the Albanian tale is preserved the anthropomorph form. In addition to that, another distinction is that *Cerberi* has three heads and many eyes. Based on *Cerberi*'s description as a three-headed dog, it seems that visualization is equivalented with that of archetypal mythology and with the later visualizations deriving from poets such as Hesiod, for example, where *Cerberi* appears with fifty heads.

The commonality between *Cerberi* and *Syqenëza/Syqeni* of the Albanian tale is that both are anthropophagus. Therefore, apart from the similarity with *Cerberi* – the monster dog guarding Hades, as forwarded by Çabej in *Syqenëza/Syqeni* of the Albanian tale, we can find the collaboration of an entirety of features of other mythological creatures, including here also cannibalization features.

Such may be the affinity with the old *Graeae*, gray-haired witches, who shared the same tooth and the same eye amongst themselves. The affinity continues also with the single-eyed *Polyphemus* who lived in a mountain cave that opened and closed the same as *burreci*'s shelter in the tale *Shtatë pllambë mjekërr e tri pllambë shtat* who lived in

⁹ See also Hylli i Dritës, 1936, Shkodër: 7-8, 400-407.

¹⁰ See also: Sako 1954, 37.

a mountain crack which opened and closed and which is almost like the description that Homer makes to *Poseidon's* son, the cyclopes *Polyphemus*¹¹.

In the same tale are encountered counterpart forms. Apart from heroes and titans (*Heracles* and *Atlas*) there is also one scene where one of the characters “could carry the whole village on his shoulders” and “only with a single hand supported at the shoulder edge he was carrying his own village with lands, orchards and people.”

In this tale, for comparison purposes between the two models, among others, there is also this dialogue published in the volume *Albanian Folk Tales*:

- “- May your work be easy!
- Thank you! – the cricket replied.
- Have you heard about a man whom they say can carry his own village on his arms? Can you tell me where I can find him?”

In the same tale, we find this dialogue even in another version.

“- Manet have you heard of a man who carries his own village on his arms, or is this a lie? - the traveler asks.

- No, they have not lied — the cricket replied. — It is true that he carries his own village on his arms.” (Sako 1954, 82)

Affinities of the tale characters meeting each other and the meeting of *Heracles* and *Atlas* in the ancient myth are evident even in the same text where the man who carried the village on his arms appears as a giant who had “supported his feet on two mountain peaks and could see the abyss under it.”

- “- What are you doing? – two of his friends asked.
- It is day now - he replied – the best is devouring our animals and I didn't see any other solution but to carry the village on my arms.
- Put the village down in its own place and come with me to conquer the world!” (Ibid.)

Apart from the abovementioned elements and motifs, within the folk narration are even observed mourning rituals/lamentation in chorus and coryphaeus, just like the ancient theatre. In the same source, the cult of *Diana/Fairy* is studied, similarities have been noted between the hunting scene of *Meleagri* with his friends against the wild pig and in the tale *Shtatë pllambë mjekërr e tri pllambë shtat*.

Even within the versification of the Albanian Epos there are traced kidnapping scenes which are typologically similar with the kidnapping of *Helena* or violence tableau on the dead or calamities in fights between heroes which remind you of the misery of *Achilles* on *Hector* in *The Iliad* of *Homer*, as can be noted in the supplementary notes and the commentary of the tale *Shtatë pllambë mjekërr e tri pllambë*, published in 1936 at “*Hylli i Dritës*”. (7-8, 404-405).

There are also noted duets of heroes such as *Muji* and *Halili*, close not only to the European cultural heroes, but also to the Epic of *Indi* (*Açvins*) or to the Armenian heroic

¹¹ See: *Hylli i Dritës*. 1936. Shkodër. 7-8: 402.

epic “Sanazar Aslimelik” who are “a couple of valiant brothers that we encounter in the Greeks/Dioscures”. (Çabej 1937, 161).

The scholar Shaban Sinani detects in Muji’ figure the ancient mythology expressed through the figure of *Achilles* with which he finds similarities with the “cult of power in the Homeric works.” (Sinani 2006, 61-62).

Of course, that in Muji the cult of power is encountered in the features of the relentless fighter and with supernatural powers nourished by two different mothers: *Achilles* from a maritime mother and Muji from an earth mother. However, Muji’s features are separated from those of the Homeric *Achilles* when revenge is taken into consideration or blind anger, because in Muji there is the presence of the ethical code. Heroes also differ in terms of the motif of participation/hiring in war. *Achilles* fights for glory even the war he fights is not part of his kinship wars. A distinction is also observed in the female kidnapping element, according to which it is Halili who is like *Achilles* more than Muji.

Beyond the supernatural power cult, in the ethical, social, or even political plane, Muji is modelled more according to *Hector* with some features like forbearance, advice, wisdom. It is Muji the one who often criticizes Halil to not let his judgement go blind and to keep revenge under his control. He doesn’t like at all Halili’s revenge speech, especially against his opponent and the stranger as noticed in the verses when Muji addresses to Halil, referring to the below versions published by Zymer Neziri. (2009, 163-164).

- Ç’je kah thue, Halil, të vraftë zoti!
 Sall prej t’dekunsh, marre ty me t’ardhë!
 Gjak as fis me shkje na nuk i kemi,
 qi me t’dekun punë ne me na dalë!
 Lufto t’gjallët, se t’dekunt s’kanë ça t’bajnë,
 si kanu qi na kanë lanë të parët.
 Se tanë trimnija, Halil, qi m’paske ba,
 me ket fjalë ti vedit ja ke hupun!

But each symmetry remains ideal since even in the hero-*Hector* with the ethical code we encounter violence such as the case of throwing Patroclus’s body as food for the dogs of Troy, the same as *Achilles* uses violence while dragging behind his horses the killed *Hector*, a detail which is also encountered in a dialogue of Halil, part of which are the following verses:

- Baca Muji, pse po m’shpottitë,
 ja ktheu djali kah po lidhë do varrë.
 Se me kenë, si ç’thue Llabutani,
 kjeçë tu’ e lidhë për bishtit të gjogut,
 rrshanë m’e ngrhë qenin npër rrgalle,
 zhag m’e ngrhë qenin npër zalle,
 nëpër zalle ktu e n’Jutbinë!

Similar motifs appearing in folk poetry, tales, ballads, and songs of *Kreshniks* of the Albanian Epic are also studied by Gustav Meyer, Johann Georg von Hahn, Holger

Pedersen, Zef Skiroi (Giuseppe Schirò) At Donat Kurti, P. Marin Sirdan and other earlier scholars of the legendary epics, contemporary or later than those. And since the start, in those texts, almost all authors underline the fact that within this epic treasure we can encounter songs and *gojëdhëna* (legends) which reflect ancient human motifs and old pagan custom states which open ways for further consideration and interpretation.

There are also other authors who have provided their opinion that to understand who and what we were, we should go back to “pre-historic times, in the far away *gojdhana* (legends) and in mythology, which is found among our forefathers and is then acquired by other peoples.”¹²

In the same paper the author also makes efforts to explain the local toponymy with adapted mythological names such as the case when he tries to argue that “Our forefathers erected a castle to honor *Kroi* in the field of Finik. Now this place is called *Krongji* with the ruins near Delvina”, the same when he writes that “in our land the ancient mythology of peoples is first cradled.”¹³

Time, space and migration routes for myths

Despite the identification of motifs, separation of characters and approach to mythical themes, the issue how such motifs were born or how they arrived in the Albanian epic or narrative, it seems that it does not have the major attention in the mentioned study of Eqrem Çabej.

When examining the potential arrival routes, the explanation is given through the “wave theory” with which the German linguist Johannes Schmidt “had explained the relations between the Indo-German languages”. According to such theory, which mostly addressed to the languages, the myth motifs and characters are spread little by little, pushing one another, as it happens with the concentric circles enabling the convergence between the myth motifs and characters, moved by their carriers.

From there, considering “the different localizations of *gojëdhëna* (legends) as centers of circles from where their various versions are spread in the form of waves,” Eqrem Çabej posed the question if such theory could be employed even in “tracking the *gojdhana* of a country so composed as the Balkans is.” (Çabej 1937, 154-155).

However, the theory in question was especially suggested to extract not only the spreading route, but also the “relative age of such variants of *gojëdhëna*”, including here even the “priority of one kind over the others.”

In this direction of research on the spreading routes, relative age and priorities among variants, Ernest Koliqi suggests, among others, even a chronological and thematic classification as well as filing by area of myth influence.

Which were the main themes and motifs? When was dated the time of their creation/recreation or of their arrival? Eqrem Çabej in the abovementioned paper quotes E. Koliqi and examines the thesis published in 1937 in the *Epica popolare Albanese*. Koliqi initially presents as a time of creation “the verge of Turkish time”, where in the forms of pre-Turkish life of the folk epic of Albanian colonies in Italy, apart from overlayers, one could also detect even the “byzantine-pre-Turkish condition”. (Koliqi

¹² Ashta, Kolë. 1941. “Rmuesi i shpirtit shqiptar.” Shkëndia. 8-9: 58-60.

¹³ Ashta, Kolë. 1941. “Rmuesi i shpirtit shqiptar.” Shkëndia. 8-9: 58-60.

1937, 44). Related to what is mentioned above, before identifying the common motifs, Ernest Koliqi distinctly divides two units. However, in this paper it is noted that in the beginning this scholar distinguishes the Italian-Albanian epic from the cycle of *Gjeto Basho Muji*, in which, as he notes, there intervene supernatural powers and creatures such as *Ora* and Fairies, while in the group of indirect songs or biased ones “no influence of foreign folk epic is noticed because they take their material from real events”. With this division he attempts to separate not only the local epic motifs from the foreign ones, but also between the legendary/mythical and the historical classification in folk songs.

The idea on the presence of elements from the history in the songs of *Kreshniks* like *Muji* and *Halili* is also supported by Fulvio Cordignano in his papers and study entitled *La poesia epica di confine nell'Albania del Nord*. However, he notes even other themes of mythology deriving from the theatre such as in *La leggenda de l'Edipo Albanese* (The legend of the son who marries his mother), and *La Penelope Albanese* (The legend of the loyal wife).

In the meantime, there are two study points. In the first one you can notice the active influence of the myths of mystery, magic fauna and flora or of creatures of the imaginary catalogue of demonology where mythical characters that move within the chthonic character of the legendary epic are noticed (*Circe - Kirke; Cerber; Persephone; Polyphemus*).

In the second one, you can notice the efforts made for the Albanian epic, which now had its own action space, to be placed in a topos, but also in its time, including there the relation with itself and the world. Referring to the scholar Shaban Sinani, in later studies, the ideas on the presence of chthonic and of the border between the Byzantine-Pre-Turkish time are enriched with other proposals, such as the one of character and the “matriarchal feature of mythological figures of the legendary epics”. (Sinani 2006, 63-64). The studies are completed with new thesis, interpretations and arguments as expressed in detail even in the monographies of the same author on the mythology in Epos or on the ethnos issue in Epos. (Sinani 2006, 172-173). Even in the works of Andromaqi Gjergji we can find treatment and arguments on the Epos heroes, “the ethnic conflict” or “features of ancient heroes.” (Gjergji 1986, 103-119). Likewise, even Mark Tirta in his book *Mitologjia ndër shqiptarë* (Mythology among Albanians) clarifies in detail on the mythical creatures and characters in epos, tales, or superstitions.

Another name who provides more arguments earlier in time to the theme of the role cultural relations is also Marin Sirdâni. Arguing his idea that in Albanian lands there has been not only a borrowing culture, but even a lending one, or rightly said, that it was a culture in a relationship, in his paper *Kulturë e arte në Shqipëri (Culture and Arts in Albania)*, Sirdâni underlines that “The Albania of ancient times served as a bridge or intermediary of relations and efforts between the Balkan’s peninsula and Italy.” (Sirdani 1943, 5-6). In the same paper Sirdâni opposes the idea of the Italian archeologist and historian Luigi M. Ugolini on the movement vector of cultural myths. Ugolini’s thesis develops the idea that it is not unusual that the passing of civilization is on the opposite side with that of the migration of peoples. Based on this he emphasized that idea that culture, different from the migration of peoples, may have

moved from the Apennine peninsula towards the South-West Balkans and not the vice-versa.

The arguments brought in the paper by Sirdâni include for analogy even names of other scholars such as Nicola Jorga and Carl Patsch, in particular with regards to their arguments on the Thracian-Illyrian issue, or their history and cultural heritage in the Balkans.

In the meantime, we can find the attention on determining the place of birth of myths and some other more direct questions and answers on the issues “where were these motifs born, where did they come from, how were they spread?” even earlier than that, published in the *Visaret e Kombit II (National Treasures II)*, in 1937. The book presents two possible ways of the arrival of mythical motifs towards Europe, taking for granted the myths’ place of birth. Such routes or ways, as it is affirmed, must have served even for the motifs of poetical myths of Homer and Hesiod to arrive up to the epic of the Northern Albania, as well as in the tales of Southern Albanians.

Even though with a lesser influence, such communication routes seem to have been even the commercial exchanges or cross-ethnic marriages. Not bards or Rhapsodes, but common people, merchants or children’s mothers become the carriers of song motifs from one Ethnos to another.

But are our answers exhaustive about the routes and ways of transfer of mythical motifs from their place of creation towards other countries in relation? Could there be other ways for the transfer of mythical motifs from one culture towards the other apart from the ones offered thanks to the migration of myths through bards-rhapsodes, migration of peoples and foundation of coastal cities from the Corinthian and Korkyrian colonists on earlier Illyrian places?

Apart from their technology, could there be other ways of creation/recreation? Has it taken the final answer or is there still space to discuss other routes which could lead scientific research into other conclusions, in particular on the transfer of mythical motifs towards neighbor border cultures and from there even further? From here it becomes appealing the idea of looking for alternative ways of carrying mythical motifs in Albanian tales, legends and rhapsodies, or even their passing from the Albanian narratives towards other cultures by proposing, apart from the existing ones, even other routes which are not pointed out in the arrivals range. At the end of the day, could it be that, apart from the abovementioned elements, even the ancient theatre might have served as a transport means of myths from one culture to another with its own distinct features totally different from those?

The ancient theatre – a placenta for myths and a counterpart of the Medea myth in the Albanian north

The idea that – apart from immigration and migration, migration of Rhapsodes and cross-ethnic marriages – the theatre may have been one of the transport means of myths, becomes very appealing especially when “placing in front of the theatre-derived myths the pre-Homeric myths” and the “Cosmogony of Homer, as a version of the Pellasgian mythology of creation, Orphic myths of mysteries and their remains in Epos”. (Graves 2011, 27-34).

Theatre created its own myths, especially in the third-generation characters, among sons and descendants of ancient kings who took the first raw in the many theatrical stages spread everywhere in the Mediterranean coast and coastal cities of the ancient Haemus, after the Gods left the theatre temple.

By first differentiating between Homer's myths and theatre's myths, recreated because of putting on stage authorial tragedies of the Antiquity, you can observe more clearly even the most convenient routes that myth made use of to arrive from the creators and carriers to its users. For archetypal-myth characters of Homer and Hesiod migration through the technology of Rhapsodes or migration of carrier peoples is better justified. But when examining the cases of theatre myths' spread, myths which were not processed by the anonymous and oral culture, but arrived from ancient authors like Aeschylus, Euripides, Sophocles, the route of myth movement may be searched in other furrows and what is more in the opposite direction or from entities other than the usual ones.

The case of the presence of *Odyssey's* Homeric motif in the Arberesh of Italy or that of *Circe* as *E Bukura e Dheut* (The Beauty of Earth) in the Albanian southern tale, is developed within the logic of carrying the anonymous culture and nomad spirit of the Rhapsodes who transported culture from one person to the carrier-peoples. But when the case is posed for the "theatre myths" as authorial creativity fixed in time and well-defined space, such as the motif of *Medea* or *Oedipus's* myth it is reasonable to think on the real possibilities that bards and Rhapsodes had to approach the theatrical culture as such.

There is no reliable historical data that make us take for granted the hypothesis that King Oedipus or Medea have had their own real life and have existed as culture before they were transformed into fiction tragic characters from ancient authors, but this does not exclude at all the idea that the event nucleus which is placed in a topos like Thebes to have existed even before taking its form under the authorship of Sophocles.

The theatre placed new borders and it serves as a separator of the bards' epoch, marking the start of the end of rhapsodic improvisation culture, the presence of *motërzime* (variants) and open variants. The theatrical culture of fixed text and without variants on the theme of a myth parallelized the singing culture with textual changes of the same story or myth, a technique which was oriented more towards the supplementing processes than codification. What was allowed to rhapsodes-creators, was forbidden to the interpreting actors since in front of them there stood a text fixed in writing which allowed for less space for modifications or improvisation.

Despite the independent life that epos and theatre could have and their reciprocal relation, the latter moved the Epic and the epic rhapsody from the urban environs while preserving the distance between the spoken and the written word. With the rise of the theatre, there came the obvious quality change. The usual environs of myth circulation were not anymore the areas isolated from communication, mountains or unurbanized environs.

It is the theatre which becomes the place of exposing the event and exchanging experience, its cultivated audience and, above all, the head of the country and the glory does not go to the rhapsod, but to the author.

Different from the Rhapsod, as a representation of the nomad culture which mainly addressed to the natural and rural environs and which with the rise of the theatre appears ever more rarely in public environs (as invited in the royal palaces or agoras) it is the author and the theatre which gain a higher status, belonging to the culture of polis, the culture of public environs and not of temples, sanctuaries, or sacred places of oracles.

Confronted with the nomad bards' technology, but without eliminating it as probability, it may be brought into attention that it is the theatre itself which appears as an advanced technology, as a plural technology of the chorus which fights against the univocal loneliness of the Rhapsod -aed. The theatre itself and its wide infrastructure must have been the means which was used as a radiating nucleus and conveyor of myth-events from the area where the ancient theatres were towards the coast or Albanian mainland, and, from there, towards the further units.

Especially after the 5th century AD, myths presented themselves to demos and audiences ever more sophisticated through a new format, the theatre form. This became the contribution form, the form of commitment and participation in the city-polis life. The city and its spaces, schools and cultivated arts which produced the statues of Gods and heroes, but even the artisan which through the painted pots with mythical motifs produced not just pots but even transmitted the myth from one country to the other. Among these, the theatre – as one of the most important creations of public communication in the ancient culture – may be considered as a placenta – bed, which has wrapped, grown and transmitted mythical motifs.

For the benefit of this idea and returning to Ugolini's idea, it becomes more reliable the fact that it must have been usual for a civilization's motifs to follow the opposite route to that of the peoples' migration, including here even the colonization or invasions. This paradigm would make the Albanian culture area to be felt not only as a hosting culture, but even part of a culture in a relation, a processing culture and conveyor of myths or ancient Epic, be those Greek or Roman.

Following the idea that it is not the bards, but the theatre with its elements which have played a primary role in the transfer of myths from the coastal area towards mainland, may lead to a different vision from the one we know on the cultural movement vectors or the transfer of motifs through other geographical crossroads. One case of the opposite movement of motifs from within to outside may be traced in the myth of *Enea*, as the main myth of Rome, one of the most important civilizations of the European culture. In the song brought by Prof. Frano Alkaj which, according to the 1942 edition bears the title "Zbritja e Eneut ne Butrint" (*The descent of Enea in Buthrint*), based on *According to Virgil's Eneida*, Book, 111, verses 266-355, Buthrotum as topos is placed in Kaoní and is presented as a city built according to the reflection of Troy, near which lives *Andromache*, as presented in the translation and philological notes of Frano Alkaj¹⁴.

The Homeric myth of Troy passes to Virgil's *Eneida* and the forwarding topos, the topos in relation between the cultures becomes Buthrotum, in Kaoní, a city which shelters *Andromache*, its myth, memories and rituals. In the narration time "*Andromache*", in Virgil's version, of the same translation in Albanian, stands in front

¹⁴ Alkaj, Frano. 1942. "Zbritja e Eneut në Butrint". Hylli i Dritës. 1-2: 25-26.

of an empty coffin, with no dead body, by sacrificing for Hector's dead spirit, as it appears in the verses of the same work:

*Dal prej limanit
Lundrin tue lanë e bregun, kur pa pritun
Qe se Andromakja m'pyll perbri qytetit
Zanë vend ke rryma e Simoentit t' rrejshem
Po bate flit vjetore e dhurata
T'permortshme i lruete hinit te Hektori
Tue thirrur Hien e tij perane njaj vorri,
Qi mbrenda zbrastë me plisa t' njomë reduë
Atij kushtue i a kisht me dy lterë ngjijtun
Shkak lotsh e vaji.*

Deriving from the areal after the ancient battlefields towards Buthrotum and from there towards the Apennine peninsula, the nucleus of the Enea myth provides the noted data that the migration route does not always coincide with that of big invasions or massive cultural colonization.

Without stopping any longer on the confrontation of the Homeric myth and Virgilian one, through such a reasoning and, while including in such reasoning even the presence of one or more surrounding theaters like the one of Butrint, Foinike, Oriq, Hadrianopolis, Bylis above, Apollonia in the coast or even Bouleuterion of Zgërdhesh deeper, almost as a joining node with Lisus and Skodra in the North, may trace the route which the theatrical myth of *Medea* might have had to take, until it gets stuck in the Albanian mountains, as the myth of the mother killing her children for punishment and revenge.

Motifs and fragments, features, marks, and traces of the myth of Euripides appear not completely foreign even for the Rhapsody "Dashtnija vllaznore e smira e grues" (Fraternal love and wife's envy), collected in the northern end of Albania.

Mythological motifs never reconcile in a symmetrical way in between versions in terms of size or form, but they present surprising similarities. The essence or description of the motif remains the same when the infanticide myth is treated, as killer of her own children/child for revenge. It is not of much importance if the motif-incident is the marriage between a man and another woman or the vows of a brother to never separate from his sister.

Such elements become secondary for the mechanism that makes the myth work, a mechanism which in the argument of the epic song makes distinct the other motifs between the theatrical myth and its fragment in the Albanian north mountains where it is written: "Brother and sister, two orphans, vow to each other that they would never separate as long they're alive ... When the brother got married, his wife became envious and thought to convince her husband to move his sister away and have her married far away. He did not like this thing. Then his wife reached her anger and misery peak; she smothered the horse; she smothered the oxen, and, in the evening, she smothered even the only man." (Alkaj 1942, 25-28).

In the Albanian version, the wife, to punish her husband, after "smothering the horse" (iconography of the hero and power cult) and, after smothering even the "oxen"

(iconography of the wellbeing and economy cult), smothered even the “only man” (iconography of malicious envy and madness), as found in the verses of the same poem and same source:

*Herët natën prejë gjumit a çue
Marrë m'a ka një thikë të vogël në dorë
Djepin shaka prejë vedit e avitë
Kryet djalit kadalë ia zblon
Në të butë të kres thikën i ea ka kûlë
Prap në shtruese me 'i herë a ulë e ra. (Miraj 1972, 72)*

Reconsidering the question of the above subchapter, explanation is required on which route the theatrical myth of Medea was carried to reach the mountains of Vermosh, where they were sung under the title *Kreshnik songs*. Could the carrier of this tragic song be a simple itinerant Rhapsod? If yes, where could have he heard such theatrical motif and why could it have seemed that important so as to carry with himself from the area of myth creation to his far away mountainous myth? Can we think that not him, the bard-rhapsod, but the theatre and its multiple elements (theatrical repertoire, actors, chorus members, musicians and citizens - spectators who watched the tragedy happening on stage from the steps) have played a role in transmitting the myths from the theatre to cities and from cities towards more peripheral areas, to forward the theatrical myth from area to area and from the culture of an ethnos to the culture of another neighbor? Could this spread of the theatrical myth be explained with the wave theory, where it is not anymore the lonely rhapsodes almost devoid of any technology versus the theater, but that it is the theatrical stages themselves which passed to each other the infanticide myth deriving from Euripides, from the coastal south to the country's mainland?

The added presence of ancient theatres that the archeological expeditions have discovered in the South-Western Albania, as well as their not small capacities for the model and time, suggest the idea that the theatre, in the entirety of its elements, offers reliable precondition which meet not only the educational and entertaining purpose, but also the preservation and transmitting of myths from the stage towards inhabited centers in cities, centers with developed cultural and educational premises, in which communication was always done less through Rhapsodes and more and more through the public forms of communication, one of which is the theatre.

If the theatre, as an exposing and transferring unit of the myth would be avoided, logic would miss the means linking the place of creation with the further usage and processing of the myth, as in the case of the *Kreshnik* song with traces and fragments of the local Medea in the mountains of Vermosh in Albania. Without the theatre, we would be in need of reformulating the question on the route of how this form of the infanticide myth of Medea has arrived in the Albanian north.

Getting back to the Albanian epic song with the Medea motif one can notice that the place where it is sung is situated not far from the place where the myth was created by Euripides in ancient Greece. Therefore, as an important linking node between the collection place of the Albanian epic song and the creation place of the myth archetype of infanticide, it is suggested to be the theatre, or the string of the many theaters found

in this ancient territory. Such theatres have an almost even distance both from the area where the tragic song is collected and from the area where the ancient theatres of Greece were situated and where those tragedies were put on stage.

One can note that the theatrical stages start from the South to go up to the center of Albanian regions, starting from Butrint in Finiq where, as noted even by Neritan Ceka, the theatre was built during the last decades of the 3rd century AD when Foinike became the capital of Epir, from Adrianople with a huge theatre – in whose steps could sit 3500 – 4000 spectators, in Orik – where there was a small theatre - where 600 spectators could sit and up to Tomb no 2 in Lower Selca – which has the shape of a theatre with two rows of seats, an orchestra pit which makes it a unique entombing monument. (Ceka 1972, 151-178)

To this day there is information on the location, capacities and styles or the architectural type of the Greek or Roman model of ancient theatres that are found in Albania, but there is a lack of data which could testify the titles and repertoires of shows put on the stage of such theatres.

We cannot say that in those stages is watched or heard the story of a suicidal mother (Jocasta), the same as we cannot prove that there was interpreted the motif of the destiny of a daughter sacrificed for the war (Iphigenia)? There is no information whether for the local audience or for the incoming one from far away was narrated the story of the sister who sacrifices herself (Antigone) to bury her killed brother? We do not even know whether the tragedy of the mother who, hurt by her husband's betrayals, kills her children in revenge (Medea) or the sister who collaborates with her brother to kill their mother (Electra) are watched from those steps?

The theatres of that time, built in those places, were not decorative cultural institutions, but they should have had a busy life and should have served for life scenic shows, with a repertory, calendar, and other elements, necessary for the work of an open theatre.

To be functional, those theatres should have had a repertory, their theatrical troop (wandering or not), the master of masks, the master of chorus, Choragus, the master of scenic elements and stage assistants.

Something must have been put on that stage, in accordance with the purpose and functions of establishing a theatre as an important public work. Apart from this, a question needs to be asked as from where did the spectators come, from far away or from the inhabited centers around the ancient theaters?

Apart from the space, as location, even the time they were built and the functioning of such ancient theatres is not far from the active time the neighboring countries theatres functioned. From here, we should look more persistently on the styles and architectural elements of the steps, stages and columns of such theatres, but something more should be learned even on the primary role and function of the theatres in those areas with wide cultural exchanges? An answer should also be given to the meaning of a high presence of theatres in such a small territory.

Archeology may provide data on what has been the influence field that such a dense presence of theatres might and must have played in that area. From this starting point, today may be traced, gathered and probably discovered details on the titles of theatrical

works that may have been played in theatres within the Southern lands of today's Albania?

Is it possible to learn what was the language (*lingua franca*) of actors as well as the vernacular language of the audience? How much cultivated was the audience to watch theatrical shows? Was it domestic, foreign, mixed, and what form of social representation did the audience have? If we refer to the capacities of thousands of seats in the ancient theaters' steps found within the territory of Albania, we should suppose that the audience was wide.

Given the today's experience, but even through analogy, it can be imagined that theatrical shows should have had a good social representation, civic, including even some cultural preconditions, if they chose the theatre as a public communication means. However, can we believe that such audience became one of the factors that transferred the myths from the theatres towards the coastal and hilly cities, and from there up above towards the Albanian north, from where the above cited examples arrive and are detected?

In conclusion, not only tracking and interpretation of the presence of mother-myths in the Albanian epic songs and tales that preserve mythical elements is needed, but even a more convincing explanation on the ways how such motifs migrated towards cultures in relation. From them one can notice even other motifs, like the one of the tragic fate of a man betrayed and killed by his wife (*Agamemnon/Klitemnestra?*), the tragedy of the father-killing son (*Oedipus?*) or of the mother-killing son (*Orestes?*).

The same questions or answers work even for tracing other motifs, such as one of *torturing the dead hero* (the case of *Achilles* against *Hector*). Likewise, even the *horse mourning motif* as is the case of *Achilles'* death, traces which we might suppose at Muji's *Gjoku* which refuses to eat due to grieving.

Even in the *female kidnapping motif* as is the case of *Agamemnon* in classical mythology may be drawn parallels with the female kidnapping which happen not only once in the Albanian Epos, including here also the kidnapping of Muji's friend, sometimes written by Filipe Maxhari in a *motërçim* (variant) and sometimes by Krajl Kapedani in another variant. In the same direction do come even the versions of the song *Rrëmbimi i shoqes së Mujit* (Kidnapping of Muji's girlfriend), collected and edited by Father Bernardin Palaj and Father Donat Kurti¹⁵.

The posed questions get us back to the idea expressed above related to the direction that the myths followed in their migration: – from maritime islands towards mainland?; from the coastline towards the continental area?; from the mountains towards the sea?; from the rural areas towards the ancient cities?; from the mountainous cultures towards the urban areas? In the bottom-line, do the myth movement vectors correspond with the routes of peoples' migration from the sea towards the mountains areal where the scholars have identified for a long time the epicenters and the parallels of the mythical motifs in rhapsodies and tales?

However, apart from the mentioned research methods, stratification of mythical motifs may also be searched through cultural archeology as well as through the interpretation of the myths which "got stuck" in the Epos.

¹⁵ Palaj, Bernardin dhe Donat Kurti. 1931. "Rrëmbi i shoqes së Mujit". Hylli i Dritës 11: 621.

Mythical motifs fossilized in epic songs are like a maritime mollusk which is found amid mountainous rocks, thousands of kilometers far from the sea, but which confess a remote past or a mythological time when the sea was there.

However, such layers may be examined even through archeological discoveries, which, according to Ugolini, provide the best proof that “Albanian people are ethnically related and belong to one of the oldest races of Europe, preserved in an almost miraculous way” and that the mountain people now already use the traditions of a time so old that you should look for the Homeric times.” (Sirdani 1942, 108).

A similar statement is also made earlier by Milan Šufllaj who, in his paper “Burime të historisë së Shqipërisë” (Sources of Albania’s history), published in *Diturija* journal during the year 1928, notes that “the only hope to explain cultures are archeological discoveries and that to prove that we need anthropological and linguistic studies.”¹⁶

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¹⁶ Šufllaj, Milan. 1928. “Burime të historisë shqipëtare”. *Diturija* 12: 362.

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Afërdita ONUZI

ALBANIAN CLOTHING IN THE XIV-XV CENTURIES- ETHNOGRAPHIC REFLECTION

Abstract

In this paper, attempts are being made to present the fashion and dressing of different social strata in XIV-XV century and to classify the various typologies during this period. For the first time, has been taken into consideration the myth of mourning found in various parts of the traditional costume. Based on written sources, the engravings of foreign travelers, as well as the older generation of Albanian photographers, we argue that the male felt pant (tight woolen pants-tirqe) came into use in the second half of the XX century.

Keywords: Fashion and costume in the XIV-XV centuries; the felt pant dressing.

A lot has been written and published about the Albanian folkloric dressing, even from the beginnings of the development of the ethnographic science. The first to have written about is Rook Zojzi, who, in addition to other aspects, has focused in details even in the technology of the material's preparations which with parts of the folkloric dresses were made of. Later on, Andromaqi Gjergji, who further deepened her studies about this topic, by crowning them with a great publishing entitled: Albanian dresses along the centuries: the origin, typology, development (2005).

Whereas in this paper we will try to provide an ethnography of the clothing and their typology during the XIV-XV centuries, confronting with each-other some sources, concretely documents written during this period, archaeological findings of the antique and medieval period, some lyrics of the Eposi i Kreshnikeve (The Epic of Valliant's) the ethnographic funds of the IAKSA, as well as other sources from the terrain, which bring the social memory related to mourning expressed in the folkloric dresses after the death of Scanderbeg.

With reference to the written records (which inform us about the types of the materials used and the styling forms of the dresses) they are unilateral, they mostly introduce the dresses of the high classes of the time, including the clerics of this category.

In the documents of import for the XIII,XIV,XV centuries, the types of drapery and other luxurious fabrics such as: *panni de grana*, *panni rubei boni*, *panni de Cumis*, *panni de Florentina* etc, which were mainly imported through Venetic¹. Precisely, a document of the year 1433, informs us that the dress materials for the family members of Gjon Kastrioti, Aranit Komneni, Gjergj Jura etc., came from Venetic ((Radoniç 1942).

¹ Acta et diplomata, vëll II, dok. 312, 386, 737 (cited as of Gjergji 2005, 69).

The same documents inform us about the colors of the materials used, which were defined according to the rank of the nobles. For example: the purple color, the red and green one could be used only by the high rank nobles. Based on the frescoes of the time or on any short early description, we learn that the nobles followed the Byzantine fashion, not only regarding the dresses, but also the expensive ornamenting (regarding jewelry). Particularly, numerous and expensive, were the jewelry used by their women, high crowns, pearl earrings, diadems, belts, pins etc. All these were elements presents according to the documents of the years 1393,1399,1400 etc.².

The dresses of men in the XIV century were composed of such parts: a type of tight shirt, long jacket with short sleeves up to the elbow with some hanging paws. In general, it was a heavy dress, frozen because of the numerous decorations.

The women's dresses as well (according to the frescoes) are presented as quite luxurious. In the head they used to keep a type of a light fabric, which due to the way of knotting reminds us of the Dropulli women and the ones of the region of Has. Most of the cases, the kneading of the of dresses was domestic, as in some cities as in Vlora, Shkodra, Berat, Pulti etc., a numerous number of masters had bloomed, including the luxurious ones. In the XV century the dressing went through changes, affected by the oriental fashion. The upper jacket was substituted with a type of mantel (pellanda) which instead of the primer, it had an expensive fur. The sleeves were in the shape of a funnel kneaded in the shoulders and had only decorative function. These sleeves are similar to the cloak of Orthodox women of Mokra, or hanging sleeves of the dolman dressed by the men of Mirdita, Mat and Kurbin. Scanderbeg has been shown in a portrait in such a mantel coated in ermelin leather. This type of mantel had been widespread not only in the Balkan areas, but up to Venetic.

The XIV-XV centuries are the period of long hair for men. We remind here that Teodor Muzaka was nicknamed as "Chiscetis" too because of the long hair "Ksheta".

The byzantine fashion in the dresses continued during the following centuries in the rich classes of the Albanian cities, especially in the southern Albania and lesser in the northern Albania. Let us remind the women's dresses in the city of Berat, the dresses of Lunxhëria, but even the survival of the specific elements in the sleeves of doublet (*xhamadan*) of the northern Albania, dolman of the men of Kurbin etc.

With reference to the dressing of the masses of the population, it is thought that in most of the occasions they were produced within the family economy. However, even the imported ones were present too, which were linen fabric which were mainly used by the persons of service "*pro servientibus*", as stated in the medieval documents, before the Turks³. Of a more modest quality was a fabric called "*fustango*", made of linen and cotton. It is certain that this type of fabric has been used for a part of men's clothing in the form of skirts, pleated, which later was call *fistan* or *fustanella*.

It looks as more trustworthy a document of the year 1355, where it is stated that a sailor in the port of Drini (near Shkodra), was taken away his clothes, amongst which "tunic", "fistan", "mantel", "shirt" etc. We learn from this document that "fistani", is already mentioned as part of the dress, along with the shirt⁴.

² Acta et diplomata, vëll I, dok 186 (cited as of: Gjergji 2005, 19).

³ Acta et diplomata, vëll I, dok 385, viti 1278; dok 407, viti 1280. (cited as of Gjergji 2005, 20).

⁴ Acta et diplomata, vëll I, dok 790 (cited as of Gjergji 2005, 20)

In another document of the year 1330, ‘brekeshat’⁵ are mentioned. Other documents, but also the songs in the Cycle of Valiants, a type of a vest is mentioned, made of the sheep leather, *xhubleta* and *xhupeta* (typical dress of Albanian women in the regions of northern Albania, Malesi e Madhe, Rugove, Dukagjin)⁶, types of *dolma* form men, long shirts and women’s aprons, types of *xhoka* made of white felt. Based on this testimony, as well as based on the dwellings of Illyrian culture or the different statuettes of the previous times, in the findings of medieval cemeteries, in which it has been noted types of wide belts decorated in pins and buttons, chains that hang over the belt, temporal, earrings, rings, traces of drawings which present the belt ‘in rami’ or batches, types of capes etc., as well as in the clothing of Arbereshe, the frescoes of the time, I think that during that period, XIV-XV centuries, four types of dresses circulated, two for men and two for women, certainly in their variant, which survived to the XIX century and the beginning of the XX century.

This classification does not have the aim of opposing the one made by the ethnographer and the scholar of the folkloric dresses Andromaqi Gjergji. The classification made by her is based on the fact considering the folkloric dresses used during the XIX century and the beginning of the XX century, a time in which the varieties of the used dresses in the Albanian regions, had been enriched even more due to the results of further developments of the historical, social and cultural processes. In the classification made by her, pure folkloric dresses have been included, considering the ones of the end of the XIX century and the beginning of the XX century, and the ones which have later been affected by the foreign civilizations have been left out, which were mainly used by the richer classes of the society. The typology has been defined based on the lower part of the dresses, surely without excluding even some other parts of the suits. Generally, the upper part of the dresses are more uniform, whereas the ones of the lower parts, are various, especially in the forms of tailoring. The author thinks that the typology of the later, provides the possibility to better define the distinctions and the analogies to the other people of the Balkans. In the meantime, this enables the possibility to compare the dresses of the XIX-XX century with the ones of the medieval period and earlier periods, based on the figurative sources, written records and archaeological findings.

It has been considered that, even the fact that the dresses have followed developmental processes: some of them have been old-fashioned and out of use and some have been replaced by others, or something has even survived the times. Indeed, the stream of this paper consists precisely on this process of development.

For the women: one of the types consisted on the dress with *xhubleta*, presented in the variant of the short *xhubleta*, reserved in the region of Dukagjin and the other variant the dress with *xhupeta*, a type of a woolen shirt accompanied by an apron and *xhupe* (type of a woolen sweatshirt). The other type was represented by the dress with long shirt (made of linen) and two batches. The type of dress with *xhubleta*, which was later enriched with the variant of the longer *xhubleta* and the shorter one has a very ancient origin. However, even the other variants of the dress with the long shirt and two batches are quite ancient in their origin.

⁵ Acta et diplomata, dok. 80, dt. 13 dhjetor, Raguzë, 790 (cited as of 2005, 32).

⁶ Note of the translator.

For the men there circulated: the type of dress with fustanella and type with the long shirt, in long and wide pants. A type of felt coat was worn above the shirt, which was later called dolma (in the northern Albania) or “çibun” in the southern Albanian, which was made of white felt. This type of coat was made of a fabricated and qualitative drapery for the richer classes. In regard with this type of dressing, sources to be considered are some fragmentary testimonies too, which we find in the layers of the songs of The Songs of Valliant’s. Thus Muji and Halili and other agha, sometimes they are dressed in qyrk, sometimes in kondosh and dolma kneaded in gold lines (typical dresses of the byzantine fashion), however the dresses in skirts are present too.

Whereas their wives, sisters and daughters as well as the kidnapped brides are often presented dressed in long dresses and *kollana*, with dolma with buttons, belt pins etc., typical byzantine elements.

The *fustanella* dress managed to survive all over Albania up to the beginning of the XX century, concentrating later on only in the southern Albania. Whereas the dress in long shirt and dolma by the mid XIX century was replaced by the dress in tirq (cakcir) in the Northern Albania. In the southern Albania, this dress called cibun, after the First World War, was replaced by the dress in poture (bloomers). In relation to the continuity of the use of these types of dresses used in the XIV-XV century, we get information even by the foreign painters, who have travelled to Albanian since the beginning of the XIX century up to the beginning of the XX century (Hudhri, 1990,87). In their paintings the precise dresses we mentioned above have been presented. A new type of dress (type of trousers) widespread in northern Albania, which was known with the definitions of *me tirq*, *me çakçirë ose me zhgun*, is noted only in some of their compositions only after the years 1860-1870.

Before this period, the traces of this dress for the men are not offered in any documentary sources, but we have to mention the fact that the dress in fustanella in the cold seasons was accompanied by a pair of kallce or kofshata (type of long socks), of a length up to the thighs. The material of kallce was of woolen fabrics (imported) which was called tirk. Seemingly, the definition tirq of these trousers has derived exactly by the name of this fabrics. Whereas the definition çakçirë is of oriental origin. This phenomenon is noted even in the definitions of some other parts of men and women clothing in the period after the Turkish invasion.

Thus, I have to clarify that the outfit of Scanderbeg or his warriors in tirq dress in some of the creations of the Albanian painter, is not scientifically correct and does not show the reality of the used dresses of that time. As we know, the folkloric creation about Scanderbeg are numerous. The historical memory regarding his times has been provided through some variants of the popular dresses. During many of the expeditions that I have undertaken in the terrain, especially in the regions including the area of Libazhd up to the Alps within and outside the political borders of Albania, it has happened to me often to listen that the parts of the clothes in black color, such as: xhubleta of brides, types of xhurdie-s (known of different definitions), the women’s aprons in Malësia e Dibrës (Highland of Dibra), and specifically the black headscarf or dark blue of the women of Mirdita, have been worn as a sign of mourning after the death of Scanderbeg. In addition, the northern men were identified as “gjokazez”. “gjokazinj”.

To conclude, I wish to highlight that the contribution of this paper consists on the definition of the dresses used in the period that includes XVI-XV centuries, so the period prior to the Turkish invasion. It is precisely these dresses that resisted more to the oriental fashion presented after the ottoman invasion and the new cultural streams in the following years.

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Beqir META**MONTENEGRIN MINORITY, ROMA AND JEWS
DURING 1925-1939****Montenegrin minority of Vraka***Serbian schools in Shkodër and Vrakë*

In the first years of A. Zogu's regime, the influence of Yugoslavia on the orthodox population of Shkodra was persisting. Two private Serbian schools secretly sponsored by the Yugoslav government were still operational. One of them was in Shkodra. Although the orthodox community in Shkodra were Albanians based on race, language and customs, some of them sent their children to this school, which worked intensively to spread the Serbian language among the Albanian orthodox of Shkodra in order for them to change their nationality. This school had not completed the legal operational requirements. Therefore, in April 1926, the prefecture of Shkodra proposed closing the school¹.

Meanwhile, the other Serbian private school operating in the village of Vraka did not teach students Albanian language at all, contrary to the treaties for the minorities. Shkodra Prefecture suggested that this school be closed as well and the establishment of another state school in Slavic language².

In 1927, the orthodox private school of Shkodra had four classes, with 86 students (54 boys and 32 girls). There was also a private school in Vraka with four classes and 70 students. It continued to be funded by the Yugoslav state, openly violating the treaties on protecting minorities³.

Even in 1928, Serbian orthodox schools in Vraka and Shkodra continued to employ teachers with Serbian citizenship who acted in violation to the Albanian legislation⁴. In fact, there was uncertainty in the Ministry of Education about the status of the Serbian school in Shkodra and the rights of the Albanian Orthodox community in Shkodra on maintaining such a school⁵.

Meanwhile, the Yugoslav consulate continued to provide scholarships to many orthodox boys in the town to study in Yugoslav schools⁶. The Yugoslav authorities

¹ *Arkivi Qendror Shtetëror i Republikës së Shqipërisë* (following: *AQSH*), Fundi (following: F.) MPB, (following: V.) 1926, file (following: D.) 19, fl. 9, 11. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, March 22, and April 3 1926.

² *Ibid*, fl. 7. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, February 17, 1926.

³ *Ibid*, F. Ministria e Arsimit (MA), V. 1927, D. 61, fl. 93-94.

⁴ *Ibid*, F. MPB, V. 1928, D. 542, fl. 1. Ministria e Arsimit drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, 14 shkurt 1928.

⁵ *Ibid*, F. MPB, V. 1928, D. 218, fl. 12. Ministria e Arsimit drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, 22 gusht 1928.

⁶ *Ibid*, fl. 1-2. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, 10 gusht 1928.

severely punished those Albanian students from the Albanian territories under the Yugoslavian jurisdiction who tried to come to Albania to attend Albanian schools.

The Albanian government took measures to stop the illegal education of Albanian Orthodox boys in Yugoslavia. Students attending the Seminary in Manastiri were denied visas. This was based on the decision of the Council of Ministers, which banned the enrollment in foreign high schools without the permission of the Ministry of Education⁷. These measures were in line with international legislation on minorities. They were taken after the standing of the regime consolidated within the country and improved internationally. Previously, the Albanian administration had tolerated these violations as it had deemed to have weaker standing and, therefore, tried to avoid any complications at home and abroad.

In addition, the issue of minorities in Albania attracted the attention of scholars and publicists of the time. They highlighted the fact that, although the Greek, Montenegrin and Bulgarian-Macedonian minorities were very small in number, they had become instruments of propaganda by Greece and Yugoslavia.⁸ They also stressed that the situation of these minorities in Albania was quite different from the situation of minorities in other countries.

They confirmed that even in Albania minorities were slowly being assimilated by the majority but this phenomenon was common and it developing "within those limits that allowed the protection of the Albanian state and maintaining good relations with neighboring countries with the aim of avoiding reprisals against strong Albanian minorities in Greece and especially in Yugoslavia"⁹.

The Ministry of Education tried to discipline the activities of the two Orthodox schools in Vraka and Shkodra. In the school of Shkodra, the Ministry gave a teaching permission to teachers Harallamb Andriq, Angjelina Andriq and B. Dezenka Gjergjević as they had valid documents. Teaching in these schools would be in accordance with the curricula of state primary schools and in Albanian language, while the Slavic language would be taught as a foreign language¹⁰. But these ordinances were not carried out. The Shkodra school continued to operate as before and retained the character of a Yugoslav school. For this reason, the Ministry of Education ordered the removal of those teachers who did not know the Albanian language and who did not have Albanian citizenship.

The Albanian authorities demanded that the books and registers of this school would have to be official. If these requirements were not met, the school would be closed¹¹. The government instructed the prefecture of Shkodra to ask this school to adhere to the program that was implemented in all schools in the country. The reason was that the Orthodox population of Shkodra was not a "racial or national minority". This community was composed of Albanians coming from different areas, purely Albanian,

⁷*Ibid*, F. MPB, V. 1928, D. 218, fl.15. Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Jashtme, 9 tetor 1928.

⁸*Enrico Aci Monfosca, Le Minoranze Nazionali Contemplate dagli Atti Internazionali, volume secondo, Paesi Danubiani, Balcanici e Turchia, Firenze: 1929, f. 205-206.*

⁹*Ibid*.

¹⁰AQSH, F. MA, V. 1929, D. 91, fl. 3. Ministria e Punëve të Jashtme drejtuar prefekturës së Shkodrës, October 17, 1929.

¹¹*Ibid*, fl. 18. Ministria e Arsimit drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, November 26, 1929.

who spoke Albanian in their homes and conducted their trade relations, and other types of relations, in this language. On the other hand, they could only learn Slavic as a second language, a few hours a week, using textbooks that would be approved by the Ministry of Education¹².

The government approached differently the school in Vraça. Since the inhabitants of that village mostly spoke Slavic, the lessons in that school would be given in Slavic; Albanian would be taught one hour a day¹³. This was a correct approach and in accordance with the treaties of the League of Nations for the protection of minorities.

However, the Yugoslav government continued to violate these treaties by intervening directly in this educational issue. The Prefect of Shkodra, Kol Rodhe informed that these two schools were also being funded by the Yugoslav government for propaganda purposes. He emphasized that the orthodox inhabitants of Shkodra, in general, were Vlachs who came from Durrës, Kavaja, Berat, etc. Not only the teachers who taught there were not Albanian citizens, but they also had Slavic feelings. Rodhe demanded their removal and replacement with teachers from Korça¹⁴.

In 1929 both Serbian schools continued to be operational. These schools employed 10 teachers, two of Albanian origin and eight of Serbian origin. The total number of students in these schools was 120 and the Albanian state spent 4,980 gold francs per year for the maintenance of these schools¹⁵.

The Albanian government was determined that, like all other minority schools, the Vraça school would function in accordance with Albanian legislation, and observe particularly Article 207 of the Basic Statute of the Kingdom of Albania. Otherwise, it would be closed¹⁶.

At the beginning of 1930, the Albanian government tried to resolve amicably the issue of legal operation of the Orthodox school of Shkodra. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Albania asked the Chargé d'Affaires of Yugoslavia to intervene with the director of this school so that he would implement the state rules. The Yugoslav representative vowed that the condition of this school would change. However, a few days later, he informed the MFA that the school director claimed to have complied with all the requirements set by the Ministry of Education¹⁷. Under these circumstances, the Ministry of Education ordered the closure of the orthodox school in Shkodra, since it had consistently opposed the implementation of the curriculum the government had approved, it had taught all lessons in Serbian without giving any lessons in Albanian, the teachers did not know the Albanian language and were not Albanian citizens, while the books and registers that were used were not approved by the Ministry of Education.

¹²*Ibid*, fl. 31. Ministria e Arsimit drejtuar prefekturës së Shkodrës, November 2, 1929.

¹³*Ibid*, fl. 34. Ministria e Arsimit drejtuar prefekturës së Shkodrës, November 6, 1929.

¹⁴*Ibid*, fl. 52-53. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme

¹⁵ *Arkivi i Ministrisë së Punëve të Jashtme i Republikës së Shqipërisë* (më tej: *AMPJ*), V. 1929, D. 797, fl. 7. Pasqyrë përmbledhëse e shkollave të minoriteteve etnike në Shqipëri.

¹⁶*Ibid*, V. 1929, D. 796. Përgjigje e Ministrisë së Arsimit dërguar Ministrisë së Punëve të Jashtme për shkollat minoritare, September 10, 1929.

¹⁷*Ibid*, V. 1930, D. 288, fl. 1. Ministria e Punëve të Jashtme drejtuar Ministrisë së Arsimit, January 3, 1930.

This ministry stated that it had allowed the activity of this school temporarily in order to allow the school to prepare for the fulfillment of the above-mentioned requirements, but it had never met these conditions¹⁸. An inspection carried out in the orthodox school of Shkodra, revealed that the school director had not posted the school board in the Albanian language. He even refused to post it when asked to do so by local authorities. Many portraits of Serb nationalists hung on the school walls. For this reason, the prefecture of Shkodra revoked the professional license of the school director Harallamb Andriqit, replaced the latter with Luigj Sheldina, and suspended teachers Vuk Stajkoviç, Milica Stajkoviç and Angjelina Andriq because they did not know the Albanian language and had taught not even one class about Albanian language¹⁹.

These measures were well received by the public of Shkodra²⁰. But three or four days later, the Ministry of Education ordered that all the aforementioned teachers be allowed to practice their profession. Shkodra Prefecture used this opportunity to replace the previous director with a new director²¹.

In 1930-1931, 2 Serbian schools with 11 teachers and 142 students continued to be operational. The Albanian state paid 6300 gold francs a year for their maintenance²².

Efforts for the establishment of a slavic society in Shkodra

During 1925-1926, the society "Obiliq" was active in the city of Shkodra. Using theater, the society was trying to spread the Serbian feelings and the language among the Albanian Orthodox. The people of Shkodra were dissatisfied with the activity of this society, which was trying to change the national identity of Albanian children²³. However, during that first phase, the new regime was very careful and wanted to avoid incidents and misunderstandings with Belgrade. Therefore, the local authorities temporarily tolerated in silence the activity of this company.

In the summer of 1928, the Obiliq Society was trying to show some theatrical plays in Serbian language. But now, unlike two years ago, there was a reaction from the state authorities and the population as well. The prefecture did not allow the implementation of these activities, as this company was not officially recognized by the Albanian state²⁴.

The Ministry of Interior ordered that this company be closed on the basis of article 6 of the Destur (order of thanixhild) of the Ottoman Law, which was still in force²⁵. The society was temporarily closed. The president, councilors and members of the society presented the prefecture with a pro-Albanian patriotic statement, in which they apologized for this mistake²⁶. Further, the Ministry of Interior withdrew from the first

¹⁸*Ibid*, fl. 5. Ministria e Arsimit drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Jashtme, January 13, 1930.

¹⁹*AQSH*, F. MPB, V. 1930, D. 304, fl. 2. Prefektura Shkodër drejtuar Inspektorisë së Arsimit Shkodër, January 2, 1930.

²⁰*Ibid*, fl. 13. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, January 7, 1930.

²¹*Ibid*, fl. 16. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, January 9, 1930.

²²*AQSH*, F. MA, V. 1931, D. 31, fl. 1. Pasqyrë mbi shkollat minoritare në Shqipëri, 1930-1931.

²³*Ibid*, F. MPB, V. 1926, D. 19, fl. 12. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, August 7, 1926.

²⁴*Ibid*, F. MPB, V. 1928, D. 218, fl. 1-2. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, August 10 1928.

²⁵*Ibid*, fl. 3. Ministria e Punëve të Brendshme drejtuar prefekturës Shkodër, July 13, 1928.

²⁶*Ibid*, fl. 6. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, August 16, 1928.

order. She instructed the prefecture of Shkodra to order the president of this society to seek regular permission from the government and, in case the society resumed its activity, the prefecture had to "close its eyes" until a second order²⁷.

The change of the position of the Ministry of Interior, aimed to avoid any unwanted conflict with Yugoslavia in those delicate moments, when the Constituent Assembly would declare a monarchy. The Ministry of Interior ordered: "It is imperative that we do not have the slightest conflict." She assured the prefecture that the chairman of the "Obiliq" society would not be granted the required permit, but it was necessary that during those days there were no conflicts²⁸.

After the proclamation of the Monarchy, the society was closed. Yugoslav Legation in Tirana did not stay passive but protested for the closure of the "Obiliq" society. In 1929, the students of the Serbian school tried to re-establish this society. When the society closed, the government did not punish its founders. This increased the courage of the students, who had the courage to demand the reopening of this society, motivated even by the Yugoslav consul. According to the statute, the goal of the society was sports. But judging from its internal organization, it was clear that this was a secret organization. For this reason, the police authorities asked the initiators to change the name of the society, replacing it with an Albanian name and change some vague and dubious articles of the statute²⁹. The Prefecture of Shkodra underlined that the Vraka boys and all Yugoslav agents were working unrestrained because, since then, not only had no action been taken against the Yugoslav propagandists, but they had been really supported by the Albanian government both on the reopening of their school and on the ecclesiastical issue³⁰. The prefecture proposed taking strong and quick legal measures or direct and indirect administrative actions for the deportation of the initiators of the society, in order to stop this activity once and have for all and have the orthodox people of Shkodra, who secretly followed them, understand that they had to obey the orders of the government³¹. There are no data on the existence of this society in the following years in the Albanian archives. It seems that it ceased its activity in 1929.

The issue of the Serbian Orthodox Church

The Albanian state made efforts to limit the intervention of the Serbian church in the affairs of the Albanian Autocephalous Church, trying to find support in the small Slavic minority of Vraka and the Orthodox communities in the prefectures of Peshkopia and Shkodra. In 1928, the bishop of Ohrid had appointed a parish priest for the Orthodox communities of Peshkopia and Stebleva, but he was not allowed to practice his activity. The local authorities asked him for permission from the Presidency of the Albanian Autocephalous Church³². The state authorities asked the Presidency of

²⁷*Ibid.*, fl. 18. MPB drejtuar prefekturës Shkodër.

²⁸*Ibid.*, fl. 7, 11. Udhëzime të Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme për prefekturën e Shkodrës, August 19 and 22, 1928.

²⁹*Ibid.*, F. MPB, V. 1929, D. 18, fl. 12-13. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, January 29, 1929.

³⁰*Ibid.*

³¹*Ibid.*

³²AQSH, F. MPB, V. 1928, D. 39, fl. 152. Prefektura Dibër drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, April 20, 1928.

KOASH to appoint an Albanian priest to this vacant position, in order not to give reasons to Yugoslavs to raise minority claims³³. However, the issue was not resolved immediately. Golloborda and Zerqani did not have an Albanian priest and religious ceremonies were performed by a Yugoslav priest, who occasionally came from Yugoslavia³⁴.

Albania was a typical example of how minorities of any kind, with the support of powerful neighboring states, had become an important factor in the life of a small and weak state, having even a greater weight than they could have based on their number.

The same was the case with the Slavic-speaking inhabitants of Vraka, who were used by Belgrade to gain important dominant positions in the Albanian Orthodox Church. On the eve of the Orthodox Congress of 1929, the Yugoslav representative in Albania put heavy pressure on Visarion Xhuvani, even threatening him and the KOASH, in order to appoint Serbian Bishop Viktori at the head of the Shkodra Orthodox Church. However, Archbishop Visarion categorically rejected this request³⁵. The Yugoslav Legation was informed that the Congress would abolish the entire ecclesiastical status quo of Shkodra. During the debate, the representative of the Yugoslav legation seemed convinced by the arguments presented by the chairman of the KOASH Synod but was reluctant to report these arguments to Belgrade³⁶.

On the eve of the Congress, Serbian Bishop Viktori paid a visit to Korça. The Ministry of Interior followed this event with concern. It instructed the President of the Synod to warn Victor that he could not be allowed to attend the Congress, as he was not a delegate elected by the Orthodox population of Shkodra. For this reason, he should not have stayed in Korça while the Congress was taking place, because his isolated stay there at that time would damage his religious authority³⁷.

On the other hand, the prefecture of Shkodra tried to persuade Viktor to appoint Risto Siliq and Vasil Palaj as delegates to the Congress. Viktor refused on the grounds that the former had never appeared in church and the Orthodox people considered him a Catholic and did not like him, while the latter, Vasil Palaj, was unknown to anyone.

Victor declared to the local authorities that the government should not instill the slightest distrust among the delegates who would be elected, because they would say "amen" to every conversation and decision that would be taken in Congress! He complained that Visarion had severely reprimanded him for going to Korça but he replied that he had gone "as an initiator [KOASH] and as an Albanian". The Serbian clergyman warned that Visarion's nervousness would not have good consequences, neither for the members of the Synod, nor for the clergy. He added that the interest of KOASH and the political interest required that he not only go to Korça, but he should have been called by the presidency of the Synod, because thus autocephaly of the Albanian Orthodox Church would be strongly linked to the Serbian Patriarchate, especially because "The orthodox people of Shkodra and its delegates see that I am,

³³*Ibid.*, fl. 156. Nënprefektura e Zerqanit drejtuar prefekturës Dibër, 30 tetor 1928.

³⁴*Ibid.*, fl. 158. MPB drejtuar prefekturës Korçë, November 10, 1928.

³⁵*Ibid.*, F. MPB, V. 1929, D. 19/A, fl. 223. Prefektura e Elbasanit drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, June 10, 1929.

³⁶*Ibid.*

³⁷*Ibid.*, fl. 223. Prefektura e Elbasanit drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, June 10, 1929.

both spiritually and nationally, united with them"³⁸. But, in fact, Viktor had prepared a stab behind the back of KOASH.

Taking advantage of the difficulties that the Albanian state was facing with the organization of KOASH, some representatives of this community, Velisha Popoviq, Naum Plevenshi and Mitro L Lazaroviq tried to submit a memorandum to the Congress of KOASH of 1929, which contained the following requirements: 1 - Serbian Bishop Viktor had to attend the Congress, based on right and duty. He also had to be elected a member of the Synod because "his presence had given a guarantee to the organization of KOASH". They protested his absence from Congress and him no being elected to the Senate; 2 - Demanded the restoration of the ecclesiastical *status quo* of the period before the independence of Albania, when there was a Slavic bishop for Shkodra, its villages and Golloborda. They also demanded that Masses in these villages be held in the Slavic language, that Slavic schools be preserved, and that religious festivals be held according to the old calendar³⁹.

The investigations made by the prefecture of Korça, showed that the Albanian Orthodox delegates of Shkodra had approved this memorandum, not out of any bad intention, but based on the promises Monsignor Visarion had made them that their ecclesiastical and linguistic rights would remain as they had been before. Therefore, they handed him this letter, "in order to remind him of the wish of the orthodox people of Shkodra and the promise that Visarion had given them"⁴⁰.

The Ministry of Interior intervened to block the submission of this memorandum to Congress. It even ordered that this document not even be mentioned by anyone⁴¹. Orders were also given to advise the delegates from Shkodra that these demands could never be supported by a majority in Congress and would be of no use, except to let the government know that they were working for the benefit of other parties and to the detriment of Albanian national interests. The Ministry of Interior issued instructions on advising Visarion Xhuvani "that it was imperative that he reduce his contacts with the Yugoslavs, and even interrupt them altogether, or otherwise the ministry would begin to suspect on him"⁴².

Bishop Victor was persuaded not to attend the Congress, after receiving from Visarion a fat sum of 1600 gold francs, and his request was accepted to attend the Te deum held in the church of St. George⁴³. The Yugoslav consul also attended the opening ceremony of the Congress. Visarion was met by the secretary of the Yugoslav legation, who stressed that the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, Marinkovic, had asked the KOASH to allow Viktor to attend the Congress, as proof of the sincerity of KOASH towards Yugoslavia⁴⁴.

³⁸*Ibid.*, F. MPB, V. 1929, D. 119/1, fl. 123-124. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, June 24, 1929.

³⁹*Ibid.*, F. MPB, V. 1929, D. 119/2A, fl. 278-279. Prefektura e Korçës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, June 22, 1929.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, fl. 281. Prefektura e Korçës drejtuar MPB, June 22, 1929.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, fl. 280. MPB drejtuar prefekturës së Korçës, June 22, 1929.

⁴²*Ibid.*

⁴³*Ibid.*, fl. 242-243. Prefekti i Korçës, Hil Mosi, drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, June 17, 1929.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*

Although resistance to the KOASH continued in Vraça, the Orthodox population of Shkodra after the ecclesiastical congress changed its position for the moment. At the end of August 1929, the Deputy Metropolitan, Josif, arrived in Shkodra. He was received in an enthusiastic atmosphere by the orthodox people and clergy of Shkodra. He read the order of the president of KOASH, Visarion and gave a long speech in favor of the King and the Albanian Autocephalous Church, which was greeted by incessant applause⁴⁵.

The Yugoslav pressure continued in some orthodox villages in the province of Dibra. In February 1929, the KOASH presidency sent to Peshkopia an Albanian patriot priest⁴⁶. In order to prevent the organization of masses and religious services by Yugoslav priests among the Orthodox population of Golloborda, the KOASH appointed Anastas Davidhi as a priest in this province. The Ministry of Interior considered this issue important, so it instructed the local authorities to take all measures to help him and the local population, in order not to allow the performance of religious services by Yugoslav priests⁴⁷.

The arrival of the Yugoslav border delegation in Shkodra prompted more dynamism among all agents of the Yugoslav consul and some people from Vraça, who, fed by Slavic dreams, intensified their opposition to the KOASH and the orders of the Albanian government.

During November-December 1929, a fierce confrontation ensued between the leadership of KOASH and the Serbian agents and priests of Vraça. In early November, Archbishop Visarion, after being informed that the priest of Vraça, Velisha Popovic, had rebelled against KOASH, appointed in his place the parish priest of Lin – Erazm, who had recognized and respected the autocephaly of the Albanian Orthodox Church. Visarion also ordered the deputy metropolitan of Shkodra, Bishop Gjenins, to punish Velisha for this action, banning him for 15 days from any religious service and transferring him to the monastery of St. John in Elbasan. If, after this punishment, he obeyed KOASH, he would be transferred to another site, where he could not mingle with political issues⁴⁸.

However, the Serbian elements continued to resist. A few days later, at the house of the priest of Vraça, Velisha Popovic, a meeting was held, which had political purposes directed against KOASH. During the meeting discussions were held on the organization of the resistance against the Albanian Autocephalous Church and the non-acceptance of the Albanian language in the school of Vraça. According to the instructions of the Yugoslav consul in Shkodra, an organization had been set up, to which he had promised support and money⁴⁹. The Albanian authorities took action and had arrested the five organizers of this meeting.⁵⁰ Although the priest of Vraça openly declared before the

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, fl. 355-366. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar MPB, August, 31 1929.

⁴⁶ AQSH, F. MPB, V. 1929, D. 119/1, fl. 141. Ministria e Punëve të Brendshme drejtuar prefekturës Dibër, February 27, 1929.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, F. MPB, V. 1929, D. 119/A, fl. 270. Ministria e Punëve të Brendshme drejtuar nënprefekturës Zërëqan, January 24, 1929.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, F. MPB, V. 1929, D. 18, fl. 160. Prefektura e Korçës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, November 11, 1929.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, fl. 164. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, November 30, 1929.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

authorities of the prefecture of Shkodra that he did not recognize the autocephalous church, no legal action was taken against him⁵¹.

The prefecture of Shkodra deported 4 people to Kurvelesh for a year, while four others were deported for six months, on charges of propaganda against the regime and for connections and cooperation with political fugitives. This sentence was applied after the decision taken by the Council of Ministers on December 10, 1929⁵². A few days later, the Ecclesiastical Council of Shkodra expelled from its ranks a priest with Serbian citizenship⁵³. The Ministry of Interior ordered the prefecture of Shkodra to use the new ecclesiastical calendar in the Orthodox Church of Shkodra and not the old calendar used by the Slavic churches. People has to be introduced to the new calendar carefully in order not to cause a reaction⁵⁴.

However, the Albanian government, as it had been the case many times with the nationalist activities of the Greek minority, was not determined to implement the aforementioned punitive measures against the Yugoslav propagandists. Just a few days later, the Council of Ministers decided to release the internees in Kurvelesh⁵⁵. The newcomers from exile immediately boycotted the Christmas holiday and declared that they did not obey KOASH. The Shkodra prefecture had reliable data that the Yugoslav consulate made use of this case, encouraging opposition to the KOASH.

Ita had given money, encouraging the people of Vraça to resist and, if the men were to be deported, had provided financial support to their families, just as it had supported the families of those people from Vraça who had been interned a few days earlier to Kurvelesh⁵⁶.

On December 23, Yugoslav Minister Nastasioviç visited the Durrës Metropolitanate. He threatened that the Presidency and the chairperson of the Synod of KOASH would repent if, within two months, the previous ecclesiastical situation in Vraça was not restored. However, the KOASH Presidency resisted this pressure and stated that it had taken into account any risk. The Yugoslav minister added Chrysanthos would soon arrive with another bishop from Greece while Vasil Avrami had set off to Greece on a mission.⁵⁷ The Yugoslav diplomat warned that Yugoslavia would support the Greek cause regarding the Albanian-Greek debate on KOASH.

However, during the Christmas of 1929, the situation in Vraça calmed down somewhat. The mayor of Shkodra went with the new priest to Vraça and the whole village attended his mass. The village nobility welcomed the guests to a reception and promised to fully respect the religious orders of the Metropolis and KOASH⁵⁸.

In the last days of December, the Yugoslav consul in Korça, Koich, visited the mayor of the city. The latter expressed his regret that the Serbian Patriarchate, which had initially supported the establishment of the Albanian Orthodox Synod, had

⁵¹ *Ibid*, fl. 174. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, December 7, 1929.

⁵² *Ibid*, fl. 83.

⁵³ *Ibid*, fl. 191. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, December 16, 1929.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, F. MPB, V. 1929, D. 119/a, fl. 298. MPB drejtuar prefekturës së Shkodrës, December 14, 1929.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, F. MPB, V. 1929, D. 18, fl. 200. Vendim i Këshillit të Ministrave, nr. 1204, December 22, 1929.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, fl. 221. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, December 27, 1929.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, fl. 227. Prefektura e Durrësit drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, December 23, 1929.

⁵⁸ *AQSH*, F. MPB, V. 1929, D. 18, fl. 223, Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, December 29, 1929.

withdrawn from this position and refused to formally recognize KOASH, as promised. The Yugoslav consul said that this reaction came because of the position of the Albanian government, which had promised the Yugoslav representative in Tirana, Mihajlovic, that it would recognize Viktor as bishop of Shkodra and as a member of the Synod and that he would maintain the Orthodox status quo in Shkodra and its suburbs. On the other side, all these promises were revoked in the meeting of the Panorthodox Congress of Korça and in the Statute of KOASH. He claimed that, as these promises were not fulfilled, the Yugoslav government withdrew its Minister Mihailovi from Tirana, disappointed by the dry promises he had received⁵⁹.

The prefect of Korça denied that the Albanian government had made such promises, as the orthodox population of the prefecture of Shkodra, not over 3900 people, was Albanian mostly. Only a very small part, not over 500 people, were of Slavic origin and even they were good Albanian citizens and knew the Albanian language very well⁶⁰.

The Orthodox Church in Vraca continued to have problems. At the beginning of 1930, two dead people from the village of Vraca were buried without religious services, because some of the people from Vraca started to oppose again the representative of the Albanian Autocephalous Church. The Ministry of Interior asked the prefecture of Shkodra to stop this action by administrative measures because, if the presence of Serbian clergy was tolerated even more, then this would reopen the wound of privileges foreign churches enjoyed but which had recently had been removed⁶¹. On the other hand, the Ministry of Interior asked the Ministry of Justice to instruct the chairman of KOASH to appoint in Vraca a priest who knew the Slavic language⁶². Meanwhile, the prefecture of Shkodra ordered the municipality of Vraca to not allow the burial of the dead without the performance of due religious services. If such actions were repeated, the perpetrators would be exiled, being considered disturbers of peace and propagandists against the interests of the state⁶³. However, two months later another burial was repeated without the performance of religious services. The former parish priest of Vraca, Velisha, encouraged the locals to oppose KOASH, promising that the Slavic language would be restored and the old calendar would be used⁶⁴.

In July 1930, the KOASH leadership demanded that pop Velisha be allowed to perform religious ceremonies in Vraca, after he had served an eight-month sentence for not performing mass⁶⁵. Even in 1931, father Velisha continued to hold religious ceremonies in the church of Vraca in the Slavic language and according to the old calendar⁶⁶, which was contrary to the statute of KOASH. The Yugoslavs were not satisfied with the concessions made by KOASH and the Albanian government in Vraca

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, F. MPB, V. 1929, D. 119/1a, fl. 304-308. Prefektura e Korçës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, December 24, 1929.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*

⁶¹*Ibid.*, F. MPB, V. 1930, D. 185, fl. 2. MPB drejtuar prefekturës së Shkodrës, March 20, 1930.

⁶²*Ibid.*, fl. 4. Ministria e Punëve të Brendshme drejtuar Ministrisë së Drejtësisë.

⁶³*Ibid.*, fl. 6. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, March 28, 1930.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, fl. 9. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, May 17, 1930.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, fl. 13. Kryesia e KOASH drejtuar Ministrisë së Drejtësisë, July 18, 1930.

⁶⁶*AQSH*, F. MPB, V. 1931, D. 193, fl. 35. Komanda e qarkut Shkodër drejtuar Komandës së Përgjithshme të Xhandarmërisë, September 3, 1931.

and tried to challenge its authority in Shkodra and to Slavify the Orthodox Church of that city as well.

Over time, the Albanian Autocephalous Church strengthened but foreign influences were present, ready to strike at it. In 1934, Risto Pleoneshi and Risto Gjergjo, guardians of the Albanian Orthodox Autocephalous Church in the city of Shkodra, were trying to have Velisha from Vraça as a parish priest in the church of Shkodra. To this purpose, they had prepared a prayer and were collecting the signatures of the orthodox inhabitants of Shkodra. They acted on the instructions of the Yugoslav consulate, which worked to bring the church of Shkodra under its control through its loyal agent, Father Velisha. He had fought and continued to fight resolutely the authority of KOASH in the church of Shkodra which had its parish priest and who acted in accordance with the orders and principles of the high Albanian ecclesiastical authorities⁶⁷.

While implementing the colonial agrarian reform in Kosovo, the Yugoslav government sought to strengthen the economic standing of the Vraça minority, whose members were landless farmers. The Yugoslav consulate mediated for the inhabitants of Vraça to buy the lands of Sylçe Bej Bushati. The prefecture asked the Ministry of Interior to stop the efforts of the people of Vraça as well as the interventions of the Yugoslav consul in this matter⁶⁸. The efforts of the Yugoslavs to strengthen and expand their influence in the area of Shkodra ran into difficulties.

Thus, from December 1933 until the spring 1935, the inhabitants of Vraça had fled to Yugoslavia, with the intention of settling there permanently. Out of 175 families with 1290 persons that had been in December 1933, there were only 60 families with 367 people, so 115 families with 923 people had left⁶⁹.

These displacements were driven by economic reasons as the inhabitants of Vraça were tempted to find a better life in Yugoslavia. The Albanian government and authorities did not intervene in this process. After some time, some of them would return again and the Albanian state readmitted them, introducing no obstacles. This policy towards minorities was diametrically different from the Serbian and Greek policies who never allowed to lose any opportunity of removing minorities from their state territory.

Romani in Albania

The Romani, otherwise known as the “gabels”, gypsies, arixhi, or jevg are a cultural minority with distinctive features in Albania. This population is divided into different social and cultural strata and groups. However, both in the popular jargon and in the state documents of that time, there is an obvious ambiguity and inaccuracy in the naming of this population.

Unfortunately, the Albanian archives have very little information about their presence and how they were treated by the Albanian state. Although their life in Albania has been vivacious and interesting, unfortunately, we cannot fully address their history

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, F. MPB, V. 1934, D. 164, fl. 95. Komanda e xhandarmërisë së qarkut Shkodër drejtuar prefekturës së Shkodrës, August 4, 1934.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, F. MPB, V. 1929, D. 18/ 1, fl. 261. Prefektura Shkodër drejtuar MPB, November 9, 1929.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, F. MPB, V. 1935, D. 554, fl. 1-3. Prefektura e Shkodrës drejtuar Ministrisë së Punëve të Brendshme, April 20, 1935.

* This is how they are called in the records of the time.

and problems in this study. However, we cannot leave without presenting some data discovered in the archives, which we think however, could be interesting to the reader.

Archival sources show that in the 1920s in the prefecture of Korça the influx of gypsies increased a lot. Some of them had come from Asia Minor during the emigration of the Orthodox of this region, whom the Greek government settled near the Albanian border. In the late 1920s, the number of unemployed from this community increased. They made a living by sending women to the villages to beg and horse-trading. Some of them even committed petty thefts in the villages. In addition, some of their women and young women prostituted when they went out to the villages. The authorities of Korça were concerned that these nomads, having ties to the Orthodox who had settled on the Albanian-Greek border, could become the cradle of various evils.

Therefore they sought that this population be sent to other prefectures as well⁷⁰. However, the Ministry of Interior did not consider their distribution within the Albanian territory useful. It gave instructions of deporting them with administrative skill outside the border and preventing others from entering the Albanian border⁷¹.

During 1920-30, Albania continued to face the issue of the immigration of gypsies from the East. 38 "gabels" with Turkish citizenship came in the prefecture of Bilisht in 1929; 59 gypsies came in the prefecture of Vlora from Izmir; 76 gypsies had come from Florina, Greece during 1923-1924 in the village of Pojan in Korça. 22 gypsies had come in the prefecture of Gjirokastra from Greece during 1923-1926 had come. They claimed to have Greek citizenship but their documents were torn by the Greek authorities. In the prefecture of Elbasan there were 14 gypsies coming from Florina⁷².

The Ministry of Interior claimed that the Albanian population was being morally and materially harmed by these emigrants, because they did not have any skills to ensure their livelihood in an honest manner⁷³. Therefore, the ministry banned the entry of the Romani in Albania, in order to eliminate the negative consequences. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs instructed the Albanian representations abroad not to grant visas to these people under no circumstance⁷⁴. However, a few months later this position was softened and visas were allowed only to those Romani who had their families long settled in Albania and those who went from Albania to Greece or elsewhere for manual labor, such as was the case with some Romani from Bilisht⁷⁵.

Some data on Jews in the Albanian state

The history of the Jews in the Albanian state is one of the most impressive. Although they were a small group, they built very close relations with the Albanian population which are still vivid in the memory of both parties. There have been some interesting studies on this topic by Albanian and foreign authors, so in this article we are giving only some other data on the presence of Jews in Albania during the period of the republic and monarchy.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, F. MPB, V. 1928, D. 283, fl. 2. Nënprefektura Bilisht drejtuar prefekturës Korçë, May 2, 1928.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, fl. 5. Ministria e Punëve të Brendshme drejtuar prefekturës Korçë, 16 maj 1928.

⁷²*AQSH*, F. MPB, V. 1929, D. 271, fl. 2. Qarkore e MPB dërguar prefekturave, July 15, 1929.

⁷³*Ibid.*

⁷⁴*AMPJ*, V. 1929, D. 948, fl. 1. Qarkore e Ministrisë së Punëve të Jashtme, July 23, 1929.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*

After the declaration of the independent Albanian state, unlike other Balkan countries, the position of the Jews remained as it had been in the Ottoman period. According to American Jewish publications, Albanians were the first and, perhaps, the only ones to accept the resolution of Dr. Gaster on the recognition of the rights of Jews in the Balkans.⁷⁶ Albania would begin its recovery as an independent state only after 1920. Because of the war, the number of Jews was small and was about 100 people. But later, their numbers would grow.

Compared to some other Balkan countries, Albanians have maintained a specific positive attitude towards Jews. In Albania, they were respected, sheltered and protected, which did not happen in other countries. Particularly in Romania, Greece, and Serbia, ultranationalist and pro-fascist forces maintained an openly hostile attitude toward Jews. While in Albania no such manifestations have been found.

A common feeling bonded the Jews and Albanians at this time, as they were both victims of Serbian and Greek nationalisms. In the 1920s and 1930s, the Jews, like the Albanians, were viewed with hostility and contempt by the political circles of the Serbo-Croatian-Slovenian Kingdom. A quote from Vladan Gjordjević, the former Prime Minister of Serbia, stands out, emphasizing that Albanians could be compared to Jews who, until recently, "had tails like monkeys".⁷⁷ In Yugoslavia, after a temporary improvement of the condition of Jews in the early 1930s, because of the insistence of their societies, the situation worsened again in 1936, when the Yugoslav government impeded the free movement of non-Serb residents of Kosovo.⁷⁸

Other Balkan countries have also been notorious for their hostile treatment of Jews. Following is a brief overview in order for the reader to be able to differentiate between Albania and the other countries of the region with regard to how they treated Jews during one of the worst periods of their existence in history.

A horrifying story is the persecution of Jews in Romania. Thus, as early as 1923 a *Fasho* was established in the student circles of Bucharest, in the fashion of Mussolini. In the same year, Professor Aleksandër Kuza (Cuza) (1857-1947) of the University of Jashi, founded the "Christian National Defense League", in which many anti-Semitic nationalists adhered. The latter had joined the "peasantry" (taranzmul), which had had influence also in the district of I. Muhalake. In the 1926 elections, the party won 10 seats in parliament. The party then supported the Transylvanian poet Octavian Goga, which allowed the latter to become prime minister for a short time in 1937, during which he practice brutal and destructive anti-Semitism. The "Iron Guard" (Garda de Fier) of Cornelius Kodreanu (1889-1938) had the same roots into the same land but it had even more fascist structures. Cornelius committed a series of violent acts against the Jews. In 1927 he restructured his movement according to the Nazi model. They were the "green shirts". The Iron Guards resumed their exploits against the Jews of Bessarabia, and there Kodreanu was elected member of parliament in 1932⁷⁹.

⁷⁶Haxhi Bajraktari, *Marrëdhëniet shqiptaro-hebraike*, Instituti Shqiptar i Studimeve Politike-Tiranë, Prishtinë, 2009, f. 87. The author refers to "The American Jewish Year Book 5674", published by Herbert Friedenwald and G. H. Friedman.

⁷⁷Noel Malcolm, *KOSOVA, një histori e shkurtër*, Prishtinë: Koha, 1998, p. 280.

⁷⁸H. Bajraktari, *Marrëdhëniet shqiptaro-hebraike...*, p. 90.

⁷⁹Georges Castellani, *Histori e Ballkanit (shek. XIV-XX)*, Tiranë: Çabej, 1996, p. 441- 442.

The war, that began on June 22, 1941 between Hitler and Stalin, found the Romanians on the front line. The "legendary state" of September 1940 did not last long. The excesses of the guards disturbed the conductor but also the German command, which wanted to have its bases in the rear of the future eastern front as stable as possible. On January 21, 1941, the guards captured Bucharest, massacring with horror 350 personalities, among them many Jews. The next day, Antonescu unleashed Romanian officers and soldiers, backed by Wehrmacht panzers, in a relentless hunt against the legions.⁸⁰ Under Nazi pressure, Antonescu introduced anti-Semitic legislation in Romania, which banned the Jews from being doctors, lawyers, journalists; banned the possession of radios and vehicles, going to cinemas, etc. Nevertheless, the Jews did not experience here neither the ghettos nor the mass deportations to the Reich extermination camps.⁸¹

In Greece 45,000 Sephardic Jews from Thessaloniki were deported to extermination camps in Birkenhau and Bergen-Belsen.⁸² Greek nationalism reflected their hatred of Jews by handing them over to the Germans and aiding in the deportation of Jews.

A contradictory phenomenon took place in Bulgaria in the 1940s. Bulgarian Prime Minister B. Fillov was inspired by the Nazi model and promoted the enactment of anti-Semitic legislation. A law "On the preservation of the nation" (December 1940) established wearing the yellow star and provided for the expulsion of the Israelis from Sofia. However, when Hitler demanded their deportation to the German Reich, Fillov's government, fearing public opinion, limited itself to arrest Jews from the occupied territories of Yugoslavia and Greece (about 10,000), while the Assembly defended the Jews in Bulgaria: 43 pro-government MPs, including the Deputy Speaker of Parliament, protested and the government stepped back. Bulgaria's Jews were among the few fortunate communities in Nazi-ruled Europe who were not deported to mass extermination camps.⁸³

There was never an anti-Semitic movement in Albania. As early as the 1920s, after the Greek-Turkish War, many Jews were forced to emigrate from Ioannina to Albania to escape Greek persecution. Records of the time prove that the Jewish community had a quiet life in the new Albanian state. Its members were free to practice their religious practices and to participate in the economic and institutional life of the country, without any distinction or restriction. The American diplomat in Albania, Herman Bernstein wrote in 1934 that "in Albania there were no problems for the Jews. In this beautiful little Adriatic country there are no signs of discrimination, not just because the Jewish community is small but because Albania today is one of the few countries in Europe where religious prejudice and racial hatred do not exist, although Albanians are divided into three faiths".⁸⁴

Even scholar Myrteza Studenica stated that "among Albanians, both in Albania and outside its state borders, as well as in the Albanian diaspora, there has been no anti-Semitism. Religious prejudice never turned into hysterical hatred against Jews ... From

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, p. 446.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, p. 468.

⁸²*Ibid.*, p. 481.

⁸³*Ibid.*, p. 471, 472.

⁸⁴ Apostol Kotani, *Hebrenjtë në Shqipëri gjatë shekujve*, Dituria, Tiranë 1996, p. 39.

the time of the Roman conquests, when the Jews moved from their lands to Illyria, to the present day there is no record of the killing of Jews".⁸⁵

In the 1920s and 1930s, Albania was a heaven for Jews trying to escape the clutches of the Nazis. Thousands of people were able to get visas to go through Albania or even to stay if they so wished. In 1928, the Constitution of Albania underlined that all types of faith had to be honored and respected. This determined that the faith and identity of the Jews be respected.

It should be noted, however, that some laws and regulations contained some restrictions on the rights of Jews. But the Albanian government did not have the desire and will to implement them. It was clear that these legal and administrative provisions had been made under the Italian pressure. Practically no special restrictions were imposed on the Jews. The Albanian government also provided modest assistance to Jewish refugees in need.

The benevolent attitude of the Albanian government towards the Jews worried the Italians who aimed to colonize Albania. They put pressure on and hinder the rapid progress of projects for the installation of Jews in Albania, such as the project of the Cleveland Tractor Company.⁸⁶ The Italians were very vigilant about all the moves that were being made in this direction, putting under surveillance also those Albanian or foreign persons or officials who were supporting these projects.

Italian diplomatic reports stated that "Jews in Albania enjoy great sympathy from Albanians in general, and, in particular, from circles within the government, including the royal house."⁸⁷ The organization of the Zionist movement in Albania received state support when, in January 1937, the Albanian government authorized the establishment of the Jewish National Founding Committee chaired by Menachem Yonitov and Isaac Cohen. Three months later, the state officially recognized the Jewish community in the country.⁸⁸

The tolerant climate and benevolent attitude of the Albanians towards the Jewish community, and the danger posed by Hitler's coming to power in Germany, pushed the American ambassador in Tirana, Herman Bernstein, to start the efforts for the settlement of the Jews in Albania.

He saw no proper opportunity for the fruition of this project, which he considered benefiting both Jews and Albanians, who would benefit from large investments for the development of their country. The Albanian government welcomed Bernstein's proposals, the requests of the High Commissioner for Refugees of the League of Nations, James McDonald, as well as the project of the powerful American company, Cleveland Tractor Company for drying some swamps, in order to provide in them settlements for the Jews. It agreed to provide an area of 220,000 hectares for this purpose.⁸⁸⁹ Besides the humanitarian aspect, the Albanian government was showing great interest in Jewish investments in the country.

⁸⁵*Rilindja*, Zvicër, March 30, 1993.

⁸⁶H. Bajraktari, *Marrëdhëniet shqiptaro-hebraike ...*, f. 102. The author refers to USNA, State Department Records (RG59), Decimal File, 1910-1949: 8756112/11.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, f. 103. The author refers to *AQSH*, F. 163, V. 1938, D. 158, fl. 32.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, f. 94.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, pgs. 98-99.

According to the data of the Ministry of Interior, in 1937 the Jews in Albania had the following distribution:⁹⁰

Gjirokastra	12 families	51 persons
Tirana	13 families	13 persons
Durrës	7 families	21 persons
Vlora	16 families	17 persons
Shkodra	2 families	11 persons
Korça	3 families	3 persons

During 1938-1939, the Jewish population in Albania increased significantly. The Albanian consuls, based on the orientations of their government, were very tolerant and issued many entry visas. While the official authorities in Albania granted Albanian citizenship to many immigrant Jews. This did not happen in other countries. In addition to the official number of 350 Jews, there were many others in the country, most of whom had expired "tourist" or "transit" visas.

Prominent Albanian personalities, such as Fan Noli, Gjergj Fishta and others, openly defended the well-known albanologist Norbert Jokl and made efforts to take him out of Austria, which was under German control. They also had Victor Emanuel and Count Ciano, intervene, albeit unsuccessfully, on their German counterparts to allow Joklin to leave Austria. Jokl was arrested and disappeared in 1942.

The same tragic fate had befallen another great Jewish Albanologist, Milan Shufflay, who was barbarically killed by the Yugoslav secret police on February 19, 1931 in front of his house, precisely because of the remarkable contribution he had on the writing of the history of the Albanians.⁹¹ These prominent personalities remain honored and appreciated by the Albanian nation. They are an eternal symbol of the Albanian-Jewish friendship.

At the beginning of the Second World War, the situation in Albania seemed so good for the Albanian Jews that they felt safe and little attention was paid to the emigrants who came to Albania and spoke about the growing horrors in the countries of Central Europe.

The forces of the national liberation movement in Albania constantly cultivated a sense of solidarity and humanity for the Jews and resolutely defended them. Cases and documents are many. In this respect, they bore much resemblance to other liberation movements in the Balkans led by left-wing forces.

What was special about Albania is the fact that even the nationalist formations and forces were contributing to the protection of the Jews. The well-known Jewish scholar in Albania, Apostol Kotani, proved that neither the Ballists, nor the Zogists, nor the militias and gendarmes under the command of governments operating under the Italian or German control did not ask for the surrender of Jews, but defended them.⁹² As such, the quisling Prime Minister Mustafa Kruja insisted that the Italian Deputy General in

⁹⁰AQSH, F. MPB, V. 1937, D. 109. Të dhëna për çifutët në Shqipëri.

⁹¹H. Bajraktari, *Marrëdhëniet shqiptaro-hebraike* ..., p. 109-111.

⁹²A. Kotani, *Hebrenjtë në Shqipëri gjatë shekujve* ..., p. 81.

Albania, Jacomoni, do everything possible to save the Jews in Kosovo who had gathered in Pristina waiting to be handed over to the Nazi authorities. Jacomoni approved his request and action was taken to remove the Israelis from Pristina and bring them to Albania.⁹³ It is also worth mentioning the contribution of the former secretary of the municipality of Pristina, Preng Uli, in providing fake IDs for many Jews.⁹⁴

The Albanian nation not only protected the Jews in its territory, but did not allow any other Jew who, thankfully, had arrived in the country, to surrender to the Nazis. When the Nazis demanded the lists of Jews in 1943, the Albanian government refused to hand them over. The Jews in Albania moved from one city to another and mostly between Vlora and Durrës. Albanians, regardless of the danger, sheltered them, fed them and did not allow them to become victims of the Holocaust.

The Albanian regency had agreed with the Germans that the latter would not interfere in the internal affairs of Albania and this was of crucial importance for the fate of the Jews. When the Germans asked the regency to hand over their lists in all of Albania, the Albanian government objected, referring to this very agreement. Even the Minister of Interior, Xhafer Deva, who was described as anti-Semitic, came to the defense of the Jews. Harvey Sarnet⁹⁵ writes that "Minister Deva's nationalism surpassed his anti-Semitism. "He protested to the Germans and managed to persuade them to withdraw the request on the Jewish lists." He told them that he considered this a flagrant violation of the agreement and an arbitrary interference in the internal affairs of Albania.

King Zog I, who was in exile in Great Britain during the war, also proposed to British leaders a plan to settle 50,000 Jewish families in Albania. He described Albania as country rich in natural resources but with a poor population, which could easily maintain a population of 5 million. He promised to give every Jewish family a farm on state-owned land on the coast.

In Kosovo, the Germans took measures as well, as in other occupied countries, to persecute the Jews. But even here, these measures failed and their orders were not carried out. However, the Jews here were not as lucky as those in political Albania. The number of survivors in Kosovo was 60%, a figure that makes it one area with the highest percentage of survivors in occupied Europe.

The protection of Jews by Albanian nationalist forces is another proof of the humanistic nature of this nationalism. Albanian nationalism proved to be significantly different from the other Balkan nationalisms which treated inhumanely Jews and other minorities.

One reason may be the fact that the Albanian state and other Balkan states were created in different historical circumstances and followed different paths for their national development. The basic characteristic of the Balkan states is that they were created and consolidated as homogeneous and unitary states from the religious point of view, which influenced the cultivation of hyper-nationalism and ethnic exclusivity. While the Albanian nation and state developed as an entity based on tolerance and

⁹³Francesco Jacomoni, *La politica dell'Italia in Albania*, Padova: Capelli editore, 1965, p. 288, 289.

⁹⁴A. Kotani, *Hebrenjtë në Shqipëri gjatë shekujve ...*, p. 57.

⁹⁵Harvey Sarnet, *Shpëtimi, historia e patreguar e fisnikëve shqiptar të cilët i shpëtuan hebrenjtë nga Holokausti*, Tirana: Koha, 1998.

cooperation among the ethnic Albanian population, which belonged to three different faiths with a prominent Muslim majority. This influenced coexistence with diversity and the avoidance of exclusivism and hyper-nationalism.

The support of the Albanians was clearly evidenced by the tendency of the Jews to move from other European countries to Albania. They knew that even in Albania they would find Nazi invaders but they made this decision, hoping a lot in the support of the Albanian people, knowing well, apparently, its ancient code of trust and protection of the friend.

Albania is a special case in the Balkans on protecting Jews. Was this a coincidence, or an isolated phenomenon? If we were to study carefully the socio-human and cultural-spiritual construct of the Albanians, we could try to give an explanation for this phenomenon. The humanist spirit of the Albanians has deep roots in history, it is the essence of their code of living, a code unchanged over the centuries that dominated all social, spiritual and state structures of the Albanian nation. However, in order to understand the sacrifices, the Albanians made for protecting Jews during World War II, we emphasize that this was not the only act of humanism and an isolated phenomenon in their history. They are just as prominent in the region or even in Europe for protecting, respecting and living in harmony with all national or ethnos-cultural minorities at all times. This virtue of the Albanians has significantly influenced the positive policies of the Albanian state towards minorities throughout its almost century-long life. Nowhere in the Balkans did minorities survive as they did in Albania.

Recognizing these positive qualities of Albanians, Jews were not the only minority seeking protection in Albania. But the other two minorities, such as the Bulgarians or the Macedonians and the Vlachs, sought to be part of the Albanian state in order to secure their livelihood and identity, which were threatened by the nationalist regimes of Greece and Serbia.

The Macedonian population of the area around Prespa asked the Conference of Ambassadors in 1921 to join Albania, and this area joined the Albanian state in 1924. Throughout the following period, this population preserved, with no problems, its identity. Even the Vlachs of Macedonia and Pindus, for two consecutive times, in 1913 at the Conference of Ambassadors in London and in 1919-1920 at the Peace Conference in Paris, insisted on joining the new Albanian state, which they saw as most likely to preserve their identity, honor and life.

At the same time, inter-religious tolerance and harmony distinguish Albanians as a nation with sound human and civil resources and structure.

Ruzhdi STRINGA

**KINISMS AND CALQUES WITH CHINESE CONTENT IN
ALBANIAN LITERATURE - IN THE NOVELS “CONCERT AT
THE END OF WINTER” (I. KADARE) AND “IVORY
DRAGON...” F. KONGOLI ETC.**

When mentioning written literature, given the purpose expressed in the title of this paper, I will consider firstly literature and then journalism. Literary works are mostly read for entertainment, but also for knowledge and less for information; the news is read, generally, to be informed. It is not me the first one to say that. This is also too obvious. Despite the often-observed deviations from the aim, both these applications of standard language linguistically educate and that is why we can talk about language culture and cultured users. However, I need to emphasize that in the Albanian language terrain, the language of literature does not appear that open and pure, whereas the language of information has remained closed and normatively ingrained, thus making the standard system, which has given through these two application hierarchical structures, cherish continuous contemporariness. Given the below definition, I will take for granted the fact that the language of literature and that of information serve as the two main applications even of the standard Albanian language: the variety with the highest status of the language of a community or nation, which is usually based on the spoken and written discourse of the local educated users of this language. Standard language is generally used in the informative media, in artistic literature, in dictionaries and grammar books, in school and for its teaching as a foreign language. Sometimes, it is the variety of culture, used in public and cultural centers of a country, e.g., the standard language of France is based on the educated Parisian French.... It is a relatively unified variety of the language used for communication within the country. Standard language is the result of long-term linguistic and standardizing efforts of cultural institutions such as academies and of publications like dictionaries, grammar books, where the written forms are preferred over the conversational and dialectical forms. Standard language may be codified in different levels: in spelling, correct pronunciation, grammar, and lexicon.

In the field of technical terminology, official agreements between specialists of different fields may manage the national and international standardization of language.

For more: Trudgill 1983, Wardhaugh 1986, Woods 1985, Zgusta 1989, Milroy 1991, McArthur 1992, Bauer 1994¹.

¹ standard language: *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics*, English-Chinese edition 1998.

Thus, the shaped, dark, or “big” language that lives in all social, cultural, geographical forms/paradigms, otherwise the indirect way of expressing, polysematicity, connotation, figuration, etc., are essential in the literary/literature language, whereas the flat/pure or “small” language, which serves directly to the meaning agreement is an obligation in the informative/official language. If we read for study purposes in these two applications of Standard Albanian, we will see that the “big language” is ever more eliminating the “small language”. This is, among other things, a feature of a language under transition². Such linguistic transition not only keeps suspended linguistic issues brought by the new time, but also discusses those of the past. To remain on the same theoretical discussion and to be lead somewhat among the many phrases having as their headword the term *language*, such as *national standard language*, *common language*, *supradialectal language*, *official language*, etc., I, as per the above presentation, would distinguish two discerning terms within the standard Albanian: for the big language, etc., the term *literature/literary language* and for the small language, etc., the term *informative/official language*. Thus, within the standard we would have the big circle of the language of literature and within it the small circle of the official language, where the first could be linked to the indirect structures and the second to the direct structures of communication.

In the 40 subsequent years the importance of the role of transformations has decreased because of the work within and outside the original formulations of Chomsky; such a thing is dedicated to the introduction of the concept “deep structures”, over which it was affirmed that it was the transformations that acted (and, at least based on some formulations, it is still affirmed that they act) to create the superficial structures ...³

Literary language would thus be the language of literary works: with an enriching tendency, shaped, polysemantic, dark – and for what reason even “meaningless”, open to the norm, a continuous influencer to the official language.

The official language would be the language of information, of school, of the language for foreigners: pure, flat, easily understandable by all, locked (for an indefinite time) by the norm. In a nutshell, the literary language has the tendency to enrich, to be polysemantic (to be implicit, supratextual, incomprehensible, connotative, figurative, pragmatic, etc.), changeable in terms of time and place and social groups, and as a result, free from the standard. The official language, on the contrary, tends to be pure, denotative, unique, and standard.

From the sociolinguistic point of view, both the language of literature and the language of administration hold a high position because they are used by the elite of society, and consequently they enjoy more prestige. They become models of use by other segments of society, and in this way educate users linguistically. In literary contexts, e.g., culture, as an integral part of the time, place, author, etc., helps in breaking down polysematicity, whereas in official contexts in realizing denotation. And this could be that other type of reading, the reading for studies, where scientific interests can be of the most varied. My interest goes towards observing the lexicon used

² For more see the “Elite” journal, Dhjetor 2015, R. Stringa, *Gjuhëtari përtej aziatikut*.

³ R. H. Robins, *Historia e Gjuhësisë*, përkthet Genc Lefe, Shtëpia Botuese DITURIA, f. 345.

in both contexts. Since the lexicon itself may be viewed from many angles, each of its observers starts from the subject matter with which he/she works daily, and because I currently do my academic life in one of the Universities of China, the lexicon of the sememes, roots, key words *China*, *Chinese person*, *Chinese language*, as well as the lexicon with Chinese content has become, for nearly two decades, an everyday observation of mine turning thus into a priority, which, however, is related to the Albanian language. It must be said that the study select the Albanian lexicon related to my work as a teacher of the Albanian language with Chinese students of all three high levels of education. In these conditions, the observation of such a lexicon has seemed valuable to me, both for Albanians, in whom is conceived a concept or image predetermined by this lexicon, as well as for the Chinese, whose curiosity about the Albanian language would increase more when it is a lexicon related to their country. Thus, concentration on this type of lexicon, in both types of standard Albanian language, rose and was shaped in me as a study work to pass it to the researchers of both parties. Due to the distinct features, the analysis of this lexicon in the language of literature of special Albanian authors and the same lexicon in the formal language of the Albanian media has been done separately and this paper addresses the first one.

If we pose now, among Albanians, the question “What is China for you?”, the answers lead you on the directions we are discussing. I have asked this question and received the answer I expected: “A developed country, but **incomprehensible** ...”⁴.

In case we would assume that such question would be made prior to the year 1990, despite the alliance fluctuations, I can still predict the answer based on the present answers; during the heating of the alliance, the answer would be: “A big ally country, but **incomprehensible**” and during the cooling of the alliance: “A big non ally country, but **incomprehensible**” where the first phrase of the answer would change depending on the alliance temperatures, whereas the second would remain the same as after the question was made. The common attribution in both times (**incomprehensible**) is now an inherited stereotype, of the cultural dimension, whereas the different attribution (respectively: a developed and big non-ally country) is related to the temporal dimension of contextuality or temporal thematization. Such known answers match and find explanation even in the discourse within the Albanian text (literature, media, etc.), where the speaker of Chinese content has conceived and conceives a predetermined image by delineating in the Albanian mindset an imaginary China and a different meaning, one that is motley, connotative and figurative, derived from the use of words related to the country, people and relevant language, beyond their denotative meaning. Episodes that are lived, read, narrated in a funny way, or fixed as idioms, confirm at its best this phenomenon. From this point of view, in my daily Albanian, I have encountered attributions or designations, prejudices, funny situations up to the absurd related to the name of the country *China*, the noun or adjective *kinez* (*Chinese person*) for the inhabitants and the adverb *kinezçe* (*Chinese language*) for the language of this country. The same like the adverb *Albanian* e.g., it has distanced the originating ingredient *meaning clarity* up to avoidance from its semantic nest because of the total

⁴ Among the 100 who were surveyed, 76 chose this answer among the options to the question what the post '90 China was like: undeveloped country/incomprehensible, undeveloped country/incomprehensible, developed/understandable and **developed/incomprehensible**.

cover from the language designation; likewise, but on the opposite side, the adverb *kinezçe* (*Chinese language*), due to incomprehension of not only the language, assisted even by the obsolete strain word-formation, is avoiding the basic meaning to the benefit of *meaning unclarity* or *incomprehension*, being transformed into a stereotypical synonym of incomprehensibility (I cannot deny the use of the basic meaning), the same like the adverb *Albanian* in origin was the synonym of comprehensibility. I am recounting some linguistic events I have lived, where the abovementioned words are never taken in their real meaning and, used as stereotypisms, better to say ethnotypisms, produce hindrances in communication, due to the connotation which tends to transform in denotation:

a) We were going to travel to Kosovo with an Albanian airline and when we arrived in Rinas two hours before departure, as per the international rule, we made ourselves comfortable with the whole family to have a coffee. While conversing with the waiter we told him that we were to travel to Kosovo, but that we had time even to relax.

The plane for Kosovo has left, - said the waiter.

We immediately got up and went to inquire. A gentleman explained to us that the plane was full, and it departed. When we were explaining ourselves and showing our tickets, he told us:

- It's **like you come from China**, Sir. How **do you not understand** that, when the plane is full, it does not wait anymore, it departs.

- But we **come from China**, I told him. The employee, after being puzzled for a moment and having understood that we **really came from there**, composed himself saying that he **did not mean that**, but **in the meaning that you don't understand** what I am saying ...

b) – Our politicians, during electoral campaigns, **speak Chinese** with the people, - a friend of mine wrote to me in Facebook ... In the following lines, after he remembered that I was exactly writing from China, he added in a somewhat obliged way, the explanation: - **They speak in vain**. And he interrupted our conversation.

Linguistic occurrences such as these, found in an abundance in Albanian literature, the same as for me, are and should be an object of study even for other researchers. Some years ago, with a paper published in “Gjuha jonë”⁵, we have conducted a research on the use of the unknown or less used adverb **kinisht** (*Chinese language*), instead of **kinezçe** (*Chinese language*) which prevails in the spoken language, but carries prejudices among Albanians who use it everywhere for the incomprehensible in any circumstance, as I explained above, but even to the benefit of the other form **kinezisht** (*Chinese language*) which makes good efforts to specialize in meaning, but not naturally, because, in the current condition of the Albanian language, almost all the adverbs of this type are formed by the country name with the suffix *-(i)sht*, rarely, or better to say, never from the inhabitant's name. Then, even the propagandistic prejudicing, funny, imaginary or image-creating attributions, such as *Chinese brother people*, *Great China*, *red China*, *New China*, *faraway China*, *kinezërira*, *Chinese dragon*, *a Chinese from the end of the world*, *yellow monkey*, *he came from China*, *ciu*

⁵ R. Stringa, *Kinezçe, kinezisht apo kinisht*, “Gjuha jonë”, 2001/1-2, f. 81-84.

cërr, *second superpower*, *first economy*, *a train you can't catch*, etc., strongly affect the creation of an imaginary, beyond or future world of the Albanian man who does not know from close the Chinese reality. These and other expressions of this lexicon layer, both in the literary and official language, are appealing to me to consider them from a research perspective.

The literary layer of the Albanian lexicon with Chinese matter and content is mainly observed in two famous authors who have in their works the Chinese theme, Ismail Kadare with the novel "Concert at the end of winter" and Fatos Kongoli with the novel "The Ivory Dragon", but also in others. In the meantime, the formal layer of this type of lexicon is considered separately due to its peculiarities and will be the subject of another paper. However, something may be said since the beginning. There is no clear-cut separation in these two hierarchical applications of standard Albanian language even in this lexicon layer of Albanian language which seems small. There are transfers, especially from the official language to the literary language, i.e., bottom-up (in the meaning small - big), where, as a consequence, the word extends all its limits both in meaning and signing, but also in the spelling and correct pronunciation standard, thus it is "freed" from the rules. However, there are also other transfers from top to bottom, i.e., from literature to the news, where the word takes one meaning and is formally shaped or borrowed being "locked" within the normative regularity to escape from misunderstandings, lack of understanding, supra-meanings and implications which are much loved from the literary contexts. Transfers with opposite values from indirect structures to direct ones and vice-versa would testify for uncultured users of the language and would turn literature into news and news into literature. The language of literature with a high tendency of enrichment, which does not miss purification, is supplied both from the bottom by using the basic fund and from the side by using words from foreign languages (loans, nativizations and arrivals), but also from above, where the creative phantasy of authors creates neologisms; whereas the formal language with a strong tendency of purification, which does not lack enrichment either, unifies forms and meanings, regulates and normalizes the existing forms, selects neologisms and nativizes, borrows and excludes the created arrivals from foreign words.

Let us concretize this thought with the following examples:

The word *Kinë* (China)

- the way it appears, it is shaped by the official language. Likewise, it is also used in the literary language, but in this later there are some variants which are still used in expressions, idioms, jokes, derived words, etc., such as: Sina (Sine, Magnus Sinus), Qina, Çinamacin, çini, sini, serikulturë, sinolog⁶, sinologji etc. In addition to that, in this plane it is also used as a figurative word, a polysemantic one, connotative and opened towards the standard:

Eh, anyway **China** is a **mystery**, continued the other one. If you want to understand **China's politics**, **Çu En Lai** once said, go to the **Beijing's theatre**... But it is full of

⁶ Sh. Sinani, *Lidhjet historiko-kulturore kino-shqiptare ndër shekuj*, Beijing Foreign Study University, 16 nëntor 2015. The author clarifies here that sericulture addresses the culture of the silk worm and that the European name of China in ancient times appears in the forms *Seres*, *Ceres*, *Serres*, *Serindë*, all of them meaning *the country from where silk comes*.

unbreakable symbols, monkeys, snakes... (I.K., Concert at the end of winter, 1990, p. 20)

Through the characters talking about China, the author has depicted it as an incomprehensible country (a mystery). To be more convincing in the creation of this mysterious image, the author quotes the approach of the Chinese former prime minister China-theater, behind which, the same as behind the camera blitz, is enlightened the image of China itself, when we are told that the Beijing theatre was full of incomprehensible symbols.

You are **China**, I strongly addressed (To the showcase dragon My note R.S.) in a blind anger, **the reduced China** into the size of a lizard. (F.K., The Ivory Dragon, 2009, p. 140)

In this fragment the county's name (China) signifies the dragon and metaphorically their opposite features are interchanged (big– small), due to the features in common (incomprehensible). A safe metaphor, where the dragon is called China and the country is called lizard and, even though this is the way the angered character reaches understatement, China still, remains incomprehensible.

The boy returned from a **remote country**. In the arsenal of folk curses, **it** was included in the expression “May you go in **Çinemaçin**”. However, despite the **tremendous distance**... (F.K., The Ivory Dragon, 2009, f. 51)

... I thought I was **at the end of the world**, what seemed not to be like that. As I learnt the next day, the word **China**, as per the hieroglyphs means **Middle Country**, in the sense in the middle of the world. Thus, I was in the **middle of the world**. (F.K., The Ivory Dragon, 2009, f. 108)

In the two above fragments the name China related, in the first case, with the tremendous distance, is deformed in a “pindaric” closed compound word whose meaning is not very clear in Albanian, but with phonetic approximation efforts so that the phrase “China and beyond China”⁷ sounds as closer as possible to the Chinese language and, in the second case, this name is related to the end of the world (very far), it is explained by the Chinese hieroglyphs themselves as the Middle Country and literary you may not feel in China, but in the “middle of the world”. A clear case, where in literature the other-image (of Albanians for China) and the self-image (of the Chinese for China) is diametrically opposite.

- in the official language the word *China* has stopped on the Albanian language station as part of the stable nativizations that Albanian language has made to the names of foreign countries by prevailing over some other variants such as *Qinë* and *Sinë* e.g., which are now out of use in this application as foreign arrivals and are only used in

⁷ In my opinion, in terms of meaning we should have the phrase “China and beyond China” in the closed compound expression or with the inter-suffix –ma- “Çinemaçin”, like in *ziemazi*, *xhuxhmashuxh*, etc. However, as already explained, the literary language is assumptive and not informative, moreover that in the concrete case we have to do with a type of idiom, that is why the expression may be explained even differently, it may be polysemantic or meaningless, or just an approximating effort with the Chinese language, as in the famous expression of linguistic games with children (tongue twisters) “Çin çun çau çuni im”. In the meantime, an interesting explanation for the said expression I have heard from Prof. Sh. Sinani, who says that in that expression there is a short-fixed form of two distant toponyms with coordination: Çin (Kinë) + e + Maçin (Maçuri).

literature. It is used with a single and standardized meaning without leaving any space for misunderstanding and incomprehension:

In the European continent and in the Mediterranean countries, the main rivals of **China** on international influence are the USA and the European Union.

The Prime Minister evaluated the traditional relations between **China** and Albania as strong bonds that have resisted times ...

The word *kinez* (Chinese person)

- In the literary language it generally has the same form apart from some ironic cases such as *qinez* or outdated like *sinez*. The figurative use with a simile and the metaphoric meaning of this word are presented in growth process and not only are they covering the basic meaning but they are also affecting the creation of a desired image of the signed.

But I wouldn't like to convince anybody neither for Heaven, nor for the **Chinese** hell. (F.K., *The Ivory Dragon*, 2009, p. 54)

Harassed by an Albanian, **kinezka** (Chinese woman) had asked for help. (F. K., *The Ivory Dragon*, 2009, p. 57)

It is truly **boredom**... I would say a **Chinese conversation**... (I.K., *Concert at the end of winter*, 1990, p. 202)

Finally, the fireworks appeared in the form of mythical **Chinese** snakes... (I.K., *Concert at the end of winter*, 1990, p. 22)

- In the official language the word *kinez* (*Chinese person*) appears unified in terms of meaning and standardized, but the somewhat heavy weight of the figurative uses in literature has affected that of the official communication, what is sometimes noticed in the distinct pronunciation and in the facial gestures accompanying that word with sneering. (Any attentive listener and keen observer of the face as an important element of human communication, would have noticed such signs which in a written form are given between quotation marks.)

The **Chinese author** Mo Yan signing his picture.

To facilitate this process, the **Chinese** have planned to open their banks in some countries of Europe ...

It is only one of the hundred-thousand friends of the "**Chinese people**" who for decades in a row continue to get together ...

The word *kinezçe* (Chinese language)

- it arrives in this form in the literary language from the spoken language. It has or easily takes all possible meanings and figurative nuances (helped even by the suffix -*çe*); it appears different from the usual word-formation type (country name + suffix -*(i)sht*) and, for this reason it is encountered as semantically volatile and formally doubled⁸. In structure it appears differently from the adverbs and nouns which sign other languages:

⁸ The same happens even in the English language if we refer to the *Albanian-English dictionary* of Pavli Qesku. In the entry *Chinese* in the sense of *language* he chooses three forms as Albanian counterparts: *gjuhë kineze*, *kinezishte*, *kinezçe* by explaining even the expressions: *to speak Chinese* in two ways in Albanian:

... someone ... insisted to formulate in **kinezçe** (Chinese language) some of the **worst swearing phrases of the Albanian language**. (F.K., The Ivory Dragon, p. 51)

His **Kinezçja** (Chinese language)... What **mocking, laughs** and **gibes** had he tolerated between the people of his own circle due to that **kinezçe** (Chinese language). (I.K., Concert at the end of winter, 1990, p. 140)

I repeated those in **kinezçe** (Chinese language), **Russian** and **French**. (F.K., The Ivory Dragon, p. 286)

- in the informative language, this form (*kinezçe*), deriving from the literary language, has already started to feel the polysemanticity and connotation, and for this there are made efforts for meaning differentiation initially with the form *kinezisht*, and then with *kinisht*. Both these forms can serve without any additional nuance the informative function, while the first uses a not very productive word formation in Albanian (inhabitant name + *isht*), according to which we should have *anglezisht* (*English language*), *spanjollisht* (*Spanish language*) or *japonezisht* (*Japanese language*), whereas the second is not that spread. Such a thing has happened in a final way with the adverbs *turqisht* (*Turkish language*) and *turçe* (*Turkish language*) and is also happening to the adverbs *kinezisht/ kinisht* and *kinezçe* (see note no 7)

You can also hear **kinezçe** (Chinese language) in his apartment, because not only him, but even his wife, Laureta, speaks the **Chinese language**.

In Albania there are 200-300 **kinezçefolës** (Chinese speakers), whereas the Friendship Association with China has around 350 members.

... the deputy of the Socialist Party Fidel Ylli has made irony of the prime minister Berisha by singing a song in the **Chinese language**.

Kinezisht-shqip (Chinese-Albanian) dictionary

Berisha: **Kinezishtja** (Chinese language), a second language in schools
Conversation book Shqip-**Kinisht** (Albanian – Chinese)

If all the words, even the possible forms and meanings of the lexicon of a language, therefore even those of the layer under study, manage to find a place in the language of literature, the same should not happen in the informative language.

The word *kinezëri* (*Strange behavior, sneaky and incomprehensible*)

- Some take it with a positive connotation, some with a negative one. Every time it is used, it is felt the need to be clarified. It is a word which belongs to the language of literature because through it you can create figuration and build the relevant images, but also because the word allows for its pragmatic meaning analysis according to the users of phrases that contain it according to the time, country, and culture. You can communicate with that indirectly, but not inform directly, thus there are not found any more or less unified explanations, it cannot be easily undressed from the context, and it is not a denotative word of the dictionary. The word *kinezëri*, in Albanian and not only here, is generally used to show trifles and detailed handicrafts, as well as a special way of acting or behaving. In the ideologic use, already fixed in Albanian language may have been initially introduced by the politics, sometimes in positive contexts and sometimes in negative ones, thus reflecting even the temperatures of the China-Albania relationships. Afterwards, word artists have introduced it in literary works by

I speak kinezçe (Chinese), I speak an incomprehensible language and It's Chinese to me: për mua është turçe (For me it is Turkish).

translating even more its contextual meaning, and that explains why it is difficult for it to find space to be used in the informative language. Thus, with the use of this word from the scholar and journalist Ilir Yzeiri, a huge debate started when he published his article entitled “Intelektualët dhe një ambasador i vogël i një vendi të madh” (The Intellectuals and a small ambassador in a huge country) at “Shekulli” newspaper on 9.04.2011 and immediately there started to appear many definitions of the word in forums, wishing to reach its only meaning, the primary and signifying meaning. An explanation and clarification has been given by the author himself in “Dr. Ilir Yzeiri: You are wrong, Mr Ambassador Arvizu”:

I am aware that all this has come because I have called «kinezëri» a behavior of the ambassador Arvizu.

I don't know how your Albanian assistants have translated this word but allow me to say that this word does not carry any offensive connotation, it is a sign which characterizes a behavioral manner and has entered the Albanian language since the times of our relations with the Chinese. You must know, dear madam, that we have been related for 20 years to the communist China and, under China's example, the infamous Cultural Revolution was brought even here, and the construction of a new man was encouraged. Here, in Albania, Mao's quotations were published as pocketbooks which were propagandistic and lacked value and sometimes were even funny. They said for example that «man must love his/her political party», «the political party above everything», or other types of quotations which very often provoked laughter. The peak was reached for example with a *kinezëri* which was an amalgam of Confucius and Mao's quotations, and which stated: «The best time to do the dishes is after a meal».

My generation is grown both with the dramatic aspect of *kinezëri* and its comic aspect. Therefore, in Albanian discourse the word «*kinezëri*» has entered a sign which marks a populist, propagandistic, and valueless behavior such as the news or an event. It seemed to me that the story the ambassador told with the woman caressing the child, thus his effort to appear popular was coerced and seemed like the *kinezëri* of Mao Ce Dun's time. I would have expected the Embassy of the Republic of China to come with a reaction and not the US one. However, in case you have experienced my interpretation as very offensive, I take it back and I will never use it.⁹

This is the much-discussed use of the word *kinezëri* in the abovementioned article which was considered as a cliché, as racist language, etc., and which addressed to Arvizu, the American ambassador of the time in Albania.

On the other hand, it is not appealing the effort you are making to show that you are a loving person with the people. In Albanian we call these **kinezërira**. You know very well the psychology of the **Chinese of Mao** and the hero **Lej Fen**. You may also read the novel “Concert at the end of winter” of our great writer Kadare. **It beautifully depicts what we call kinezëri**. As a matter of fact, ... the story that you recounted with the woman and the child that you met and caressed the child, pardon me, it was not appealing. This kind of populism in Albania does not appeal, on the contrary, it does the opposite effect.

Look at one of the uses of Kadare of this word in his novel with a Chinese theme:

⁹ <http://www.forum-al.com/showthread.php?t=16793>

... here even the word nostalgia does not mean anything, but it is better to say **amateur of kinezëri**. Thus, this **amateur** is perverted because it is not related to **China**, the **Chinese people or art** and other things like this, but it originates from low motives which are found in the existence itself ... (I. Kadare, Concert at the end of winter, 1990, f. 147-1480)

The word *kinezëri* is a truncated dead metaphor in Albanian, which, however, carries in its semantics a certain multidimensional context and may not be out of this context with all the efforts that are made, thus remaining more than a sememe, a generalizing and homogenizing definition. Even though this word has already passed the historical period of meaning truncation and has become an ethnotypism related to the Chinese by «infecting» even words in its radius. Thus, it spreads prejudice more than information and, in this way, it can prejudice even the user him/herself. Since the language of literature and information are part of communication and it is only the way of transmitting (indirectly-directly) the message that distinguishes them, then perhaps the propaganda or pragmatism of the message transmitter may be the reasons for choosing this word in the media.

While observing the factual material related to the language and country of China in the two abovementioned novels, and beyond, one can note words of Chinese origin or phonetic loans (*kinisms*) and Albanian words or expressions with Chinese content or *calques from Chinese*.

The word or phrase borrowing process from another language by preserving its meaning but replacing the components of morphological elements of the domestic language, thus it is a type of borrowing in which any morpheme or word is translated with the corresponding morphemes or words of the other language. *Calquing* may consist in one word, phrase or even a short sentence. *The calqued words are called calques*. For example, the English word *almighty* and the Albanian word (*i plotfuqishëm*) are *calques* from the Latin word *omnipotens* (Lat. *omni* + *potens*, Eng. *all* + *mighty*, Alb. *plot* + *fuqi*). The Cantonese phrase *yiht gáu* is a *kalk* of the English phrase *hot dog* (*yiht* = *hot*, *gáu* = *dog*). The English phrase *beer garden and academic freedom* is a *calque* of the German words *Bier-garten and akademische Freiheit (Birrari e hapur dhe liri akademike)*¹⁰.

Kinisms are less in number and generally enter in Albanian as direct *nativizations*¹¹ (*çjentinçi*) or through a third language such as Japanese in this case (*rikshi*), adapting to its paradigmatic-syntagmatic system and living as Albanian words. In terms of their meaning, they include the onomastics, cuisine, clothing, politics, economy, technology, etc., and are:

a) Onomastic proper nouns:

- anthroponyms or people's names, such as *Mao Ce Dun, Çu En Lai, Çian Çin, Lej Fen, Vang Mei, Sui Lin, Lu Sin, Siao Hua* etj.

¹⁰ J. C. Richards, *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics*, English-Chinese Edition 1998, f.270/ **loan translation** (My translation R. S.).

¹¹ J. C. Richards, *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics*, English-Chinese Edition 1998, f.303/ **nativisation** (My translation R. S.). *Acquisition of foreign words in a certain language. Nativizations transforms words in borrowings by making them part of the indogene lexicon fund.* For more information: Berg 1993, Kachru 1981.

- toponyms or country names, such as *Kinë, Pekin, Tiencin, Nankin, Shangai, Hanxhou, Van Fu Xhin, Tiencin, Tien An Men, Pei Hai, I He Jyen*, etc.

Such nouns are given in Albanian through the generalizing phonetic regulation of the from heard directly from the Chinese language, whereas the traditional ones through the arrangement of the heard forms through intermediary languages (*Kinë, Pekin, Kanton, Mao Ce Dun, Lej Fen* etj.). Since today, because of direct contacts, the intermediary language is ever more not included, there has been a rise in double Albanian word pairs like *Pekin-Beigjin (Beijing)*. Such group of lexemes is the first contact of the Chinese word which is naturalized or nativized, by starting a way even for other words which for different needs become part of the lexicon through nativization¹².

Here are some examples:

... He thought he could find himself one day in front of **Mao Ce Dun**? (Concert at the end of winter, p. 179)

And I was grateful to **Lu Sin** who had raised for me a curtain of **China**. (The Ivory Dragon, p. 307)

I could take him to a bar, for example at “Moska” restaurant, near **Tung U Jen**. (The Ivory Dragon, p. 248)

...another dragon I would have found, like the ivory monster of **Bai Hua Ta Lou**. (The Ivory Dragon, p. 147)

... the **Tao Zhan Ting** ... according to **Siao Hua** harmless people were gathered there. (The Ivory Dragon, p. 250)

I even wondered a whole day on the roads of **Beijing** as an idiot, on and off the trolleybuses, from **Pei Hai** to **I Hë Jyen**, from **Tien An Meni** to **Tao Zhan Ting**, under the scorching sun ... (The Ivory Dragon, p. 252-253)

b) General words, especially nouns of various meaning fields, where the already started manner from proper nouns starts to be applied even in those words which to authors it seems necessary to create images, or due to the lack in the domestic lexicon. They are words belonging to different spheres such as:

- celebrations, greetings/wishes, drinks/tobacco, etc., such as: *Çhun Çie, niha, çin çin, Gan pei, çaj, muotaj, (cigarette) Xhung Hua* etc.;

- cuisine, such as: *çini, keçap, toufu, liçi*, etc.;

- fashion/clothing, money, etc., such as: *qipao, jaka Mao, gejšhë, jen, juen* etj.;

- philosophy, poetry, history, such as: *jin-jang, fengshuej, hajku, han, gomindan*;

- politics, such as: *Çunanhai, bao gao, Zhen Min Zhi Bao, dacibao*;

- economy/technology, nature, etc., such as: *rikshi, çjentinçi, tajfun, tufan*;

- sports, such as: *qigong, tajçi, xhudo, kunfu, taekuondo*.

For example:

My first incursion in **Van Fu Xhin** was a catastrophic disappointment. I got off the **trolejbus** (trolleybus) keeping up as a **xhentelmeni** (gentleman) **shik** (chicly) dressed, what gave me the sensation of a race prevalence, especially when I did one part of the road with a **rikshi** (rikishi). (The Ivory Dragon, p. 111)

¹² R. Stringa, *Fjalë të huaja - loans and arrivals*, “Kërkime gjuhësore”, IV, Tiranë, 2016, f. 129-134.

Apart from the kinisms, the above fragment also contains anglicisms, which are in the right place and depict the environment and the character as with a photographic camera. They also serve as a writing model for nativizations from kinisht (Chinese language).

That he took part or not in the weekly **bao gao** ..., this did not impede him to be an excellent student. (The Ivory Dragon..., p. 275)

Kinisms, thus Albanian phonetic loans of Chinese words display the need of the Albanian language for the most accurate reflection of a Chinese environment, whereas the calques from Chinese (*Muri i Madh* (*The Great Wall*), e.g.) show the author's desire for local, temporal and cultural contextualization of semantics of the Chinese structural models. These loan translations range from Chinese poetry, political quotes and simple and compound local names. Calques, i.e., the Chinese structural models translated in Albanian are more numerous than kinisms and both are related to different spheres of social life, such as:

- a) politics: *revolucioni kulturor* (*cultural revolution*), *gardistët e kuq* (*red guardians*), *lindja është e kuqe* (*the East is red*);
- b) economy: *ura të betonta ajrore* (*air concrete bridges*);
- c) history: *ushtarët prej argjili në përmasa natyrore* (*natural size clay soldiers*);
- d) art and sport: *ekspozita e poçerisë kineze* (*Chinese pottery exhibition*), *Opera e Pekinit* (*Beijing's opera*), *grupi skulpturor "Oborri i vjeljes së taksave"* (*the sculpture group "Tax-collecting Yard"*), *Opera "Marrja me dinakëri e Malit të Tigrit"* (*The opera "The cunning takeover of Tiger's Mountain"*);
- e) fashion and clothing: *këpucë-pandofla* (*shoes-slippers*);
- f) food and cuisine: *Rosa e Pekinit* (*Beijing's duck*);
- g) compound nouns: *Porta e Qetësisë Qiellore* (*Heaven Calmness Gate*), *Hotel "Paqja"* (*"Peace" hotel*), *Tempulli i Qiellit* (*Heaven's Temple*), *Muri i Madh Kinez* (*The Great Wall of China*), *Viti i Ri Kinez* (*Chinese New Year*);
- h) quotes, poems: *fshati rrethon qytetin* (*the village surrounding the city*), *një shtet dy sisteme* (*One state two systems*).

For example:

I loved her. And she loved me. And there was no reason to be afraid of. I would convince her to go in the middle of "**Tien An Men**" square, to come out. Or not, the "**Tien An Men**" square was not very appropriate, better to go to the **Tempulli i Qiellit** (Heaven's Temple). There, in the **muri rrethor magjik** (magic circular wall), I would whisper with my lips near the polished tiles and on the opposite side, to my diametrically opposite point, she would listen to that as in the telephone, and she would answer me. Her words would slip down the wall to reach my ear: It is not an illusion, it is not! (The Ivory Dragon, p. 60)

All this text is a presentation in Albanian words of a Chinese content for one of the tourism sights of Beijing, that it why it is impossible to do without kinisms and calques.

Imagine me under the weather with flu. The dream in "**Pallati i Kuq**" (The Red Palace), a variant published two hundred years ago, during the empire of **Qiang Long**, contains an episode where **Qing Ven**, I believe you remember the characters, suffered from dizziness because of his stuffed nose. **Bao Ju** ordered **She Jyen** to give him to

smoke some tobacco from the West. The sick sneezes many times and is cured. Let us get then some western tobacco like **Qing Ven** did two hundred years ago, during the empire of **Qing Long of the dynasty of Mings**. Let us sneeze, you and me. With a strong sneeze, so strong and heavy that the **Muri i Madh (Great Wall)** trembles. (The Ivory Dragon..., p. 101-102)

A Chinese short story translated in Albanian is impossible to pass out of the attention of the Chinese speaker. Among the onomastic kinisms one may also find the calques *Pallati i Kuq (Red Palace)*, *Dinastia e Mingëve (Dynasty of Mings)* and *Muri i Madh (The Great Wall)*.

...he showed the last edition of a magazine in whose cover was **Mao Ce Dun** was swimming across the river **Lumi i Verdhë** (The Yellow River) or **Jan Ce**. (The Ivory Dragon..., p. 260)

What is more, in the same sentence as above, for river names is also used the calque *Lumi i Verdhë (The Yellow River)*, and the kinism *Jan Ce*.

Where else could the words “**perandori e qendrës**” (Empire of the center) could be tasted better then here? (in the cave, My note R.S.) (Concert at the end of winter, p. 30)

He had closed one eye for their pickiness during the **Revolucion Kulturor** (Cultural Revolution), for the **gardistët e kuq** (red guardians), for Shakespeare and tens of **vogëlsira** (trifles). (Concert at the end of winter..., p. 33)

Figuration with Albanian words of that layer of lexicon under study in this paper, i.e., of that of Chinese content, may be seen even as a flat reflection plane for creating an image for China which could be photographic, fantastic, propagandistic, pragmatic, etc. Different from kinisms and calques, Chinese images with Albanian words are more than a property of the language, they are contextual uses closely linked with the time, place, culture, and the person producing them. This is an issue pertaining to imagery, which we will have a chance to address in detail in other papers. Here we are just proving some examples how this image is created through the mirror of this type of lexicon:

And Besnik Struga had told Silva how in an evening party, exactly the evening party after the break of relations (with the Soviet Union, My note R.S.), when everybody was waiting to look at the **newly arrived fireworks from China**, for which it was spoken several days ahead, he happened to be on the road exactly when **the sky was full of them**. People had raised their head **happy and surprised at the same time** for these **fireworks, which we must say were different** from the ones they had seen before, some fireworks which were **foreign** anyway, **of a yellowish color**, which released while falling **some creeping squeak** as they were talking to each other: what is this land, there, here, below... And if this was not enough, after the consequent explosions finally appeared the **fireworks in the form of Chinese mythical snakes**, which were sagging at the end, they fluttered in the wind, until they burnt down one after the other leaving the sky **completely black**. The people started to cry: “**Snakes, snakes!**” and I, creped out, thought: What’s this **ominous** thing? (Concert at the end of winter... f. 22)

The prediction with the question “*What’s this ominous thing?*” of the break of the relations with China since the embryo, in the above paragraph, is not only done by using the snake symbol that appeared to the character during the break of relations with the Soviet Union, but also with the words used, especially chosen with the consonance *cc*

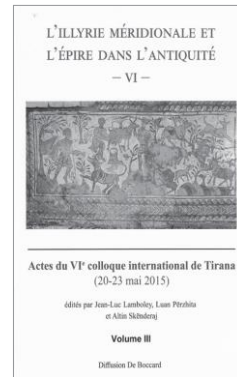
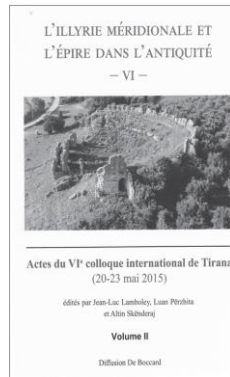
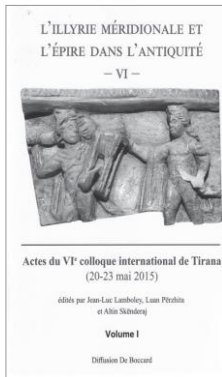
ss (cacijasjengjethese) which remind you of the nagging sound of fireworks, even the language of the country they are produced, thus aiming at the image with yellowish elongating figures and with the hissing sound of the snake symbol of the break that was predicted to happen for a second time.

A spectacle with **improvised jugglers, frightening dragons**, which entered and exited under the **deafening roar of the gong and metal plates** with **fighters hidden behind the colorful grotesque scary masks, flags, and knick-knacks**, which brandished their arms and dialogued with one another in a **thin voice full of incredible cadences**. (The Ivory Dragon, p. 288)

Even if you were not a spectator, the description with words in the above fragment is a live picture that could be made to the Opera show of Beijing.

The fantastic image in the first case and the photographic one in the second are linked by the idea of creating an imagination of an incomprehensible world. This idea is strengthened because the words, word forms and phrases or phrases with a high frequency of use in both the works taken in this analysis are those of head-and-key *meaning* words of denying value.

CRITICS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY



Southern Illyria and Epirus in antiquity

Acts of the VI International Symposium, Tirana 15-18 May 2015, (publication under the direction of Jean-Luc LAMBOLEY, Luan PËRZHITA and ALTIN SKËNDERAJ) ed. De Boccard, December 2018.

Southern Illyria and Epirus in antiquity, held in Tirana in 2015, is the sixth symposium organized since 1984. The first was held in Clermont-Ferrand (France) with the initiative of P. CABANES. Every six years, this important activity brings together the entire scientific community working in the Balkans, with research extended from the pre- and proto-historical period to the early Byzantine Middle Ages. *Southern Illyria and Epirus in antiquity* is the only symposium in this field that brings together researchers from the Balkans, European and American researchers involved in international projects.

It should be noted that for the first time in the tradition of this important international scientific activity, it took place in a Balkan country, like our country, which inaugurates a tradition that needs to be consolidated.

The acts of the symposium of *Southern Illyria and Epirus in antiquity* VI, contain 95 articles published by 144 authors. The acts are organized in three volumes with a total of 1207 pages.

The first and main part of the publication sheds light on the latest discoveries in the field of archeology. Since the launch of international projects in Albania, now also in Kosovo, and taking into account the significant development of research in northwestern Greece, in particular through the survey method, the pace of discoveries in these areas has accelerated. In these conditions, there is a need for the results to be confronted with the scientific community, in a multiple historiographical and interdisciplinary perspective. Volumes I, II and part of Volume III have to do with new

research undertaken during 2009-2015 in the periods:

- Pre- and Proto-history: New archaeological discoveries from Kosovo to central Epirus, from Korça area to Shkodra area.

- Antiquity, with specific research in fields such as Epigraphy and Numismatics, and those in archaeological centers, in Dardania, Rizon, Shkodra, Scampis-Via Egnatia, Epidamn-Dyrrachium, Apollonia, Byllis, Amantia, Orikos, Antigoneia, Phoinike, Hadrianopolis, Buthrotos Dodonë, Molosi, Thesproti, not forgetting the inter-sea relations.

- Late Antiquity and Early Middle Ages, with centers or regions such as Dyrrachium, Korisha, Drin valley, Mesopotamia, Phoenician, Kamenica and northern Greece.

The second part of the publication (Volume III) presents a historical summary within a specific topic that was addressed during the symposium of *Southern Illyria and Epirus in antiquity VI*, which relates to cities, territories, populations and environmental dynamics. This choice was conditioned by the research topics carried out by different teams. Topics such as: Dynamics of settlement in Korça area; Dyrrachium and its territory for a landscape archeology; Transversal between via Lissus-Naissus and via Egnatia; The transition from the tribal community to the koinè in the Hellenistic period in Kaoni of Epirus; Treatment of public space in the pre-Roman cities of Southern Illyria and Epirus; Babunjë: a small archaic-classical settlement between Apollonia and Dyrrachion; Cities and populations of Northern Epirus in the Roman era; Theaters in the cities of southern Illyria and Epirus; *Per Epirum*, an alternative to the Adriatic; The territory of Hadrianopolis and the Drino valley from the Hellenistic to the early Roman period; Urban settlements in medieval Epirus, brought important news related to the aforementioned theme.

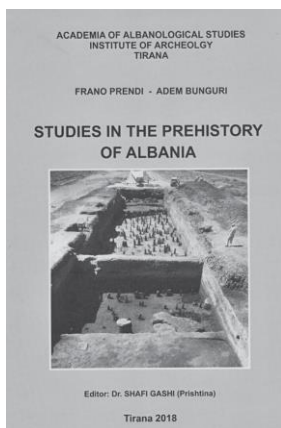
In addition to the articles, 4 indexes are an integral part of this publication: geographical and ethnic; of ancient authors; mythological index and index of proper names.

One of the merits of the Symposium and the acts is related to the fact that it created the opportunity for young researchers to present their works. The confrontation between the experience accumulated by researchers and the renewal of the topics proposed by the young researchers, proved to be the right combination for a dynamic and successful scientific research.

On the other hand, the chronological framework from prehistory to the Byzantine period, provides a better explanation of the transformational processes that took place in these regions over the centuries, giving the opportunity to all disciplines and sciences of antiquity to contribute.

The success of the symposium can be evidenced from the growing number of countries represented and the colleagues who presented the research results. In the publication of the acts of the VI symposium, 12 states were represented.

LATIN SEALS IN AMPHORA'S IN ALBANIAN (III-I CENT. B.C)



The author Bashkim Lahi, archaeologist at the Institute of Archaeology, Academy of Albanological Studies, Tirana, presents through his book, his many-years long research about the Latin seals in the amphora of transport that have circulated in the Southern Illyria during the III-I centuries B.C. The book has 252 pages and it includes 350 Latin seals of the amphora of transport, with 210 proper names, documented, in different dwellings in Albania, from the 40's of the 20-th century until 2017. A part of the findings is published for the first time, whereas the seals that have been studied again, have undergone a wide analysis and have been confronted with rich comparative literature. The fundamental aim of this study is the identification of the Latin seals in the amphora

of transport during the III-I cent. B.C., and their placement in the historical context. The seals in the publication have been confronted with a relatively rich literature, prolonged in time from 1885 until the latest literature, in a volume of more than 200 publications with about 150 different authors. The publication has been issued in June 2019.

The book consists of 7 chapters where the catalogue of seals takes main place. In most of the cases the presentation of a seal or a common group of seals is preceded by a short text-analysis. The text provides data about the identification of the seals, the circumstances of its finding, the investigation of the authors in comparing the stamps, comparisons with findings outside the territory of Albania, data about the origin and dating of the seal/seals. The catalogue provides data about the content of the clay as well as the date of the place of production of the finding. In most of the cases the seals are illustrated with pictures and the drawings of the vulvas.

The seals treated in this paper are a vivid testimony of the treated orientations of the Southern Illyrian territories during the III-I century B.C., as well as of the transformations in the lifestyle of the populations of this zone, after getting in touch with the new Roman culture especially after the Roman invasion.

The author hopes that the presentation through a monography of this category of findings will serve to a wide group of researchers, especially to archaeologists who work in the terrain, amongst others, even because of the chronological sensitivity the seals of amphora bear.

Monographic publications regarding this category of findings also in Montenegro, Croatia and Slovenia, would be more than welcomed, as this way a better picture would be provided in regard with the circulation of the Latin seals of transport amphora during the III-I century B.C., alongside the eastern Adriatic. This monographic publication is the first of its kind in Albania and in the eastern Adriatic.

Bashkim LAHI

MONOGRAPH "STUDIES IN THE PREHISTORY OF ALBANIA"

Monograph "Studies in the Prehistory of Albania" with co-authors F. Prendi - A. Bunguri (ISBN-978-9928-256-48-5) and format B5 (21x17.5cm), is the English version of the monograph "Studies on the Prehistory of Albania" (Tirana 2014) (ISBN-978-9928-172-18-1). The publisher is Dr. Shafi GASHI (Prizren). She has a

total volume of 582 pages, writing 11 TNR, space 1.15. The monograph is equipped with a rich and updated scientific tool, consisting of 453 titles and 1420 footnotes, illustrated with 95 figures, maps, diagrams and profiles, with 174 tables of objects, two synchronous tables of Paleolithic-Mesolithic and Neolithic-Eneolithic, 6 typological tables of vessels according to historical-cultural periods and 16 tables of informative appendix. This reprint reflects the latest archaeological information of 2014-2018.

In this volume is treated the culture of the 4 earliest eras of Prehistory, respectively: Paleolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Eneolithic. Although the Paleolithic and Mesolithic, chronologically, occupy a much longer time frame compared to the Neolithic and Eneolithic eras, the culture of the last two eras is more fully known and constitutes the main database treated in this volume.

Structurally, the study consists of 5 chapters, preceded by a brief introduction, geographical position and the history of prehistoric research. Then according to the chronological and thematic criteria, chapter I is dedicated to the Paleolithic and Mesolithic, chapter II to the Early Neolithic, chapter III to the Middle Neolithic, chapter IV to the Late Neolithic and chapter V to the Eneolithic. The paper closes with conclusions and an informative appendix that includes the list of settlements by periods, the table of their approximate surface and excavated area, the table of radiocarbon dating of prehistoric cultures in Albania and the region, the list of illustrations, bibliography and index of names. The text has been translated into English, to be used by foreign researchers as well.

The particularity of this monograph is the treatment of Neo-Eneolithic cultures according to the respective cultural groups and complexes, paying more attention to synthesis and cultural analysis, a criterion that to some extent has freed us from excessive descriptions. However, in order to have a more complete picture of the neo-Eneolithic developments in Albania, within each cultural group, we have given a summary of the culture of the main settlements, which gives to the study the features of a prehistoric anthology. For this reason, with the predisposition to give as fully as possible the whole picture of prehistoric cultures in Albania, we have included in this monograph, in addition to the manuscripts of Prof. F. Prendi also a summary of the culture of the Neo-Eneolithic settlements excavated and studied by other authors, extremely respecting the criteria of authorship of scientific work. Respectively for the Middle Paleolithic have been used Xara I, Gajtani II and Blazi, for the Upper Paleolithic, except Blazi II, are included also Rrëza e Dajtit, Xara II, Shën Marina, Blerani and Konispoli I, for the Mesolithic, except Vlushë I, have been included also Konispoli II and Kryegjata A-B.

In Chapter I "Early Neolithic", in addition to settlements such as Vlusha II or Blazi III, are included Konispoli IIIa, Katundasi (Korkuti 1996), Neziri III i (Andrea 1989),

Burimi i (Andrea 1981, Bunguri 2010), Kolshi (Korkuti 1983), Vashtëmia (Korkuti 1982), Treni (Korkuti 1971), Sovjani (Lera et al 2008), Rajça and Rashtani (Gjipali 1995, 1997). In chap. II "Middle Neolithic" are included the culture of the group Cakran-Dunavec (Korkuti 1974), Podgoria II (Lera 1971), Kamniku I (Prendi-Aliu 1971), Katundasi II and Konispoli IIIb (Korkuti) as well as Kolshi II (Korkuti 1983), Topojani I (1993).

In chapter "The Late Neolithic" in addition to the Maliq I-Kamnik culture in the south and the Blaz V culture in the north, are included the settlements which are part of this cultural group, although they have been dig up and published by other scholars. These are Dërsnik and Barç (Lera 1987, 1988), Katundas III and Konispol IIIc (Korkuti 1995), Topojani II (Bunguri 1997) and Kolshi III (Korkuti 1995).

In chap. "Eneolithic", in addition to the settlement of Maliq, are included the culture of other settlements, part of this cultural group. Such are Burimasi II, Treni II, Benja I, Katundasi IV, Konispoli IV (Korkuti 1995), Neziri IV (Andrea 1989), Dajçi I (Bela 1987), Gradeci (Korkuti 1995) and some Eneolithic settlements of the Dibra area (Bunguri 2010).

In the informative appendix at the end of the text, 16 tables are given that include: List of Early Paleolithic stations, List of Middle Paleolithic stations, List of Upper Paleolithic stations, List of Mesolithic stations, List of Early Neolithic settlements, List of Middle Neolithic Settlements, List of Late Neolithic Settlements, List of Eneolithic Settlements, List of excavated surface of Neo-Eneolithic settlements, List of radiocarbon dating of Neo-Eneolithic cultures in Albania, List of radiocarbon dating of Mesolithic sites in the Balkans, List of radiocarbon dating of Early Neolithic cultures in the Balkans and Anatolia, List of dates of the Middle and Late Neolithic cultures in the Balkans and Anatolia, List of radiocarbon dating of the Eneolithic cultures in the Balkans and Anatolia, List of references of illustrative documentation, List of illustrations (figures, diagrams, plan, profiles) and tables. The monograph closes with the Abbreviations, Bibliography and Index of geographical names.

With such rich content, the above monograph represents the most complete analytical and synthesizing study until now, on the prehistoric cultures of Albania. Its publication completes a will of Prof. Frano Prendi and is also homage to his scientific work and his extraordinary contribution to prehistoric studies in Albania.

Adem BUNGURI

HAJRI SHEHU, "STUDIES ON ALBANIAN LEXICON AND TODAY'S LEXICOGRAPHY", ASA, IGJL, TIRANA, 2015, 364 F.

Summary "Studies on lexicon and contemporary Albanian lexicography" by prof. dr. Hajri Shehu includes over fifty articles, almost all of them published in the scientific journals "Philological Studies", "Our Language", "Albanian Language" etc. Its topics are: I. Issues of popular lexicon with potential literary value; II. Issues of word formation in the Albanian language; III. Syntagmatics issues; IV. Language culture

issues; V. Lexicological criticism; VI. Lexicographical criticism etc. As can be seen, the studies and articles cover a wide and varied subject matter.

The issues raised in these studies and articles are analyzed and reviewed with scientific competence. We mention, for example, the study of syndicates in today's Albanian language, in which, through the analysis of a concrete subject, the author gives his opinion on such basic questions, of a theoretical nature, as: "Are the so-called adverbs meaningful words outside the monosyllabic unit, or have they moved away from the system of lexical units of language, that is, have they turned into morphemes with abstract semantics down to the word-formation plane of adverbs? Are we aware of their general meaning (characteristic of adverbs), or of their lexical meanings as motivating themes in the monosyllabic unit? In this study he maintains his position on certain units, such as *bashkë-*, *brenda-*, *jashtë-*, *para-*, *krye-*, *shumë-* (co-, inside-, outside-, pre-, top-, multi) etc., Entering into discussion with the position expressed that "they have become and are becoming prefixes in all formations with them", that "they represent more a movement in the direction from composition to prefix, but without moving too far away from the source". More specifically, he asserts that "these elements have not been grammaticalized nor are they being grammaticalized, that is, we are not dealing with punctuation marks that have returned or are returning to the form; on the contrary, semantically they preserve independence". Also, the same attitude is held for this problem in the study "Formations with the first part the stem itself - in today's Albanian language". In the study it is extensively examined from the point of view of lexico-semantic largest paradigmatic grouping of formations with *vetë-*. The author connects the increase of the number of these formations in comparison with the previous periods of the development of the literary language not only with intralinguistic factors, but also with the extralinguistic ones. "Today's development of production, its mechanization and automation bring new notions. On the other hand, it is known that society exerts a regulatory influence on literary language through systematic and conscious efforts not only for its enrichment, but also for its further cleansing from unnecessary foreign influences. Formations with *vetë-* (*self-*) meet this goal, as many foreign units, even internationalisms with the *auto-* element have been formed to cover designations from various fields of science, especially technology. In the paper, the formations with *vetë-* are distinguished and analyzed separately, when this component is decomposed with the feminine noun *vet / e*, *-ja* (*vetëqortoj* - self-reprimand) and with the personal pronoun *vetë* (*vetëveproj* - *self-act*). A detailed analysis is made for the possible and impossible cases of unions with *vetë-* and with the verbs according to the respective diatheses, which in this case also serve as criteria to distinguish irregular verbal formations.

For observations and conclusions of special scientific interest we can mention, among others, the study "On the addition of compound words in today's Albanian language." The addition of these units is analyzed on the basis of internal and external valences. More specifically, it is clearly underlined that the possibility of forming compound words is conditioned by the valence of both themes entering the composition, but, in the first place, by the repetitive theme, which is the first limb of the unit: how it relates with other limbs, which is the possibility to form lexicon-semantic formations. Based on the statements obtained through statistical analysis of

words composed in the "*Dictionary of today's Albanian language*" (1980), compared to those extracted from the "*Dictionary of the Albanian language*" (1954), the author claims that greater increase was noticed in adjective compositions and after them, noun ones, because the noun and adjective stems in the composition of these compositions have a higher valence compared to other stems belonging to other parts of the lecture. On the basis of comparing the data of the statements compiled for the Compositions of the Dictionary according to the parts of the lecture, another conclusion is drawn: 'High valence of noun and adjective stems defines the tendencies in compound words in contemporary Albanian language. This means, he points out, that even in the future the class of adjectives and nouns will tend to be added more with compound units. It is also important to emphasize, - adds the author, - that this addition of adjectives and compound nouns leads to the overall increase of the lexical category of nouns and adjectives in today's Albanian standard language, and not only for the current stage of its development, but also for the future'.

Another scientific treatment of interest has been made to the popular lexicon with potential literary value for today's Albanian language in some study articles: "Dictionary of today's Albanian language" (1980) and the popular lexicon with potential literary value ", "About some potential literary values of the popular lexicon for today's Albanian language" etc. The first article underlines the fact that one of the distinguishing features of this Dictionary is that it has included in its lexicon a considerable number of popular lexical items of regional origin, unknown or little known until then in the literary standard language. It is a completely different solution from that of many explanatory dictionaries of other languages, such as Russian, Bulgarian, Romanian, etc., which reflect the popular lexicon with regional source only on the basis of its wide spread, beyond the local borders, or on the basis of its rather wide use in literary language, especially in fiction. This original solution is based on the most general guiding principle for the choice of vocabulary, according to which literary source, but according to its objective value in the lexical structure of today's literary Albanian".

In the second article the author has focused on the lexical fields that have found a lot of place in this Dictionary, such as: ethnographic lexicon, professional lexicon (names for tools, various crafts and folk crafts, work processes with these tools and equipment, parts of them, etc.), ethnobotanical and ethnozoological lexicon, etc.

A detailed lexical-semantic and word-formation analysis is done to the lexical units that name the colors in the study "About the names of colors in the Albanian language". The study brings and examines a large wealth of these names in Albanian. It can be included among the rare studies in the linguistic literature, which analyzes this lexical wealth of Albanian in the composition of the conceptual field of colors. There are several articles on the culture of the language: "About English words or derived from English in today's Albanian language", "On anglicisms in today's mass media", "Some problems of the spoken language of the mass media", "For unnecessary foreign words in the media", "Once again for the language of our televisions and radios", etc. The author scientifically analyzes the attitude towards anglicisms. In order to determine linguistically and objectively the place that English borrowings occupy or can occupy in today's Albanian language, the author sets several criteria, which can apply

simultaneously to all borrowings: 1- Is the borrowed English word given or derived from English with the phonetic means of Albanian and according to its spelling? 2- Can it be brought in the respective lexical-grammatical category of Albanian? 3- Is the foreign word active, that is, is it part of the active, less active or passive layer of the lexicon and terminology? 4- What gives it further from the word-formation point of view, that is, what internal valence does it have: does it serve as a topic for new formations, do they come from its basic formation, semi-formation, etc.? 5- What it brings from the semantic point of view: what semantics it expands; is it reinterpreted in the Albanian language, that is, does it develop new meanings; creates a synonymous string with other words in the language or extends such strings further; do we have semantic influence on local synonymy, that is, does a new meaning or new semantic, stylistic color emerge as a result of semantic induction? 6-What is the external valence of the word borrowed or of foreign origin, what is the possibility of attaching this word to the discourse, etc.? Based on these criteria, the author gives in his articles a broad overview with necessary and unnecessary anglicisms for the Albanian language.

Articles on lexicography are numerous. They can be classified into two groups: 1- Problem articles, such as: "Should dialectalism and regionalism be included in an Albanian-foreign language dictionary?", "For a general dialect dictionary of the Albanian language", "Word together with the word", "For an orthographic dictionary of the Albanian language", "Should a school dictionary of the Albanian language be published?" etc.; 2- some review articles for some lexicographical works, such as "Dictionary of antonyms in the Albanian language" by M. Samara, "Albanian-English Dictionary of Oxford (Oxford Albanian-English Dictionary) by L. Newmark, published in a shorter variety also abbreviated in the International Journal of Lexicography, S. Tomçin's "Arabic-Albanian Dictionary", "Persian-Albanian Dictionary", compiled by a group of authors, etc. Especially in the article "Oxford Albanian-English Dictionary" by L. Newmark, a detailed lexicographical analysis is made and the achievements and shortcomings of this bilingual Dictionary are objectively examined.

An important place is also occupied by the review articles for some monographs with lexical character, such as: "Dialectal and regional lexicon in today's Albanian" by J. Thomai, "Prepositions in today's Albanian" by M. Samara, "Term and word in the language Albanian" by A. Duros, "Agricultural tradition through the linguistic treasury in the northern areas of Albania (in comparison with other dialects of the Albanian language)" by S. Pepa etc.

A more specific article, but certainly within the general theme of this review is "Professor Androkli Kostallari - a prominent personality of science and education." It is a well-deserved appreciation for his research work at European level, for his scientific leadership at the head of the Institute of Linguistics and Literature and within it, the Sector of Lexicology and Lexicography, for his dignified work in the service of Albanian studies.

Studies and articles are logically structured according to the topics they cover.

Thanas FEKA

HAJRI SHEHU "DICTIONARY OF FOLK WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS FROM THE IDIOMS OF UJEMUJA", QSA, IGJL, TIRANË, 2016, 436 f.

1. In the new century, in the new conditions of Albania with the change of the system and the great opening to the world, when the globalization impact is powerful in all of the files and when the modern development of economy, science, culture and life provide sharp changes in general and in language too, mainly in the lexicon, amongst other issues pushing back and throwing into oblivion words, meanings of popular Albanian expressions paving the way for borrowings, often unnecessary affecting the identity of Albanian language, compiling dialectical and regional dictionaries which bring to light the personal wealth of Albanian language and which save it from loss and put it in general use, become more indispensable and more useful.

'The dictionary with words and popular expressions from Ujemuja', compiled by professor Hajri Shehu serves this purpose.

2. The author of the "Dictionary" is a prominent lexicologist and a lexicographer, of rich experience as a coauthor in compiling national dictionaries (the great work of the Albanian lexicography such as: *'Dictionary of today's Albanian language'* 1980, *'Dictionary of today's Albanian'* 1984/2002, *'Synonymous dictionary of Albanian language'* 2004, *'Dictionary of Albanian language'* 2006, *'Electronic dictionary of Albanian language'* 2014 etc.), with full formation in the lexicographical theory too and with the adequate scientific seriousness for a reliable linguist. Reliance on a contemporary theoretical system, as well as scientific methodology that has used for the research and the recording process directly from the closest informants' mouth of that territory or village, in the concrete discourse situations, also with expeditions deliberately prepared for these researches, make the "Dictionary" scientifically trustworthy and reliable. The scientific competence of the author himself is the biggest warranty of the scientific quality of his work.

3. *'The Dictionary'* has a volume of 8000 words, phraseological units and source proverbs, but its value is increased further with other semantic data for many phraseological words and units, which constitute together with the words and the phraseological units, a valuable wealth of the Albanian lexicon. The author has set himself the goal of giving the peculiar lexicon, the phraseology and the lexicon semantics of the spoken idiom in classes and groups of word formation thematic as well as other material from its toponymy etc. the dictionary is of differentiating type, but with five layers with local words it brings precious wealth of Albanian language, most of it in general unknown, while also useful for the enriching of standard Albanian. The words, the meanings, and particularly the rich popular phraseology in the *'Dictionary'* are of great expressive-emotional value, much appreciated not only in the artistic discourse, but also in the general discourse regarding their power, accuracy and beauty, thus enlarging the means of artistic expression.

4. *'The dictionary'* has been compiled according to the contemporary lexicographic criteria in all its elements: in the choice of the speaker, in the lexicographic presentation of the words and the paragraph per each word, in the forms and grammatical notes and of superimposed expressive-emotional values (*tall., mospërf., përcm., shar. etj.*), in the ways of providing the phraseology of the typical

local expressions etc. with regard to scientific accuracy and for the economy of presentation, the author has often referred to *“Dictionary of today’s Albanian language”* (1980), which provides to this regional dictionary a contrastive character to the lexicon, phraseology and semantics reflected in this national dictionary, thus better highlighting what he brings new in these fields.

5. The introductory part of the *“Dictionary”*, considered as a preface, although short, consists on interesting geographic, historic, ethnographic and linguistic data provided in a concise way as a scientific study, as well as data for the dictionary itself, the approach method etc.

Thus it helps understanding better what this dictionary is about, how it was compiled, why this or that lexicographic solution has been given etc. In this specific part, the reader will get to know the scientific competence of the dictionary’s author too.

6. *“Dictionary with words and popular expressions from Ujenuja”*, compiled by professor Hajri Shehu is of a high scientific quality, it brings a lexical, phraseological and semantic wealth, in general unknown, but which must be presented following its publication due to the various values it has with regard to the protection of Albanian’s own linguistic wealth, for the enrichment of its lexicon and specifically to the standard language, for the writers, translators, publicists, scholars etc., as well as for the scientific studies in the field of Albanian language lexicon.

This dictionary will enrich the Albanian lexicographic bibliography and due to the scientific and practical values it conveys, it will occupy the first rows of the dictionaries of this type.

Jani THOMAI

Scientific information

A JUBILEE SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE IN MEMORY OF THE PROMINENT SCHOLAR OSMAN MYDERRIZI, ON THE 130TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BIRTH (1891–1973)

The Section of Albanological and Social Sciences in the Academy of Sciences, honoring the renowned researcher Osman Myderrizi, on his 130th birth anniversary (1891–1973) organized a jubilee scientific conference on April 29, 2021.

It is difficult to define the place of Osman Myderrizi within the wide specter of human sciences, said prof. Pëllumb Xhufi in the opening speech of this event. He was an historian, but a linguist as well, an ethnologist, but even a lexicographer. He was a precious scholar of literature in Arabian alphabet and an attentive scholar and a transcriber of the authors belonging to the northern catholic tradition. A profound connoisseur of the languages and cultures of the East, Osman Myderrizi was an equally profound connoisseur of the languages and cultures of the West. His interests and knowledge had a range of 360 degrees. Osman Myderrizi belongs to that special species of learned individuals, who can only be found before the twentieth century, and who deserve of the simple but difficult definition: a knowledge worker, namely scholar. His two most important essays in the field of the Albanian History, the one on the rebellion of Middle Albania during 1915-1915, and the other a research on the national designations "Albanian" and "Albania", are innovative for their methodological approach, the number and variety of arguments, the depth and cohesion of the analysis and the conclusion which flow naturally and convincingly. The papers presented during this event by prof. Seit Mansaku: The linguistic work of prof. Osman Myderrizi; prof. Ferit Duka: Osman Myderrizi the renown Albanian orientalist; acad. Albert Doja: Osman Myderrizi, a forgotten pioneer of scientific approaches in Albanian studies; PhD Enika Abazi: Osman Myderrizi, a life among wise people, revealed the values of this famous activist.

Osman Myderrizi was a researcher, teacher and political activist. Besides the writings with a methodical-educational nature for schools, O. Myderrizi wrote "The new grammar of Albanian language: -phonetics and morphology" (1944)

Later, as an employee at the Institute of Sciences, he participated in the drafting commission of the "Dictionary of the Albanian language" (1954) and was active in identifying literature written in the Arabic alphabet, studying and publishing it as well. He continued this work at the Institute of History and Linguistics.

He has the merit of discovering some bejtexhinj authors and transcribing and studying their texts. His studies in this field were included in the monograph "Albanian literature in the Arabic alphabet". In his last years he was busy preparing the essential edition of the texts of this literature. In the field of lexicography, Osman Myderrizi prepared the critical edition of the Dictionary of Hafiz Ali Ulqinaku (1965). He assisted also the discussions on specific issues of Albanian history.

Vitore VELI

A JUBILEE ON THE 210TH ANNIVERSARY OF BIRTH AND THE 140TH ANNIVERSARY OF DEATH OF PHILOSOPHER AND ACTIVIST HASAN TAHSINI

The Academy of Sciences of Albania organized a jubilee event on the 210th anniversary of the birth and 140th anniversary of the death of the philosopher and activist Hasan Tahsini, on April 22, 2021.

Acad. Pëllumb Xhufi, head of the Section of Social and Albanological Sciences, at the opening of the event underlined that Hasan Tahsini was the first to spread in the Ottoman Empire the natural sciences and the laws of the universe, but also the first to spread among the Albanian population the idea of creating an independent Albanian state. In the history of Albanian National Renaissance, he entered as one of the most prominent figures of the XIX century.

In his speech, Acad. Rexhep Meidani praised Hasan Tahsin as a scholar and patriot who should be placed in the national pantheon of knowledge and patriotism, and be considered at the same time as the pioneer of modern sciences of the XIX century in the Ottoman Empire.

Hoxha Tahsini also worked on the Albanian alphabet. He wanted it different from the alphabets of the other languages and, above all, he wanted it to express the power of the Albanian language. Hasan Tahsini began his intellectual activity and studies in Paris in 1857. In the first year of his stay in Paris, before enrolling in the Faculty of Natural Sciences at the Sorbonne University, he further enriched and deepened his knowledge by "digging" in the wealth of the libraries in Paris. In parallel to his studies in natural sciences, he attended lectures as an outsider in several other faculties, thus gaining in-depth knowledge in physics and mathematics, astronomy and geology, chemistry and biology, philosophy and psychology. As rector of the first university in the Ottoman Empire, he also restructured the curriculum, even though this was against state rules.

Hoxha Tahsini was open to new scientific ideas, but he could not and did not go beyond the framework of the Islamic religion. He tried to combine them in search of credible truths in order to create a mentally and morally healthy society. Although he was introduced to religious doctrine by his father as a child, he saw the world from an in-depth contemporary scientific point of view.

Academic Rexhep Meidani also made an analysis of Hasan Tahsin's scientific innovations in his work "Basics of astronomy", which often coincide with the last word of science.

Acad. assoc. Mimoza Hafizi spoke of his book "Basics of astronomy" and the scientific contributions of Hasan Tahsin in the context of the greatest discoveries of the mid-nineteenth century.

Hasan Tahsini was influenced by European discoveries, because he had stayed and studied long in Paris. Although he was part of an Eastern world, he held and expressed the positions of European astronomy of that era. Ms. Hafizi assessed that "Basics of Astronomy" is a work that stands at the most advanced level of astronomical knowledge for the era when it was written.

Prof. Bashkim Kuçuku spoke about the universal and national dimensions of Hasan Tahsin's work. An encyclopedic scientist and disseminator of knowledge, a figure that even today, after 210 years, has not been challenged, on such a scale in the history of Albanian culture. Although he practices his diverse knowledge far from his homeland and not to the benefit of his Albanian people, his national contributions are remarkable. Sami Frashëri, in his memoirs, wrote: "The late Hoxha Tahsin was one of those great people who rarely emerge over the centuries." His emancipatory work was in conflict with the scholarly formation and environment of Istanbul. His summarized portrait was: a developer and disseminator of modern European sciences in the face of the Ottoman Empire. Unprepared to accept and use it as much as it could, the Ottoman Empire hindered, stopped and wiped out most of it, said prof. Kuçuku, describing Hasan Tahsin as the teacher of the most important renaissance figures, Naim and Sami Frashëri, initiator of patriotic activities and collaborator with Kostandin Kristoforidhi, Jani Vreton, Pashko Vasa, etc.. He underlined especially the creation of the Albanian alphabet. He was a determined opponent, with scientific arguments to not accept the Arabic alphabet, because it did not fit with Albanian, did not express all its breadth and richness.

The jubilee event was greeted by Mr. Alket Veliu, president of the association "Hasan Tahsini", offering cooperation and contribution to make possible the publication of his full work.

Vitore VELI

A JUBILEE ON THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RENAISSANCE POET NAIM FRASHËRI, IN HONOR OF HIS LITERARY AND PATRIOTIC WORK

On the 175th anniversary of the birth of the Renaissance poet Naim Frashëri, the Academy of Sciences of Albania, Section of Social and Albanological Sciences, organized on May 21, 2021, a scientific activity in honor of his literary and patriotic work.

In the opening speech of the event, Acad. Skënder Gjinushi (President of the Academy of Sciences), said that Naim Frashëri and Jeronim de Rada are the two most important figures of the century regarding the formation of the Albanian national consciousness.

All unite around them: poets, thinkers, publicists, insurgents. Naim Frashëri is one of the rare figures, who was never contested throughout the history of his life and work. Naim Frashëri came to Albania as a project of the future. And he came not from nothing. His coming was preceded by the ideology of the XVIII century, known as albanesità among the Arbëresh. During this period, the names Albania and Albanian had been adopted by all compatriots, culminating with Naim Frashëri's lapidary dedication to the country: "You Albania give me honor / you give me the Albanian name".

The image of Albania is multifaceted: there is a political Albania, there is an economic Albania, a customary Albania, a linguistic Albania. But the most beautiful

Albania is the literary Albania and among the literary Albanians, the figure of Naim shines as brightly as Arberia in the glorious era of Gjergj Kastriot in the poems of De Rada”.

In his greeting speech, His Eminence HadjiDede Edmond Brahimaj (World Leader of the Bektashi), stated "On the eve of the twentieth century, the opinion of the great men of the Albanian lands had materialized, and then most of them turned their attention to Naim Frashëri, to that person who stood as a symbol of our national consciousness."

Acad. Pëllumb Xhufi (Head of the Section of Social and Albanological Sciences in the Academy of Sciences), in his presentation *Naim Frashëri and his vision of openness and tolerance* described the remarkable renaissance figure as the greatest innovator of the Albanian letters in history, a great patriot and a humanist with a European vision. Looking back on the work "Istori e Skënderbeut" by Naim Frashëri, academic Xhufi said that before Naim other authors such as Zef Jubani, Filip Shiroka, Ndre Mjeda, De Rada, had tried to bring back to life the figure of Gjergj Kastriot, through historical texts or artistic creation. However, their writings, even when they came out to light, did not achieve the same influence and success as Naim's work. Through the "Istoria e Skënderbeut", a presentation of the historical narrative in poetic form, Naim instilled among the Albanians of his time the key element of Albanian consciousness: he introduced them to their national hero.

Prof. As. Dr. Abdulla Rexhepi presented the *three new works of Naim Frashëri in the Turkish-Ottoman language, which have been unknown until today*: "A reading book" with 80 stories with distinct literary and didactic values, "Inventions and Discoveries", "Grammar of Persian". He said that Naim Frashëri wrote the Persian grammar in 1871, when no Iranian had yet published the grammar of this language.

Dr. Dorian Koçi (director of the National Historical Museum), presented *Myth and history in the work of Naim Frashëri*. He said that our national poet, Naim Frashëri, in his literary and didactic creativity adopts two roles: the creator of national literature, and the teacher of the nation. It is obvious that the Albanian literature during the Renaissance had a propaganda characteristic which aimed to awake the nation with a simple language, and hence we have weak stylistic forms, but this does not dilute the true values of the work of Naim Frashëri”.

Prof. dr. Begzad Baliu (Kosovo), spoke on the *mission of Naim Frashëri in the work of Professor Rexhep Qosja*.

According to poet Shahip Emërllahu from Northern Macedonia, Naim Frashëri is one of the most prominent and brightest figures of our National Renaissance. Even though his work is primarily dedicated to his homeland and people, it often goes beyond the national frameworks and appears to be a humanistic work that belongs to humanity as a whole.

Mr. Mehmet Gëzhilli, publisher of a corpus of his works, brought evidence of the appreciation foreign authors had expressed for Naim Frashëri.

Nuri Çuni (Bektashi World Headquarters) presented another book of Naim Frashëri "The *Bektashi Notebook*", written 125 years ago, published in Bucharest, in 1896. He said that this book provides philosophical-moral theses. The content in this book is deep and the values are essential in order to understand the broad worldview of Naim.

In the context of the activities in honor of the 175th anniversary of the birth of Naim Frashëri, the Academy of Sciences of Albania in cooperation with the University of Gjirokastra "Eqrem Çabej", held in Gjirokastra another scientific conference, on May 25, 2021.

The rector of the University of Gjirokastra prof. dr. Bektash Mema opened this conference with a greeting speech.

In his greeting speech, the president of the Academy of Sciences Acad. Skënder Gjinushi emphasized the great role of Naim Frashëri in the National Renaissance and the place his creativity has in Albanian literature, quoting: "Naim Frashëri and Jeronim de Rada are the two most important figures of the century regarding the formation of the Albanian national consciousness. Everyone unites around them: poets, thinkers, publicists, insurgents, and that Naim Frashëri is probably the only poet who does not need to be adapted or edited - so familiar and ecumenical is his Albanian for all contemporary speakers. The Naimian verb stands in the foundations of Albanian today. "The Albanian Orthography Congress could not have taken the decisions it took without the work of Naim."

Acad. Pëllumb Xhufi (Academy of Sciences of Albania) said in his presentation *Naim Frashëri and his great cultural and ideological subversion*, that this great renaissance figure instilled among the Albanians of his time an element which was essential, the Albanian consciousness. He also underlined that Naim Frashëri inserted a hefty dose of nationalism in the Bektashi doctrine, uniting the Bektashi sect with national programs. Naimian Bektashism was in harmony with Romanticism when the idea of a radical solution to the religious problem was being thrown around, agonizing the minds of Albanian intellectuals, while Naim was advising Albanians on a great deal of tolerance from every point of view. Naim Frashëri's philosophical and religious essay shad a European vision. They are reminiscent of Italian humanists, and just like them, Naim placed man at the center of the universe.

In his speech, Prof. Dr. Roland Zisi (rector, University of Vlora) made a comparative analysis between the *Naim's ideals of Albania and Dritëro Agolli's ideal Albania: from "Livestock and Agriculture" to "Mother Albania"*. In "Livestock and Agriculture" as well as in all of his work, Naim sings to the entirety and terrestrial compactness in which Albanians have lived for centuries, in the ethnic sense of the terms. He also sings to the Albanian language, docks, customs, folk and authentic Albanian culture. Other elements in his poem are the Albanian psyche and ethno type both in their metaphysical individual and collective aspects. God, as a universal factor present in the daily life of Albanians, and the intellectual and practical values and skills in the family and community. These are necessary preconditions for building a common national home, like all nations surrounding us.

Prof. Dr. Dhori K. Qirjazi (University of Thessaloniki) in his presentation *The Enlightenment of Naim and the Greek Enlightenment Figures of the 1821 revolution*, stated that although we have not yet managed to bring to light the multifaceted values of his work, one of his works, apparently, is the organic, perhaps magical connection of Albanianism to ecumenism. The word LIGHT is the pillar and the key word of Enlightenment. Naimi was shining light everywhere, East and West. His work creates bridges not only with the present, but also with previous eras.

Prof. Assoc. Dr. Avdulla Rexhepi (University of Prishtina), spoke about the new works of *Naim Frashëri in Ottoman (Turkish); which have been unknown until today*: "Reading book", "Inventions and discoveries", "Persian grammar". Prof. Rexhepi said that Naim Frashëri made great contributions to the knowledge of the Turkish people, because until recently, it was only known that Naimi had done great services only to the Albanian people. Naimi raised before the intellectuals the question of what makes modern European thought stronger than the Ottoman thought and tried to send some Ottoman students to Europe to learn modern European knowledge, including Hoxha Tahsim.

Prof. Dr. Valter Memisha (Academy of Albanological Studies) during his presentation "*The language of Naim and the evolution of Albanian*" said that the foundations of the Albanian national literary language were laid during the Renaissance, a period that cannot be understood without the name of Naim Frashëri. His role in this founding process is decisive, which can be seen if we reflect on the language of his work, with multiple and direct connections with today standard Albanian, so much so that it is possible to say that the national literary language cannot be perceived and understood without the language of the work of the national poet.

Msc. Behar Hoxhaj (University of Gjirokastra) spoke about the lexicon of noun prepositions in Naim's work. He said that in some levels and linguistic disciplines, Naimi brought wealth not only syntax and morphology but also in semantics. The language of Naim Frashëri enriches the language, and it is worth studying from many angles.

Prof. Assoc. Dr. Merita Gjokutaj, introduced Naimi in her presentation *Code of popular discourse* as a talented poet, a very good connoisseur of the Albanian language, who knew his mother tongue thoroughly

Acad. Vasil S. Tole (vice-president of ASA), in his paper *The Cult of the Nightingale as a Singing Bird in Naimi*, emphasized that our outstanding writer Naim Frashëri belongs more than anyone else to the group of writers, whom we can call "the writers of the singing language of the nightingale".

He said that the main corpus of our writers of tradition included in their poems music as divine art and the nightingale as a singing bird.

Finally, in their own right, writers have played an important role in reviving the concept of music as part of culture in general and national culture in particular.

Prof. Gëzim Redhi (University of Gjirokastra) spoke about *Naim's writings in Greek and the influence of the "Zosimea" gymnasium*.

Dr. Virion Graçi (ASA) presented the *Song of the Angel: Naim's Skanderbeg in the course of time*. At the core of his speech he said that epochal acts like those of Gjergj Kastriot, brought to the stage of history a nation, an ethnicity; great poetic and prophetic souls like Naim Frashëri, brought to the consciousness of the masses, to all Albanians, a perfect, majestic and humane Gjergj Kastriot, the embodiment of goodness, a proper identifying symbol for us, from the past to the future.

Prof. assoc. dr. Spiridhulla Poçi (University of Gjirokastra) in his paper *The Frashërlli in History and Naimi* spoke about the contribution of the Frashërlli family in the history of Albania and the continuation of these contributions by Naimi and his

brothers, in the formation of national consciousness and the creation of a written of a high-level literary language.

In the paper *Classical Persian Motifs in Naim's Poetry according to Musine Kokalari*, Acad. Shaban Sinani (ASA), spoke about the research of Musine Kokalari on the stylistic and expressive characteristics of Naim Frashëri poems. This research is important to know the true character of the poet.

Vitore VELI

A JUBILEE AND INAUGURAL SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITY, THE SHEET MUSIC OF THE FIRST ALBANIAN BALLET "HALILI AND HAJRIJA" OF ACAD. TISH DAIJA (1926-2003), ON HIS 95TH BIRTHDAY

The Academy of Sciences of Albania, the Permanent Commission of Art and Cultural Heritage, organized on the 95th anniversary of the birth of academician Tish Daija (1926-2003) a scientific and inaugural event in collaboration with the Faculty of Music (UA), and promoted the sheet music of the first Albanian ballet "Halili and Hajrija", composed by Tish Daija and choreographed by Panajot Kanaçi.

It is a complete, computerized edition of the historical music sheet of the first Albanian ballet "Halili and Hajrija" (573 pages).

The event was moderated by dr. Mikaela Minga (member of the Youth Academy, at ASA).

Acad. Vasil S. Tole greeted on behalf of the Presidency of AS and said that the history of this ballet is a success story. The premiere of the ballet took place on January 13, 1963 at the Opera and Ballet Theater (today the Academy of Arts). This play has been performed almost 300 times on the stage of the Opera and Ballet Theater in Tirana, as well as abroad in Greece (1983), Italy (1991) and in the Ohrid Wine Festival (2005). It was staged even in France by artists from the Clermond-Ferrand Opera and Ballet Theater (1980), choreographed by Brice Leroux. The ballet was also staged in Kosovo by the Pristina Provincial Theater Ballet Ensemble in 1979. Further, Acad. Vasil S. Tole spoke about the importance of publishing this musical sheet, while the original work was at risk of being degraded. "The publication of the historical musical sheet of the first Albanian ballet will serve a wide variety of users, such as music conductors inside and outside the country, young composers and musicologists, specialized or not specialized libraries, music students, lovers, collectors, etc."

Acad. Eno Koço (external member of AS) spoke about the importance of the first Albanian ballet and recounted memories from working with the famous composer Tish Daija, praising composer Dajia as one of the few composers who remained in the elite of the most prominent Albanians composers.

Prof. dr. Isak Shehu (Dean of the Faculty of Music) after elaborating about the musical education of Tish Daija, which started at preschool age, with the participation in the Franciscan choir, quoted that: "Tish Daija made a great contribution to the creation and development of the Albanian instrumental, vocal and symphony music of all genres. He composed slow and folk music songs, film music, Albanian ballet "Halili and Hajrija", "Sons of the fisherman", etc. His creativity speaks Albanian. The source

material he chose, the harmonization, orchestration, forms, etc., all speak only Albanian, said Prof. Dr. Isak Shehu.

Prof. Rafet Rudi (Kosovo) after talking about the importance of these types of music publications, described Tish Daija as one of the bards of Albanian music, who provided a new momentum to music composition.

The son of Acad. Tish Daija, composer Gust Daija, after thanking and expressing gratitude to the Presidency of AS for publishing the music sheet, said that "Halili and Hajria was the fourth work of composer Tish Daija, since the beginning of his work. He narrated the path of Tish Daija as the author of many great musical works such as, operetta "Lejlaja", opera "Spring", the first Albanian ballet, "Sons of the Fisherman" etc.

The event was also greeted by the ballet master Albert Janku, who is the only protagonist of the first Albanian ballet "Halili and Hajria" who is still alive. The beautiful works prevail over time and are the great wealth of the people, said Albert Janku, remembering with nostalgia the time this work was made and the tireless work that was done for staging this ballet on stage with the ballet master Panajot Kanaçi, who brought innovation through the harmonious expression of the dancers under the music of Tish Daija.

Vasil S. TOLE

ARCHAEOLOGIST SKËNDER ANAMALI, ONE OF THE FOUR CO-FOUNDERS OF ALBANIAN ARCHEOLOGY AND INITIATOR OF RESEARCHES IN THE FIELD OF ARBERIAN ARCHEOLOGY, HONORED ON THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BIRTH

On May 7, 2021 the Albanian Academy of Sciences held the scientific-jubilee activity "Skënder Anamali - founder of Albanian archeology".

President of the Academy of Sciences academic Skënder Gjinushi considered Skënder Anamali as one of the central figures of Albanian archeology.

"To Skënder Anamali and the four co-founders of Albanian archeology we acknowledge the merit that turned this science and service from the exclusivity of foreign scholars, such as Luigi Ugolini and Leon Rey, to knowledge and research of the locals: they returned Albanian archeology to its homeland, and made it a science of Albanians too", said acad. Gjinushi while emphasizing that just as Hasan Ceka took archeology to Selce, Skënder Anamali too drew it to Mat and Stelush, to Lin and as far as Kosovo; but first of all to Koman, where it was first discovered and was universally accepted the existence of a cultural layer of the transition from the Illyrians to the Arbërs, a layer that also proved their typological continuity.

Akad. Muzafer Korkuti, through his greeting message to the event, remembered Skënder Anamali as the teacher, the colleague, the friend of young archaeologists, that with his work laid a cornerstone of the (thesis of) origins of the Arbërs from the Illyrians.

Prof. Neritan Ceka praised Skënder Anamali as one of the four magnificent of Albanian archeology. He recalled the beginnings of Skënder Anamali's work on

archeological expeditions with the outstanding archaeologist Hasan Ceka. Anamali was the friend and teacher of young archaeologists and prepared a constellation of specialists of the Roman and Byzantine era, such as D. Komata, K. Lako, L. Perzhita, G. Hozha, etc. His legacy is made of fundamental studies on the issue of the transition from Illyrians to Albanians and archaeological excavations in Ballsh, Koman, Krujë, Pogradec, etc.

Professor Luan Përzhita, in the paper "Skënder Anamali as the initiator of research in the field of Arberian archeology", said that the history of modern archaeological research on the early Albanian Middle Ages began, grew and developed for almost half a century through the tireless work of prof. Skënder Anamalit and other archaeologists.

It was the 1960s when Albanian archeology turned its attention to the culture of late antiquity and early medieval Albania. This new orientation of research, very important for the archeology and the history of the early medieval period, was assigned to prof. Skënder Anamalit.

Prof. Gëzim Hoxha, in the paper "Archeology of the Roman era in Albania; contribution of prof. Skënder Anamalit ", said that Prof. Anamali has synthesized all his experience on the Roman era in the territory of Albania.

His professionalism is found not only in accurate studies and discoveries, but also in presenting new issues, which remain as a potential for new researches.

Lydra Biçoku, the daughter of the prominent archaeologist, thanked the Academy of Sciences for the event and added that, as a father, Skënder Anamali taught his children to be dedicated to work and with the culture of a gallant communication.

The event took place under the auspices of the Standing Committee on History and Archeology at the Academy of Sciences.

Neritan CEKA

"POPE CLEMENT XI AND ALBANIA"- A JUBILEE SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE, ON THE 300TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS ASCENSION

The Academy of Sciences in cooperation with the Apostolic Nunciature in Albania, held on July 15, 2021 the jubilee scientific conference "Pope Clement XI and Albania", on the 300th anniversary of his death.

The conference was opened by academic Pëllumb Xhufi, President of the Department of Social and Albanological Sciences, who in front of the audience emphasized the role of Pope Clement XI in promoting cultural developments and his contribution to the political and religious rebirth of his homeland.

The greeting message was delivered by Acad. Skënder Gjinushi, president of the Academy of Sciences of Albania, who, among the many merits of Pope Clement XI, differentiated the generalization of the new ethnonym of the country (Albania) and the people (Albanians), which were used for the first time as a substitute for Arbëri and Arbër in the records of the Assembly of Merqi, known also as the Assembly of Arbni.

"The missionaries sent by him to attend this assembly, authors of early dictionaries and grammars, stabilized the new name of the people at a time when the old

denominations had become too narrow to include everyone, regardless of religious, regional and cultural differences”, said acad. Gjinushi.

Further, acad. Gjinushi spoke about some initiatives of historical-epochal importance, which Pope Clement has undertaken during his life, in favor of his country of origin.

This jubilee conference was greeted by the apostolic nuncio in Albania, Monsignor Luigi Bonazzi, who emphasized that Pope Clement XI supported the Assembly of Arbri and the Albanian language. This year also concurs with the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Holy See.

He spoke about the presence of the Holy See in the Arberian realm to this day and noted the fact that Pope Clement XI was proud of his Albanian origins, emphasizing that there has always been a close connection between the Holy See and the Albanian people.

Father Nikë Ukgjini in the paper "Merqia - the church of the Assembly of Arbri, in the past and today", said that the origin of Pope Clement is from Laçi, Albania, bringing evidence for the development of the Assembly of Arbri in the church of Merqia in Lezha.

He underlined the encouragement and support of Pope Alban for the Assembly of Abër, thus withstanding by the difficulties and threats from external enemies, especially during the 500-year occupation from the Ottoman Empire.

Father Ukgjini also brought data about the parish of Merqia in Lezha, where the Assembly of Arber was held, approved by Pope Albani.

The conference continued with the presentation of documents and studies portraying Pope Clement XI as an erudite figure who emancipated the Christian faith and made major contributions to the Catholic Church.

Prof. Bardhyl Demiraj in the speech "Pope Clement XI in the Albanian collective memory" emphasized the continuous contributions to unite Christianity in Albania, where the Catholic and Orthodox Church coexisted peacefully and underlined that Pope Clement also fought against corruption and nepotism.

Prof. Francesco Altimari in his speech: "*Regeneratioalbanica*: the role of Pope Clement XI for the awakening of the culture and identity in the Albanian realm" spoke about the Albanian descent of Pope Clement, who took special care of the destiny of the country of his ancestors.

Hailing from the noble family of Mikel Laçi, the family of Pope Clement XI settled in Urbino, Italy and took the Albani surname.

Prof. Altimari pointed out that at the time of Pope Clement there was a renewal in the Arbëresh world, where the clergy were the first to start writing in Albanian.

Pope Clement XI became the forerunner of the establishment of two Italian-Albanian colleges in Calabria and Sicily that are of great importance in political, cultural, literary and religious history.

Prof. Evalda Paci in her speech "Pope Clement XI in dedication texts of his contemporaries" spoke about his role in consolidating ecclesiastical institutions to the most remote localities where the Roman church operated. She mentioned the coordination of his actual actions in terms of evangelism and strengthening the role of the church of Rome in Europe, but also further, in far distant regions and jurisdictions.

Father Mikel Pllumbaj in his speech "Pope Clement and Illyricum Sacrum" spoke about the major encyclopedia with 9 volumes and 5500 pages, which talks about the history of the Illyrians and Arbërs, and there, Pope Clement XI occupies an important place as an Albanian patriot.

Prof. Ardian Ndreca pointed out the importance of the Assembly of Arbni (1703) as an event that marked a radical turn in the Albanian ecclesiastical life, as a result of the crucial role of Pope Clement XI.

Dr. Alvin Saraçi in his paper "Pope Clement XI Albani's contribution for Albania" brought evidence on the Albanian origin and, among other things, cited documents discovered in Rome where it is written about the Albani family, which prove that the Albani family was related to the Kastriots. During his speech Dr. Saraçi also highlighted Pope Clement's projects for the history of Albanians.

Pope Clement XI is otherwise known as John Francesco Albani (Giovanni Francesco Albani).

Vitore VELI

SCIENTIFIC-JUBILEE ACTIVITY ON THE 85TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF ACADEMIC BAHRI BECI

The Albanian Academy of Sciences (Department of Social and Albanology Sciences) on March 2, 2021, on the 85th anniversary of the birth of academic Bahri Beci held a scientific-jubilee activity along with the promotion of his recent publication "L'union linguistique balkanique à la lumière des données de la langue albanaise" (The Balkan linguistic relation in the light of Albanian language data").

Due to the pandemic conditions, the event took place online, with very limited participation in the "Alex Buda" hall.

Acad. Pëllumb Xhufi, Chairman of the Section of Social and Albanology Sciences, opened the jubilee event, wishing his colleague Beci on behalf of the Presidency of the Academy of Sciences, colleagues and participants, long life and joyful occasions in his life.

Chairman of the Academy of Sciences acad. Skënder Gjinushi welcomed the organization of this event and praised the scientific personality of Mr. Bahri Beci with over six decades of activity. He noted his university education first at the University of Tirana and then in France, at the Institute of Phonetics and Applied Linguistics at Sorbonne University, where he specialized in phonetics and phonology and presented his doctorate degree, with the study "Le système vocal and consonant of the city of Shkodra". In this way of cultivation, the dialectologist and the phonetist merged within him and this resulted in successful researches for more than half a century on the Albanian dialects, on the history of their formation and the importance of historical dialectology data for proving the historical continuity of Albanians in their own lands. "Bahri Beci's professional life has been manifested, in two words, from the metropolis to the suburbs, from the Parisian university halls (as a student and as a teacher) to the deepest regions of the country, where he lived and archived valuable language subjects for today and for the future", said among others acad. Skënder Gjinushi, emphasizing

that his scientific love for dialects is related to their appraisal as the spiritual heritage of the people, as a permanent basis and source for the enrichment of today's unified language.

During the presentation of the work of acad. Bahri Beci "L'union linguistique balkanique à la lumière des données de la langue albanaise" Prof. dr. Seit Mansaku emphasized the credits of this publication, primarily focusing on the Balkan attributes of the Albanian language and its contribution to the formation of common attributes of the Balkan languages. Secondly, the inclusion of data from dialectology studies of Albanian language when explaining the Balkan attributes of the Albanian language and the use of distinctive attributes of Albanian dialects to explain the origin of some Balkan attributes. Also, another peculiarity related to this is that the author has paid more attention to the Balkan attributes related to historical phonetics such as, among others, the origin of the phoneme "y", to the origin and diffusion of the vowel "ë" in some Balkan languages, to the phenomenon of rhotacism, etc., said among others prof. Mansaku, hailing the work of the acad. Beci in illuminating the contribution of Albanian language in the formation of common features of the Balkan languages and on the further clarification of the origin and diffusion of these features. Academician Rexhep Ismajli congratulated from Pristina acad. Bahri Beci for the new publication and in general for the results in his scientific work. He said that he applauds him for the synthesized nature of his works, at the same time emphasizing and thanking acad. Bahri Beci for his contribution to the research of dialects in the field and that has provided a synthesis work of Albanian phonetics and beyond. Prof. dr. Anila Omari also spoke on the recent publication of the acad. Bahri Beci "L'union linguistique balkanique à la lumière des données de la langue albanaise" emphasizing the attention that academician Bahri Beci in his linguistic studies has paid to the participation of the Albanian language in the Balkan language linkage, as one of its fundamental languages. In these studies, he presents his views on the relations between the Balkan languages and on the role of the Albanian language in these interrelations. He tries to prove the primary role of Albanian in this linguistic linkage, thus being in line with the founders of Balkan linguistics; a line which has been recaptured by modern-day Austrian scholars such as Schumacher and Matzinger, claiming the key role of Albanian language in explaining the common features of Balkan languages, especially the article retraction feature. "Half a century of research in the field of Albanian dialectology, conducted by himself from the beginning of his scientific activity along with that of other colleagues of the Institute of Linguistics, has served as a motivation and study basis for the analysis of the primary role of Albanian in this linkage", emphasized prof. Omari.

Next, acad. Shaban Sinani read the greeting letter of the French researcher prof. emeritus Mrs. Odile Daniel (from the National Institute of Oriental Civilizations and Languages, France (Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales), who deeply moved sent to the academician Bahri Beci her heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of the 85th anniversary and celebration of his book publishing in French. "Thirty years ago, we met for the first time, when you invited me to the international workshop of Albanology that you led in Tirana, and those activities have left me a great memory. As your former colleague at the Institute of Oriental Languages in Paris, I could admire with what radiance you gave lectures at this institution, due to your vast

knowledge. The students were very interested in listening to you, and, through your mediation, they began to love Albania and its beautiful language dearly”, wrote Mrs. Odile Daniel. Akad. Bahri Beci, after receiving the cordial congratulations of colleagues and participants in the jubilee event for his 85th birthday, enthralled, thanked in particular the Chairman of the Academy of Sciences, acad. Skënder Gjinushi and further the organizers of the meeting and the presenters of his work. The work of academician B. Beci "Balkan linguistic linkage in the light of Albanian language data" in French comes along the track of works aiming to clarify the linguistic interconnection between the Balkan languages. Establishing the Albanian in its proper place on the group of Balkan languages, as well as the collection of the smallest, unnoticed or undiscussed Balkan features constitute the object of this work. The whole work is permeated by the idea that the whole history of the Albanian language always appears interconnected with that of other Balkan languages, new or ancient, alive or extinct. These features continue to show interaction among Balkan languages, so in addition to studying convergences, one must also look at the divergences between these languages to better understand where they originate from and what trends they will take in the future.

Anila OMARI

JUBILEE SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE "WE HAVE MUSIC SO THAT WE DO NOT DIE", ON THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF PJETËR GACI'S (PEOPLE'S ARTIST) BIRTH

On the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the birth of the composer Pjetër Gaci (People's Artist), the Academy of Sciences of Albania, the Permanent Commission of Art and Cultural Heritage at AS, organized the jubilee conference "We have music so that we don't die" on March 31, 2021.

The conference was opened by prof. Stefan Çapaliku (member of the Commission of Art and Cultural Heritage), who spoke about the importance of Pjetër Gaci's contribution to Albanian music.

Acad. Vasil. S. Tole (AAS) delivered the speech entitled "Composers from Shkodra, pioneers in the creation of great musical genres: symphony - Zadeja; opera - Jakova; ballet - Daija and instrumental concert - Pjetër Gaci".

Acad. Tole spoke specifically about these four important composers from Shkodra in the sphere of music, highlighting the personality of Pjetër Gaci, who, as he mentioned, after studying violin at the "Tchaikovsky" conservatory, with the world-famous professor Abram Yamsky (1890-1956), discovered the magic of this both melodic and technical instrument. From there he felt that he would not be simply a violinist, but also a composer. Further, Tole spoke about Pjetër Gaci's journey across Albanian music, about his most famous compositions and about his individual career after returning to Albania, where he led the National Opera Theater orchestra and simultaneously gave violin lessons at the "Jordan Misja" artistic high school.

Researcher Zija Vuka delivered the speech "We have music, so that we do not die" - a resume of Gaci's life. He said, among other things, that his contribution as a violinist, as a lecturer, yet above all as a composer remains immortal, as with his work and

creative opus he built human values and rare artistic models that withstand time. Thanks to the talent and intuition of such a master, the fund of our national music was enriched with genres that did not exist before (him).

Acad. Eno Koço, external member of AAS, through his paper presentation "Pjetër, the violinist and composer in my impressions" shared with the audience the memories of when Pjetër Gaci composed his violin concerto, back in 1959. In the Albanian violin repertoire, the violin concerto of Pjetër Gaci is undoubtedly the most played work, beginning from the pupils of the elementary grades of music schools to the concert violinists. It becomes accessible and palatable not only by the fragrance of the themes of a local sound, but also by the simplicity of its playing. The dynamism and energy that is produced from the first period gives way to the singing with European features of the second period, to explode in the virtuoso dance with motifs of Kukës and the 9/8 meter of the third period. The whole concert thus was creating an atmosphere both brilliant and enthusiastic.

Complimenting the creativity of the composer Gaci, acad. Eno Koço said that he has also composed choral works for soloists, choirs and orchestras. The vocal attracted him a great deal to create the well-known song "For You my Fatherland". Cantatas, such as "O my Albania, (my) poor Albania" with verses by Pashko Vasa, creations, which would follow each other, powerful and melodious, where the priority was given to the power of the words and of the idea, perhaps more than to the dramaturgical orchestral development, according to the principles of the style of symphonic elaboration.

"Pjetër Gaci and the Albanian song", was the paper presented by dr. Mikalela Minga, member of the Youth Academy, at AAS. She mentioned that in Pjetër Gaci's composition works, the song occupies a special place. Melodic disposition and interest in vocal music have been among the main attributes that have been evidenced in his work as a whole. Besides his participation in the competition of the Song Festival on Albanian Radio-Television, we have songs that have been written for the National Ensemble of Songs and Dancing, for diverse ensembles -of Tirana and Shkodra - as well as for local festivals and concerts, said dr. Minga highlighting popular song-titles such as: "For You Homeland", "Free eagle", "When the flute and the çiftelia are played", "Kaçanik Gorge", "We have a strong Albania". Among the most celebrated remains the song "For you my homeland", a strophic song, with celebratory-anthem tones, which at the time was nominated as the anthem of Albania.

Prof. Lorenc Radovani (violinist at AAA), delivered the paper "Pjetër Gaci, the violinist and the educator". "Pjetër Gaci, said among others prof. Radovani, founded the first instrumental trio called the "Opera Trio". He possessed a special knowledge of violin qualities as an instrument as well as on the lutherie. As he had a spiritual demand for the beautiful sound, so he discriminated the qualities of the instruments. He executed with great precision the position of the anima of the instrument and the placement of the arc threads.

At the end, the participants were greeted by Mrs. Tamara Kudrickaja-Gaci, the wife of the composer Gaci, recounting memories from the life and the dedicated work of her husband.

Vasil S. TOLE

IN MEMORIAM**CHRISTIAN GUT
(1931-2018)**

Christian Gut passed away on 26 November 2018, one of the prominent French Albanologists of our times, a very good scholar and valuable contributor in the study of Albanian language, history and its culture, a worthy follower of tradition already formed in the ranks of the French scholars about Albanology, with input from the field of linguistics, history, ethnology, culture etc.

Christian Gut had a life full of activities and commitments in different spheres of the social life (in addition to the scientific research), and thanks to his intellectual and organizational skills, he managed a successful career even in the French administration, with contributions traced beyond the French borders, with commitments in important national institutions, as well as in international organizations and organisms, a contribution that has been estimated a shown gratitude toward with a various number of titles and medals.

This career that started in France as archivist-paleographer goes on in with a number of functions: as archivist-in-charge of the Department of Oise (1995-1958); chief of the audio-visual service in the National Archives (1961-1966); Director of the Archives of Sene (1966-1978); Chief Guard of the technical service in the Directorate of Archives in France (1978-1984); director of the Interdepartmental Specialized Hospital Center of Clermont-de-Oise (1984-1989) etc.

His career is way richer and various, it consists of other duties and functions: as an expert of the French delegation to UNESCO (1976-1984); as expert of UNESCO for the archives of Chad, Congo, Mauritania, Haiti, Cypress; as a member of the Microfilm Committee of the International Council of Archives (1975-1978); as vice-chair of the International Center of Information for the Sourced of History of Balkans (1976-1984); as a member of the Superior Commission of archives (1978-1984); as Secretary of the International Conference of the Round Table of Archives (1966-1979) etc.

This is a really important part, however, only some of his career of this man who did a very useful work throughout his life.

He has been honored with many of the highest decorates and titles by the French administration for his valuable and tireless work: Knight of the National Order of the Legion of Honor (Chevalier de l'Ordre national de la Légion d'honneur) (1983), Knight of the National Order of Merit (Chevalier de l'Ordre national du Mérite) (1968), Officer of Arts and Letters (Officier des Arts et des Lettres) (1978) etc.

The contribution of C.Gut in Albanology, is provided as clearly shaped, by envisioning the lecturer's profiles regarding the important issues of the Albanian civilization and culture in the prominent university and scientific institutions in Paris, for the teacher of Albanian and the history of Albanians, of the researcher of the different aspects of history, personalities and their unknown works, of the translator of

artistic literary works, scientific and political, of the researcher and the competent presenter of the archive documents, early or new ones; also the protector of the cultural values of the Albanian people in different panels of Paris and beyond, where the Albanian culture would speak out loud and where the voice of C.Gut sounded firmly and strong. The areas his voice would reach to were the Senate of the French Parliament, the Ministry of Education and Science in France up to the Sorbonne University aula and the Institute of the Eastern Languages and Civilizations (INALCO). His contribution naturally is included in the tradition of French researchers for the Albanology, fitting in, however with the nature, requirements, and contemporary necessities of a new period of studies in the fields he took commitment for.

His activity as albanologists is various and has obviously helped for the study of the Albanian language, history and culture.

The following aspects of his contribution stand out in particular:

As lecturer about the Albanian civilization (literature, history, geography) in the Institute for the Eastern Languages and Civilizations (INALCO) (1966-1992), where he even chaired the Department of the Eastern and Central European Languages (1971-1980) as its director, and in the years 1990-1992 as vice-director, as well as in the Practical School of Higher Studies in Sorbonne.

As presenter of the Albanian world and Albanian civilization in the encyclopedias and different scientific summaries, by providing writings and voices in them as in: i "Notice sur l'histoire de l'Albanie", *Encyclopedia universalis*, v. I, Paris, 1968, f. 551-554; "Notice sur Esad Mekuli", *Histoire des littératures*, Paris, 1976; "La littérature albanaise", *Histoire littéraire de l'Europe médiane des origines à nos jours*, Paris, 1998, f. 19-29; "Le Kosovo dans la littérature albanaise", *Annales de l'autre Islam*, n° 7 (2001), f. 37-41; "Notices sur la littérature albanaise des XIV^{ème}-XIX^{ème} s., la littérature populaire et orale" *Dictionnaire universel des littératures*, Paris, 1994, "Pasco Wassa", *Dictionnaire universel des littératures*, Paris, 1994, f. 83-84; 2946 and 3991. Lectures and videoconferences about the Albanian customary law, particularly about the Kanun of Lekë Dukagjini, must be added here;

As compiler for manuals for teaching Albanian to foreigners, a contribution he offered through teaching Albanian language and Albanian civilization at INALCO; he compiled for the student's needs: "Les sources en langue albanaise de l'histoire de l'Albanie, des origines au début du XIX^{ème} siècle (fasc. 1). Sources littéraires", Paris, 1970, 34 f.; "Les sources en langue albanaise de l'histoire de l'Albanie, des origines au début du XIX^{ème} siècle (fasc. 2). Sources ethnographiques", Paris, 1970, 33 f., "Les sources de l'histoire de l'Albanie (fasc. 3). Littérature populaire", Paris, 1972, 33 f. dhe "Les sources ... de l'histoire de l'Albanie ... (fasc. 4). Sources diplomatiques et juridiques". He has posited the state of the albanological studies and Albanian language teaching through various writings and papers, as in: "L'état présent des études albanologiques en France", *Akten des internationalen Kolloquiums ... zum Gedächtnis an Norbert Jokl*, Innsbruck, 1977, f. 113-118 dhe "Mësimi i gjuhës shqipe në Francë dje dhe sot", ("Learning of Albanian language in France yesterday and today") *Gjuha jonë*, n° 1 / 4, Tirana, 1995 f. 113-127;

As archivist and good medieval connoisseur (in addition to the writings about the French medieval history- about 100 articles), he has compiled a series of writings even

for the Albanian medieval period, such as: "Inventory of the Correspondences of the French Consuls to Durrës", 1699-1726, Albanological Research, n° 1-2, Prishtinë, 1970, f. 295-312; "Les structures administratives de l'Albanie pendant les premières années de son indépendance", Colloque Langues O', Paris, 1984, f. 75-85; "Notices sur l'histoire de l'Albanie, Ali pacha et Les îles ioniennes", Dictionnaire Napoléon, Paris, 1987, f. 59, 64-65 dhe 937-938; "Religions et identités culturelles en Europe centrale et orientale, l'exemple albanais", në Groupe de travaux sur l'Europe centrale et orientale. Bulletin d'information, n° 2, 1978, f. 38-41 dhe 50-58; "La commission internationale de contrôle et le statut organique de l'Albanie", Albanie, n° 16, 1989, f. 26-32; "La vendetta dans le Kanun", Albanie utopie. Huis clos dans les Balkans, Paris, 1996, f. 62-67; "The administrative, judicial and military organization of Albania" (Organizimi administrativ, juridik dhe ushtarak i Shqipërisë), 1912-1914", XVIII International seminar about the Albanian language, literature and culture, Tirana, 1996, f. 47-54; "Une œuvre peu connue de Pasco Vasa", Esquisse historique sur le Monténégro, IV international seminar Shkodra in centuries', v. 1, Shkodër, 2002, f. 171-176; "Un document inédit sur les rapports de Pashko Vasa et de Preng Bib Doda", Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo. Studies 8-9, Prishtinë, 2002, f. 325-329; "The Question of the East", Scientific Bulletin of the University "Aleksandër Xhuvani", Elbasan, 2004, n° 2, f. 207-228; "Bosnia and Herzegovina in the perspective of Pashko Vasa (1863-1864)", Scientific Bulletin of the University "Aleksandër Xhuvani", Elbasan, 2004, n° 2, f. 97-106, etc.;

As researcher of the system of Albanian, its grammar construction, particularly in the philological aspect with writings such as: "Linguistic contacts between Albanian and Macedonian", "Albanological research" n° III, 1973, f. 51-55; "Combien l'albanais a-t-il de cas?", Cahiers balkaniques, n° 19, Paris, 1994, p. 207-216; "An unpublished Shkodra text of the years 1850", the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo, Studies, 4, 1997, f. 339-341; "Contrastive approach between the phonetical systems of grammar of Kostandin Kristoforidhit and the one of Ogyst Dozonit", Elbasan, 2002, f. 48-55; "Contrastive approach between the grammatical systems (verbs) of Soson and Kristoforidhi", Eqerem Çabej and the Albanian culture, Tirana 2004, f. 245-254; "Pashko Vasa and the alphabet", Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo, Studies, 12, Prishtinë, 2006, f. 61-65;

As translator from Albanian into French of a various number of prominent works of artistic literature, scientific and political: the first published translation is *La ville du Sud* (Qyteti i jugut) i Ismail Kadarese, Paris, 1985, p 190, with a preface of Robert Eskarpit. He has translated into Albanian the poems of Pashko Vasa compiled in French, *Pashko Vasa, Vepra, t. I*, Prishtinë, 1989, f. 315-326, and into French the poems of Preç Zogaj, *Poésie 93*, n° 46, Paris, 1993, f. 88-90. He has succeeded in translating some of the most difficult works to translate to a foreign language such as: *Grandeur et décadence du camarade Zulo* (Shkëlqimi dhe rënia e shokut Zylo) of Dritëro Agolli, Paris, 1990, 285 f.; *La mort me vient de ces yeux-là* (Vdekja më vjen prej syve të tillë) of Rexhep Qose, Paris, 1994, 321 p. with the preface of të Ismail Kadarese and *Kanun de Lekë Dukagjini* (Kanuni i Lekë Dukagjinit), Pejë, 2001, 298 p. for the translation of the novel "The grandeur and the fall of the comrade Zylo" it has been written about that it is not a translation, but it has been written in French, because it took years for

him, he has polished it, he said it all the way the French clerks say it. The translation of Kannon of Lekë Dukagjini, took 15 years, is the only in French to present days. It not only the most complete, but also the most accurate so far amongst all of the other translations of it in other languages, which testifies of a deep acquisition of the law of the Albanian mountains. Such a translation helps for a better acquisition of the Albanian traditional self-governing, which on the other hand can help for the translation of Kannon of Lekë Dukagjini, into other languages. Amongst other translations of a general character we can mention the "Universal Declaration of Humana Rights" (from French to Albanian), *The Republic a*, n° 1/2, 1994, f. 28-29 and *La question albanaise* (Çështja shqiptare) e Rexhep Qoses, Paris, 1995, 326 p. He has translated also, but not published yet even other works such as *Lulja e kujtimit* ("The flower of remembrance") of Foqion Postolit etc.;

As passionate researcher of the period of our national Renaissance, particularly the works of Pashko Vasa. The Albanian literature has always seduced Christian Gut; he has worked for a long time with it and he has dedicated a series of writings to it, amongst which we can mention: "Poezitë e papërfillura të Pashko Vasës" ("The disdained poems of Pashko Vasa"), *Albanological Research*, series of philological sciences, n° XVI, Prishtina, 1986, p. 169-182; "About the economic condition of Pashko Vasa family", *Albanological Research*, series of historical sciences, n° XVII, Prishtinë, 1987, p. 171- 176; "An unknown story from the life of Pashko Vasa", *Philological Studies*, Tirana, 1988 n° 2, f. 197-199; "[Pashko Vasa], Biography with bibliography", *Pashko Vasa. Vepra*, IV, Prishtinë, 1989, f. 233-238; "Conscience nationale et conscience européenne dans l'oeuvre d'Ismaïl Kadare", *Colloques langues O'. Convergences européennes*, Paris, 1993, f. 247-259; "The manuscript of the poem O moj Shqypni' (Oh my Albania) of Pashko Vasa", *Philological Studies*, Tiranë, 1993, no1-4, f. 137-140; "Pashko Vasa et son œuvre", *Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo, Studies*, 10, Prishtinë, 2004, p. 29-32 etc.

He has also published, two books of the albanological character: *Parlons albanais*, Paris, 1999, 485 f., republished some times, and *Pashko Vasa*, Prishtina, 2008, 275 p. the first a result of collaboration with colleagues, is a manual with historic, geographic, ethnographic, literary and linguistic information and with some dialogue texts of the most immediate, as well as with two glossaries Albanian- French and French-Albanian. This manual is so far the most complete in its type. The second, is the more complete monographic study to the present days of the great renaissance, who has seduced C. Gut so much, and to which he has dedicated so many years of studies. In this book, a result of monographic research that lasted for some decades, the reader finds out new materials and facts known a little or not at all about or renaissance poet, as well as the accuracy and the depth of the scientific analysis of the author.

Present even in the Albanian university environments with his papers, cycles of lectures and writings in the scientific journals of Albanian universities. He has been present in the auditoriums, panels and scientific bulletins of the University of Tirana, University of Elbasan 'A. Xhuvani', University of Shkodra 'Luigj Gurakuqi', the one Gjirokastra 'E. Çabej' etc.

Different Albanian university and scientific institutions have honored him with high academic and scientific awards such as: External member of the Academy of Sciences

and Arts of Kosovo (1996), *Extraordinary Professor* of University “‘Aleksandër Xhuvani” of Elbasan (1998), *Doctor Honoris Causa* of University of Tirana (2000).

Remzi PËRNASKA, Tomorr PLANGARICA

KOLEC TOPALLI
(1938-2018)

On May 24, 2018 after a serious illness professor Kolec Topalli passed away, member of the Academy of Sciences of Albania, external member of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo, “‘People’s Teacher”, prominent scholar of the Albanian language and its history.

Professor Kolec Topalli was born in Shkodra in 1938, in a well-known family. Due to biographical reasons of the family, he went through persecution by the communist regime since at an early age by being exiled to concentration camps in very difficult living conditions.

He followed his secondary education in Shkodra, where he even graduated in the Higher Pedagogical Two-Year Institute of this city. After graduating at excellent results the higher studies for Albanian language and literature at the University of Tirana (1964), he worked as teacher in different villages of Albania as in Kukës, Lezhë, Gramsh and Krujë, where he gained experience even from the use of Albanian language in the terrain. Having been a teacher in Nikël of Kruja, he came in contact with leaders of education, who asked his opinion regarding some texts, an opinion which was highly evaluated by the professor of Albanian language, Fatmir Agalliu, who urged him to publish his study. This is how the difficult and passionate journey for the study of the Albanian language by Kolec Topalli started. During the years of service in the education system, he prepared two dissertations (1986,1991).

After the turning point in the political situation in 1990 Kolec Topalli, involved in the democratic movement of the time and evaluated by the leader of the new pluralist power, was nominated Secretary General of the President of the Republic (1992-1997). However, his early wish was the full-time scientific work in the field of linguistics, which he never interrupted even while exercising the new political duty. In 1997 he moved to the Institute of Linguistics and Literature as scientific worker, where with the exception of one year as councilor in the Albanian Embassy in Rome (2006), he never interrupted the work relations, even after retiring in 2007, when he worked as scientific coordinator in the Center for Albanological Studies (2007-2014).

The scientific activities in the field of diachronic studies of Albanian language, professor Kolec Topalli started since in the ‘70s and continued with continuous and systematic steps until realizing an important number of monographies in the field of Historical Phonetics and later in the field of Historical Morphology, which brought the publishing of two great works “‘Historical Phonetics of Albanian Language” and “‘Historical Grammar of Albanian Language”.

Passion about the science of Linguistics and the love for Albanian language guided him throughout his work, accompanied with the great will and the tireless work in a

field that plenty of numerous generations of foreign and domestic scholars of Albanian Studies for more than a century and a half, had faced the difficulties that the history of Albanian language presents. The studies for reconstructing the history of the Albanian language, its phonetics and its language, led the author in a natural way even towards the reconstruction of the history of its words, their origin, finding out the earlier meanings or even the very first meaning of them, thus the etymology of Albanian words and their reflection in an etymologic dictionary, his last great work. Shortly before passing away, Koleci had lived the joy of the publishing of his etymological dictionary, to which he had dedicated the last six years of his life.

Prof. Koleci was a good educator of his students too at the Faculty of History and Philology. He lectured lectures in Historical Phonetics for 15 years in a row, throughout which some generations graduated in linguistics, who were lucky to have taken lectures from him. Academic Koleci Topalli is the author of many important study works about Albanian language, monographies, study summaries and collective works such as "The accent in the Albanian language" (1995); "About the history of the nasal vowels in Albanian language" (1996); "The historical development of the Albanian diphthongs" (1998); "Historical conversions in the Albanian language vowel system" (2000); "The Phonetics of Albanian language" (2007); "The sonant of Albanian language" (2001); "The occlusive of Albanian language" (2002); "Fricatives and affricates of Albanian language" (2003); "Phonetical phenomena of the consonant system of Albanian language" (2004); "The basis of the historical phonetics of the Albanian language" (2011); "Ricerche sulla storia dell'accento in Albanese" (2007); "Historical evolution of the pronouns of Albanian" (2009); "The articles of Albanian language" (2009); "The verbal system of Albanian language" (2010); "Historical Grammar of Albanian" (2011); "The basis of the historical grammar of Albanian language" (2011) as well as his latest publishing "Etymological dictionary of Albanian language" published in 2017. His works count more than 250 titles with about 10.000 pages: monographies, articles and papers, publishing in 5 foreign languages, thus leaving behind a priceless legacy in the Albanian culture. He has been associate to 30 scientific journals in Albania and abroad; he has participated with papers in 120 national scientific conferences and 58 international ones and has lectured about the history of the Albanian language at universities and scientific centers in the country and abroad.

He has also been editor and reviewer of a numerous important study works such as "Dictionary of rare Albanian words" of Benedikt Dema; "Selected works" of Selman Riza; "Albanian language in the present phase; the policies for the improvement and enriching the standard: proceedings of the scientific conference, Dures, 15-17 December 2010", "The Albanian-Serbian linguistics relations" of Anila Omari; "Acoustic Phonetics: analysis of the phonetical system" of Aljula Jubani; "The Albanian literary commission in Shkodra (1916-1918) and the Association of the typing Albanian letters (1879), Association "Bashkimi" (1899), "Association "Agimi" (1901) and "The century of the Albanian Literary Commission in Shkodra: (1916-1918): 100 years of its journey" of the author Tomor Osmani; etc.

In 2008 he was selected as member of the Academy of Sciences of Albania, and in 2012 external member of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo.

Some of his best works have been awarded prestigious prizes. ‘‘The Historical Grammar of Albanian language’’ was awarded the prize of the ‘‘Kult’’ magazine in 2012, as the best annual scientific work, The Etymological Dictionary of Albanian Language was the winner of ‘‘Çabej’’ Prize, Second Edition, as the best scientific work for the year 2017 in the field of Albanology.

The Academic Senate of the Center of the Studies of Albanology has awarded him the title ‘‘Professor of Honor of the Albanian Studies’’. The President of the Republic awarded him with the order ‘‘Great Master’’.

Upon his death, the Institute of Linguistics and Literature and the Academy of the Albanological Studies lost an irreplaceable collaborator and a respected colleague and friend. The Academy of Sciences lost a scientist with a long and qualitative activity; the Albanological scientific world a valuable experienced scholar; family and relatives their beloved.

Anila OMARI

WILFRIED FIEDLER
(7 May 1933 – 11 September 2019)

Germany’s Albanology as well as the Albanological circles all around Europe and elsewhere are again shaken by bitter news this year. Wilfried Fiedler, who was well known within the cultural and intellectual discourse in Albania and the Balkans as the greatest and most productive expert in the field of linguistic Albanological and Balkanological research in the whole German-speaking region, has left us quite unexpectedly. He was a corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo and honorary member of the Academy of Sciences of Albania.

Wilfried Fiedler was born in Oberfrohna (Saxony/Germany) in 1933, but already in his youth moved to Berlin, where he studied Slavistics and other Eastern and Southeastern European philologies at the Humboldt University. In 1955, he began his academic career as a research assistant at the Institute of Folk Culture at the Academy of Sciences of Germany (in East Berlin). Four years later, when he had already acquired a profound knowledge of Albanian, he became a lecturer at the Humboldt University. This activity shaped his scientific, academic, and intellectual activity for over 30 years (1957-1989). The fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of Germany brought Fiedler to the West, to the prestigious Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, where he was to succeed the professorship of Albanology, which had once been founded by Martin Camaj. He held this position until his retirement (1991-1998). In addition to his academic activities, his university involvement remained part of his active life as a sought-after expert of Albanian, both at the LMU Munich and at the University of Jena, as well as a welcome associate of the Academy of Sciences and Arts in Kosovo.

Wilfried Fiedler came into contact with the Albanian language as early as 1957 in the course of several months of ethnographic field research. His acquaintance with the Albanian scholar Eqrem Çabej exerted a considerable influence on his coexistence with the Albanian sciences for more than six decades. Fiedler maintained an intensive correlation with him until Çabej passed away in 1980.

Wilfried Fiedler's scientific activity is distinguished for the wide range of scientific publications as author or co-author in many fields of Balkan and Eastern European philology. His latest work, the "Comparative Grammar of Balkan Languages" ("Vergleichende Grammatik der Balkansprachen", *Gramatikë e krahasuar e gjuhëve ballkanike*, ASHAK. Prishtinë 2018), represents a link in the almost two-century tradition of Balkanological research.

In the meantime, it is not easy to identify a field of research in which this erudite colossus has not left indelible traces in Albanian linguistics. These include his bilingual dictionaries Albanian-German and German-Albanian (1977 - with the co-authors Oda Buchholz, Gerda Uhlisch, and Ardian Klosi, respectively), "Albanian Grammar" ("Albanische Grammatik", *Gramatika e gjuhës shqipe*, with Oda Buchholz as co-author, Enzyklopedie-Verlag. Leipzig 1987), "The Verbal System in the Missal of Gjon Buzuku" ("Das Verbalsystem im Messale von Gjon Buzuku", *Sistemi foljor në "Mesharin" e Gjon Buzukut*, ASHAK. Prishtinë 2004), "Plural Formation in Albanian" ("Die Pluralbildung im Albanischen" (*Ndërtimi i shumës në gjuhën shqipe*, ASHAK. Prishtinë 2007), as well as other independent works, which have an incredible volume of 180 titles (see below).

In addition to his academic activities, Wilfried Fiedler was known among his friends as a lover of music. He was the organizer and member of the Academic Orchestra of the Humboldt University (1966) as well as a virtuoso on the oboe and a number of rare musical instruments.

The fact that he is leaving us is a bitter loss for all his friends, colleagues, and for the entire scientific world of Albanology, which in these moments of sorrow and condolence remember him with respect and special reverence as a person of Albanian culture.

Bardhyl DEMIRAJ

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