



MEDIA, PERCEPTIONS AND CULTURE

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POLIS

ISSN 2223-8174

No. 19, issue 1/2020

SCIENTIFIC JOURNAL OF THE FACULTY OF HUMANITIES,
EDUCATION AND LIBERAL ARTS

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The journal has been catalogued at the National Library of Albania and the Library of the European University of Tirana, Albania.

(print ISSN: 2223-8174/ online ISSN: 2223-8174)

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Published by:
EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY OF TIRANA / ALBANIA

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Comparative Representations of Albania in Time and The Economist Magazines¹

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Abstract

Albania depicted as the most mysterious, isolated, forgotten Balkan country on the part of the international news media, is by no means an exception. It is common today as it was almost 100 years ago for western media outlets to find not so flattering exceptionalities in the Albanian land, in its politics and its people. When it comes to this “tiny, little country”, journalistic codes of American and British media give a rather coherent subject in international terms, despite their respective editorial lines. The Economist and Time magazines are compared and contrasted here in accordance with the media functional equivalence approach, despite their different political or editorial alignments, in order to understand their coverage of a rather distant international subject such as that of Albania in the context of the Balkans.

The empirically measured media content on the subject of Albania is dispersed and sporadic through years, events and focus. However, the inconsistent coverage and stance given to the subject does translate into a rather constant view or representation through time. The research shows that this is almost a script 100 years old with few nuances, perpetuating therefore an abnormal image and reputation of Albania and the Balkans overall in international terms. The comparative media content analysis of Time magazine and The Economist show how the western media construction of the country as an “abnormal other” still prevails, despite an evolving historical context for Albania as well as other Balkan countries who are also reported in the same vein

¹ This article reflects a research project that the author has initiated with SEESOX, St Antony's College, University of Oxford 2019-2021.

over time. To look at this more closely, the search and findings are first organized separately in terms of quantitative and qualitative data and then are compared and contrasted in terms of the extent, nature and frames of their coverage.

Key Words: *Media Representations, Albania in the Foreign Press, British Media, American Media, Time, The Economist, International Media Representations of the Balkans*

Methodology

This study is based on a combined methodological approach from within the empirical tradition of the media studies and research: the textual studies and the study of the agency. Both quantitative and qualitative instruments are used to collect and analyze the data. The content analyzed consists of the news about Albania featured in *Time* magazine and *The Economist*, in terms of their frequency, placement, topics and framings; as well as the language and the discourse used to depict the country, its people and its politics. The study of the agency builds mainly on media studies literature and a few interviews with the editors covering Albania.

Based on the above research, the main argument of this study is that the subject of Albania is approached and constructed in a repetitive constant way over time on the part of *Time* and *The Economist* magazines from their early days to nowadays. The hypothesis is as follows:

“In evolving historical contexts, Albania as a Balkan country remains approached and reported in a constant repetitive fashion over time, perpetuating an abnormal image and reputation of the region in international terms”.

Therefore, this article shall endeavor to support the thesis that, despite an evolutionary historical context, the topic of Albania in the western press, exemplified by *Time* and *The Economist* magazines, is approached, and reported in a constant repetitive fashion, giving as a result a fixed image of the country and its region. Its continuity and repetitiveness are imbedded first in the language used in terms of key words and phrases, taglines, epithets, comparisons and other stylistic means of journalistic expression such as parody and irony. An important part is therefore evidenced in the very headlines and subheadings of the newsmagazines, as well as in their captures.

Secondly, the quantitative data analyses aims at mapping out to what extent the number of features published year after year, its classification in order of rubrics, topics, length, places, words and most mentioned personalities have contributed to a consistent view over time, from one period to another.

Thirdly, the relevant media studies literature and further interviews with *magazine* editors and their codes of practices allow for some introspection linked to the theories of the social production of news and particularly the social construction of the international news². This is to say that the press practices at *Time* and *The Economist* specifically and their institutionalization in terms of the production of foreign news³ as well as their countries international relations in general, fuel its contents or its approaches towards distant and foreign countries like Albania⁴.

First reason for the selection of the media is methodological based on their functional equivalence as international newsmagazines that enables a comparative approach. Also, the criteria of the presence of Albania as an international subject is present in both outlets significantly; the criteria of weekly periodicity and compact body of data and third the criteria of a long-term coverage (1923-2013 for the *Time*) and (1912-2020 for the *Economist*).

Second reason for this choice is the international scope and relevance of both media outlets, with *Time* fulfilling the criteria of a flagship media on the part of the American media spectrum and *The Economist* for the British media spectrum; the choice is also based on the criteria of the significant international audience and impact of *TIME* with 20 million as its total audience, whereas *The Economist* with its broad interest in global affairs has earned the reputation of the co-called “Bible of Global Affairs” by the NYT.

The study classifying criteria for the account of Albania as a study object has been first the name “Albania” mentioned in: Headlines, Subheadings and First Paragraphs; second the subject of Albania referred to as: Foreign state and country, geographical territory, population, government, foreign affairs and international relations, traditions and culture, economy and social life. Only Albanians mentioned as subjects of the state of Albania are included and not as subjects of other states such as Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro or diaspora that might constitute separate study subjects.

Overall, this study addresses a problem that has not been approached significantly in the context of Albania, as a way to understand how the subject of the country is reported and represented by the American and the British media and how it relates to its international relations and public diplomacy as well as in terms of international PR, country branding or image. It might also be valuable so as to its regional scope, applicability and comparativeness with other Balkan countries represented along similar lines.

² Berger Peter L. Luckmann Thomas, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, Open Road Media, 2011.

³ Tuchman Gaye, *Making News: a Study in the Construction of Reality*: Free Press, 1978.

⁴ Philo C. Wasburn, *The social construction of international news, We're talking about them, they're talking about us*, London: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002.

The periodization of the study according to three different contexts of time for both magazines, was necessary for drawing comparisons between them. In the context of the first period 1912-1944, Albania accounts as independent state, after First World War and during the Second World War. In the second period, that of 1945-1989, Albania is put in the context of the communist dictatorship and in the context of the Cold War and its affiliation with the East Block. Third period covers the years after the fall of the communism, from 1990-today when

Albania accounts as an emerging democratic country in the context of post-communism, in terms of a transitional democracy and as Western Balkan country aspiring the European Union membership and integration.

The study is based on a comparative media content analysis, therefore it is an empirical study with elements of textual/discourse analysis and media agency analysis. The media coverage of Albania accounts also as a case study in the context of Balkan countries. Therefore, the focus is first on the content of the two international magazines on the subject of Albania in terms of: extensiveness of coverage (number and frequency of media contents), topics, framings, discourse, styles, narratives, language, sources and images that are elements of importance to the textual analysis both in qualitative and quantitative terms. The media agency analysis is also relevant to the study, because it helps to understand the impact of the editorial stance of the news media, its international coverage, politics, sources of international news, through relevant aspects of media ownership, management and circulation as well as map out the impact of foreign affairs, editorial boards, international correspondents and audience profile or impact.

The main data-collecting instruments that has been used are the digital archives of Time and the Economist magazines. For Time it is used www.time.com archive, whereas for The Economist it is used Gale as a database for retracting articles with fully searchable complete facsimile editions of the Economist from 1843 to 2015. The selections of the most relevant articles is based on length, place, subjects and classification (about 250 items / each magazine), followed by evidencing of discourses, frames, styles, metaphors and images, epithets as well as most used contexts, most used terms and taglines, descriptions, names and protagonists, sources, etc.

The theoretical research consists of a literature review based on media studies, journalism and international news media, international relations, history and culture studies of the Balkans

Another complementary research instrument is the interview with journalists, correspondents, editors of Time and The Economist. The above data are organized equally in tables of quantitative and qualitative data and findings, combined with the evidencing from interviews as well as an overview of both media profiles complemented with their editorial and reporting practices.

For Time and the American media analysis are interviewed Massimo Calabresi, Actual Editor at Time Washington Bureau, former director of the Vienna Bureau from 1995-1999, who has covered the Kosovo War and the civil conflict of spring 1997 in Albania from Vlora; James Graff, editor of the Vienna Bureau and senior correspondent of Time from 1990 to 1995, who has also covered the first elections after the fall of dictatorship in Albania in 1991; Edward Barnes: War correspondent of Time and Life magazines from 1984 to 2001; Altin Raxhimi, Albanian journalist that has worked as a stringer/fixer for Time from Albania during the Kosovo War and as a freelancer until 2011; Angela Leuker, administrator and reporting support at the Vienna Office for South Eastern Europe and the region of the Balkans in the period from 1983 to 2006 and finally professor Robert Herzstein, historian of Time magazine and Biographer of the founder and first editor in chief of Time magazine, Henry Luce.

For the Economist and the British Media are set to be conducted interviews with Tim Judah of the Economist, Timothy Garton Ash of The Guardian, Gabriel Partos of the BBC, Mathew Parris of The Times and professor Noel Malcolm, renowned historian and author of a recent book on Albanians.

The most important research questions are:

- How it is approached the subject of Albania from Time and The Economist, historically?
- What are the sources and the techniques used to get informed about Albania?
- Is there a constant or different approach, a single discourse or various ways of representing Albania in different periods of time?
- What are the similarities and differences of coverage given to Albania from the American and the British media?
- What are the similarities and differences of representations between Albania and other Balkan countries?
- How the media discourses relate to other agents such as politics, public diplomacy and international relations between respective countries?

Content analysis

The findings from the content analysis show that Albania is often seen on the worst of terms with every other factor, internal or external, as if nothing ever goes on with it. So do get represented its people, territory and politicians, as well as its international relations, politics and developments overall. No matter the specific subject under discussion, its context or how it is taken into account in the first place, the narrative doesn't change much as a way of seeing and unfolding the

subject. The most common frames being used are those of insignificance as a “tiny”, “minuscule”, “forgotten”, “lonely”, “poor”, “isolated”, “obscurest” country; but also frames of defiance and sympathy by contrast to the inferiority schemata. More similar than different, the magazines share frames of a “messy”, “chaotic”, “destabilized”, “undemocratic” country against few positive features mainly related to its natural beauty, beaches and sympathized cultural traditions of honor and faithfulness of Albanians as reliable friends.

Sometimes, negative and positive stereotypes are intrinsically related, from the early days, such as in The Economist article, “Albania and The Adriatic” where Albanians are labelled “*untameable mountaineers*” whose [the Geghs’s] sole interest and lifelong study is guerilla war, but after all, the article states that “*the Geghs should be preserved from ruthless extermination. To see them quickens sympathy and gives substance to an abstract dislike for ravage and massacre. Physically the finest race in Europe, in character the most abnormal, they are a possession Europe can ill afford to lose in these days when civilization tends to eliminate all special characteristics and all peculiar distinction with them*”, going on further stating that “*we can scarcely doubt it in the case of a race whose character is wholly composed of intolerance of domination, whose single want is a good fight now and then and who are quite content to be left to fight each other undisturbed*”⁵.

Often the language or discourse is that of a perennial abnormality and not a flattering exceptionality exemplified in the extreme schemata related to the territory, to the climate, to the people, to the nation as it is referred to as the smallest of the smallest, the worst of the bad, or the least of the last. Extremities of the size are often associated with other exceptional characteristics such as in the phrase: “*Pocked-size Albania has always been the most backward of the Iron Curtain countries.*” or that “*Albania is the tiniest, the poorest and most backward of all communist satellites in Europe and the only one that has no common border with another state in the U.S.S.R’s empire*”. Further on, the enmeshed extremities go hand in hand as in the phrase “*The tiny nation that Russia and Red China are using to work off their ideological aggressions, is tucked away in a remote corner of the Balkans*”⁶. In another report from Time magazine, the extreme of the extremes is depicted as follows: “*Like Dante’s Inferno, Communism has its different levels of horror and misery. At the bottom of the pit, by almost any measure, lies Albania...*” During the communist period it is also referred by Time magazine as “*the only satellite isolated from Moscow by unfriendly territory*”, “*satellite Albania, Soviet Communism only Mediterranean base*”, “*Albania: the black sheep*”, “*the most wretched country in Europe*”, “*the least accessible nation in the communist world today*”, “*a minute, mountainous country... poor in living conditions, rich in anachronisms and completely alone in its bizarre comradeship with Red China...*”,

⁵ “Albania and the Adriatic”, The Economist, July 22, 1911, Vol.073, issue 3543.

⁶ Eagle’s country: The Little Land they are fighting over, Time magazine, 27 October 1961

“the little Balkan dictatorship”, “puppet state of Albania” or “China’s sole friend in Europe...”, “It is Europe’s poorest nation and one of the world’s most closed societies”...

The exceptionality and abnormality is still present after the fall of communism, as Time writes that *“Tiny Albania emerged from communist dictatorship in 1990 only to tumble into a rough world of gangsters, fraudulent financial machinations and incompetent governance, exacerbated by lawless capitalism and devil-may-care politics”*⁷. The Economist also accounts for *“Bad to worse”, “Edge of the abyss” or “Bad gets worse in Albania”* in its headlines after the fall of communism. The entry of the latest article goes like this: *“In Tirana, Europe’s poorest country, things are going even more horribly wrong”*⁸. Occasionally, the exceptions are also positive as in an article by Tim Judah of 8th May 2011 that ends with the phrase: *“Albanians, of all the people in the western Balkans, are by far the most optimistic. Let’s hope today’s battle of Stalingrad ends without casualties and breaks the country’s political deadlock”*⁹. However, the overall schemata of the article is still abnormality, related to the local elections that year, under the headline *“Albania’s Stalingrad”* and the subheading: *“A chance to end a two year political stalemate”*, further stating that *“normal political life in Albania has been on hold for almost two years”,* and *“ever since Albanian politics has rolled from crisis to crisis...”*¹⁰.

Agency analysis

The agency analysis tells that a constant negative approach of the western media towards the subject of Albania through time is based on a set of defining factors such as:

1. Organizational and Professional media practices towards distant foreign subjects; The Power structures and the political economy of the mass media play a pivotal role
2. The fact that there is no regular correspondence from Albania or close in the Balkans related to the centralized organizational structure of the media and the fact that the sources of information about Albania are scarce, indirect, unidentified or distant...

The lack of pro-active information on the part of Albania is considered as a primary limitation for the coverage it gets abroad. Referring to a 100 years old

⁷ Time, “The Trouble with Democracy: Albania’s Worrisome Vote, 21 May 2011 (Time.com)

⁸ “Bad gets worse in Albania”, The Economist, Nr.13, 1993, 329, issue 7837, p.56.

⁹ “Local elections in Albania/ Albania’s Stalingrad?” Ex/communist Europe/Eastern Approaches, Tim Judah, The Economist May 8th 2011.

¹⁰ ibid.

article of the Economist, “*News from Albania is at all times untrustworthy – the Albanians themselves have no means of giving their own account of events*”¹¹. In another article titled “Albania and Tito” of 1949, a special correspondent writes that “*The small Adriatic republic of Albania has become important. Information about the country is scarce and reliable information is unobtainable. Authentic western correspondents can seldom visit the country and its government has diplomatic relations with France but not with Britain or America. Attempts to estimate the situation can only be based on the speeches at the Albanian Communist (recently named – Workers) Party conference held in November and reported at length by Tirana radio, corrected by a study of the Yugoslav case put out by Belgrade propaganda.*”¹² But even today it can be argued that Albania doesn’t convey much strategically in terms of international relations but also in terms of the country brand image. Negative perceptions and real problems have to be taken into account when addressing the question of international PR and strategic communication. Also it has to be emphasized that positive stances are often short lived even when they are projected and the negative images are the ones which are well-established and hard to change or transform.

“Letters to the editors”; reactions towards negative representations

However, the reactive approach has also to be taken into consideration, especially in the rubrics “Letters to the editor”. Therefore, the most positive approaches to Albania can be found in the letters sent to the editors of the Economist and Time magazines. In an article that dates back to 1913, may 17, under the headline “*The Sufferings and Needs of Albania*”, Telford Erickson, as director of the American Board Mission in Central Albania with headquarters in Elbasan, writes to the editor of The Economist, based on the information told by the leading Albanian men of Elbasan, Peqin, Kavaja and Durazzo, that “*I am certain that no people in the Balkans are more in need of help and more deserving of sympathy at the hands of England at this moment than the Albanians. After all, they are the victims and not the victors, the spoils and not the spoiled*”.

Another article of the section “Opinion and editorial”, published also as a letter to the editor, reads “*It is no good considering Albania from a superior worldly point of view...*” from Jan Crew and Neil Taylor, Regent Holidays Ltd, “Albania”, April 1, 1978¹³. The letter is a reaction against a correspondent of The Economist that had published an article about a holiday in Albania, on Mars 4th 1978. Having spent a holiday there too, the authors of the letter write that “*the statement that children are apparently taught to abuse, and even stone foreigners is baseless... In a*

¹¹ “Albania and the Adriatic”, The Economist, July 22, 1911, volume 073, issue 3543

¹² “Albania and Tito”, The Economist, Jan. 1, 1949, vol. 156, issue nr 5497 under the section News

¹³ “Albania”, The Economist, April 1, 1978, vol.267, issue 7022.

village we visited a crowd of peasants pressed round us, in the most friendly way. It is no good considering Albania from a superior point of view”¹⁴.

In another reaction letter to the editor dated Jan.22, 1949, R. Westgate writes that “from enquiries I have made I am not alone in finding the Economist anti-Albania obsession one of the less comprehensible oddities of contemporary British journalism. ... I feel it no unreasonable to complain that the writer failed utterly to show just what is intolerable and just how Albania is a nuisance to him and The Economist in any sense that say the Soviet Union is not. With what authority can your correspondent speak of the murder of British sailors by Albania? The International Court at The Hague has not yet made any such finding and seems unlikely to do so as long as Britain’s case lacks any stronger prop than the evidence of a short-sighted discredited Yugoslav emigre. Also is not your journal guilty of a grave moral shortcoming in anticipating a verdict and treating an international body with a contempt it would not dare show towards any court of law in this country? A similar lack of consideration for morals is evident in the means your correspondent advocates for ridding the world of the nuisance that is present-day Albania”... To this letter the editor responds that “Albania is not a greater nuisance to The Economist than is the Soviet Union, but is considerably more vulnerable. To concentrate on removing such nuisances as it seems practically possible to remove is a sound principle of power politics, which the Soviet Government has long pursued. An understanding with Yugoslavia has been advocated by The Economist only on condition that Yugoslavia were to cease intervening in Greece. That Albania has radically readjusted her economic plans as a result of the breach with Yugoslavia was clearly shown in the speeches made at the Congress of the Albanian Communist Party in November”.

Positive coverage and nuances

Occasionally Albania does get positive coverage in The Economist and Time magazines, such as in a recent article that appeared in the Europe section of the print edition of The Economist, under the headline “The Albanian all-stars”. The online version published on 3rd October 2020 starts with the question “What do Dua Lipa, Rita Ora and Ava Max have in common?” referring to pop stars with Albanian roots that according to the magazine are conquering the world. The Economist states that “Until recently the most famous ethnic Albanians were Mother Teresa (a nun who cared for orphans and lepers in India) and Enver Hoxha (a homicidal communist despot). Now to the saint and the sinner must be added the singers”. “The pop stars, along with a clutch of Albanian footballers in top teams across Europe, play an “incredibly important role” in helping to change Albanians’ image from one of conflict’, says Petrit Selimi, a former foreign minister of Kosovo

¹⁴ ibid.

to the Economist, whereas along the unusual lines of parody the magazine also states that “*Ava Max’s sexy single “Sweet but Psycho” is universally considered more fun than Hoxha’s literary offering, “Albania Challenges Khrushchev Revisionism”*”, whereas referring to Ms Lipa’s father, Dukagjin Lipa, it also states that “*throughout history, Albanians have been squashed, but the success of this generation of musicians shows that “given the chance, we excel.”*” Even though they are labelled the stars of the Albanian diaspora, the story emphasizes the fact that they often perform back home, “wrapping themselves in Kosovar or Albanian flags, because they clearly feel a need to represent the nation and in return earn an outpouring of love. The magazine cites Ms Rexha saying on a visit to Albania that “My heart bleeds Albanian blood”, whereas mentions that Ms Lipa courted controversy by tweeting a map associated with extreme Albanian nationalists showing a vast Greater Albania, even though she later said her post had been “misinterpreted”. On the background of the article, it is stated that the parents of the stars who grew up abroad left the Balkans in the turbulent early 1990s, but theirs was not always a story of refugee rags to riches, because The Ora and Lipa families were part of Kosovo’s elite and both girls attended a top performing-arts school in London.

Findings: comparing periods through quantitative and qualitative data

The quantitative data overall show a constant representation of Albania in terms of rubrics and topics of coverage over time. Frequency of coverage is sporadic in years but relatively constant in periods. The configuration and placement if not always constant. In qualitative terms, the discourse is rather constant, respectively a Discourse of Albanian abnormality and American superiority for Time magazine and in the same vein a discourse of Albanian abnormality and British superiority for The Economist. The most used taglines for the size of Albania are those of a “Tiny Albania”, “Pocket Size country”, “Little Albania”, “Miniscule Albania”, “The smallest country of the region”, “Sandwiched country between Greece, Italy and ex-Yugoslavia”, etc. The most frequent frames of the subject are those of “insignificance” as a “small, isolated, forgotten country” and of “political destabilization” as a “messy country” with “non-democratic tradition”. Sometimes dichotomy is also present as a way of framing the subject in terms of “Poverty/Sufferings” as well as in terms of “Inferiority/Defiance” or “Abnormality/Sympathy”.

The qualitative data show that the main discourse is that of abnormality and exceptionality with extreme schemata related to the territory, to the climate, to the people, to the nation, whereas the taglines for Albania are those of a small, tiny or little Albania and its variants such as the smallest country, the pocket-size country, the very little kingdom. Often the extreme is reinforced as in the example

“the smallest nation in the Balkans” that relates to Albania as the smallest of the smallest, and elsewhere as the worst of the bad, or the least of the last. The analysis next focuses on the findings from Time magazine according to three periods of study, first in the context of free and independent Albania, to the dictatorship period under communism and the third period that explores the developments after the fall of communism to nowadays.

First period: That independent but “small, little, tiny country of Albania” (1923-1944)

The first period (1923-1944) relates to the aftermaths of the First World War and the Second World War that produced battlefields to be covered in the Balkans in general and Albania in particular, as can be seen under the rubric of the magazine: “Balkan Theater”. The language of extremes for this period relates also to the climate, to the poverty as well as to the political developments and to the political leaders. Albania is called “Most primitive and out-of-the-way spot in Europe, most Oriental than Western...” in a long report that dates 17 April 1939. Albanians are also portrayed as “filthy, wretched, impoverished, fly-bitten, famine starved and earthquake stricken” in a report titled “Albania, President into King” that gives a contrast between the state of Albanian people and the King Ahmet Zogu. Often the extreme is reinforced as in the example “the smallest nation in the Balkans” that relates to Albania as the smallest of the smallest¹⁵. The language of extremes relates also to the climate, to the poverty as well as to the political developments and to the political leaders. In a report of the 11 January 1937, Tirana, the capital of Albania has been described as “the worst hole in Europe” in the phrase: “*Tirana, the mountainous little kingdom’s capital, is regarded among diplomats as the worst hole in Europe*”¹⁶. The Time report on Albania on the 21 of March 1927, depicts Tirana as “*that little, vile, ill-favored capital*”¹⁷. The extreme language goes on with other depictions such as in the phrase “*The almost rural silence of Tirana, the small capital perched in the mountains of the tiny Kingdom of Albania*”¹⁸. In other reports Time mentions the “*wild mountains behind Tirana*”¹⁹, or “*Through the jagged mountains of Albania*”²⁰ in a report referring to the extreme reliefs as well as in the phrase “*the mountains peaks and troughs of perpendicular little*

¹⁵ Time magazine, “Albania: a noose for Benito”, 7 June 1943

¹⁶ Time magazine, “Albania: Fatima or Else”, 11 January 1937

¹⁷ Time magazine; “Albania: Agent Provocateur”, 21 march 1927

¹⁸ Time magazine, “Albania: Birth and Death” of the date 17 April 1939

¹⁹ Time magazine, “Albania: a noose for Benito”, 7 June 1943

²⁰ Time magazine, “Zog’s Choice”, 7 February 1938

Albania” in another report²¹. In a long report that dates 17 April 1939 Time depicts Albania as “*Most primitive and out-of-the-way spot in Europe, most Oriental than Western...*”²². Referring to its size again, in a report of the 1924, Time writes “*Albania (about the size of New Jersey plus Maryland)*”²³. As to the Albanian people Time writes “*Albanians: filthy, wretched, impoverished, fly-bitten, famine starved and earthquake stricken*” in a report titled “Albania, President into King” that gives a contrast between the state of Albanian people and the King Ahmet Zogu²⁴. Moreover he is referred to as the “*Bachelor King*”, “*Little King Zog*”, “*His smart little majesty king Zog*”, “*Footlose Zog*”, “*Lonely King Zog*”, “*Hoarse-voiced King Zog*”, etc.

The journalistic style of Time writing is famous for its colors, boldness and parody, especially during the years studied here. Albania gets it all as a subject, but most of all is characterized by parody. Headings such as “*Albania: Footlose Zog*”, or “*Albania: Zog and Jerry*” or “*Albania: International Cough*”, “*Albania: Swiss Laws, Greek Patriarch*” are parodies in themselves. The body of the reports offers other colorful parodies such as in the constructs referring to Albanians as “*fierce-faced... hoped on scrawny donkeys*”²⁵ or “*baggy-trousered clansmen*”²⁶. In other expressions, Time refers to Albania as “*That sharp spur-wheel, Albania: or as “ready to be prodded” (International: Scared, 28 March 1927). Ahmet Zogu himself is often the favorite subject of parody when it is called freely “bachelor king”, “footlose Zog”, “Italy’s puppet”, “His smart little majesty King Zog”, “hog-tied (with a crown), “lonely King Zog” or “hoarse-voiced King Zog*”²⁷.

In a longer version Time refers to him as follows: “*Though Albania may lack roads, she should never lack for royal palaces. Last week Italian workmen and engineers, sent by King Zog’s patron and protector, Dictator Mussolini, laid the foundations of a new royal palace, Zog’s fifth outside the grimy old capital city of Tirana...*” and below: “*Albanians recalled that at the time of King Zog’s coronation last year, only one expresses intention of genuine Scanderbeg descendants to slit Zog’s royal gullet dissuaded the new King from adopting the title of Scanderbeg II*”²⁸.

²¹ Time magazine, “Balkan Theatre: Children of Socrates” published on the 9 May 1938

²² Time magazine, “Albania: Birth and Death”, 17 April 1939

²³ Time magazine, “Albania: Man Sized Revolt, 23 June 1924

²⁴ Time magazine, “Albania, President into King”, 27 August 1928.

²⁵ Time magazine, “Zog and Jerry”, 9 May 1938.

²⁶ Time magazine, “Albania; a nose for Benito”, 7 June 1943

²⁷ Time magazine, Albania: International Caough, 8 July 1929; “Albania; Supreme Removal”, 21 March 1932; “Footlose Zog,” 19 June 1933; “Milestones”, 27 January 1936; “Albania: Fatima or Else”, 11 January 1937; or “Italy: Lost and Found, 3 October 1938.

²⁸ Time magazine, “Albania: Zog, not Skanderbeg”, 17 June 1929.

Second Period: Albania, “a glimpse behind the Iron Curtain” (1945-1989)

The second period (1945-1989) coincides with the Cold War and its significance both for America and Albania as “a country behind the Iron Curtain”. The textual data in terms of the language, the style and the way Albania is depicted reinforce the discourse of abnormality for the second period as well, that of the communist dictatorship when it gets more profound and gains continuity for the future decades to come. Abnormal characteristics are attributed to the people, the places and the natural features of Albania as during the first period and for this period they are even more pronounced in the style of the communist regime and its representatives. What is more evident, the extreme schemata constitute the way of seeing Albania in almost every aspect and repetitively as “the tiniest, the poorest, most backward country”²⁹. The taglines for Albania remain unchanged with its size mentioned in almost all the reports in the variants “the tiny”, “the little”, “the small”, “the pocked-sized”. Extremities of the size are often associated with other extreme characteristics such as in the phrase: “Pocked-size Albania has always been the most backward of the Iron Curtain countries”³⁰. In another report Time states that “Albania is the tiniest, the poorest and most backward of all communist satellites in Europe and the only one that has no common border with another state in the U.S.S.R’s empire”³¹. Further on, the enmeshed extremities go hand in hand as in the phrase “The tiny nation that Russia and Red China are using to work off their ideological aggressions, is tucked away in a remote corner of the Balkans” (Eagle’s country: The Little Land they are fighting over, 27 October 1961). In another report, the extreme of the extremes is depicted as follows: “Like Dante’s Inferno, Communism has its different levels of horror and misery. At the bottom of the pit, by almost any measure, lies Albania...”³².

Similar depictions were also present in a report of the 1951 that declares: “Albania is the most obscure, backward and isolated country behind the Iron Curtain”³³. In another report Time writes that “Life in Albania can be brutish, nasty and short. 14 concentration camps and dozen jails are jammed with an estimated 30 000 prisoners – nearly 2% of the total population”³⁴. Such depictions are not exceptional and Albania is continuously referred to as a “benighted nation”³⁵,

²⁹ Time magazine, “Communists: a swim in the Adriatic”, 8 June 1959

³⁰ Time magazine, “Albania: Down goes Hoxha”, 2 August 1954

³¹ Time magazine, “Communists: a swim in the Adriatic”, 8 June 1959

³² Time magazine, “Albania, Over the Hill”, 3 June 1957

³³ Time magazine, “Albania, By remote control”, 14 May 1951

³⁴ Time magazine: “Albania: Death to the Muscovites”, 28 April 1961

³⁵ Time magazine, “Albania: Over the Hill”, 3 June 1957

“rugged country”³⁶, “rocky road”³⁷, “The weakest Soviet satellite”³⁸, “The only satellite isolated from Moscow by unfriendly territory”³⁹, “satellite Albania, Soviet Communism only Mediterranean base”⁴⁰, “Albania: the black sheep”⁴¹, “the most wretched country in Europe”⁴², “the least accessible nation in the communist world today”⁴³, “a minute, mountainous country... poor in living conditions, rich in anachronisms and completely alone in its bizarre comradeship with Red China...”⁴⁴, “the little Balkan dictatorship”⁴⁵, “puppet state of Albania”⁴⁶ or “China’s sole friend in Europe... and for the last decade it has been as angry and insulated as Peking itself”⁴⁷, “It is Europe’s poorest nation and one of the world’s most closed societies”⁴⁸.

The list gets long, but the colorful exceptional depictions continue as in the phrase: *“It is a pedestrian heaven; Albania is quite possibly the most earless country anywhere. The people are suspicious, curious, unsmiling- testimony to the effectiveness of Party Boss Hoxha’s moto: “It is fear that guards the vineyard”*⁴⁹. In another report, years latter, Albania is depicted as *“an isolated, mountainous country of 2,9 million people, is a place of bleak statistics. It is Europe’s poorest nation and one of the world’s most closed societies. Its harsh internal policies place it among the last bastions of Stalinism”*⁵⁰. A report of the late years of the dictatorship, after Hoxha’s death, cites: *“Known to his citizens as the “land of the Eagle” Albania is notable in two dubious counts: it is Europe’s poorest nation and a relic of the Stalinist era”* (Albania: The Eagle spreads its wings, 1 December 1986). In another report the exceptionality is depicted in a more lightweight style: *“Last week Communist Albania accomplished an astonishing record: almost perfect parliamentary elections. Every one of the country’s 1, 830, 653 registered voters cast a ballot, and all candidates selected by the Albanian Labor Party won 100% of the votes counted. But alas, a single ballot was declared invalid by officials. Wait till next year”*⁵¹. The last report for this period marks again the exceptionality of the size in the phrase: *“A Maryland-size slice of the Balkans, The People’s Socialist Republic of Albania has for more than three decades peeped warily at the world from behind a stiff veil of Marxist-Leninist rigidity”*⁵².

³⁶ Ibid

³⁷ Time magazine, “Albania, the rocky road”, 19 July 1954

³⁸ Time magazine, “Albania: a New Stoooge”, 17 April 1950

³⁹ Time magazine, “Albania, Down goes Hoxha”, 2 August 1954

⁴⁰ Time magazine, “The Mediterranean: Out of the North, 29 July 1957

⁴¹ Time magazine: “Albania: the black sheep”, 23 June 1961

⁴² Time magazine, “Albania, Benighted nation”, 10 August 1962

⁴³ Time magazine: “Albania, Lock on the Dore, 26 May 1967

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ Time magazine: “Albania: Emulating Mao, 23 February 1970

⁴⁶ Time magazine: “China: Don’t fence Mao in”, 26 May 1967

⁴⁷ Time magazine: “The World: Fear that guards the vineyard”, 6 September 1971

⁴⁸ Time magazine: “Albania, Enver Hoxha: 1908-1985, Stalin Disciple, 22 April 1985

⁴⁹ Time magazine, “The World, Fear that guards the vineyard, 6 September 1971.

⁵⁰ Time magazine, “Albania, Enver Hoxha: 1908-1985, Stalin Disciple, 22 April 1985

⁵¹ Time magazine, “Albania: what could be more perfect?”, 16 February 1987

⁵² Time magazine, “Albania: Borrowing from the past, 4 December 1989 (Time Europe)

The depiction of Enver Hoxha is not without contrasts and contradictions when Time in early reports describes him smoothly as “handsome Hoxha”, “spunky fellow”, “hulking, baby faced”, “truculent as a small boy”, “Albania’s youngish (38) dictator”, Enver Hoxha (rhymes with got-cha)”, whereas latter on continues to describe him quite neutrally as “Albania’s party boss Enver Hoxha”. Only after his death, Time calls him “doctrinaire dictator Enver Hoxha”. He once was even admired in a report by Time: “So he [Enver Hoxha] permitted free and secret balloting, under a system rude but effective. It functioned admirably”. In another report he gains also a mostly favorable account from *Time*: “*This same national touchiness is continually displayed by Red Boss Enver Hoxha, and represents much of his strength. Albanians have a Mediterranean fondness for florid and denunciatory speeches, and Hoxha is recognized even by his enemies as a master of this sort of oratory. Tall and handsome, with thick, pomaded hair now greying at the temples, Hoxha draws stormy applause for his insults to Khrushchev. Hoxha’s picture is plastered on just about every wall in the land. His profile adorns Albania’s monetary unit, the lek, and at meetings of the Communist Central Committee (most of whom are related to each other and to the boss by blood or marriage) Hoxha speaks from a podium decorated with a plaster bust of himself. Like his country, Hoxha is full of surprises. Instead of being a rough, tough mountain chieftain, he is a former schoolteacher and was the pampered son of a well-to-do Moslem merchant. Though he has the mentality of a brigand, his manners are those of a cultivated bourgeois and reflect his education at universities in France and Belgium*”⁵³.

Third period: Repetitive Albania, after the fall of communism (1990-nowadays)

The last period, from the 1990-s to nowadays represents drastic changes with Albania free from isolation and toward democracy and the media internationally immersed in the digital revolution, while the USA as well as the rest of the world experienced the fall of the Berlin Wall. The reports on the events right after the fall of the communist regime in the ‘90’s, as well as the episodes of the economic crises after the fall of the pyramid schemes in the year 1997 and the political events of protests like that of the 21 January 2011 constitute a large part not only of the occasions to write about Albania, but also to construct the subject as an exception, with the extreme depictions still dominant. For example in a report of the early days, Time writes: “*Paranoid, reclusive Albania is beginning to reach out and touch someone. The nation opened telephone links with 54 Western countries...*”⁵⁴

⁵³ Time magazine, “World: Albania: Stalin Heir”, 22 December 1961

⁵⁴ Time, “Grapevine, 14 May 1990 (Time US)

Albania continues to be referred to as the poorest, the tiniest, the most isolated as a rudiment of the dictatorship years as shows this report of 1991: *“Despite their landslide victory in Albania’s first free elections last spring, the old communist rulers have had trouble holding on to power as the wave of reform sweeps over Europe’s poorest and most isolated country”*⁵⁵

The serial of depictions as exceptionality continues as the below example shows: *“Only one Communist government in Europe managed to withstand the political earthquake unscathed. Now, nearly six months later, the leadership of Tiny Albania is finally loosening its ultra-orthodox Stalinist grip”*⁵⁶ Speaking of violence and crisis, here it goes in another report from the same year: *“Though the communists won a commanding 162 of the 250 People’s Assembly seats... their victory ignited some of the worst violence the country has seen in more than a year of escalating unrest”*⁵⁷

The repetitive features attract Time magazine coverage years later in the same fashion with more synonymies: *“Foreigners flee as tiny Albania dissolved into Mad Max-Style Chaos”*⁵⁸

This dramatic depiction is described as following: *“Europe looked to its southeast last week to find civilization vanishing down a sinkhole. Perennially under privileged Albania suddenly was no longer an organized society but a state of chaos... [...] what had begun as spontaneous revolts in a few southern cities turned all of the country into a Mad Max movie: children brandishing grenades and automatic rifles; wholesale looting; and frenetic, random gunfire—an utter collapse of civil authority. Small, sun-washed Albania had become the state of Anarchia”*⁵⁹

Continually referred to as “tiny Albania” the tagline doesn’t change for this period either as in the below citation from Time.com publication: *“Tiny Albania emerged from communist dictatorship in 1990 only to tumble into a rough world of gangsters, fraudulent financial machinations and incompetent governance, exacerbated by laëless capitalism and devil-may-care politics”*⁶⁰

The other epithets are also retaken like “remote country” or “the poorest” as in the below fragment from a report on the visit of former American president in Tirana: *“Bush will be the first sitting president to visit the remote Balkan country, the poorest in Europe, and Albanians have outdone themselves in preparations: tens of thousands have thronged to the run-down capital, Tirana, to get a glimpse of the American first couple”*⁶¹

⁵⁵ Time, “Albania: A setback for the Old Guard, 16 December 1991 (Time US)

⁵⁶ Time, “Albania and then there were none, 21 May 1990 (TIME US)

⁵⁷ Time, “Albania: It’s not over by a long shot, 15 April 1991 (Time US)

⁵⁸ Time, No Law or Order in the Land, 24 March 1997 (TIME US)

⁵⁹ Time, No Law or Order in the Land, 24 March 1997 (TIME US)

⁶⁰ Time, “The Trouble with Democracy: Albania’s Worrisome Vote, 21 May 2011 (Time.com)

⁶¹ Albania: “Please Occupy Us!”, 10 June 2007 (Time.com)

Again the protests and the political unrest come as primary subject in an article that states: “*The scandal was enough to spark last week’s protests, the most violent the country has seen in almost 15 years*”⁶²

Even the political figures are referred to in case they represent an exception as in the fragment below: “[*Edi Rama*] used his outsized personality (and physique) to transform his hometown and, with it, much of the country’s politics.”⁶³

Another political protagonist, Leka Zogu is depicted in an exotic fashion like in the fragment below: “*Bonus Royal Factoid: In the 1960s, the self-styled royal [Leka Zogu] struck up a friendship with Ronald Reagan. As a gift, he sent the future U.S. president a baby elephant named Gertie—a moniker deemed unrefined by Nancy Reagan, who rechristened the animal «GOP.»*”⁶⁴

Overall, the period from the year 1990 nowadays is marked by relevant developments both for *Time* magazine and Albania. During this period the magazine itself diversifies and the reports appear in an online publication from the year 1997, namely *Time.com*, as well as in the alternative publications of *Time Europe*, *Middle East and Africa* or *Time Asia*, whereas the core of it all is of course *Time US*. Even though the periods do not compound equal number of years, the tendency is toward less coverage regarding Albania as well as international coverage in general at *Time* magazine during this period. The diversified media like *Time Europe* or *Time Asia* and the online media like *Time.com* do not add much either. Angela Leuker, former administrator at *Time* magazine, the Vienna Office, from 1983 until 2006, tells about a small bureau centered in Vienna that covered both Central Europe and the Balkans⁶⁵. The chief of the office, James Graff (1990-1995) tells that the events in the Balkans were important during these years and that he travelled to Albania by himself in the first year to cover the first free elections in the country. However, when it comes to the number of reports on Albania that indicates a limited coverage, Graff tells that *Time* and almost all other publications in USA have drastically shortened the staffs not only internationally but also in the country. “I have served as Chicago Bureau Chief in the mid till the end of the ’90’s and *Time* doesn’t have an office there anymore either.... I have been to Octavo, Vienna, Brussels, Paris, London, but in two of these cities, in Octavo as well as in Brussels I have not been replaced by anyone. For more than a decade the office in Vienna doesn’t operate anymore and there will be no more a *Time* office there...”⁶⁶

⁶² Deadly Protests Don’t End Albania’s Power Play, 28 January 2011 (*Time.com*)

⁶³ A Mayoral Makeover, 2 October 2005 (*Time.com*)

⁶⁴ Life after the throne, 5 January 2008 (*Time.com*)

⁶⁵ Interview with Angela Leuker, administrator and supporting reporter for the Vienna Bureau at *Time Magazine* from 1986 to 2006.

⁶⁶ Interview with James Graff, former editor and Bureau Chief at Vienna Bureau, responsible for the coverage of the Central Europe and the Balkans during 1990-1995. Interviewed for this study the 3 February 2014.

There is also a tendency of a fall in the coverage of Albania in comparison to other countries of the region. For example Serbia gets 835 reports whereas Albania only 264 (both of them broadly mentioned, not as first subjects of content). Only compared to Montenegro and Macedonia, Albania still prevails. An Albanian freelancer and stringer at Time Magazine, Altin Raxhimi, tells that the first years of the '90's were the "flourishing" ones in coverage with Albania entering the subject of Kosovo events as well and the logistics that Time had in place in the region naming the most important members of the editorial offices in Europe like Massimo Calabresi, James Graff, but also the war correspondent Edward Barnes, as well as other senior correspondents like Sarah McLeary, without mentioning the supporting staff like drivers, fixers and stringers... Not anywhere close to CNN but still quite an army..."⁶⁷.

Massimo Calabresi, the chief editor of the Vienna Office after Graff left office and Edward Barnes, a senior war correspondent for both Time and Life magazines, tell that the interest in Albania was especially high during the war events and that the coverage at the time was very expensive⁶⁸.

The topics were mainly internal politics, democratic changes, conflicts and turbulent events, international relations and less so Albanian phenomena or social stories.

Massimo Calabresi, actual editor at Time for the Washington Bureau and former chief editor at the Vienna Office tells for this study that they were constrained to limit the number of stories and to be very selective bearing in mind the fact that the publication is weekly and that the staff was much more limited than that of the dailies⁶⁹.

Conclusion

Based on the above research, the main argument of this study is that the subject of Albania is approached and constructed in a repetitive constant way over time on the part of Time and The Economist magazines comparatively. Therefore, this paper tried to support the thesis that, in an evolutionary historical context, the topic of Albania in the western press, exemplified here by two American and British magazines remains approached and reported in a constant repetitive fashion. Its continuity and repetitiveness are firstly evidenced in the language used in terms of

⁶⁷ Interview with Altin Raxhimi, freelancer and former stringer and Albanian collaborator at Time magazine (1999-2011).

⁶⁸ Massimo Calabresi, the chief editor of the Vienna Office responsible for the coverage of the Central Europe and the Balkans during 1995-1999. Travelled to Albania and covered the 1997 events as well as the war on Kosovo..

⁶⁹ ibid

key words and phrases, taglines, epithets, comparisons and other stylistic means of journalistic expression such as parody. Secondly, the quantitative data analyses showed that the number of features published year after year, its classification in order of rubrics, topics, length, places, words and most mentioned personalities, places and type of events didn't differ substantially for each period. Thirdly, the interviews with editors and their code of practices allowed for some introspection linked to the theories of the social production of news and the social construction of the international news as well. This is to say that the press practices in terms of the production of foreign news, as well as international relations in general influences its content or its approach towards distant and foreign countries like Albania. Borrowing from a *Time* magazine report on the Balkans, Albania together with other countries are described as follows: "*The crowded area known as the Balkans have exploded regularly in unspeakably cruel wars... in the process, the Balkans: Yugoslavia, Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania, Greece and the European part of Turkey, became famous as a scene of intrigue and espionage*" ⁷⁰. It comes as a conclusion, in fashion with the title of the above report that the "old script" is not easily changed and so it doesn't in the case of Albania.

Additionally, the agency analysis tells that a constant negative approach of the western media towards the subject of Albania through time is based on a set of defining factors such as the organizational and professional media practices towards distant foreign subjects, whereas the power structures and the political economy of the mass media play a pivotal role. Secondly, the fact that there is no regular correspondence from Albania or close in the Balkans related to the centralized organizational structure of the media and the fact that the sources of information about Albania are scarce, indirect, unidentified or distant. The lack of pro-active information on the part of Albania is considered as a primary limitation for the coverage it gets abroad, as well as the lack of direct public diplomacy with international media and its audiences.

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⁷⁰ *Time* Magazine, "The Balkans: Changing the Old Script", 29 November 1971

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The Lasting Problem of Blood Feud _____

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Abstract

Blood feud is one of the most prominent elements of customary law that has been practiced in Albania for centuries. It was an adequate tool of restoring justice while there was no independent Albanian state, but today it is a problematic extra-legal practice that negatively affects the socio-economic life of those involved in it. On the other hand, its existence undermines the very functioning of Albanian state institutions, public security and state legitimacy. Referring to systems theory, the phenomenon of blood feud may be analysed in three dimensions along which it presents itself as a problem to Albanian society: definition, control, and consensus. Since this article aims to answer why blood feud has lasted for centuries in the Albanian soil, we shall focus only on the definition and consensus problems. How can blood feud be adequately defined, so that no ambiguities and abuses result from it? How can one build consensus against blood feud as a social practice? We argue that blood feud should be defined as a legal sanction, which is also the way it is understood by those who practice it. Furthermore, it is crucial to achieve consensus against this phenomenon, especially in those areas most affected by it. We argue that efforts must concentrate on strategies and mechanisms of trust building.

Key words: *blood feud; revenge; duty; right; sanction; consensus*

Conceptual Issues

Following systems theory, we may try to understand and communicate the phenomenon of blood feud in three dimensions of meaning: fact dimension, temporal dimension, and social dimension (Luhmann, 1995: 59-102). All the

three appear simultaneously (i.e. united) in the real world but can be separated for analytical reasons. In order to conceptualise blood feud as a problem, we first need to clarify that our approach is neither ontological, nor merely analytical. A problem does not become such by and in itself, it does not possess the capacity to constitute itself necessarily as a problem. On the other hand, we maintain that problems exist; they are not constituted as such only analytically (i.e. having no correspondence to the reality), e.g. by a sociologist. However, the problems are problems only when and if a system constitutes them as such. Therefore, we will speak of the problem of blood feud only with reference to systems of society, e.g. law, politics, religion, science etc.

Here, for pragmatic reasons that relate to research interests, we will only focus on the fact and social dimensions. This is because we want to know why blood feud has resisted for centuries in the Albanian soil. Thus, blood feud becomes a problem for a system of the society only when: (a) It appears as a complex phenomenon that *cannot be defined adequately*; and (b) the majority of those participating in the system are *against it* – the majority understood as those with the decision-making power, which in the democratic system corresponds to those being able to raise the greater number of votes. Therefore, blood feud may become a problem of *definition* and/or *consensus*. For science (and its subsystems such as sociology, legal theory, anthropology, and ethnography) it is above all a problem of definition. Scientific studies have tried to conceptualise blood feud, to show what it is and what it is not, to understand its function and, by situating it in a broader context, to explain how it has come about and what consequences it may bring. All scientific contributions concerning the function, causes and consequences of blood feud are evidently related to the problem of definition. This problem, however, can hardly be of interest for anyone beyond the domain of science. It would, if it were clear that the way the phenomenon was defined would decisively affect the way and possibilities for handling it. Policymakers, decision-makers, and lawyers are not interested in the definition of blood feud, but in the possibilities for controlling and manipulating it. The problem of consensus is again of crucial importance to policymakers and decision-makers. It is the decision-makers' duty, once a commitment has been made to fight the phenomenon of blood feud, to overcome the problem of consensus.

We maintain that solutions to the problem of definition and consensus must specify: (a) How blood feud can be *adequately defined*, taking into consideration both the internal perspective of the legal system and the external perspective of the science system; and (b) by what means can one bring about *consensus* against the phenomenon of blood feud. Having thus clarified the conditions when blood feud becomes a problem for the society and hinted at solutions, we shall now analyse the interaction between social structural changes and historical semantics

developed in regard to each of the resulting problems. This will allow us to evaluate the solutions given to these problems and to understand better their relevance/irrelevance for the present.

Problem of definition

Elezi attempts to distinguish between *blood feud* (*gjakmarrja*) and *revenge* (*hakmarrja*), believing that this distinction is fundamental to handling properly the phenomenon of blood feud. According to him, a blood feud murder is committed in order to take the blood of a previous murder, or against murder attempts and attempts to cause serious or light injuries. On the other hand, a revenge murder is committed as retaliation for having been subjected to beating, quarrel, insult, violence, and previous unjust offences (Elezi, 2000: 7). Here Elezi merely follows and generalises the sanctions of customary law. In other words, customary law imposed other sanctions (not blood feud) such as expulsion (*dëbimi*), ending of social relations with the punished person (*leçitja*), fines (*gjobat*), and giving a black cheek (*faqja e zezë*) for beating, quarrel, insult, violence, and previous unjust offences. We recognise the usefulness of this distinction in some respects, but also maintain that it is necessary to point out certain problematic aspects in it. Thus, it is difficult to see the difference between insult, violence, and previous unjust offences on the one hand, and attempts to cause serious or light injuries, on the other. It is obvious that an attempt to cause injury to somebody may also be considered as an insult by that person. Also, violence is implied in any attempt to cause injury; no such attempt can occur in a peaceful way. The same holds for previous unjust offences. They can also be attempts to cause injury.

Therefore, although blood feud and revenge can be distinguished, this must be made by using only those properties that cannot be confused with or imply properties used for the definition of the other concept. It is especially important to point out that the distinction used by Elezi reflects the distinction already made inside the legal system based on customary law. Thus, when we say that blood feud as a sanction has been related in an ambiguous way to facts ('attempt to cause injury' qualifies as a legal fact for imposing the sanction of blood feud, while 'insult', 'violence', and 'previous unjust offences' do not), it is not simply a problem of definition created by science, but above all a problem for the proper functioning of the legal system. The system had to treat everyone equally in order for it to be fair and acceptable to the people. If in one case 'insult' was not sanctioned with 'blood feud' and in another case it was, this would create confusion and legitimating problems for the legal system based on customary law.

The only mean this system could use to resolve the situation was *argumentation*. Argumentation becomes necessary for determining unambiguously what the fact

is in each case. Is it simply an act of violence, or an attempt to cause injury? Do previous unjust offences qualify as insults, violence, or as attempts to cause injury, or even as murder attempts? After having determined what the fact is, then it is clear whether this is a case for the implementation of the sanction of blood feud, or not. The Code of Lekë Dukagjini did not provide for the institution in charge of argumentation (i.e. the barrister). However, upon oath, the persons involved in litigation did have the right to express their complaints (i.e. arguments) before the Council of Elders (*pleqnia*) (Gellçi, 2005: 41). Therefore, the plaintiff and the defendant were those who argued about what the legal fact was. Their arguments of course were *ad hoc* and *ad hominem* and did not refer to specialised legal materials, such as precedents, rules, and principles (Teubner, 2001). So, it was left up to the Elders to argue about the facts, after having heard both parties in litigation, as well as the witnesses. From the exemplified cases in the Code of Lekë Dukagjini it is obvious that the Elders held the opinion that the statute (the Code) could provide adequate and unequivocal description of what was the legal fact in a case. When encountering difficulties, they simply could and did recall a principle from the Code so as to establish the legal fact and the corresponding sanction for the guilty party. Indeed, they never had to argue about what the fact was, but only whether, in a given case, that principle of the Code should be recalled/selected or another one. Argumentation was reduced to only a selection among principles. This way of establishing the legal facts was one of the contributing factors to the legitimacy enjoyed by customary law; on the other hand, it contributed considerably to the preservation of this law's norms that registered almost no change at all for a very long time.

Elezi defined blood feud as *a moral and religious right and duty*. The person who did not take the blood (i.e. who refused to get involved in blood feud and kill the person that had murdered one of his family/clan) was despised and sometimes banished out of the clan or family (Elezi, 1983: 12). On the other hand, Diana Gellçi narrows down the definition of blood feud and believes it is *only a social duty*.

Thus, the concepts of 'right' and 'duty' come to the fore. When Elezi expresses his opinion that blood feud is a moral and religious right, he seems to imply that the right given to the people to involve in blood feud was obligatory. However, the obligation rested on morality and religion, not on any legal provisions. It was the society that exerted pressure on the individual, by accordingly distributing esteem or disdain in order to induce one to actualise one's right to take blood. But also, the mystical religious mentality contributed to generating fears, such that the soul of the victim could only rest in peace when his blood was taken back by a relative (Elezi, 1983: 12). Therefore, blood feud was a legal right, but not a legal obligation.

Problem of consensus

One is usually astonished that customary law has managed to outlast time, political, economic and technological development and arrive in its original form in the XXI century. How could it be that customary law originating from time immemorial is still accepted as a valuable behavioural guidance? How can one explain that fact that blood feud, as part of customary law, has endured for so long as a suitable solution for certain conflicts, while other alternative solutions (especially those proposed by the state) have not been preferred? We believe that several factors internal to the legal system have contributed to this. Despite their differences, these factors have one thing in common: they hindered *reflexive communication* (Luhmann, 1995: 153). This is the kind of communication that allows for raising questions about what has been communicated, therefore opening up the possibility of modification and/or correction. Viewed this way, reflexive communication forms the basis of all critical thinking.

The first factor precluding reflexive communication was the fact that customary law was *unwritten*. It circulated orally among the highlanders, while utterance and speech fused into an effective unity, compensating for the lack of information with persuasion, and synchronising speaking, hearing and accepting of communication in a rhythmic and rhapsodic way, leaving literally no time for doubt. Communication is the synthesis of three selections; it is the unity of information, utterance, and understanding (Luhmann, 1995: 147). In other words, in every communication always is implied a selection of the source and content of information, a selection of the form, manner and time in which information is expressed, and a selection of understanding that has excluded all other possibilities of making sense about the way the information has been expressed through utterance. It is precisely the difference between information and utterance that is very difficult to distinguish in the spoken language. On the other hand, in writing there is a clear distinction between information and utterance. Moreover, via printing (as an extension of writing in time and space) the suspicion increases that the utterance is specially prepared for producing certain effects, that it follows its own motives and that it is not merely a servant of information. Only writing and printing suggest reaction to and consideration of communication not as a unity but as a difference of utterance and information: for example, processes for controlling truth and articulating suspicion (Luhmann, 1995: 162). The oral tradition of Albanian highlanders reflected in customary law reduced the probabilities of raising doubt about the real value and suitability of customary law and made it practically impossible to think about better alternatives. This should not be misunderstood. We are not claiming that spoken language impedes reflection about communication (i.e. tradition), but only that tradition, precisely because it was communicated orally, entered

the discussions in a form vague enough to disallow for critique and modification. Moreover, unlike modern Civil or Criminal Codes, the language of customary law was highly metaphorical, which contributed to increase the level of vagueness.

Secondly, customary law is a *mixture of legal norms and social norms, legal sanctions and social sanctions*. For example, one can find in customary law norms concerning family life, marriage, property, trade, *besa*, wedding, work, honour, church, murder and so on. Likewise is the range of sanctions, from death penalty, blood feud, expulsion, fines, burning of the house, and *sodumja* (destruction of plants, meadow, garden etc. through burning or weeding out) to *leçitja* (ending of social relations with the punished person) and *faqja e zezë* (black cheek). This arrangement of norms and sanctions in customary law, where the legal coexisted with the social and the social was easily translated into the legal, hindered the emancipation/evolution of both. Thus, in order to think critically about the relevance of blood feud for doing justice, one also had to consider *leçitjen*, *faqen e zezë*, honour, family life etc. In this way the problems that emerged in the legal domain were transferred to the social one and conversely, thus escaping strict examination. To be sure, this transferring of problems back and forth would have destabilised both the legal and the social system, were it not for a third factor that ensured stability (i.e. preservation of tradition) – *the coincidence of a certain type of morality with a certain model of societal organisation*.

Morality establishes the coherence between the ‘private’ domain of interaction and the social domain, by imposing the same requirements for earning esteem in both. As we have seen, the morality of Albanian highlanders was based on honour. That means that they needed to show honour wherever they dealt with others – be it in the family, before the authorities, in the economic life and trade, before the guest, in the presence of a single person or of the entire community – in order to earn esteem and avoid disdain. Morality based on honour never fell into crisis, because it was developed in a society that passed from a segmental to a stratified model of organisation. Neither model could create premises for questioning morality. Thus in segmental society all areas of life functioned as one, crossing their own borders to invade each other’s’ territories and thus not be distinguished easily from one another; therefore it made little sense to speak about the ‘private’ and the ‘public’: everything was private and simultaneously everything was public. Honour, as the basis of morality, could pass from interaction between two human beings to the social – from love to marriage, from domestically produced goods to the market, from religious conversations to the church, from legal discussions to the Council of Elders– smoothly. The transition to stratified society only established hierarchies in these areas of life; however, it did not make them more autonomous. Indeed, highlanders expected that those on the top (the authorities/ the rich/the most educated/the strongest) showed honour just like all the others.

This expectation (and the use of legal and social sanctions in case it was not fulfilled, among which blood feud) held the Albanian highlanders' society together, thereby reducing the probability of suffering a morality crisis. While in segmental society highlanders needed to show honour across the different areas of life, in stratified society they needed to show honour regardless of the societal position they occupied. Thus customary law and blood feud were safely insulated both from the (potential) *horizontal* critiques referring to political, economic, religious, legal and scientific arguments and the (potential) *vertical* critiques coming from the authorities and the higher strata. Customary law and blood feud as part of it enjoyed wide consensus among Albanian highlanders.

With the transition of Albanian highlanders' society to *functional* differentiation (Luhmann, 1982; 2013) – politics, economy, law, religion, education, intimacy etc. differentiate from each other and become important *per se* – we would expect social consensus for customary law and blood feud to cease. No more can morality be based on honour; indeed, morality has fallen into crisis. Requirements for earning esteem in the 'private' sphere of interaction differ a lot from those in the 'public' sphere of function systems. The society is no more interested in judging the person as a whole, but only as being capable or not at performing specific tasks. Thus, esteem can be earned by accumulating wealth and power, while there is no need to refer to the symbolic medium of honour. Indeed, *power* and *money* have become the most attractive symbolic media and Albanian society is trying to establish a new morality based on them. Moreover, the Code of Lekë Dukagjini has been available in written form since 1933. This means that one can reflect upon it, raise doubts and propose changes. However, a considerable number of people in Albanian highlands (recently also in the valleys and cities because of internal migration) turn to blood feud as a solution to their conflicts. Therefore the question arises: if it is true that honour has left its central position to power and money; if the exclusively oral tradition of the highlanders has been undermined by the introduction of writing; and if customary law itself proclaims that forgiving blood is bravery, why does blood feud occur at all?

Notwithstanding these developments, certain roles foreseen by customary law have not disappeared altogether. The inducer (*gergasi*) is one of them (Gjeçovi, 2001: 116). One may call the inducer the 'memory of customary law,' for it is him that, from time to time, points out the norms and sanctions of customary law in public. Admittedly, the inducer is more sensitive to those norms and sanctions that concern blood feud. On the other hand, although the role of the inducer can be played by everyone, there are only few people (and sometimes a single person) that play it at any given time/occasion. Therefore, how could it be that the position taken by a few does have more important impact in guiding behaviour than that taken by the majority of people?

Systems theory seems to provide the necessary concepts for answering this question. According to this theory, in the situations experienced as particularly risky (public esteem or disdain, because of insecurity of the outcome, is one of such situations) emerge *trust* or *distrust*. Given that people cannot fully predict the behaviour/reaction of others, in order to interact with them, they need to attribute trust or distrust. As a strategy, trust possesses greater scope. Anyone who gives his trust considerably widens his potential for action. He can rely on unsure premises and by doing so increase their certainty value. Trust itself suggests the transition to distrust and therefore surrounds itself with controlling sensibilities. Minor indications of the misuse of trust or of previously overlooked qualities often are enough to trigger a radical change in the relation. One lets oneself run a risk only if one has taken precautions against eventualities – for example, has sanctions in hand or is adequately secured against losses (Luhmann, 1995: 128-129).

Albanian highlanders have experienced two conditions where they had almost no freedom of choice: under customary law, and under Communism. Customary law regulated every aspect of highlanders' life, while social costs for disobeying it were very high to pay. As Gellçi puts it, 'regardless of the fact that one should kill and the other should be killed, both the killer and victim appear as passive agents that followed the rules even against their own desires' (Gellçi, 2005: 41). Likewise, Communism tried to dictate everything and constrained individual choice through severe punishments such as long imprisonment, deportation, and execution. In 1990, when Communism fell, people could choose freely their way of life. Among other things, they could choose whom to trust and whom to distrust. But having lived under the Communist regime for so long (45 years), when they were used to distrust strangers, their neighbours and sometimes even their relatives; and, while looking back to the time before Communism the only tradition they had was that of customary law, when one had to check himself out for any (possibly) inappropriate gestures or deeds; the highlanders (and also Albanians in general) found it difficult to trust the others. Therefore, they choose the strategy of distrust. Only this can explain why the inducer, although in the smallest of minorities, can still influence the decisions of the people in blood feud. The problem with the inducer is that this role is imperishable, precisely because everyone can play it. However, there where trust prevails the inducer cannot be effective.

Conclusion

Blood feud is a legal sanction, not a moral or religious one. Although there may be moral or religious implications, they are only secondary. Blood feud is located within the legal system, as one of these system's tools for restoring justice. It is not

primarily moral or religious in a further consideration. Blood feud cannot be used arbitrarily, as customary law makes it clear. It needs institutions, roles, and values. Blood feud can occur only if there is a Council of Elders that allows for or prohibits the murder, or takes some other sanctions against the one found guilty; a murderer that has sufficient motive (specified in customary law) for committing the murder, a target (victim) who must have certain blood relations to the person found guilty (or be that person himself) and who must have fulfilled certain other requirements such as age, gender etc.; and if honour is demonstrated before, during, and after the murder. In this regard blood feud is like the execution of death penalty in our modern legal systems. Both in blood feud murders and the execution of death penalty, clear and specific procedures are followed, and relevant institutions are involved, for causing death to the person found guilty.

Albanian highlanders seem to have operated with precisely this definition of blood feud. They have considered it a legal sanction of the legal system based on customary law. For this reason, while no centre of power (Albanian or foreign) proved able or interested to rule their territory and undermine their law, they saw no reason to abandon blood feud. It constituted an essential part of the whole of their legal system. But the endurance of customary law was also supported by other factors that hindered reflection upon it. There were three such factors: customary law was unwritten; it was a mixture of legal and social norms, legal sanctions and social sanctions; and a certain type of morality that was based on honour coincided with a segmental and then stratified model of social organisation.

Any governmental or civil society action, whether it aims at eradicating the phenomenon of blood feud, or intends to deal with its consequences, needs to take consideration of the existing social consensus for or against blood feud. In a democratic state the process of blood feud cannot be controlled, however sophisticated the means of control, if the community that perpetuates it is against such attempts and prefers blood feud instead of court decisions.

The social consensus for customary law and blood feud has been traditionally fed on an honour-based morality. Nowadays, this kind of morality has been undermined by power and money. The latter seem to be more attractive media than honour. But in some parts of Albanian society honour has still managed to preserve a relatively powerful position, although occupying far less time than before in the conversations and activities of the daily life of the Albanians. In other words, in contemporary Albania honour is individually useless (it holds no promises of success, one cannot achieve any important personal goals by leading an honourable life), but socially crucial (i.e. in a negative sense the society punishes those that do not demonstrate honour, at least when it comes to the decision of involving in blood feud or not). Albanian society is ambivalent as regards honour: it simultaneously neglects and pays attention to it. The society

neglects rewarding claims referring to honour but is attentive to honour whenever it comes to punishment. Still worse, this social situation is experienced by individuals that distrust the others. Distrust leads them to above all calculate the probability and expectable cost of social punishment and forget about the neglect story. Since it means to be marginalised and disdained by the society to the point of being ashamed of oneself, one usually chooses to involve in blood feud in order to show honour. In any case, this is perceived as a more certain way of avoiding social punishment, in that it leaves no room for alternative interpretations. In this light, efforts for eradicating the phenomenon of blood feud must concentrate on strategies and mechanisms of trust building.

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Towards an Open Science Definition as a Political and Legal Framework: Sharing and Dissemination of Research Outputs

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Abstract

Our proposal of an Open Science definition as a political and legal framework where research outputs are shared and disseminated in order to be rendered visible, accessible, reusable is developed, standing over the concepts enhanced by the Budapest Open Science Initiative (BOAI), and by the Free/Open Source Software (FOSS) and Open data movements.

We elaborate this proposal through a detailed analysis of some selected EC policies and laws as well as of the function of research evaluation practices. The legal aspects considered in our examination include, in particular, the study of the role of licences in the context of the dissemination of research outputs.

Key Words: *open science; open access; research data; research software; research evaluation*

Motivation

Even if nowadays the Open Access, Free/Open Source Software (FOSS), Open Data, etc. (that we will call Open Science movements from now on) find more and more followers, adepts, and even addicts among the different key actors in the research population, our experience provides everyday examples of scientists that do not know well these movements and their consequences. Some have an idealistic or anecdotal point of view, and many are still not really aware of the deep changes that they do carry on for the research practice.

The use of licenses is well acknowledged in many places, but again, our experience provides examples of scientists that do not even possess a basic understanding of the license issues. Many use software licenses under the advice of colleagues that have no further understanding on licenses, author's rights and their consequences. But the use of a wrong license can have devastating results, opposed to what it was initially expected.

It is also well known within software developer communities that code writers do pay much more attention to the quality of their outcome if it is openly and freely available, and, thus, easily exposed to other developers' examination (and criticisms), which may have real consequences, for example, upon their career. Likewise, researchers that put preprints in places like arXiv¹ do pay special attention to the quality of the initial version in order to attract collaborators, citations, and maybe comments, that will improve the content of the initial work.

Another example of potential consequences of Open Science movements in the research practice appears when noticing the current evolution of the scholarly publishing system. Indeed, there are clear signals that show that the old model dominated by few big (predator) editors is slowly becoming out of date. Yet, part of the research evaluation system is still favouring publications in some Journal titles selected under Impact Factor and Science Citation Index criteria, something that can also become outdated, see for example the analysis in (Guédon, 2001; Delgado-López-Cózar & Martín-Martín 2019; EG to EC, 2019; CODATA CEG, 2020). To illustrate here some of the current publishing evolutions we can mention the recent adoption of an OPEN Roadmap by the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) Council as well as the Code Ocean Integrations in the ACM Digital Library to make software and data more discoverable².

Despite the increasing presence of Open Science policies and its benefits for the scientific community and the research practices, Open Science can be still considered a young issue requiring, in particular, a deeper understanding of the different ingredients that conform this movement. One of the oldest references on

¹ <https://arxiv.org/>

² <https://www.acm.org/articles/pubs-newsletter/2020/blue-diamond-october2020>

the Open Science subject is (Chubin, 1985), that approaches this concept through the definition of *Closed science*:

Closed science is defined as research which, in its production, communication, or utilization, is inaccessible to potential consumers. The grounds for such closure are always political, in the sense that certain interests, fortified by legitimate power, can exercise democratic control. The information denied to interested parties becomes the focus of a dispute or controversy which includes the means of control and ways of opening it.

Paul A. David places in (David, 2008) the *historical formation of key elements in the ethos and organizational structure of publicly funded 'open science'* in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, where

... the idea and practice of 'open science' [...] represented a break from the previously dominant ethos of secrecy in the pursuit of Nature's Secrets, to a new set of norms, incentives, and organizational structures that reinforced scientific researchers' commitments to rapid disclosure of new knowledge.

addressing as well its positive characteristics (David, 2008; p.20):

... its economic and social efficiency properties in the pursuit of knowledge, and the supportive role played by norms that tend to reinforce cooperative behaviors among scientists.

Despite these ancient origins, and although Open Science best practices are currently rapidly evolving, real barriers remain for its universal adoption. In particular, many areas of scientific research are still far from being open, as remarked in (Morey, Chambers, Etchells, Harris, & Hoekstra, 2019). In our opinion, one important reason for this circumstance has to do with the lack of a clear definition of what Open Science is, which difficulties the dissemination of a persuasive message to a wider community of scientists. This deficiency is a well known issue, as you can see for example in the COASP³ 14 conference of C. Aspesi³ or as stated in (Tennant, 2018):

... there is no single, accepted, unified definition or vision of 'open science'...

This perception is shared by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) international organization as it conforms, in (OECD,

³ <http://zeeba.tv/keynote-a-financial-analyst's-perspective-on-open-access/>

2015), the absence of such generally accepted definition, while, at the same time, establishes the key ingredients to be used in the OECD study:

Open science. There is no formal definition of open science. In this report, the term refers to efforts by researchers, governments, research funding agencies or the scientific community itself to make the primary outputs of publicly funded research results – publications and the research data – publicly accessible in digital format with no or minimal restriction as a means for accelerating research; these efforts are in the interest of enhancing transparency and collaboration, and fostering innovation.

Contrasting with this imprecise scenery, the Open Science benefits for science and for scientists are widely accepted, as mentioned in (European Commission, 2012), referring to benefits of public investment in research, or as listed in (Tennant, 2018):

... greater transparency throughout the entire research process, including peer review ... to combat the ‘reproducibility crisis’, to expose or prevent research misconduct, to introduce greater accountability for researchers, or to increase the verifiability of the research record in order to engender greater public trust for the scientific enterprise...

In the same direction, the OECD report (OECD, 2015) and (Fell, 2019) provide further insight about Open Science benefits, including emerging estimations of the economic value of increasing accessibility to public sector research outputs. From a larger, worldwide perspective, the recent CODATA coordinated report (CODATA Coordinated Expert Group, 2020) emphasizes the relevance of Open Science in the starting century:

Open Science is best characterised as the necessary transformation of scientific practice to adapt to the changes, challenges and opportunities of the 21st century digital era to advance knowledge and to improve our world. This requires changes in scientific culture, methodologies, institutions and infrastructures.

Note that this report also studies in its section 8 some of the negative impacts of Open Science and how to address them.

Furthermore, in this 2020 pandemic year, there is little doubt in the need of a sound, extended Open Science, and that its benefits spread to the whole society, worldwide (Arrizabalaga, Otaegui, Vergara, Arrizabalaga, & Méndez, 2020; CODATA Coordinated Expert Group, 2020; EC DGRI, 2020; UNESCO, 2020)⁴.

⁴ See also the UNESCO video at YouTube: Open Talks Webinar “Open Science for Building Resilience in the Face of COVID-19” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nbwjEZ1n1Gg>

Getting back to our main issue here, that is, on the need for a clear and broad definition, let us observe that the authors of (Vicente-Saez & Martinez-Fuentes, 2018) explicitly acknowledge this fact:

... there is a lack of awareness about what Open Science is, mainly due to the fact that there is no formal definition of Open Science ...

after performing a thorough review of publications of the period 1985-2016, ending up by expressing the need for further research to clarify this concept.

It is our aim, in the present work, to contribute towards the fulfilment of this purpose.

Rather than to concentrate here in the philosophical aspects involved in the definition of Open Science (Fecher & Friesike, 2014), we will focus in more practical endeavours, represented by the sharing and dissemination conditions of the research production, or by *the norms and rules governing disclosure* of these research outputs (in the words of Paul A. David), that is norms of full disclosure and cooperation in the search for knowledge (David, 2008; p. 23).

Thus, in the following section we will present the three fundamental components supporting our Open Science definition proposal as *a political and legal framework where research outputs are shared and disseminated in order to be rendered visible, accessible, reusable*. Section 3 emphasizes the relevant role of licenses in this context. Section 4 describes, through some examples, our proposal for an Open Science framework comprising policies, laws and research evaluation practices. This work ends by describing the advantages of our proposal, which are argued in the final section and exemplified via the analysis of a recent case covered by the media.

Three pillars for an Open Science vision

There is an extended literature studying Open Science key issues and, although it is a pending task, it is not the goal of our present work to provide a bibliographic survey on the foundations of Open Science. Rather, in this section, we summarily present what we consider the three pillars where our Open Science vision stands over.

We place our first pillar on the BOAI, the Budapest Open Access Initiative (2002)⁵, that defines *open access to the scholarly journal literature* as follows:

⁵ <https://www.budapestopenaccessinitiative.org/>

By “open access” to this literature, we mean its free availability on the public internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. The only constraint on reproduction and distribution, and the only role for copyright in this domain, should be to give authors control over the integrity of their work and the right to be properly acknowledged and cited.

Let us remark that a historic vision, initiated by Peter Suber, of the Open Access movement can be found at the Open Access directory (OAD)⁶, with a pioneer online library dated back to 1966.

The Open Access movement launched by the BOAI was partially inspired by the Free/Libre/Open Source Software movements (FOSS or FLOSS⁷), which constitute, for us, the second pillar of our Open Science vision. Free software was defined⁸ by the Free Software Foundation (FSF), launched by R. M. Stallman (1985), as follows:

“Free software” means software that respects users’ freedom and community. [...] The four essential freedoms. A program is free software if the program’s users have the four essential freedoms:

- *The freedom to run the program as you wish, for any purpose (freedom 0).*
- *The freedom to study how the program works, and change it so it does your computing as you wish (freedom 1). Access to the source code is a precondition for this.*
- *The freedom to redistribute copies so you can help others (freedom 2).*
- *The freedom to distribute copies of your modified versions to others (freedom 3). By doing this you can give the whole community a chance to benefit from your changes. Access to the source code is a precondition for this.*

The third pillar is based in the Open Data movement. As we are not aware of older initiatives, we place its initial step in CODATA, the Committee on Data for Sciences and Technology launched by the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) in 1966 (CODATA, 1971; p. 2):

⁶ <http://oad.simmons.edu/oadwiki/Timeline>

⁷ FLOSS stands for Free/Libre/Open Source Software, where the French/Spanish word Libre enhances the freedom philosophy of the Free Software movement.

⁸ See <https://www.gnu.org/philosophy/free-sw.en.html>. See also The Open Source Initiative web page <http://www.opensource.org/docs/osd> for the definition of Open Source Software (OSS).

CODATA est un Comité au niveau scientifique international le plus élevé [...] à cause de l'importance qui s'attache à l'évaluation des données [...] c'est un comité de coordination et sa principale tâche est de prendre des initiatives et de souligner

l'importance des aspects communs à plusieurs domaines de la science et de la technologie, ce qui

comprend les activités suivantes:

- a) l'évaluation des méthodes de contrôle de la qualité,*
- b) la définition des besoins des utilisateurs,*
- c) les standards divers,*
- d) les techniques de l'information [...]*

[CODATA is a Committee at the highest international scientific level [...] because of the importance attached to the evaluation of data [...]

it is a coordinating committee and its main task is to take initiatives and highlight the importance of aspects common to several fields of science and technology, which includes the following activities:

- a) evaluation of quality control methods,*
- b) the definition of user needs,*
- c) various standards,*
- d) information technology [...]⁹*

As we can see in (CODATA, 1971; p. 3), data issues were already part, by that time, of the international scientific considerations:

The compilation of evaluated numerical and other quantitative scientific data is an important part of the general problem of a Science Information System which encompasses abstracting, storage and retrieval of unevaluated scientific information as well as the evaluation of this information in the form of selected and critical sets of quantitative data, including critical review papers.

Moreover, in (CODATA, 1972), we can find *A guide to procedures for the publication of thermodynamic data*, which shows how data dissemination issues were, even then, at the heart of the CODATA considerations.

A modern version of this kind of international initiative to deal with scientific data issues is the Research Data Alliance (RDA)¹⁰, launched as a community-driven initiative in 2013 by the European Commission, the United States Government's

⁹ The authors provide their own translation to French citations. Authors prefer to keep the original text for French readers to enjoy it, very much in line with the Helsinki Initiative on Multilingualism in Scholarly Communication (2019), see <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.7887059>.

¹⁰ <https://www.rd-alliance.org/about-rda>

National Science Foundation and National Institute of Standards and Technology, and the Australian Government's Department of Innovation. RDA's goal is to build the social and technical infrastructure to enable open sharing and re-use of data.

Besides these three key points that we have swiftly described, there are other scientific initiatives and movements that do enrich our Open Science vision. We would like to mention here the Reproducible Research initiative¹¹:

An article about computational science in a scientific publication is not the scholarship itself, it is merely advertising of the scholarship. The actual scholarship is the complete software development environment and the complete set of instructions which generated the figures. (D. Donoho)

as well as the *open peer review* studies and the current evolutions in its practices (Ross-Hellauer, 2017; Morey et al., 2019; Tennant, 2018). See for example (UNESCO, 2020) for a more complete vision.

Legal aspects: the important role of licenses

Our three Open Science pillars set the dissemination conditions for research outputs, where licenses play an important role. A software is free if it is released complying with the four freedoms of the above mentioned definition given by the FSF; and this compliance should be stated in the license, a (legal) document that is included in the set of files that constitute the software, and that comprises the source code, the compiled code, documentation, etc. The running, loading, reproducing, translating or arranging of a computer program can only be done upon the corresponding (written) authorisation (Directive 2009/24/EC, 2009), and, if there is not license, then "*All rights are reserved*". In particular no one outside the circle of the authors and the rightholders can run the software (legally speaking). A license sets then *the sharing conditions* of the disseminated software.

Thus, another important point of the Free Software Foundation was to develop the GNU GPL license, a license according to its philosophy and that accompanies its software production¹².

This is a curious difference between the Open Access movement and the FOSS movement, as it took some time in the Open Access movement to

¹¹ <http://reproducibleresearch.net/>

¹² See the History of the GNU GPL at https://www.free-soft.org/gpl_history/. For further information on the GPL license and its consequences on the evolutions of the information technology market see Eben Moglen's plea for Free Software before the European Parliament (2013-07-09) at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FI1CoeqyD5o>

speak about the use of licenses in the dissemination of written works, mainly mentioning the Creative Common (CC) licenses¹³. Once you have access to a document, there is not legal barrier to its reading. So the important point for the Open Access movement was to have access to the scientific literature. On the other hand, even if you have access to a software, its use can encounter legal barriers. This is why the first freedom (freedom 0) of the free software definition is about the use of the software. Furthermore, freedom 1 and freedom 3 are related to the access to the source code in order to be able to study it and to produce new software. These principles correspond to the production of (new) scientific knowledge, which should be eased by the open access to the existing scientific literature.

Nowadays, despite these initial differences, the important role of licences is now clear for the Open Access movement, as we can see in recent publications such as (Arrizabalaga, et al., 2020; EC DGRI, 2020; UNESCO, 2020)¹⁴. Licenses are in fact the tool to set aside the legal barriers referred to in the BOAI open access definition.

Other important issues related to licenses that we introduce here deal with:

- i)* the relation between the open access definition and the most common used licenses (such as CC),
- ii)* the adequacy of the use of CC licenses for software, documents and data,
- iii)* the way to overcome the possible limitations imposed by a license.

Regarding item *i)*, note that the dissemination of research outputs such as articles, in compliance with the BOAI open access definition, can be realized with the CC licenses CC-BY and CC-BY-SA, but not with the others (CC BY-ND, CC BY-NC, CC BY-NC-SA, CC BY-NC-ND), as there are restrictions in the production of derivative works (as for example the translation of a document) or in the commercial use of the outputs. It is also possible to use Public Domain marks¹⁵ (Public Domain, CC-0) and they also comply with the BOAI open access definition.

Corresponding to item *ii)*, we remark that CC licenses are not adapted to software dissemination¹⁶.

¹³ <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/>

¹⁴ See also the Webinar “Abrir con Propósito en América Latina. Una reflexión de como construir equidad e inclusión estructurales” organized by the UNESCO and other Organizations the 23 October 2020, see the announcement at <http://amela.org/index.php/2020/10/07/abrir-con-proposito-en-america-latina-una-reflexion-en-como-construir-equidad-e-inclusion-estructurales/> and the video at https://youtu.be/l9aC_sw7Xtc. In particular the presentation of Eduardo Aguado López insists on the role of licenses.

¹⁵ <https://creativecommons.org/share-your-work/public-domain/>

¹⁶ <https://creativecommons.org/about/program-areas/software/>

Software licenses can be found, for example, in the Free Software Foundation (FSF) web site¹⁷, in the Open Source Initiative (OSI) web site¹⁸ or in the Software Package Data Exchange (SPDX) web site¹⁹.

On the other hand, we observe that the Version 4.0 of the Creative Commons (CC) licenses was published in 2013 and was developed to be more user-friendly and more internationally robust, and to cover more explicitly *sui generis* database rights²⁰ (Directive 96/9/EC, 1996; Labastida & Margoni, 2020) so they can also be used in the dissemination of databases.

Finally, let us remark that, regarding item *iii*), each license sets its own sharing (legal) framework giving rights but also conditions that should be respected. In the case that the planned use of the research output does not agree with the default conditions given by the license, it may be possible to contact the rightholders to set other agreements or collaboration contexts, that is, *other sharing conditions*.

An Open Science framework: policies, laws and research evaluation practices

We consider that a proposal for a sound Open Science framework has to declare, at least, its position concerning two basic issues: the related political and legal aspects. In this section we describe our perspective on these core points, highlighting as well the consequences of our choices on a practical context that involves research evaluation practices.

Our proposal for a sound Open Science framework begins with the adoption of Open access policies such as the ones decided by the European Commission (EC) as an answer to the Open Access movement and that has have deep consequences in the EC research founding program Horizon 2020 (H2020). In its communication “*Towards better access to scientific information: Boosting the benefits of public investments in research*” (European Commission, 2012), the Commission:

...sets out the action that intends to improve access to scientific information and to boost the benefits of public investment in research. It also explains how open access policies will be implemented under ‘Horizon 2020’, the EU’s Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020). [...]

To improve access to scientific information, Member States, research funding bodies, researchers, scientific publishers, Universities and their libraries, innovative

¹⁷ <https://www.gnu.org/licenses/>

¹⁸ <https://opensource.org/licenses>

¹⁹ <https://spdx.org/licenses/>

²⁰ See <https://creativecommons.org/version4/> and <https://wiki.creativecommons.org/wiki/4.0>.

industries, and society at large need to work together [...] so that the ‘fifth freedom’ of the EU – the free circulation of knowledge – can become a reality.

These policies go along with guidelines to explain the rules on open access to scientific peer reviewed publications and research data that beneficiaries have to follow in projects funded or co-funded under Horizon 2020 (EC DGRI, 2017). Among other actions and EC funded projects we can find the OpenAIRE project²¹ with the mission to²²

Shift scholarly communication towards openness and transparency and facilitate innovative ways to communicate and monitor research.

To fulfill this mission, OpenAIRE provides Open Science services and participate to *foster the open science dialogue for policies and their implementation in Europe and beyond*, see the “Open Science overview in Europe” page in the OpenAIRE web site²³ to get more information about Open Science policies in Europe.

An Open Science policy renders publicly financed research outputs open. But it is understood that there may be some hinders, and, if it is the case, researchers should explain the reasons to keep the outputs closed, at least for some period. The European Commission mantra is as *open as possible, as closed as necessary* (EC DGRI, 2017).

The second part of our proposal recognises the need to turn such policies into legal provisions, as has been done in the French 2016 law for a Digital Republic Act (Loi n. 2016-1321 pour une République numérique, 2016), by setting up the legal framework for open access to scholarly communication²⁴ and creating thereby a new right for researchers, where authors can give open access to copies of their publications *even if they have granted the copyright to a publisher*. This law also sets the legal framework for open data and goes along with a *Décret* (Décret n. 2017-638, 2017) to list the licenses that should be used for data and software²⁵. Other licenses are possible, but there is an approval process to be applied²⁶.

This French law has been followed by a policy document, the *National plan for Open Science* published by the *Ministère de l’Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche*

²¹ <https://www.openaire.eu/>

²² <https://www.openaire.eu/mission-and-vision>

²³ <https://www.openaire.eu/os-eu-countries>

²⁴ The second chapter entitled *Économie du savoir* refers to *écrit scientifique issu d’une activité de recherche financée au moins pour moitié par des dotations de l’Etat*, and, as a consequence, also includes software.

²⁵ Note that, in here, software and data refer to the French law concept that can be larger and include the research outputs like software and data produced by research teams.

²⁶ Please note that, the list of licenses available at <https://www.data.gouv.fr/fr/licences> does not include currently the Creative Common licenses nor the European Union Public Licence (EURL) for software, available at <https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/collection/eupl/eupl-text-eupl-12>.

et de l'Innovation (MESRI, 2018). This plan contains three main axes dedicated to publication's open access, research open data and a sustainable, European and international dynamic framework. Each axis establishes three measures, including:

1. Make open access mandatory when publishing articles and books resulting from government-funded calls for projects. [...]

4. Make open access dissemination mandatory for research data resulting from government-funded projects.

These two components (policies, legal) of our proposal are direct consequences of the emphasis of the Open Science movements on these issues. But still there is a long path to be built in order to make Open Science practices to become part of the everyday practices in research.

In our view, there are three keystones that have to be considered to pave this path:

- the required evolution of policies of Universities and research performing organizations,
- the development of Open Science-oriented infrastructures and services,
- the transformation of evaluation policies and practices.

We have already mentioned in this section the EC evolutions in Open Science policies and the consequent evolutions in national laws and policies. Another example of Open Science policy evolution at large scale, perhaps one of the most relevant at the time of writing this work, is the UNESCO global consultation initiative on Open Science²⁷, that aims to build a UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science, following the commission of the 193 Member States at the 40th session of UNESCO's General Conference in order to develop an international standard-setting instrument on Open Science in the form of a UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science (UNESCO, 2020; CODATA Coordinated Expert Group, 2020). As a consequence, Universities, funders and research organizations are reviewing their policies in order to adapt to law and policy changes and to adopt and implement an answer to Open Science requirements.

To illustrate more in detail this first keystone, we would like to mention some examples of such evolutions. The first example corresponds to the local environment of one of the authors of this work. The newly named Université Gustave Eiffel²⁸ is the result of the fusion of several academic organizations including the Université de Paris-Est Marne-la-Vallée (that hosts the Laboratoire d'informatique Gaspard-Monge (LIGM)) and the Institut Français des Sciences et

²⁷ <https://en.unesco.org/science-sustainable-future/open-science/consultation>

²⁸ <https://www.univ-gustave-eiffel.fr/>

Technologies des Transports, de l'Aménagement et des Réseaux (IFSTTAR). This University has been launched on January 1st 2020, and one of the first decisions of the Research Vice presidency has been to start a working group in order to elaborate the Open Science policies of the University, the *Groupe de Travail "Politiques recherche ouverte à la société"* (GTPROS). This group counts with several subgroups, with two of them dedicated to data and software, counting with the participation of one of the authors of this paper.

Other examples to show University Open Science evolutions correspond to the Göttingen eResearch Alliance and the central role of the Vilnius University Library. The Göttingen University institutional data management policy was published in 2014, and then the eResearch Alliance was established to serve research projects and provide direct support to researchers, combining library and IT services and expertise (Schmidt & Dierkes, 2015). The Vilnius University Senate approved the Regulations of Open Access to the University Scientific Works and the Results of Scientific Research prepared by the Vilnius University Library in 2009. The Vilnius University Library has then the task to develop the scholarly communication tool dedicated to sustain open access to information and open science (Kuprienė & Petrauskienė, 2018).

Both articles highlight the great value of the direct collaboration with researchers, like, for example, embedding research-data managers into research teams (Göttingen), or their participation into determine roadmaps and priorities for the infrastructures and services under development (Vilnius).

Both examples show as well how the evolution in policies goes along with the development of infrastructures and services to accompany researchers with their output's dissemination, as there is still a lot of work to be done – the second keystone – in order to tackle the current imbalance between already imposed legal requirements for researchers, and the still ongoing and unfinished work to build the necessary infrastructures and services.

The human resources in charge of developing the needed infrastructures and services are also simultaneously and increasingly acquiring the necessary knowledge and expertise to deal with these challenges. The institution decision-makers are in a similar evolving situation. As a consequence, researchers have to adapt (and sometimes to improvise with) their working mechanisms to the new policies and funding requirements, while contributing to their implementation by the expression of their new, urgent research needs.

In this context, we can also mention the IFSTTAR experience of an institutional data deposit²⁹ developed to answer the researchers' needs. Its development towards building the institutional data deposit for the Gustave Eiffel University is currently under consideration at the GTPROS.

²⁹ <https://research-data.ifsttar.fr/>

At European level, the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) is the Open Science infrastructure currently under construction, see for example (HLEG EOSC, 2016; Budroni, Burgelman, & Schouppe, 2019).

But the keystone that we analyse here in more detail is the necessary evolution in research evaluation practices, as it has been pointed out in (ALLEA, 2012; EG to EC, 2019), with procedures like the ones proposed in (McAllister, Esposito, O'Carroll, Vandeveld, Maas, et al., 2017; Gomez-Diaz & Recio, 2019). Research evaluation happens in recruitment and career progression, and the institution's evaluation policies will drive the selection of best candidates with Open Science good practices. It is also a general practice of research institutions and funders to evaluate the laboratories, institutes, research units... regularly, and evaluation policies and practices should evolve from now on to include best Open Science practices.

Research evaluation also happens in project funding: the funder policies do establish under which conditions the projects are selected for funding, as well as to give the instructions for free/open access of the project outputs. The final evaluation of the project assesses the quality of the submitted work and verifies if the outputs are open in compliance with the open access instructions. In the case in which the outputs are not open, the evaluators should consider the alleged reasons for the avoidance of public access, but, in any case, they need to have access to the outputs in order to realize a sound evaluation.

Other evaluation contexts appear, for example, when looking for collaborators for a project, or for a publication, or in the selection of a journal for a publication. This is what we call here the “*research community evaluation*”, in which the perception of a colleague (or of a journal) reputation plays an important role. For example, authors or reviewers can choose or avoid a journal following its open peer review practices. They can also stand for more “openness” when they are contacted for their participation in a new project. This is the power of the research community and the challenge of the *reputation system*.

Funder and institution evaluations and research community evaluations are therefore a powerful tool to enhance effective Open Science evolutions, and constitute, in our view, the third cornerstone in the Open Science path. But, *as the cat biting its own tail*, the evaluation wave can only play fully its role if policies and laws are well into place.

In summary, without the necessary evolution in policies and laws, without a sound research evaluation system to enhance full compliance with the resulting policies and laws, it is not possible to achieve a solid fulfillment of the Open Science movements.

A digression: the The Lancet case

On 30 January 2020 the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that the SARS-CoV-2 outbreak constitutes a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) (EC DGRI, 2020). As a consequence, the European Commission stressed the urgency to provide immediate open access to their related publications, data and any other output possible for researchers receiving H2020 funding in SARS-CoV-2 related research, following the guidelines of (EC DGRI, 2020). In particular, the OpenAIRE project centralized in its web site³⁰ the information coming from the Zenodo Community, from the OpenAIRE Gateway, the RDA COVID-19 Fast Track Working Group and from other EC ongoing efforts. Moreover, researchers, funders and some publishers expressed the importance of open access to research outcomes in this context, as we can see for example in (Arrizabalaga et al., 2020; CODATA Coordinated Expert Group, 2020; EC DGRI, 2020; UNESCO, 2020).

But the urgency of any situation like this one should remain, more than ever, incompatible with speedy publications of poor scientific content. In the current pandemic context, many papers have been delivered in preprint servers without proper peer review, and some high-profile journals have published papers that have been retracted (CODATA Coordinated Expert Group, 2020). Moreover, as remarked in (Arrizabalaga et al., 2020), some of the open access publications available on the publishers platforms have not license at all, and thus the publisher can revoke this kind of access at any time, and then, further study can be restricted in the future.

Among these publications, possibly the most unhappily famous is the one of the The Lancet journal, that has been fully retracted³¹. This publication deals with the use of the Hydroxychloroquine drug for the treatment of Covid-19 disease, as presented for example in the French media³². Let us recall that all The Lancet journals endorse the Wellcome Trust Statement³³ to ensure that relevant research findings and data are shared rapidly and openly.

We will not enter here in the scientific details of this work, as they can be found for example in this entry blog³⁴ of the Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal)³⁵. Rather we consider here some of the involved Open Science aspects.

³⁰ <https://www.openaire.eu/openaire-activities-for-covid-19>

³¹ [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)31180-6/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)31180-6/fulltext)

³² FranceInfo, *Vrai ou Fake section*, Coronavirus : le “LancetGate” ou le naufrage de la science business, 20-06-2020 <https://www.francetvinfo.fr/sante/maladie/coronavirus/video-coronavirus-le-lancetgate-ou-le-naufrage-de-la-science-business-4014381.html>

³³ <https://wellcome.ac.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/open-data>

³⁴ <https://www.isglobal.org/en/healthisglobal/-/custom-blog-portlet/sin-rigor-y-transparencia-no-hay-ciencia-sobre-surgisphery-sus-publicaciones-cientificas-en-revistas-de-alto-impacto/93337/0>

³⁵ <https://www.isglobal.org/en/>

In general, data gathered and used to produce a publication should be available for co-authors and for reviewers before publication, but maybe the data has ethical or personal issues, and then it should be available for a restricted number of persons in a restricted environment for its study in order to allow the validation of the work. Reviewers should be given the correct time to referee a scientific work. Yet, the Covid-19 urgency has restrained the reviewing period to four days. But in the case this interval is considered too short for doing a correct assessment, reviewers should ask for more time or retract from the referee process. And this has not happen in the The Lancet case.

This affair shows the importance of having open access to publications, which has allowed, in this case, the rapid post-publication evaluation and a fast reaction of the scientific community, yielding the detection of several irregularities of this work and, thus, its retraction. It also shows the way to go forward in order to react after suffering these kind of problems. Indeed, authors who have been involved in such situations are prone to experience further issues when seeking for new collaborations or for new project funding, unless their research practices and accountability methods evolve to adopt and follow clear and transparent Open Science rules. Similar implications can be formulated concerning journals, as they can be also exposed to negative “research community evaluation”, being prompted then to adopt more sound Open Science best practices, like open peer review.

Discussion

We have initiated this article reflecting on the lack of a clear definition of Open Science, and on the need to contribute towards its clarification. As supported by the ideas developed in this work, it is our vision that Open Science is the framework that renders research outputs visible, accessible, reusable. Thus, it is most important to analyse what outputs are disseminated and by who, and when. Next, once the dissemination conditions have been finally decided, it is crucial to establish – in order to render the outputs visible, accessible, reusable – how the outputs are disseminated, in which sharing conditions, and in which places researchers will do the dissemination.

As we have introduced in section 3 and placed into context in section 4, the sharing conditions of the research outputs do involve scientific (political) movements, policies, and laws and legal issues (author rights, licenses). It involves also the producer’s choices (Gomez-Diaz, 2015) (when and where outputs are made accessible, and in which conditions they can be reused), and the places where the dissemination is realized, that can include Journals (scientific journals publishing articles, data papers and/or software papers, etc.) and other infrastructures and services for preprints, data, software

and other research outputs deposit, output search and retrieval interfaces, and that do provide or facilitate the outputs' reuse. Therefore, we conclude that Open Science should refer to *the political and legal framework where research outputs are shared and disseminated in order to be rendered visible, accessible, reusable*.

Landscaping is evolving quickly nowadays, as policies and laws evolve at many levels, and it is becoming more common to have free/open access to scientific publications as well as to other research outputs like software and data. As mentioned in section 4, research evaluation is the tool to reinforce the basis of the Open Science political and legal framework, enabling it to reach its final goals, and, thus, spreading its benefits everywhere.

Evaluation happens every day at every level, from the selection of collaborators to the recruitment and career evolutions, including as well peer reviewed publications and research funding decisions. Research evaluation is not the only keystone to enhance Open Science implementation, there is also a need to develop the infrastructures in which the outputs are accessible and reusable, as well as the supporting services to accompany the researchers. These items (research evaluation practices, infrastructures and services) are evolving to adapt to this, somehow new, Open Science context, both at supra-national level (e.g. UNESCO, EOSC) and at national and local levels which include the evolutions of Universities and other research performing institutions.

Would have been more established this Open Science framework, the The Lancet retracted publication would have neither been co-authored³⁶, nor passed the peer-reviewed stage, or been accepted by editors for publication.

Conclusion

In this paper we have introduced some examples of the pros and cons of the current progression of the Open Science movement. Reacting to the declared need to advance toward a more clear understanding of the Open Science concept, we have highlighted three relevant initiatives (BOAI, FOSS, Open data movements) that conform our Open Science vision, emphasizing their role on the dissemination procedures for research outputs, and supporting our vision of Open Science as *the political and legal framework where research outputs are shared and disseminated in order to be rendered visible, accessible, reusable*.

The important role of licenses in this context has been reported in section 3 as a key ingredient to understand our proposal for a sound Open Science framework that includes EC promoted open access policies and legal provisions such as the French Digital Republic Act. We have as well developed the needed elements to put

³⁶ Due to the lack of access to the research data by some of the authors, as reported in the news.

in to practice the proposed framework, placing the accent over its implementation with research evaluation practices.

We have concluded bringing up some suggestions for policies, laws and evaluation systems to evolve in order to achieve the goals of Open Science.

Acknowledgements

This work benefits of the interesting and fruitful exchanges at the GTPROS working group of the University Gustave Eiffel. It is also partially funded by the *Vice-présidence internationale* of this University and by the *Laboratoire d'informatique Gaspard-Monge*. Versions of this work are available at arXiv (<https://arxiv.org/>), HAL (<https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/>), POLIS (<http://uet.edu.al/polis/>) and Zenodo (<https://zenodo.org/>), under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC-BY) (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

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Who Needs Ideologies in Albanian Politics?

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Abstract

One of the main features that has characterized the Albanian political scene during these three decades of democratization, has been the problematic relationship that political parties have had with political ideologies as a linkage mechanism to mobilize their electorate and secure votes in elections. The relationship of Albanian political parties with certain political ideologies can be described as a strained and problematic. This has happened because such ideologies have either remained too “tight” to the suit of action or policies that our parties undertook when they were in power, or because political ideologies have not served these parties as an effective instrument, or as a linkage mechanism, to attract votes from the Albanian electorate. In this sense, this paper argues that Albanian political parties have increasingly relied on non-ideological instruments and strategies to guarantee what is the main goal of political parties in every country: securing votes in elections. The aim of this paper is to address the causes of the problem of de-ideologization of Albanian political parties, seeing this as a problem that relates and reflects the social structure of Albanian society during the period of its democratization after the ‘90s.

Key Words: Political Parties, Political Ideologies, Linkage Strategies, De-ideologization, Social Structure.

Introduction

For a long time, not to assert since the beginning of political pluralism and party competition in Albania in the early 1990s, the relationship of Albanian political parties with certain political ideologies can be considered as a strained one. This has happened because such ideologies have either remained too “tight” to the suit of action or policies that Albanian political parties have undertaken when they were in power or because political ideologies have not served these parties so much at all. Notwithstanding some ideological blandishments and appeals in the campaign rhetoric such as having as reference certain ideological positions left or right, political parties in Albania rarely issue detailed and coherent programmatic platforms that rely on certain political ideologies to mobilize their electorate and to secure votes in elections. Various authors (Kajsiu 2010; 2016; Ilirjani, 2005; Jano, 2008) agree that political ideologies have not served at all as a basis for building political programs and for the articulation of promises by Albanian political parties in front of their electorate. Thus, “political parties, in spite of being part of the right or left spectrum, cannot be easily distinguished from one another based on their stance on essential topics as EU integration, free market and privatization, public services, education and health, agriculture and tourism. This has lead to what Blendi Kajsiu refers as *“democracy where political pluralism has lost its meaning due to ideological monism”* (Cited in Bino, 2017: p. 43-44).

In the same way, Jano described the policy programs of Albanian political parties as irrelevant to serve as a linkage strategy through which parties in Albania gain electoral support. He put it in this way: “The programmes of parties lack clear political positioning on a great number of important issues... It seems that parties’ policies are of secondary importance making Albanian Parties lose their identity on the ideological spectrum. Furthermore, the parties’ programmes are very general and usually include ‘catchy statements’... Such trends make the political differences of the Albanian political parties’ programs become increasingly very much alike each other (Cited in Jano, 2008: p. 5-6).

With positions on policies that become frequently more similar and ideological identities lacking in them, Albanian political parties have increasingly relied on non-ideological instruments and strategies to guarantee what is and is the main goal of political parties in every country: securing votes in elections. This paper aims to address the main causes of the problem of deideologization of Albanian political parties, seeing this as a problem that relates to and reflects the social structure of Albanian society during the period of its democratization after the ‘90s. The following section (II) provides a definition of the concept of political ideology and the features that characterize it, along with an explanation of the

importance of political ideologies as a linkage mechanism/strategy that guarantees accountability and citizen representation in a democracy. Then, in section III of this paper, some of the main causes of the problem of deideologization of parties in Albania during the last two decades are addressed, as well as the alternative linkage strategies that these parties use to secure their electoral support.

Definition and Importance of Political Ideologies for Party Competition and Democratic Accountability

The concept of “political ideology” has been and remains one of the most controversial concepts in the analysis and various studies of political science. Political Ideology constitutes an “essentially contested concept” if we express it with the terminology of Walter Bryce Gallie, as there are different applications and interpretations for the term, with the authors who do not agree on its exact meaning. However, for the purposes of this study, we will rely on a more neutral and contemporary definition of the concept of political ideologies, without entering the various debates or disagreements that the use of this term has aroused in the past. Thus, according to Leon P. Baradat, ideology and its main characteristics is about:

“Ideology is first and foremost a political term, through it can be applied to other contexts. Second, ideology, consists of a view of the present and the vision of the future. The preferred future is presented as a materialistic improvement over the present. This desirable future condition is often attainable, according to the ideology, within a single lifetime. As a result, one of the outstanding features of an ideology is its offer of hope. Third, ideology is action oriented. It not only describes reality and offers a better future, but most important, it gives specific directions about the steps that must be taken to attain this goal. Fourth, ideology is directed toward the masses... [The elites] direct their appeal to the masses. They are interested in mobilizing huge numbers of people... for the same reason ideologies are usually motivational in tone, tending to call on people to make a great effort to attain the ideological goals. This mass appeal in itself implies confidence in people’s ability to improve their lives through positive action” (Baradat, 2000: p. 9).

Thus, ideology consists of a set of political ideas, values, and beliefs coherent among them, that inspire a political action of political parties about what society should be like or for a project for the desired future [...offers a better future, but most important, it gives specific directions about the steps that must be taken to attain this goal] of a certain society. Defined in this way, ideologies are simply an

instrument that certain political parties or groups use to provide the necessary support to accomplish their political project / vision on the desired future of society. As Schwarzmantel defines ideologies in this way: “political ideologies as providing central organizing frameworks for political debate and action, which contains three elements: critique, ideal, agency’ (Schwarzmantel 1998: p. 2). As such, ideologies are central to politics, to the configuration of party positions on issues / policies, and generation of public policies set by political parties.

In the various linkage mechanisms/strategies that parties use with their electorate, various theorists have emphasized the importance of their programmatic or ideological attitudes for political accountability in a democratic system. Theorists of representative democracy have generally concentrated on this form of political accountability, namely the programmatic accountability associated with parties’ commitments and promises to promote and implement particular positions on fairly broad-based issues of public policy (Kitschelt & Kselman, 2010: p. 4). Since the time of Max Weber, the programmatic connection of parties to the electorate has been theorized as an important aspect of political accountability in representative democracies. “Already in Weber, programmaticism emerges as the effort politicians make to attract voters based on commitments to general policies, delivering public goods or large-scale club goods that benefit classes and social strata” (Cited in Kitschelt & Freeze, 2010: p. 6). In the party-electorate linkage strategy based on programmaticism, voters can assess the overall orientation of each party that leads them to the production of certain positions or policies and precisely choose those parties that are closest to their preferences or interests.

In Anthony Downs’s influential theory of democracy, he famously asserts that parties, in turn, choose or produce their political appeals and positions as close as possible to the median voter, so that they can “catch” as much of the electorate as possible to vote for them. Moreover, rational voters who wish to minimize the distance between their personal ideological ideal points and that of the party coming to office insist that parties maintain programmatic commitments intertemporally in responsible ways and act reliably on pre-election commitments, once elected to office (Downs, 1957: p. 105). In this way, by receiving signals and clues on the policy positions that parties generate based on certain ideologies, voters find it easier to assess the credibility, responsibility of political parties in front of the commitments they make to the electorate about the adoption of certain public policies, and thus it is presumed that democratic accountability is realized. Downs means this when he says: “For rational voters to support any party it must show programmatic coherence and —rational immobility‖ (Downs 1957: 110) of ideological position.

However, in the unknown terrain that characterizes a political party over a 4-year period (from one election to another when voters can choose parties or candidates in a democratic system), there can be many elements of uncertainty that may come to the fore and that may not have been initially anticipated. Therefore, the political ideology again serves as an essential element to make predictable the actions / orientations of the parties about certain issues. Since the slate of issues on the political agenda is always somewhat uncertain, and individual parties cannot single-handedly control the national political agenda, legislative or otherwise, voters would like to know not only a party's position on this or that currently pertinent issue, but also on underlying principles and benchmarks parties employ in order to generate partisan positions on newly emerging issues (Cited in Kitschelt & Kselman, 2010: p. 10). In other words, voters take note of and value a party's general ideological orientation that guides the production of issue positions. While new issues may initially be unrelated to existing issue clusters and underlying party principles, with programmatic electorates parties are under pressure to assimilate issue positions and "map" them onto underlying ideological dimensions. Knowing such ideological principles and their implications for issue mapping helps voters reduce uncertainty over a party's future positions on issues that have not yet come up (Kitschelt & Kselman, 2010: p. 10-11). Thus, political ideology serves as a very important instrument for voters in a democratic system, so that they can assess the credibility and responsiveness of the political parties/candidates they vote for; helps to reduce uncertainty about the future positions of these parties, and thus enables democratic accountability. Various authors (Downs, 1957; Brock, 2005; Bobbio, 1996) have argued about the essential role that political ideology plays for democracy, seeing it as vital for generating alternatives (public policies) set by political parties and for the differentiation between them when the voter chooses in the "democratic market".

In political science, there is a well-known classification made by Sigmund Neumann that is used to distinguish parties from each other, that between *integration parties* and *representation parties*. According to Sigmund Neumann, *integration parties* use action strategies in the sense that they want to mobilize, educate and inspire the masses in relation to certain ideological principles. These parties want to transform society in relation to their ideological principles and therefore require conviction and commitment in their (action) mobilization strategies (Cited in Heywood, 2008: p. 272). In contrast, representative parties are those that use the response or reflective strategies of the electorate, with no intention at all to educate or change it in relation to certain ideological principles. Representative parties, according to Neumann, are parties that in their strategies pay more attention to pragmatism and not to the principles (ideological, programmatic), and having

as their primary function the provision of votes in elections (Cited in Heywood, 2008: p. 272), and are willing to do or promise anything that reflects the wishes of the electorate that can provide them with votes.

Regarding this classification into the *integration parties* and *representative parties* that Neumann makes, we need to make a further elaboration to explain what the second (alternative) linkage mechanism / strategy is also, that political parties can use to secure electoral support. Beyond programmatic policy commitments (which rely on certain political ideologies) as a linkage strategy, political parties can also use a clientelistic strategy, which has as its main feature the targeted delivery of benefits to certain individuals or small groups in exchange for votes they can give. Thus, in the clientelistic efforts that parties can undertake,

“rather than providing collective or club goods to large groups, without checks on whether individual members or groups of members did or did not vote for the party allocating goods, politicians offer private, targeted benefits to individual citizens or small groups (families, street neighborhoods) in exchange for citizens’ partisan support (votes, participation in rallies, campaign work, etc.). What is different from programmatic politics is not only the scale of goods delivered (small, targeted), but also the contingency of the exchange. Benefits ideally accrue only to those who stick to the (implicit) contract: targeted benefits, if votes are delivered” (Kitschelt & Freeze, 2010: p. 4).

These targeted, particularistic benefits that political parties can use to secure electoral support can take many forms, including direct or indirect vote-buying from the people, jobs in public administration, legalization of informal/illegal dwellings, preferential access to social programs and various public services, exemptions from fines or taxes, construction permits, procurements contracts for certain firms, etc. The list of these targeted clientelistic rewards that can be given is long and not exhaustive here.

What we need to emphasize after unveiling these two different linkage strategies that political parties can use in front of voters in a given environment, is that the parties make calculations / considerations as to which of the strategies provide them with the most votes. As Kitschelt and Freeze puts it, “linkage or accountability strategies are the efforts politicians undertake to gain the electoral support that awards them survival and advancement in office, individually or collectively as parties... A “linkage” exists, if politicians successfully demonstrate that they act on (are responsive to) the demands of the constituency supporting them in elections” (Kitschelt & Freeze, 2010: p. 3). And in deciding which linkage strategy will provide them with the most electoral support, political parties must also consider the social, economic, and cultural context in which they operate. And

here we come to the explanation of the factors that have led to the deideologization of Albanian political parties and the linkage strategy that they use against the Albanian electorate to secure votes.

De-ideologization of Albanian Political Parties: Alternative Linkage Strategy that Parties Use with Their Electorate

Which of the linkage or accountability strategies do Albanian political parties use the most to secure electoral support from their voters? Or if we used the classification made by Sigmund Neumann to distinguish political parties from each other, in which of these two categories could we classify Albanian political parties: into *integration parties* or *representative parties*?

If we use as a reference the categorization that Neumann makes about how political parties differ from each other, it can be said that such an explanation stands “tight” to the classification of Albanian political parties, in the sense that they are not part of any of them. Albanian political parties (at least, if we refer here to those who have managed to secure a number of seats in Parliament over the last two decades), have never been integration parties and have never pursued mobilization (action) strategies to persuade or inspire the electorate and to transform society in relation to their ideological principles. So, political ideology has not served them at all as an effective instrument/strategy to convince the electorate about building a future/vision of the desired society, and even less to provide electoral support to them to do so. On the contrary, ideological blandishments and appeals have served only as a facade in the political rhetoric of Albanian parties, when in fact at the ideological level, the differences and positions between them differed very little. As Kajsia has argued: “as ideological and policy differences faded away, the two major parties [Democratic Party and Socialist Party] increasingly relied on institutional arrangements, clientelistic networks and polarizing political discourses in order to continue dominating the Albanian political scene” (Kajsia, 2016: p. 290).

In the same way, it can be said that the Albanian political parties are not genuinely representative parties according to the classification of political parties made by Sigmund Neumann, in the sense that they articulate or reflect the demands of a certain social group and strictly defend (represent) their interests (such can be a left-wing party that defends the interests of the poor, the underprivileged, the working class; or a right-wing party that defends the interests of the rich, entrepreneurs, or even the middle class). Even in this “pragmatic” dimension of electoral representation, where parties simply articulate or reflect the interests of certain social groups that they claim to represent, Albanian political parties

have many flaws and have not seen this as an effective linkage strategy that can ensure their vote maximization. Kajsiu has emphasized in this regard that, “the crisis of representation results from the fact that, because of the deideologization and social dislocations of the transition period, neither of the two major parties in Albania articulated and represented a positive identity of their electorate on which to constitute “the people” as a whole... Under these conditions, different social categories such as farmers, workers or businesspeople, rich or poor were increasingly reduced to moments within “the people” as a whole rather than the starting point from which “the people” were constituted. Therefore, the political process became both conflictual and unrepresentative of different social groups” (Kajsiu, 2010: p. 230). Albanian political parties have only weak or instrumentality ties with social groups or interests (different segments) of society, and as such, it cannot be said that they represent these groups/interests in an organized way.

The main argument of this paper is that Albanian political parties can be called representative parties (not according to the definition given by Sigmund Neumann) only in the sense that they reflect the social structure of Albanian society. In sociology, as Rubinstein has noticed, structures are usually conceived as objective features of social organization which exists independently of social actors’ cognitive beliefs and to some extent they shape and determine their consciousness and action (Rubinstein, 1986). With social structure, we refer here to the model of typical relationships that members of a society have towards each other. From a functionalist approach, the social structure represents the patterned and relatively permanent sets of social relationships that are typical among members of society and that can be analyzed/observed even as recurrent social practices.

Here it is argued that the social structure and model of social relations that are embodied in Albanian society are essentially of a clientelistic, corrupted and particularistic type and that are based mainly on materialist (cultural) values (similarly to those described by Inglehart and Welzel (2005) in their famous study on cultural change and democracy). Frequently, and in most cases of public denunciations in the media, is articulated the idea that clientelistic and corrupt relations exist only to people and parties who have power and who have the potential to abuse it. Actually, such a model of clientelist and corrupt relations exists and is widespread in almost the entire social structure of Albanian society: from the most privileged and powerful position to ministers, MPs, judges, prosecutors, directors, employees, and public administration at all levels, to customs officers, police officers, doctors, and nurses, continuing to the guards or even the sanitary staff of public hospitals (as was the infamous case reported a few months ago in one of the investigative media shows for one of the public hospitals where patients with Covid-19 were treated).

In such an environment where the social structure incentives, or at least does not substantially oppose clientelistic, corrupted, and particularistic relations

between its members, Albanian political parties have developed increasingly efficient ways that reflect such particularistic relations and that provide them with votes. As Harry Eckstein (1966) and other culturalist authors have pointed out, the institutions of a country (including political parties as one of the key mechanisms of representative democracy) must be in harmony with the cultural values of the masses to produce a desired outcome or to function properly. The clientelist strategy has served the Albanian political parties as an effective linkage mechanism for the model of social relations typical for the Albanian society, in their struggle to secure votes, at least if we refer here to the last four parliamentary elections (in 2009, 2013, 2017 and those recently held on 25th April 2021). Both parties [Democratic Party and Socialist Party, without excluding other smaller parties] in Albania have constructed extensive clientelistic networks through which they sustained the loyalty of their followers (Kajsiu, 2016: p. 290).

By clientelism we mean here a type or a strategy linkage where the main characteristic is the particular and targeted use of public resources that serves as an instrumental exchange in the electoral arena between political parties and their constituents. This instrumental exchange means securing votes and other forms of political support given in exchange for jobs (typically in the public sector) and other benefits as “preferential access to social programs and services (such as public housing, scholarships, disability benefits, medical treatment), or benefits for businesses (favorable regulatory decisions, procurement contracts, access to foreign currency)” (Kitschelt & Kselman, 2010: p. 5). Building on this Kitschelt’s definition, the main feature (linkage mechanism) of Albanian political parties is the provision of particularistic benefits to their supporters, and in this way, they can be described as “organized clientelistic structures. As an important scholar of the Albanian political scene has noted: Finding a job in the hierarchy of the state administration, state enterprises, hospitals, schools and other public institutions has very much depended on the relations that a specific person has had with the ruling party at the local or national level” (Cited in Kajsiu, 2016: p. 290).

Albanian political parties which have electoral success and proudly declare the increase of their votes from election to election, are the ones that have adapted and respond best to the model of social relations that dominate in Albanian society. Certain ideological principles, be they liberal, conservative, social-democratic, third way, “green” ideology, etc., are not as tempting and motivating for the mobilization of the Albanian electorate (and for securing votes) as they will continue to be the particularistic methods such as jobs in public administration, public tenders, concessions, preferential access to social programs and services, legalization of illegal/informal dwellings and other favoritisms in exchange for securing votes. A good part of the Albanian electorate does not understand, let alone defend, the ideological principles of their parties. In a recent survey conducted by IPSOS on the behavior of Albanian voters for

the parliamentary elections of April 25, 2021, interesting was the question of how well the respondents knew about the political programs of the three major political parties (SP, DP, and SMI). To the question “which of the elements of the SP, DP and SMI program can you remember”, respectively 44% of the electorate did not know/did not remember any element of the Socialist Party program; 48% responded in the same way for the Democratic Party program; and a percentage that went to 61% of the electorate’s ignorance of any SMI programmatic element (Top-Channel, IPSOS Survey, 2021). Moreover, most respondents who answered this question by identifying relevant elements of the programs of these three political parties, in fact, only mentioned general things about the political offer of these parties (e.g., Population Vaccination Program, COVID 19 Pandemic, Post-Earthquake Reconstruction, etc.), which are not related at all to any program that claims to be based on certain ideological principles.

Conclusions

The function of ideological discourse or the mobilization and inspiration of the electorate based on ideological principles by political parties remains still far from the Albanian political scene. With positions on policies that become more similar and the ideological identities lacking in them, Albanian political parties have increasingly relied on non-ideological instruments and strategies to guarantee what is the main goal of political parties in every country: securing votes in elections. The main (alternative) linkage strategy, outlined in this paper, used by Albanian political parties to mobilize their electorate, is the clientelistic strategy, in which parties distribute targeted, particularistic benefits to their supporters in exchange for votes or political support. In this paper, it was argued that the clientelistic strategy has served the Albanian political parties as an effective linkage mechanism for the model of social relations typical for the Albanian society, in their struggle to secure votes. Albanian political parties that have electoral success are those that have adapted and respond best to the model of social relations that dominate Albanian society and which are essentially mostly of a clientelistic, particularistic type and based mainly on materialist values. In 2016, a famous Albanian politician declared in a meeting in front of members of his party that “their party is not a political force fallen from the sky in the Albanian reality. I believe that SMI is a product of this reality”. Thus, to emphasize once again that, if it were not for this model of social relations that are dominant today in Albanian society (expressed by the euphemism “Albanian reality”), their party and the (clientelist) linkage strategy it uses with the electorate would hardly succeed electorally.

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Polyphony, the Memory of Earth's Voice _____

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Abstract

Albanian and international cultural heritage couldn't be understood without Polyphony and vice versa, Polyphony would be an endangered value if it was not included and valued as one of the main limbs of cultural heritage. Studies have shown that in it, Polyphony is not and constitutes only a value of the past but at the same time and manner it represents even the most representative features of contemporaries. It still preserves the identity characteristics which have defined it as one of the most original genres of folklore, which testifies to its non-alienation over the centuries against the assimilative spirits that have described the History of Albania. Many local and foreign critics have shed light on and analyzed the artistic evidence of polyphony in different regions, the forms of interpretation and the features of the lyrics in its entirety as well as the history and graphical context. In addition to different opinions, unanimity but also polemics and in different ways of view on this cultural and artistic phenomenon, all scholars have shed light and treated Polyphony from different perspectives by continuously completing the research angle and at the same time emphasizing on its role and importance in preserving and further strengthening the identity of the Albanian society, despite the conditions and influences from other cultures that have described the Albanian socio-cultural climate. Despite the different points of view in period of time spanning, Polyphony is considered as a space where verse joins the sound in completed harmony between them, preserving intact the form and peculiarities of artistic interpretation, as a sign the directness of the country and the role it has played in tradition, as well as in the contemporary and at the same time the future that does not tend to tear or touch this foundation of our society.

Key words: Cultural Heritage, Polyphony, Art, Interpretation, Culture, Time, Traditions, Study, Value.

The terrain of the polyphonic tradition

Human society, from its inception to modern times, has been contained to an unstoppable developmental rate, creating, following and defining, all the ages through which its history and evolutionary process has penetrated. Everything has been subjected to a continuous life cycle, to build tools and mechanisms of continuity, and to leave footprints on the terrain where the human community built its activity. Centuries later, when the science of history was reinforcing its role in the overall social consciousness, by means of some data transmitted from one generation to the next and specific features, various scholars have been able to recognize and determine the many characteristics of the organization of life and forms of survival against the many phenomena within and beyond the community.

To reach in modern times, mankind has had to lose, change, or sacrifice many of the indicators that have accompanied it throughout the stages and life cycles that already belong and identify its past. In this way, it can be asserted that ways of communication and reaction have changed over the years, but some rituals have not changed despite passing time, and this remains undoubtedly for the ritual of birth and death, ritual of love and marriage or separation, among others reverence for the dead bodies or for the fallen on the battlefield.

Rituals and habits that are still practiced today are regarded not only as a spiritual ritual but above all as a form of existence, reverence of generations and, moreover as a manner of continuity. Seen from this viewpoint, polyphony remains one of the symbols of the heritage, which also defines the antiquity of any civilization of a nation, language or culture. The general scientific thought, is documented in many studies and directions for the proven fact that in essence the Balkan Peninsula represents the genetics of European civilization.

Over the past few years, the transition process has been accompanied by massive population movements, firstly toward immigration and secondly with a view to shifting focus in large cities. This recurring phenomenon contracted the population in many rural areas where the main sources of ethnographic, folk and especially polyphonic resources are located. Our point of view has focused in region on Vlora and Gjirokastra, as countries affected by the risk of losing or alienating essential identity traits. At the same time, in this unfavorable climate, the prevailing trends or currents of commercial art are influenced, as well as the general spirit of globalization, elements which extend the range of danger especially in the created terrain. The need for intervention through specific projects for the further protection and cultivation of this great creative and interpretive potential, becomes vital also because in this important aspect of the spiritual and artistic emancipation of society, state investment, thanks

to the multifaceted needs for interference in both tangible heritage assets and intangible heritage values always remain insufficient to change the situation.

A historical overview of polyphony

Most of ethnomusicologist do not have a response for the historic and origin of polyphonique music. Taking into consideration the opinion of French researcher Mouton, published in the periodical « *Origine des instruments de musique* » Paris-La Haye, Mouton– Chapter X “Primitive Polyphony” in 1936, in his point of view referring the musical map of the world, it is noticed that a large number of peoples worldwide have had or still maintain the tradition of polyphonic music. Mauton’s research suggests that *the first answers come from German schools at the beginning of the last century which proceed through an evolutionary and diffusions view according to which knowledge, experience, and values have been created by one. or more countries of origin, and then progressively diffusing, as a natural effect of diffusion. It would have been homophonic at first and then polyphonic.* Bernard Lortat-Jacob.

In the Albanian reality, this argument raises discussions and questions as follows:

- Which are the countries of origin?
- How are they formed?
- Where are they located?
- Is there a starting point in the history of Albanian territories that may allow us to say: Before an *X moment* there was nothing known and then at an *Y moment* there was already something?
- Is it possible to believe a spontaneous birth, what biology has put in doubt for a long time?

It is possible that polyphony’s “birth” was followed by writing, a theory which is still accepted today from the academics of musicology. *According to many experts, polyphony dates back to the medieval era, and would have been born in Europe, benefiting extensively from the “invention” of musical writing - attributed to Gui d’Arezzo, in the X century.* Bernard Lortat- Jacob.

The fact is that, in one side, music writing is practiced much earlier than the X century, and on the other side, many populations have been practicing polyphony for a long time, or without proving the need for this writing. Today’s musicals, like jazz, take the initiative from musical writing, but then they almost never use it during execution.

In the 1930s, researcher André Schaeffner analyzed that “reason of polyphony music” should be searched elsewhere: in sociology for example, in regarded

evolutionary and diffusions assumptions as questionable and confusing as they implicated a kind of “mechanism in cultural appropriation of knowledge” (a hypothesis which badly resists to historical criticism).

It is also accepted that, music is the most widely spread thing in the world. Moreover, sociology tends to prove the advantage of complex over simplicity.

It is about an epistemological and historical advantage: Hasn't human society been genetically programmed to live in a group, or at least to live as a couple, to “get things done together” and man / woman duality has also to manifest itself musically: the man's vocal cords are longer than the woman's, the man and woman talk (sing) in different registers, a fact that every culture, in its own way, likes to exploit, suggesting an initial polyphony, e.g. in octaves, or by treating these differences of natural material in terms of musical records.

In music, polyphony is a type of musical structure consisting of two or more simultaneous lines of independent melody, as opposed to a musical quality with only one voice, monophony, or a structure with a dominant melodic voice accompanied by chord, which is called the homophone.

Within the context of Western musical tradition, the term polyphony is commonly used to refer for Late Middle Ages and Renaissance music. Baroque forms like fugue, which can be called polyphonic, are usually described as contrapuntal. In all cases what Margaret Bent (1999) called a “dyadic counterpoint”, with each part generally written against another, with all parts modified if necessary, at the end. This point-to-point conception is opposed to “sequential composition”, where the voices were written in a sequence with each new sound fitting throughout the hitherto constructed, which was previously assumed.

The term polyphony is also sometimes used more broadly, to describe any musical texture that is not monophonic. Such a perspective considers homophony as a sub-type of polyphony.

Traditional (non-professional) polyphony has a wide, if uneven, distribution among the peoples of the world. Most polyphonic regions of the world are in sub-Saharan Africa, Europe and Oceania. It is believed that the origins of polyphony in traditional music vastly predate the emergence of polyphony in European professional music. Currently there are two contradictory approaches to the problem of the origins of vocal polyphony: the Cultural Model, and the Evolutionary Model. According to the Cultural Model, the origins of polyphony are connected to the development of human musical culture; polyphony came as the natural development of the primordial monophonic singing; therefore, polyphonic traditions are bound to gradually replace monophonic traditions. According to the Evolutionary Model, the origins of polyphonic singing are much deeper, and are connected to the earlier stages of human evolution; polyphony

was an important part of a defense system of the hominids, and traditions of polyphony are gradually disappearing all over the world.

Although the exact origins of polyphony in Western church traditions are unknown, the treatises *Musical enchiridia* and *Scalia enchiridia*, both dating from the 900th century, are commonly considered the oldest written examples of polyphony. These treatises provided examples of double-voiced ornamentation against call ornamentation using parallel octaves, fifth and fourth. Instead of being fixed works, they showed ways to improvise polyphony during the performance. The Winchester Troper, from the 1000th Century, is the oldest example of swim polyphony for acclaimed performance, though the note does not indicate precise pitch or extension.

Albanian Iso-polyphony is a traditional part of Albanian folk music and, as such, is included in the UNESCO list of intangible cultural heritage.

The four regions of southern Albania - Lalëria Myzeqe, Tusks, Chameria and Labria - have polyphonic songs as part of their culture. A related form of polyphonic singing is found in northern Albania, in the Peshkopi area; Polog, Tetovo, Kicevo and Gostivar in North Macedonia; and the Highlands in northern Albania and southern Montenegro.

Labëria is particular well known for multipart singing; songs can have two, three, or four parts. Two-part songs are sung only by women. Three-part songs can be sung by men and women. Four-part songs are a Labëria specialty. Research has shown that four-part songs developed after three-part ones, and that they are the most complex form of polyphonic singing.

The Gjirokastër National Folklore Festival, Albania, (*Albanian: Festivali Folklorik Kombëtar*), has been held every five years in the month of October since 1968, and it typically includes many polyphonic songs.

Descriptions of playing music in Classical Greece and Rome are full of suggestions about harmonic and counterpoint practices, and music theory, up to "Pythagoras", is full of detailed accounts of harmonic consonants. Once they mastered the means to write their liturgical music down, moreover, the Franks illustrated various methods to harmoniously strengthen that music. There is evidence of the practice of polyphonic performance of medieval calling since the time we wrote, that is, the evidence of the song itself. Users without subscription are unable to view the full content. Meanwhile, research continues to shed light on the unknown sides of this space described by the creators and performers. "These observations lead us to believe that the Albanian polyphony is more natural and more original than normally accepted. In other words, the origin and reason of the existence of polyphony should be sought in bio-sociology. Cultures, by their own choices, go on to suggest roles and parts, as well as the respective importance of these roles and parts, by persistently cultivating the

aesthetic instruments that the social group has a duty to promote and control. Remember that for some reason, some social groups first develop their taste with soloists' voices and homophonic choruses. In practice, in Mediterranean oral traditions, polyphony singing promotes the acoustic perception that "somehow you want to be together." As far as singers are concerned, sometimes it is about recognizing the distinctions, sometimes melting their voices, marking subtle, sensitive music codes and offering all the intermediate nuances.

In view of the above, the study of polyphony in Albania needs to be seen in a wider context than Albania, in the territories of neighboring countries and beyond, in order to understand so that people of any nationality may spread their values when they are together. So, finally, it can never be said enough, there is no possible culture without emotion divided between people and ethnicity, and that music remains an essential emotional communication between peoples, as the tradition of polyphonic music proves.¹⁷ After each conclusion, the scientific think-tank agrees with the conviction that any attempt to delineate an exhaustive idea about the embryonic phase, the development and extension of immense coordinates over time and different peoples, as well as ways of conveying intact polyphony up to the groove. Beyond the new millennium, it seems to be an unfinished mission, as is the very nature of polyphony characterized by human nature itself.

Analysis and features of Albanian folklore

Albanian folk is very ancient. So, for example: Straboni (Geographical book VII chapter 316) tells of the tribe of Dardanians who inhabited Kosovo, around Vranje, Tetovo, Peja and Mitrovica) that "they do not set aside music, but always use trumpets and cordless instruments". Also, the Adrians, who stood out as music lovers * see K. Patch; Tirana "Illyrians" 1925) They used these tools. Meanwhile our attention is drawn to an even clearer idea from ancient monuments depicting dancers, instrumentalists and singers who adorn dishes, coins, tombstones, etc. Among other things, many scholars draw the attention of an Illyrian statue of a comic actor unveiled at the Bylis Antique Theater that is featured in the characteristic attitude of folk singers who even today, especially in the northern highlands, sing "top - arm ", holding the hand near the ear while performing the song. It is also known that some feet of the old metric have been named after some Illyrian tribes: such as molos ('-----') as well as peonies (vvv-'), perhaps also pyrrhic feet (v'v), (see Ramadan Sokol's book - Dances and

¹ Mouton, (1936) « *Origine des instruments de musique* » Paris-La Haye, Mouton- kapitulli X, « *Polifonia primitive* ».

Music of Our Ancestors, Tirana 1971). Sokoli, speaking of the dances and songs of the ancients, states that;

We can imagine the inhabitants of these ancient centers singing and dancing not only on stage but also in houses, in temples, near springs, in squares and lawns. The cult of museums, along with the traditions or myths, as well as the many facts presented, tell us what place music and dance had in the ancestral social and private life. They sang and danced in different circumstances; for feasts and weddings, for sacrifices and celebrations, from the cradle to the grave. Between these two goals; almost every important circumstance had its own repertoire where many of those artistic and interpretive traits and nuances from that repertoire felt to have arrived to this day through the passage from generation to generation in folk tradition.

“Historian Frederick Gibert, who writes in his book,” The History of the Countries of Albania” at the beginning of the 20th century: *Studying the character of the Albanian is very difficult because it is full of contradictions and unexpected views! This people do not know the concept of love, but they sing to love more than anyone else and with the most beautiful songs. Thoughts on love in Albanian society have not been the same. They have evolved over time, with the social position that women have occupied in families, societies, etc.*” Folk creativity, regardless of genre, is characterized by several traits that are common to all kinds, to all its artistic expressions. It has now become commonplace for the sake of representing study norms and characteristics to divide all folkloric creativity into different genres and types just like cultivated literature². This division, if made for study purposes, may be accepted, but it does not fully correspond to the truth where we look closely at the general features of the oral creativity of the people. In his journey to this secluded corner of Europe, Lord Byron had not foreseen that one of the letters he addressed to his mother, while he was in Albania, would be the most representative of the Albanian folk. Regarding the above, one of his works would be mentioned by the distinguished Albanian scholar Faik Konica who brings the contents of this letter, written 200 years ago in its most original spirit: “Dear mother, let me tell you that the Albanians in their dresses, consisting of a long *white kilt*, gold worked cloak, crimson velvet gold laced jacket & waistcoat, silver mounted pistols and daggers, velvet vest embroidered with gold, with silver ornaments to give an unimaginable appearance, adorned with elegance to a stranger’s eye. “ In this way Byron had written to his mother from the Kingdom of the northern Europe.

Folk genre cannot be subdivided only into lyric, epic and dramatic genre as it is divided in cultivated literature. Folk sometimes is called as oral literature, but should not be accepted as such for several reasons.

² Arsen Jani Mustaqi: Lirika popullore Shtëpia Botuese Argeta LMG, Tiranë 2011, f. 8 - 9.

Firstly, in folklore, lyric, epic and dramatic almost coexist. In love songs, for example, it is often a dialogue between the two lovers, thus constituting a point of dramatic dialogue. On the other side, many lyrical love songs, e.g. contain a narrative, are based on an event and that is exactly what connects it to the epic. The same is true of the epic, which is almost never seen in its original appearance but is always mixed with lyrical moment.

Secondly, folk songs are born simultaneously as a text, a melodic line or as a melody, thus constituting a unity that is aesthetically valued only if all the constituent elements are interpreted together, to give the song its true artistic and emotional weight and value. On the other hand it must be admitted that in folklore, there are no songs to be recited, but verses which are sung.

Thirdly, folklore can preserve the old verse and so, for example, in folk, in heroic song we can apply the system of tonal verse, and in a love song, the other system. While today, an Albanian poet writes usually by applying the syllabic system.

However, we must admit that in some folklore creations the lyrical spirit prevails, in others the epic spirit etc, without being obliged to mention here the lyrical or epic and dramatic gender as we do with cultivated literature. For this reason, the approach of folk with the cultivated literature is quite conventional.

Folklore creation remains to this day a living and inalienable space, which over the time tends to evolve and be enriched by the inclinations and imaginations of contemporary art. This is because it is passed down from generation to generation only verbally, not written and so any new carrier can forget parts, add others, can merge into one of two songs (contamination phenomenon), from three tales, e.g. can create a single tale etc. This necessarily happens in a spontaneous, almost spontaneous way: during the story, the popular poet or storyteller creates one by one according to his talent and inclinations. We come to an important characteristic of folklore, its improvisational character. This means, as mentioned above, that popular songwriters and storytellers do not strictly adhere to the previously born creation, they can touch it, either through interpretation or editing. Sometimes they do this together, as a singing or performing group. Improvisation is a characteristic of all folk art, but it was later used in cultivated art as well.

Another characteristic of folklore is repetition. The artistic phenomenon of repetition is very important. A song, a rhapsody or even a fairy tale has repetitive elements in it, which on the one hand give the piece a very popular feature, a style very close to the taste of the people, but also aids to creation are technical tools that make the rhythm or singer better remember what he is performing. In this creation verses (different forms of chorus, etc.) can be repeated in a storytelling song or in a tale of whole moments of action (repetitio epica - epic repetition),

stanzas with only minor changes (one word, a comparison etc) and then we have iterative stanzas etc. Forms of repetition are endings and alliterations, forms of vocal harmonies, etc. Repetitions are tools that in turn facilitate the work of the popular creator that in the song or in the story, he, by repeating a few verses or a particular moment, has time to digest what comes next. One form of repetition are the formulations, the introductions and closures of a fairy tale, the introductions and closings of a rhapsody, the same repetitions that are repeated for a character within a given setting.

An important feature of folklore is its syncretistic character. A folk creation, such as a lyrical song, is the result of the union of several constituent elements: the result of the union of text, melody, and in some cases choreography. In short, one can come to the definition that a folklore creation gives its full aesthetic value only when executed together with all its constituent parts. A popular provincial polyphonic song that has been sung over the centuries has become known and loved by the whole society not only with words but with words and melody together. It is, first and foremost, a musical creation and then a poetic creation. The relation between the word and the melody is very important here, they are linked together, and they have done their best to make this song come out. For this reason, words that are only recited would have little or no artistic, exciting value, take on immense artistic and thrilling power overlaid with the cloak of melody.

Now, not only in the artistic community but also in the academic area, a folk song is only appreciated artistically if it is executed as a text, as a melody and as a dance, otherwise it does not impress you. This happens with all the folk dances. Thus in a lab dance, words are valued not only by the melody but also by the movement of the foot, hand, or the whole body of the dancer; In this way, some repetitions that are stripped of melodic-choreographic components, intertwined with the clash of the foot, assume true artistic value and turn themselves into epic, lyrical or even dramatic emotional motifs in whatever context, background or era. Only in this way will everyone have a more objective judgment in assessing the commonality and particularity of the artistic word.

Folklore is usually said to have an anonymous character. Opinions are divided into two opposing ways. A proven truth is that no one knows the creator or creators of a folk creation. Their names even if ever known have now been lost. In addition, often a song, a rhapsody, a tale is the fruit of the creative work of some authors who with their improvisation skills have contributed either at the same time together (singer groups at weddings or occasions of joy), or at different times when they have executed that creation by removing or adding something of their own. Here the anonymous character of folklore is related to its collective character, however, the word collective here should not be understood as the

creation of a folk work (song, rhythm, dance, melody) as the whole interpretive group, and at the same time listeners or also the crusts etc. The collective word here is to be understood only in that one creation is attended by some people even at different times, in different generations, who thus adapt their creation to their taste.

On the other side, the anonymous character is not entirely true, and this is because every folk creation has one or a group of creators in its origin, only that the general public may not know their names. But this is implied, as it is known that at the core of every creation there is an author or a group of talented authors who are capable of creating, improvising with their talent, inspiration and fantasy their art, which over time brings the public to know the true authors of this spiritual heritage as well.

Folk creation is just like any other phenomenon associated with time, so it has a certain age. For this reason, when we come across a popular creation and want to study for it, we must firstly determine (approximately or even precisely) the basis of facts and all source data of its age and the period when it was created. Under this logic, as well as for other reasons related to and in regard to this purpose, it is necessary to determine the age of folklore. Even many interpretive artists, in addition to voices, use the same musical instruments to perform a song of the past centuries as trumpets, culates, tunes, etc., with the idea of recreating that aura and emotional rhythm of the past.

Albanian polyphony, values and characteristics

To determine the age of a creation, many elements must be considered and studied such as historical factors, environmental factors, peoples 'movements, creators' acquaintances with creators of other nations and nations, musical elements, choreographic elements, etc. Only by this method will we be able to determine the origin, age, and characteristic of a folk creation.

Albanian iso-polyphony is characterized by songs consisting of two solo parts, a melody and a countermelody with a choral drone. The structure of the solo parts varies according to the different ways of performing the drone, which has a great variety of structures, especially in the popular style adopted by all groups performing this music.

Polyphony is stronger in the transmission of voices, as do the receivers and transmitters themselves in a voice recitation. The chorus that takes strong dramatic forms accompanies a prolonged "*e-ejee*" without stopping the first and second voices, or the four main voices that enliven the polyphonic song. Binaural polyphony is considered the primary variant of this genre of folk art. The receiver

and the host in the voice recitation harmonize the short and simple text, so as to be remembered by the first-time listener. Three-sided and four-sided polyphony is one of the art-turned forms in many parts of Southern Albania. Although the receiver and the host play the key role in the vivid recitation of the communicative vivacity and harmony, the iso is the structural element that decides the longevity of the polyphony itself in this case. Studies show that quadruple is the supreme development of the Albanian iso-polyphony. The castor is added to the receiver, transducer and choir structure for the first time. The four-voice singing process complements the echo of the song. The thriller vibrantly and harmoniously manages to convey with a higher vocal record the repetition of the words of the song, making a kind of echo in the space of polyphony. It is clear that the harmony of voices as in a sound trunk originates in the ability to sing outside the pentagram. Using a quasi-primitive musically chorus, the receiver, the songwriter, the receptionist, the waiter for the words of the first, the chorus echoing the famous “*e-ejee*” and the thrower as the voice-over narrator in space, are neither more nor less the witnesses of the history of Albanians. The magic of polyphony is marked by the lack of musical instruments and their replacement with biological “instruments” of the human body, such as voice cords, lungs, nerve, sensitivity, etc. who more fully express the performer’s emotions, features, sensitivity, and culture. In the opinion of researcher Asqeri Petani “polyphonic song is truly magical, and its magic seems to come from both its mysticism, interpretation, diversity and harmony of voices, as well as the strength and clarity of its lyrics. The lyrics of the song are compact, with implications, symbols, and pictures from its land, written by authors who know it well. And this is a feature and priority in relation to the cultivated song, since here the motif is taken from the land and conceived and interpreted by the people of the same land. Shouts, tweets, ripples, etc. have been present since the creation of society and may not have influenced and encouraged the spirit of those who created and fashioned their own song. Consequently, the inclusion of these factors in explaining the structure of polyphony seems naturally acceptable. It is plausible to say that polyphony has arrived in our day without substantial structural changes. It is preserved in its original form in the remote Albanian areas, also because in those areas the locals have remained more within themselves in many respects. In the case of the song, staying away from neighbors has had a positive effect on maintaining its original form.”³

Among other things, what is striking not only from foreign scholars but also from local scholars relates to the idea created through facts and source data but also to studies carried out at different periods of the archival fund that Albania compared to other countries. others in which polyphonic creativity and

³ Gazeta Dita Asqeri Petani “Magjia e këngës polifonike” 2 shtator 2017, publikuar më 11:26

interpretation are inherited, that is musically distinguished for a rich tradition in vocal polyphony. Generally, this type of polyphonic melody is most often sung by two, three or four voices, followed by a men's choir or a women's choir, without instrumental accompaniment. Not to mention that in this rich potential we also come across melodies sung by interwoven voices, which, although an integral part of the tradition of the past centuries, gained further development after the Second World War in Albania. Throughout the centuries from which it has been cultivated to this day intact and in its most original form, vocal polyphony takes its place and extends in the Mediterranean part of Albania from the Shkumbin River to the Chameria. We think it is worth noting that this area is then divided into two polyphonic systems. The Lab system covering the districts of Tepelena, Vlora, Gjirokastra and part of Saranda, and the Tosk system that runs from the Vjosa River to the Shkumbini River affecting the suburbs of Struga, Ohrid, and up to Prespa in North Macedonia.

If in the Laberia's system stand out for the profound difference between voices, the Tosk's system nonetheless features a freer pace and a progression of voices with more distinctive musical interval and accompaniment-enriching tunes. Their repertoire is mostly made up of historical song with a strong nationalist character and songs of peasant origin for love or lullaby. Referring to an article written by academician Vasil S. Tole, titled "On the Origin of Albanian Popular Polyphony, New Evidence on this World's Spiritual Culture", is empathized the fact that various traditions of the mythology of Ilirians' music have been made known to us since antiquity. According to Tole, one of these traditions is the one related to the death of Great Pan. Referring to Plutarch, a ship announced the Pan's death near Pelod Lake (Lake of Butrint) and thereafter a group of lamentations were heard in chorus, as if many being mourned together. We still do not know why tradition refers into Butrint's Lake, but it is thought that polyphonic crying is the most completed requisite in deaths and very prominent.

A very important clue to the finding of polyphonic singing in southern Albania, is given by Evliya Çelebi Sejahatnamesi in his 1660-1664 manuscripts. He writes that "... the Gjirokastra have another strange habit: mourning people who died until seven or eighty years ago. Every Sunday the whole tribe of the deceased gather in a house and weep for the deceased to gather their wailing mourners who weep and mourn with great pain, with mournful and sorrowful voice streaming down their tears. On this day in the city one cannot stand the roar of the noise of the mourning. I baptized Gjirokastra "the city of lamentation". From Albanian authors we mention the fresco painted by painter David Selenicasi around 1715, found in the monastery of "Laura the Great, the virgin Kukuzelisa's hat" on Mount Athos. The fresco depicts four women dancing accompanied by a toolbox consisting of two aerophone and two chordophone tools. According to F. Garry,

in this paper, the vital treatment of figures is observed, “violating” dogmas dictated by Byzantine canons⁴. According to German sociologist and philosopher Theodore Adorno: “Music is like a language.” Later, Umberto Eco writes: “Music had a syntactic dimension, but not a semantic dimension”. Not at all adhering to Umberto Eco’s theory: “The syntax of Albanian music is the totality of ways of uniting words (introverted and extroverted musical signs) of the language of Albanian music according to the meaning and “grammatical” nature of the music, together with the relationships established between the musical sentences (units) formed by them, (in iso-polyphonic receiver, transmitter and thrower, in cab and jar, (questions and responds (musical sentences) with relevant musical regularities (mass, time, height and color of sound, modes, tonality, harmony), to express thoughts and concepts and “musical lyrics” and to make them known and understandable to others.

The first written document is the Baptize Formula of the year 1462. In 1908, the Congress of Manastir adopted the Latin alphabet. The Greeks, North Macedonians and Montenegrins are considered as ethnic minorities in Albania, whereas the Roma and Aromanians as linguistic minorities.

The richness of Albanian oral and musical folklore is unusual; it goes beyond the national boundaries. It is a world richness, part and parcel of the universal heritage of humanity, acknowledged by UNESCO as well; the latter has defined the Albanian Polyphony as such.

In different times, different studies have been carried out about this phenomenon with ever-different original perspectives. According to them, it became clear that many centuries ago in the territory of Laberia –apart from monophony- a new form of artistic consciousness was being crystallized: Polyphony.

The term “polyphony”, as it is known and accepted by all researchers, comes from Greek. <poly »- many, « phony »- sound, sound, many voices, many sounds, many melodies. Until the middle of the twentieth century, it symbolized the performance, if not the sole, of the musical life of this province.

It is noticed that in the Balkan Peninsula, polyphonic song appears as a characteristic music culture for Albanian, Greek; aroma, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Bosnian, Serbian. Among them, Albanians, Greeks, Aromanians, recognizing the typical three- and four-voice singing while professional Bulgarians, North Macedonians, Bosnia, Serbs sing with two voices. Based on a musical point of view, one of the most beloved polyphonic songs in the Balkan is the Albanian polyphony. Ethnomusicologists have noticed that a various different area of singing with *more polyphonic voices and regional styles* are founded in Slovakia, southern Poland, Ukraine, the Caucasus, Georgia, the Baltic countries, Italy.

⁴ Prof. As. Dr. Vasil Tole “Mbi origjinën e polifonisë popullore shqiptare, dëshmi të reja mbi këtë pasuri të kulturës shpirtërore botërore” në Shpirti i Shqiptarit, Alba Soul, Albasoul.com 1998-2007

According to the most widespread view of science, the polyphonic song of the Balkan peoples represents an early musical culture, pre-Byzantine. Even the Albanian polyphonic song has a distant appearance in relation to the Byzantine song, it was born and created on a separate land, nurtured for centuries by a healthy indigenous tradition, thus gaining original salient features.

Musicologist Loro Sata in the article "Polyphony and Albanian masterpieces, iso, yesterday and always", published in the newspaper "Mapo" on May 14, 2015 writes that: "ISO in Albanian polyphonic song, with dialect labe and tosk, subdialects styles has had, has actually have and will eternally have the aim to: provide, guarantee the logic of modal support of the musical lines of the vocal group, the polyphonic band - the harmonious rationality - of the contrapuntal polyphony; a persistent and determined rhythm; the vocal interpretation of the song always in the high register of sound; particularly the infinite, transcendent space of that nature and of such a spontaneous, improvisational character of the first voice; of possessing a fantasy, so strikingly "astonishing" and equally masterful, enriched by an exquisite filigree weave of Skrapar's polyphonic style."

In this context, musicologist Loro Sata also in the article "Polyphony and the Albanian masterpiece, iso, yesterday and always", published in the newspaper "Mapo" on May 14, 2015 writes: "Here are some of the characteristics of the Tepelena style: You must master the breath wide and deep of the recipient's melody; The active counterpoint that the second voice carries and brings; Mixed and rich musical rhythm; Dynamic wealth accompanied by the prosperity of its agogic transformations. While passing on the interpretation of the tragic-style labyrinth-Vlore song, the spoken, recitative melody is dominated by content with pronounced epic expressions; Highly accented rhythm; Dexterous dynamics; Central sound recorder; Sound Harmony - the modes on which the melody develops, belong to the folk typical; Compressed voice control, etc. Other features and features unfold the Piluri style - of Vlora, which stands out in common with the first and second voices of the Tepelena style; for the truly characteristic and vibrant color of the third sound; mastering a modality, consistent harmony, of the third, as well as the fourth, iso voice."

It is noteworthy that Ramadan Sokoli was the first who establish the importance of Iso in the nature of popular polyphony at: "Albanian Folk Music Morphology", Tirana 1965, where he wrote: ... where the dialect is spoken we have homophonic music, and below this river where is the rotation of the consonant in, or other diphthong ua the phonetic features of the toast there and the iso together with the other polyphonic features. "

In the past, lab polyphonic music culture, like all Albanian folk music, was created, performed and lived mainly in tight, purely family settings. It began to emerge from such environments only after the second half of the twentieth

century. Label polyphonic music culture has always been remarkable for its vibrancy and density. Lab polyphony lives in the southwestern part of Albania, being partially or fully sown by the population of the districts: Vlora, Tepelena, Gjirokastra, Saranda, Përmet, Fier. It constitutes one of the four main dialects of Albanian popular polyphony, besides the mysic, tosky, cameo. On the other hand, these dialects are also divided into a variety of musical styles. Speaking of our popular sound music, it is worth noting that while in the northern and middle part of the country it is generally a homophonic voice, in the southern part it is generally more vocal, polyphonic. The main ethnographic areas that make up Labrina are Kurvelesh, Mesapliku, Drashovica, Topalltia, Treblova, Gorishti, Kudhëzi, Loperi, Kardhiqi, Rrëzoma, Coast, Dukati. Labce is also sung in Zagorie, Lunxeri, Maleshovo, Rrëza e Tepelena, Dragot, Kras, Izvor, Buz, Mallakastra, areas that we can consider as suburbs of Laberia.

The popular, polyphonic song is the strongest evidence that a people spend eternity singing, while a people who forget their song are doomed to death. The “code” and the techniques of transmitting voices and words are simple and understandable, “word of mouth” and from generation to generation. The secret is found in the interpretive individualities of polyphonic bands as well known throughout the country as: Arjan Shehu, Golik Jaupi, Nazif Cela, Brothers Cenko, Paro Ziflaj, Mehmet Vishe, Neil Ruci, Hasim Meli, etc., etc., who still maintain intact its form of authenticity from.

From the point of view of the researcher Spiro Shituni the question of the origin, timing, age of the lab polyphony, as well as of the whole Albanian folk polyphony, in terms of the lack of historical documents, is quite complicated. Some of our ethnomusicologists have dealt with it. Meanwhile, many foreign scholars, as the case may be, to a greater or lesser extent, directly or indirectly, have also addressed the beginnings of popular polyphony in general and polyphony of the respective countries in particular. In addition to trying to discover the basic distinctive features of polyphonic song, issues that have been the subject of study in such cases have been: the space within which popular polyphony revives, the time of birth of popular polyphony, the relationship between folk song and Byzantine church song.

“Albanians, hating the Muslim slave, did not bring with them the musical trends of Constantinople, nor the knowledgeable and clever art “ – asserts Lorenzo Tardo- but a regional provincial and archaic tradition, a tradition that was held in the 400’s and 500’s, but which actually goes farther back, in the time of the Basils, and probably even earlier. It seems that, the Byzantine song has failed to exert influence on the secular polyphonic song.

Iso-polyphony is a great value of Albanian folklore. Iso-polyphony is the basic musical phenomenon in Southern Albania, which is considered a unique

spiritual phenomenon of the inhabitants of Southern Albania. We have the Iso-polyphonic *tosk* and *iso labe*. Iso-polyphonic Albanian is really one of the super villains of Albanian folklore and of the world folk tradition in general genetic variants such as homophony (with one voice) geqe direct expression of the genetic unity of the species. From hundreds of centuries of practice, formulas have been built that express essentially the structure of the popular Iso-polyphony.

In line with the general study idea, we adhere to the thesis that the antiquity of lab polyphony, in the absence of historical documents, can be illuminated, first and foremost, through the study of live music. Since its beginnings are of an ancient age, this is clearly demonstrated by, among other things, the main individual traits themselves, interior design, and so on. So does the affinity that exists between the intonations of the lab polyphonic song and those of human speech. It is also meaningful that its intonations, as we shall see, from time to time; give us associations of livestock life, such as typical shepherd calls, etc. Antiquity also means the pentatonic modo-tonal construction of this musical culture - it is known that pentatonic modes are the earliest in the history of folk music. Hershmeri also undoubtedly shows the conception of the labyrinthine polyphonic song, in essence, by contrasting intrinsic, modal, harmonic ratios; rhythmic between different musical lines. Antiquity also implies its purely *za-noare* nature, etc.; However, the origins and timing of polyphony remain an open scientific issue.

Polyphonic music culture of Laberia exists in three main types or groups: two-tone or two-tone polyphonic, three-tone polyphonic or rhymed, four-tone or four-tone polyphony. The polyphony with two voices is mainly composed of women from the city of Gjirokastra, women from some villages of the Gorishti area, from the village of Kanine, men from the village of Duka etc. Whereas polyphony with three and four voices, where less and more is heard all over the villages and suburbs of Laberia.

If, for the past ten years, there has been more widespread polyphony, nowadays, the most use is earning the quadruple polyphony. The first soloist is called *marrës* (taker), the second is a *kthyes* (replier), and the third soloist is called *hedhës* (thrower).and the fourth - "iso". The latter, in contrast to others, is sung by many. The singer's name expresses a well-defined rapport, it starts from a content, internal and organic connection that exists between them. In this way, the names: "taker", "replier", "thrower", "iso" imply different roles, contradictions and unity between them, and ultimately, each other.

But in the opinion of Albanian researcher Spiro Shituni, the overall image of lab polyphony is closely linked to the impact that in social and economic conditions have historically exerted on it. Over the course of hundreds of years, it has attempted to crystallize basic substantive and formal features

under the influence of a number of objectives, subjective factors. First of all, the operation of economic factors remains important. In the past, had little to do with agriculture. Meanwhile, for their own convenient environment, they cultivated a lot of livestock. It is interesting to note that, in addition to mother-in-law, lamentation, cheerfulness, etc., livestock life has exerted a significant influence especially on the polyphonic lab song. It is by no means the case that the foundational issues of this song relate, above all, to exactly such a life. She sings songs especially for cows and cows, sheep and goats, sheep and goats, bells and cobblestones. So, within the multi-label lab song, livestock life is also reflected musically. Among other things, this is best felt in the numerous recitations calls of key soloists - receivers, returners, throwers. In many ways, they give us examples of the typical shepherds' screams. Moreover, the entire return line gives the impression of a true pastoral nuance. Sensitive recessive moments should then be considered for all types of cadets, whether incoming, internal or closing, etc. Without this call, the general and emotional atmosphere of the lab song, however, is incomplete, it cannot even be understood if they are missing. Since the 1930s, professor Egerem Cabej observed, "... we hit the core of this song better by calling it shepherd's song ... The acoustic impression created by lab songs can be compared to the sound of cattle trumpets." The impact of livestock life is also clearly evident in popular lab instructor music.

Secondly, the social factors that influenced the labels of popular folk music are, at least, of two types: matrimonial and customary in general and patriotic solidarity. In Laberia have practiced the marriage within their own villages and outside. They, as yesterday and today, also receive and give inside, as well as certain ethnographic areas. However, marriages within the villages have generally been more restricted than inclusive, and marriages within the zones have, as a rule, prevailed over inter-zonal ones. It is clear that social factors, especially customary ones, may not have influenced internally to incorporate a single, intonative -modal lab-like music culture. Therefore, within the labels of folk music, homophony and polyphony, rural and urban, women's and men's vocal and instrumental music, with all the differences they have, they vary in a range of core common intonative-modal thematic features. In Laberia they have lived and live in a land of high, rough, rocky mountains, with a marked lack of vegetation, generally mountainous climates, with cool winter harsh winters, but also Mediterranean places, where summer it is hot and dry and mild winters, limited to the west by the Ionian Sea, etc. The impact of such natural conditions is again reflected, especially, on the polyphonic lab song. Experiencing it carefully, it seems that it has somehow conceived the ideological-emotional content of the majestic attitude of the mountains, their strength, their rigor, their legendary looks, their prideful looks - perhaps for this reason a general, essential note

typical of it, appears incomparable epos. On the other hand, the labyrinthine song seems to have been influenced to some extent by the particular beauty of coastal nature - perhaps because of this certain musical styles, such as himariot, pilurian, etc., bring, above all a characteristic lyrical note, etc.

The impact of natural conditions also highlights the popular instrumental lab, homophonic and polyphonic. Its largely lyrical notes, among other things, were driven by the greatness of our nature. Flute and culdyjar as typical tools for the whole Labëria, create clear impressions and reflections of Albanian nature.

In their musical intonations one can easily see the beauty of our natural landscape, given through the shepherd's spiritual world. The influence of natural conditions is also evident in lab dances with often epic video content, vivid and vibrant movements, strong and heroic inner explosions, sensitive recitative melody, usually mixed musical rhythm, measured and pronounced. Finally, the phenomenon of the influence of the geographical environment is observed in the construction of dwellings, which are usually made of stone, high and double storeys in popular clothing similar from one ethnographic area to another; to the next; in the similar way of life; in the strong and determined character, the manly and proud temperament of the native mountaineers, etc.

Fourth, rural ethnic cleanness has had a profound effect on the individuality of lab folk music. The Leberites, in the past, developed a largely separate, closed, conservative folk artistic life relatively far away from the potential impacts of any foreign artistic culture. Such life was defined, to some extent, by natural conditions. Under these circumstances, they have been able to grow and develop an authentic folklore. "Our popular culture has existed chiefly: as a native peasant culture or a local civic culture - our researchers note. - "

Polyphony this phenomenon that will still continue to be studied

The indigenous peasant culture has been largely closed for centuries and, consequently, ethnically pure, indigenous. The original ethnic features stand out most in rural culture. The native civic culture was generally distinguished from the culture of the ruling clans and foreign invaders, with the gene being more exposed than the rural culture to foreign cultural influences. When our country was included in the Byzantine Empire, traces of Byzantine culture were noted in our popular civic or reflexive culture. After the Ottoman rule oriental influences appeared on it. "Ethnic peasant purity is a factor that also influences our day in lab folk music. First, it is understood that today, just like all Albanian folk music and art, other factors act on it. not to be overlooked, such as: lively folk artistic life, intense amateur and professional artistic activities, rapid and continuous

dissemination of musical values of all kinds, etc. As scholars have argued, modern-day technical information tools are widely used in today's folklore circulation system, which have a great informational transmission efficiency over folklore users, regardless of their educational level⁵. "In another aspect of the general judgment on the peculiarities of Albanian music the opinion of semiologist Augusto Poncio points to the idea that: "The methodology of music semiotics is a method of listening". The methodology of listening to "Iso-Polyphonic Tuscan", Përmet Kabbalah, Shkodra song "Spring started coming" and "Jares" etc., is a method of listening and playing to reach a meaningful world for the language of music of these genres and the proof of the hypothesis of the "musical standard" of Albanian music, in addition to semiotic scientific interpretation (the theory of signs and symbols) and musicology.

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Societies with a Mission and the Traitor

The Permanent Possibility of the Traitor! What is a Traitor?

_____ **Ballzor Hoxha**¹ _____

Abstract

The work is a confronting of the phenomenon of – societies with a mission – as in Enver Hoxha's Communism, with the question of the traitor. In fact, it is a blend of irony and interpretative and theoretical deliberation upon the "lack" of traitors in our collective, this having for a background the recent collective confusion raised upon the "treason" of Martin Camaj and Ernest Koliqi, two key figures of Albanian struggle against this regime, since the initiation of the very same regime.

The work takes for an interpretative and theoretical basis three key fiction novels connoting the complex of the traitor and the society with a mission, confronting this phenomenon." The Journey to The End of The Night" Ferdinand Louis Celine; "Vajza e Agamemnonit" (Agamemnon's Daughter) Ismail Kadare; "Pasardhesi" ("Successor") Ismail Kadare.

The work is concluded by e graduation of these three fictions to an anti-heroic reality.

Keywords: *Traitor; Society with a mission; the disillusioned; reality; hero; projection of pain into a mission.*

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I. Societies with a mission and the traitor

Introduction

For societies victims of violence, accepting is very difficult, in living within this impossibility, suffered violence is projected into a tragedy, a phenomenon that passes further into a tragical heroism. Hence, the ethics of the society are pain and wounds and they remain permanent, inherent and unnegotiable. The pain from experienced violence passes into a heroic eternity, into heroism. And heroism into a permanent mission.

A permanent mission born out of pain from experienced violence, passed on into a heroism which for its sake sacrifices everything that stands on its way, or is allowed to sacrifice everything for its way.

Though a fiction, the novelette “Agamemnon’s Daughter” by Ismail Kadare, surfaces all the circles of a mission of this kind, of the society itself. But this already passed over into an ideology, ‘sacrifice’ for the State’s Power, towards a total Power. This novelette, matter of fact, surfaces the primordial structure of Power being built upon sacrifice, since The Myth upon Agamemnon (Euripid). It is an identical structure - the Power of Albanian society’s state built through sacrificing the own daughter of one of the members of the Power of the mission. Power built upon the sacrifice of the Daughter of the Successor of the very same Power, the character within the novelette named Suzana.

In order to describe the circles of the spiral of the mission of heroism and moreover them being in permanent inherence with the history of humanity, “quest” for heroism turned into total Power we will layer it in three grades through excerpts from Ismail Kadare’s “Agamemnon’s Daughter”

First grade

“... In my mind there was still continuing the same strange distraction. It was surely the drunkenness that was supposed to overtake one being in the proximity to the power...”

“... Nevertheless, I couldn’t take off of my mind what I had read about the sacrificing of Agamemnon’s daughter. The celebratory noise all around, music and the red silk full of paroles ... was sending me towards the ... celebration...”

“... Where are you hurrying this way? What is happening? You still don’t know? They say they are sacrificing Agamemnon’s daughter...”

“... Military men, mixed with Greek civilians, were walking towards the altar. ... maybe they had even stamped invitations. They all had one question in their

² Kadare, ‘Agamenon’s Daughter’. pp. 69, 70, 74, 76

mind: what was this sacrifice?... it was an immediate feeling that the lack of explanation, increased the weight of angst...

"... Stalin, didn't he sacrifice his son Jakov for... for... having the right... to be able to say that his son ... should have ... the fate... the fate... the fate ...of every Russian soldier. But Agamemnon, what did he have wanted two thousand and eight hundred years ago? And what was Suzana's father wanting today...:?"

Second Grade

"... Soon I found myself in the boulevard, inside the flow of people that were running hesitatingly under the sun that suddenly was looking hotter..."

"... Two thousand and eight hundred years before, Greek soldiers were probably returning In the same way, from the event of Iphigenia's sacrifice... everything light, humorous, that would somehow disperse the sadness of war: jokes, breaking the discipline rules, happy evening on brothels, was shaking in trembling now. While the big boss, Agamemnon, had sacrificed his own daughter, there would be no mercy for anyone. The axe had been bloodied already..."

Third Grade

"Suddenly it seems to me that I had disclosed the enigma. Jakov had been sacrificed not in order to have the fate of every Russian soldier, as the dictator had declared, but in order to give the dictator the right, to request anyone's death. As Iphigenia did give the right for the bloodbath..."

However, the circle of sacrifice for the Power does not end here, it is a spiral of circles that as a black hole devours in its own circles its own people. Moreover, in the sequel to "Agamemnon's Daughter", the novel "Successor" by Ismail Kadare surfaces the next level of 'sacrifice', the very sacrificing of the Successor to the Power (the member of the very totalitarian power of Enver Hoxha) in the name of the mission.

Once the Successor of the Power of the Mission is found guilty (as in "Successor" Ismail Kadare), instantly everyone is a – traitor. Instantly the whole Albanian society remains outside of the - territory -of the mission of the Albanian (based on Poststructuralist theories the ideology's "territory" is its own discourse, and the discourse of the ideology of Societies with a mission is founded upon the very border between the mission and its traitor, two signifiers that make for the complete discourse, signifying the infinity of the possibility for punishment as a

³ Kadare. 'Agamenon's Daughter'. p. 108

⁴ Kadare, 'Agamenon's Daughter'. p. 109

means to totalizing the power)⁵ Instantly we are on a trial, that an infinite one, one for its very own sake, a process for having abandoned heroism. Instantly we are expelled. And there is not a mere and a more powerful totality than this one – expelling a whole society from the mission/its synonym of its living. Strictly on the argument of betrayal.

“... Subversion had started from the early morning... people, after opening their invitation envelopes, would notice that there was no known hierarchical criteria in the appointment of the halls... the vice prime minister’s typist had her invitation in the Opera theatre, whereas the prime minister in the hall for agricultural technicians... within the hall, the invitees would be awaited by other surprises... there was only one seat, behind one simple square table above which there was placed a magnetophonon... ordinary officers, academics, drivers, senile women... would sit silently along one another... they had all listened to the Leader’s speech in Political Bureau...” (“Successor” by Ismail Kadare)

And the primordial, in phenomenological sense, in continuum to the actual structure of the very territory of the ideology of the mission become inscribed into permanence, and make for the case that everything falling out of the mission, the ethics of this mission, which in fact has been born out of pain and wounds, is seen as treason.

In fact, in this exact point, it is built the unstoppable potency of ‘anal – sadist’ projection of communism (which projects a whole New World), of a mission built in an eternal possibility of betrayal. Regardless of it being evidenced or not. Furthermore, in communist projection, the argument, paradoxically, within the isolated society in a territory of the ideology, may even turn into a plausible accusation. As is the case for permanent accusations for traitors as Ernest Koliqi and Martin Camaj. (See below.)

The traitor is always possible and always here, among us, within “our” pain. Within our heroism.

On one side, it is exactly in the mission for heroism, for heroes, where a totalitarian communism as one of Enver Hoxha is built upon, and on the other side, on the possibility of a/the traitor. Unpredictable, uncontrollable, unavoidable; traitors like Ernest Koliqi and Martin Camaj⁷, though the argument is – 80 years

⁵ Royle on Derrida ‘Jacques Derrida (Routledge Critical Thinkers) Routledge. And Mills. On Foucault ‘Michel Foucault (Routledge Critical Thinkers) Routledge

⁶ Kadare. ‘Successor’

⁷ Tare. ‘Dritehije ne histori - Martin Camaj & Ernest Koliqi, të pazbuluar’” In the year 2020 all of a sudden and out of no evidence, there was published a – fake news – article accusing the two as members to foreign Intelligence Service Agencies. Martin Camaj and Ernest Koliqi are two of the most distinguished individuals to have been accused and judged as traitors by the Enver Hoxha’s regime at the time of communism. Both of them are on the way of being fully established as highly respected and

– ongoing. Even though that being as a relic of a past's paranoia. Though as propaganda, and thus even as a – fake news – already. A treason that does not end.

But what if the betrayal goes further beyond, into a treason of the heroism of the mission, of the whole humanity, the humanity's ideal for heroism. Or to put it into other words, what if our heroism is seen as a death machinery, of war and violence.

In this, let us go back, in a deliberation for the – traitor – the first traitor, for the traitor of the whole humanity, not only at war, as a deserter, but additionally into the principles and the ethics of the highest humanity's values – the heroism. The traitor Ferdinand Bardamu, the protagonist of the novel "Journey to the End of the Night", of the writer Louis Ferdinand Celine.

Traitor in the face of heroism, the machinery of violence - war

Treason is punishable by law too. But it has been and still remains the heaviest sociological and psychological possible judgement and punishment in any human society. However awkwardly, man also continues to acknowledge and admire as a global masterpiece the same novel and this treason of the author Louis Ferdinand Celine.

On the other side Martin Camaj and Ernest Koliqi complex continues, though eighty years in the going they are still being "exhumed" as a threat for the others, through their punishment as traitors, already in much more sophisticated manner.

In fact, the relation hero – traitor is direct, it is dependant, the more traitors, or the greater the traitors, the more dubious sources and information, the more heightened is heroism. Heroism established (once more), recovered and clear, visible, and as much threatened.

The consequence to this, experienced pain, and violence, are reborn and create the spirit of revenge and remembrance of heroism. In fact, it creates the very possibility to endow crime with mission, with sacrifice, to interweave violence with treason as an argument. Or even to make unruly and not to take the responsibility, ever, for the committed crimes. Society becomes a chimera, neutralized and of manifold faces, entrapped within the territory of the past ideology of Power, a society that does not have a consciousness to percept beyond the Mission, beyond the permanent possibility of the traitor.

It is in this very chimera of a society whereby the need for the disillusioned is born, for the human that has been, that is in the face of mission of heroism. For the real traitor. For the traitor that sees beyond the mission of heroism and the machinery of violence and murder, back into our own deception.

important figures against Enver Hoxha's regime. The – fake news – burst and took over the whole public media and civilian debate causing a yet another rift in the collective consciousness and its truth.

“Traitor”, coward, deserter, antihero, this is the first and the only impression of the reader upon the narrator, protagonist too, named Ferdinand Bardamu (with the same name as of the writer’s). At the time of First World War, between France and Germany. He, Ferdinand, the narrator, wherever he goes and travels, during and after the war, does not leave aside no detail of war, and life in its entirety, disclosed as filthy, absurd, and senseless of any human feeling. A deceit of heroism.

Deceit about heroism, about French Mission in the First World War, upon man’s heroism and humanity in its entirety, is shattered immediately at the beginning of the novel by the bear logic in front of “death machinery” in “The Journey to the End of the Night”. “Treason” or man with e logic in front of humanity’s mission for heroism with its machineries of war. War in front of bear man from this illusion, in front of disillusioned man, become clear in “traitor’s” Ferdinand Bardamu first and immediate facing with the machinery of death, and which is continuously surfacing as the very “Heroism” of humanity.

The disillusionment of man in front of “Heroism” of man through the machinery of war is too clear and bear in these three grades of man’s immediacy of facing the war:

First grade

“⁸Down the road, way in the distance, as far as we could see, there were two Germans and they’d been busy shooting for the last fifteen or twenty minutes.... Maybe our colonel knew why they were shooting, maybe the Germans knew, but I, so help me, hadn’t the vaguest idea... Might I be, I was thinking, the last coward on earth?... alone with two million crazy heroes, armed to their eyes?”

Second grade

“⁹The colonel’s belly was wide open, and he was making a nasty face about it. It must have hurt when it happened.”

Third Grade

“¹⁰Was I the only man in that regiment with any imagination about death? I preferred my own kind of death, the kind that comes late... in twenty years... thirty... maybe more... to this death they were trying to deal me right away... eating Flanders mud, my whole mouth full of it, fuller than full, split to the ears by a shell fragment. A man’s entitled to an opinion about his own death.”

⁸ Celine. ‘Journey To The End Of The Night’ p. 7

⁹ Celine. ‘Journey To The End Of The Night’ p. 12

¹⁰ Celine. ‘Journey To The End Of The Night’ p. 14

Everything starts with some sporadic shooting by the German side, until the death of Baradmu's colonel, and heads through his first meditation, upon death, war and the world. The three grades create the nature of man with a logic in front of the machinery of heroism, machinery of death. Bear nature of deceit and heroism, being that a traitor or a disillusioned man.

All at once we are in the front line, and something looks completely absurd, *while nobody has any idea why is there a shooting*, ends with a powerful explosion that leaves dead several French warriors, and together with them the colonel himself. All at once we are in front of the war. In front of its absurd. In front of its senselessness. In front of a *weaving of thousands deaths around*. In front of and helpless towards death.

But instantly we are also in front of bear thought and thinking, in the first person, personal thinking, and a personal experience of man at war. Bear and logical, inside a bear logic in front of the war.

Is this the traitor, deserter (something that the protagonist conducts by the end of the chapter), the coward, the antihero? Or is it the man with a bear logic in front of the war and its senselessness? Its absurd? The unpredictability of death?

Matter of fact this is not the issue. In fact, the dilemma is about how could there be talked, how could there be logicised, and how could there be written about fear at war, in such a tragical and moreover, in such serious times for the 'mission' of France and French people. How could there have been an author behind such a novel? How could there be a hero in real life, a man that had taken part in France's war in the First World War, and thus awarded a war hero, with his name - Louis-Ferdinand Celine? Was this a treason against the mission of France and French people? Is this still a permanent tragedy to French people, moreover by a declared hero of its own? Is this a treason of man towards the heroism of humanity? Is there heroism in fact?

Permanent possibility of traitor – Albanian mission

Starting off from the first traitor of humanity, the first one of its own, that of Ferdinand Louis Celine, let us pose the question of whereabouts of our own traitor, the one among us, the one disillusioned by our deceit for an in-existent heroism.

We are slaves to our mission, Albanian mission. Mission for heroism

But our mission remains and is, only upon – the possibility – of treason in our environment. Treason of our pain of being Albanian. Being victims in reality. It is a paradox, while "we are heroes, we recall our own suffering". Where are our own victories? Our triumphs? We are hero victims.

In this we are cursed into permanent treason and permanent traitors in our mission. If in our reality, our own mission does not accept that we have been, also, raped, divided, deviated, deserters, filthy, evil and weak, as well as, the whole humanity in its difficult times, of human itself, we are Heroes in permanence. As many Heroes as there are members in our society, as many currents and systems there are. But, moreover, for as many guilty and crimes there are.

We do not have an individuality, as Camaj's and Koliqi's, we do not have a traitor of the mission of heroism at least in our own pain, in our individual experience. In fact this has just started to happen in Albania, they are so fragile and in confusion, and the mission of heroism (read: violence towards one another), totality, recover instantly as a chimera. Matter of fact they make a chimera of our own society.

And here is, the novel of treason of humanity, "first traitor in humanity", the novel "Journey to the End of the Night", and the decoding of total power in "Agamemnon's Daughter" and in "Successor" by Ismail Kadare, in front of the mission of Albanian, in the permanent threat of a possibility of treason, in a structure, they are the eternal war of the individual with the missionary of a society. (Something that is not alien for any of the human societies).

The myth of Agamemnon, as well as two other Kadare's above mentioned novels, resurface very truthfully the building of a Power through violent sacrifice, which passes into a value, and further into a system, and into a power and a totality. Into an encompassing spirit of a society. In reality, the sacrifice is appropriated into power to build the argument of punishment for the – traitor -. Controlling the – possibility – of treason.

So, how does it happen that eighty years on the going Martin Camaj and Ernest Koliqi still can be "exhumed" and accused (though just accused) traitors? How does it happen that we can never escape from the – traitor?

This is the complex of our actual society in its entirety. Fear from the individual, the disillusioned by our heroism, it built upon our pain, built for abuse and manipulation, for oppression. Or, is heroism possible? Or does our reality admit heroism? How can we imagine heroism in a reality like the one of Albanian?

Individuals like Camaj and Koliqi, many victims, great people and ordinary people in their own lives, are "exhumed" in all their pain of suffered violence, whenever it is necessary to spread the fog of chimera.

The mission of collectivizing the pain, mission of heroism of our society, the mission of our tragedy is lived only if admitted by our own reality. For now, violence is our fate and reality, that makes one wonder if we are Albanians, or have we crossed over into aliens, foreigners towards one another. Into transgressors to one another.

SECOND PART: Societies with a mission and the traitor

Heroism (collective mission) in front of reality

Introduction

In “Agamemnon’s Daughter” and in “Successor” by Ismail Kadare, the collective truth is a vortex of violence, evilness and undoubting to a highest totality. It is a collective truth born in evilness, that has passed into mission. In this unnegotiable mission’s circles, everything is disvalued to unbeing, individual or collective one, for more everything gets devoured inside it.

In this, beginning from the titles of these two novels, it is made clear the return, the eternity, and moreover the ritual of Power’s ritual, recalled and endowed under heroism and the mission about heroism. The suffering, pain and sacrifice suffered by our society have been appropriated into circles of building the Mission, under the pledge of the Mission for heroism.

Today, our own collective truth, the chimera, its effacement, in fact are the very reality that negates our own heroism, our mission. Our mission faced with the true treason – disillusionment of the man in front of the chimera of violence, faced to power, faced to crime against one another.

In this, the first treason, the greatest treason in humanity, the most powerful treason and still actual in humanity is here with us. The novel “Journey to the End of the Night” by Ferdinand Louis Celine is an evidence of man faced with heroism, an exposure of the entanglement of man in collective mission. It is the very exit, once and for all, beyond the vicious circle of heroism, its violence and its possibility for totalising the Power.

“Journey to the End of the Night” – Ferdinand Louis Celine

I

Though a novel upon treason to humanity, and of treason to France in its tragedy in the First World War, there where it was written, published and read for the first time, the novel “Journey to the End of the Night” of the writer known with the artistic name Louis-Ferdinand Celine (his true name is Louis Ferdinand Auguste Destouches) is one of the greatest influences in world’s modern literature. It is inevitable in the world’s literature.¹¹

¹¹ Great writers as Samuel Becket, Jean Paul Sartre, Gunter Grass etc, and particularly the writer Philip Roth, have imitated “Journey to the End of the Night” in its philosophy, language and in its viciousness.

The viciousness, misery of the perspective of the protagonist Ferdinand Bardamu, is one of the most spectacular deserting, but yet most believable, and with this, the most convincing in the entire history of humanity. This novel is in fact the first step of man's crossing out of the state of a humanity with a mission, for a heroic war, for a heroic humanity, for a heroic aim, into the disillusionment of reality completely senseless towards our heroisms. The narrator character Ferdinand Bardamu has a vicious perspective, confession, narration and expression towards life, death, and towards the entire deceit within. In fact, only with Ferdinand Celine as author of this novel, does the vicious narration come forward, a nemesis, wild, stone cold narration.

Furthermore, vicious narration of Ferdinand Bardamu, treason towards humanity from the main character in the novel "Journey to the End of the Night", is built in a perspective/literary technique of the first person and evidenced in personal, that builds an intimate evidence with the reader. Intimate deserting of man from life and the world, and much more from the humanity's heroism.

And much more, Ferdinand Celine's vicious narration (in comparison to Charles Bukowski's one with which it is very frequently misunderstood) is a narration of a coward declared and a direct one; deserter and a "traitor", traitor not only at war but also in the moral and in the "struggle" of man for heroism.

The novel "Journey to the End of the Night", is a novel in which the character Ferdinand is situated face to face with the horror of life and the man's world, and in front of the futility of life and death. It is a resurfacing of – deceit – that we call life, deceit that we declare as progress, a joint one, and as a heroic stepping forward of humanity in front of its tragedies, which in fact is a deceit in which everyone of us escapes from the anxiety of death and struggles to capture any drop, any crumb of joy, all of us remained pledged to this mechanism of deceit about the progress of humanity. He is direct and beared off any heroism, in his deserting.

On the other side of confronting of the man with the world on "Journey to the End of the Night", there is the angst from joy, paradoxically. Angst from conditioning, from life, from bonding. In fact angst for joy, angst for an anchor, capturing life with one's own hand, feeling of it, it is, in fact, an unattainable happiness in every moment. Happiness is unknowable, and with this unimaginable. It does not take

He also has an incomparable influence in America, writers as Henry Miller, generation known as the Beat Generation, and the musician and poet Jim Morrison are disciples of his writing. (But the most known writer which is also misunderstood by the readers for an original because of his imitation of Ferdinand Louis Celine is the famous writer Charles Bukowski. Bukowski goes as far as to imitate his style, sentence/syntax and much more in his language. In fact one of the greatest critiques made towards Celine in his oeuvre, about the incoherence of his writings, which in fact is a purposeful technique and an imitation of the spoken language and an expression of lower strata of the society, is also the main characteristic of the writer Charles Bukowski. Furthermore Bukowski imitates Celine of "Journey to the End of the Night" with the topics, in selecting his themes as well as in the preoccupations of his themes. But he never succeeds the height of the philosophy of Ferdinand Celine "Journey to the End of the Night".)

part neither in dreams, nor in the search of the man, and yet it is the very angst of everyone. In most of the novel, characters escape from happiness, like Ferdinand and the character from the other character Molly, a prostitute with a novel soul enabling Ferdinand a wellbeing; like Robinson the doppelganger of the main character who runs from happiness; likewise the family Henrouilles, two spouses with a mother/mother in law, they kill one another the moment they reach a secure wellbeing, etc. Happiness this value of heroism, of its achievement, is a paradox, for more it does not exist in this treason..

But it is not only the nihilism, the absurd, existentialism, the futility of life as themes (existentialism yet unpopularized, in fact the very existentialist writer mentioned above, the absurdist Samuel Becket, and also the philosopher and writer Jean Paul Sartre, have been influenced by Celine) that motivate this novel. In fact, in essence there is always the shadow of death that stands in observance in this life and above this humanity, and also the intuition towards death found everywhere, and its resurfacing too in every bonding and conditioning with life. The shadow of death, in this novel, shuts everything, life happiness and our strength to be deceived in and with life, heroic one.

II

“Traitor” manages to escape from the war front. He also finds shelter with an American with the name Lola, who sells fresh juices for the army, until he is not captivated by the angst of war, murder and the possibility of death. From there on, he is taken by the Military Police, being transferred from one hospital to another one, from one sanatorium to another. Until in a moment in struggling to escape, to run from the phony, absurd patriotic spirit, patriotism itself, in First World War France, he is not given for an experiment to a mental doctor, who together with a poet try to – recover – his health through poetry, which is, in fact, his war moral and patriotism disappeared inside of him. But there is no success to it, for them and for him to escape from the sanatorium.

Immediately after the end of the war he abords in a colonialist ship and he escapes to Africa. Without a motive, without a moral, without an aim and without a meaning. There – the night – is folded even deeper, the journey to the long night; the hell itself. Everybody is obsessed with their – aperitive – and ice on their aperitives. Later he finds, or to say it more exactly – he is found – in the greatest depths pf this hell, in a sub – plantation in the depths of the jungle. There he meets colonialists, leaders to expeditions and rubber picking, colonialists who have made dependent “Their military companies” with tobacco, and in this they have created their faithfulness to anything and against anything. There he sees that everything

repeats itself and is layered deeper into humanity, the power and the insatiability of the man for power, as an escape from the absurd. There is no heroism in all this massacre of desperateness, in this other world, everybody is pledged to the shadow of death everywhere and in everything.

Later on, through a Spanish colonialist ship which captures Ferdinand the narrator as a slave in his escape from this hell, he escapes to New York in America. From the moment he sees New York for the first time and onwards to the moment he is back to France at the end of the war, New York is “*a city that stands on its feet, erected, on its feet, nonetheless attractive, frozen, horribly frozen*”. There he meets Molly, a prostitute with a good soul who does everything to bring him back into a human, to bring him back beyond fear from death and into humanity. But she does not succeed. Ferdinand is constantly in horrific relation with death, always on the run, and always in search of nothing, a sort of independence from life whilst he lives. Or as he declares ““he is too much of a coward to kill himself” and thus lives unconditioned and unbonded with anything.

He returns to Paris, the post-war Paris. He returns and becomes a doctor. In one of the most diminished peripheries and most poverty stricken peripheries of Paris, as “*the poorest doctor in the whole of France*”.

“¹²... *I was living on the second floor and had a good sight on the rear side of the buildings. The rear sides are the “dungeons” of the buildings... It is the place where the shouting and the swearing of all buildings are gathered and heard... hundreds of men and women live inside these bricks and fill the space with their quarrels and their misunderstandings with curses and bursts...*”

Surely in the whole of the novel Ferdinand suffers from the fear of death. Furthermore, he goes to the frontline of the war. But his living on “the rear side” surfaces much clearer that his fear, is not death, but the very futility of life and the weight that the human gives to death by the man, in fact the paradox of the two.

Here ends the journey of Ferdinand Bardamu, in the rear side of the buildings, in the rear side of life, in the rear side of search and motive of man, in the rear side of all that that we live as life. On the rear side of heroism.

Closure

The impossibility, weakness and the manifold faces of our society, our own collective truth, is a chimera of heroism and our mission of heroism. We are alien to ourselves and alien towards our own heroism, and also towards our own reality.

¹² Celine. ‘Journey To The End Of The Night’

The evidence of the “most famous traitor of the world” Ferdinand Bardamu from the writer Ferdinand Celine, together with the evidence of two novels by Ismail Kadare, and our living in the face to our own reality whereby Camaj and Koliqi are traitors, the reality of Albanian, are an irreversible crack of the collective truth about heroic man, upon heroism, upon man’s mission of heroism. Let us deliberate these three evidences:

1. The evidence of “The greatest traitor of the world – Ferdinand Bardamu, given here in three layers:

First layer, man at war

“¹³I preferred my own kind of death, the kind that comes late... in twenty years... thirty... maybe more... to this death they were trying to deal me right away... eating Flanders mud, my whole mouth full of it, fuller than full, split to the ears by a shell fragment. A man’s entitled to an opinion about his own death.”

Second layer, man after the war:

“¹⁴There is something saddening with people when they go to bed. You can see that they don’t give a damn if they are taking anything from life or not, you can see that they don’t even try to understand why are we here. They simply don’t give a damn. American, or not, they sleep regardless of anything, they are swollen molluscs, senseless, without a worry about life”

Third layer, man after it all:

“¹⁵... I was living on the second floor and had a good sight on the rear side of the buildings. The rear sides are the “dungeons” of the buildings... It is the place where the shouting and the swearing of all buildings are gathered and heard... hundreds of men and women live inside these bricks and fill the space with their quarrels and their misunderstandings with curses and bursts...”

2. The evidence from the two novels by Ismail Kadare:

the ritual of violence of the collective mission and heroism, and the power over them, in “Agamemnon’s Daughter” and the continuing in the novel “Successor”. Mission of collective heroism, violence at its birth, at its building, at its being, in its permanence and in its unchanging nature.

¹³ Celine. ‘Journey To The End Of The Night’ p. 14

¹⁴ Celine. ‘Journey To The End Of The Night’ p. 172

¹⁵ Celine. ‘Journey To The End Of The Night’

3. And the evidence of reality which does not know us.

If in our reality we can “exhume” two persons, traitors, immediately and in continuance, and with this an entire society, we are not recognized by our own reality.

The pain, once sanctified, furthermore abused and passed into the foundation of our mission of heroism is here, but we should also face ourselves with our impossibility as a society, and even with our sacrifice as a society as such. In fact, everything is evident and clear, unchangeable, in all existing evidences, like the two fictional novels by Ismail Kadare, taken here as an example. The evidence that is not collectivized and not accepted, always recall the society in the permanence of rituals of violence, and in this they shutter collective truth.

The hero is unknown to us. It is outside of our own reality. Or, our reality does not accept the hero. Neither as in the way we mythicise it nor as in the way it is. But it takes courage for a “Traitor” to be born. The disillusioned.

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Establishing and Functioning of a Poliphonic Center in the Area of Southern Albania and the North of Greece

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Abstract

In times that we are living, it is becoming more careful are more interesting the preserve of making art and culture part regarding the cultural heritage. For their own social and political stages, no initiative or objective can be in school life by any means. Consequently, the designed strategy cannot approach reality spontaneously.

Seen in this perspective, today it is presented as an important priority to rise at the institutional level of state, central or local policies, through which can be protected the most defining values of the heritage of the Balkan peoples. Regarding this idea, in my work I have tried to analyze in detail the phenomenon where Polyphony stands out and prevails in Albanian culture and art, as well as by harmonizing it with state policies, to build the first centers of Polyphony concentrated mainly in the South of Albania, as well as in the North of Greece, exactly where the greatest concentration of the delivery and interpretation of Polyphony is located.

No goal can be achieved if we will not be able to draft strategic plans or sound studies aimed at preserving or even continuously generating the values of our society.

Therefore, since art and culture in themselves do not aim to emphasize in an extreme way the differences between peoples but their approximation, the establishment of polyphonic centers between the two countries Albania and Greece, with the right tools, legislation and infrastructure, would make possible, the preservation and continuous strengthening of this heritage, without compromising in any means or way the peculiarities or even their distinctive characteristics in creativity and interpretation.

Keywords: Polyphony, Albania, Greece, State, Strategy, Art, Culture, Legislation, Purpose.

Overview of the current situation of the countries where polyphony is interpreted

As a unique structure of that kind, the “Polyphonia” Centers, which will can be erected in will elaborate in the area of Southern Albania and the North of Greece and their functionality according to their profile, in order to maintain and continuously generate one of the most stable values of the communities, where this genre’s kind is cultivated. The establishment of these Centers in both Greece and Albania will continue with the process of building an action plan, which will help their function. This development plan will have at its center an analysis of their functionality, consequently the purpose of increasing the spread and increasing their role and impact on social life based on the potential they possess in the respective territories. For this reason and purpose, the recruitment of qualified staff will be needed as a very important step in order to meet the standards of establishment and well-being of these institutions.

Accordingly, those institutions will establish an action plan based on the following objectives:

- Setting up a national database of groups and polyphonic soloists, interpreters of polyphonic music.
- Creating a database with different creators, poets and rhapsodists who deliver this artistic genre.
- The maps used are in accordance with the Polyphonia Thematic Route, covering the entire Project Intervention Area
- These centers where lab and task polyphony are interpreted and inherited will contribute to the overall development of the areas through the information and continuing education they will provide. The extension and expansion of their activity in these areas will arouse a significant interest of the local and foreign public, which over the years has shown sustained attention to this enduring value of our cultural heritage.

Signing cooperation agreements with individuals, groups of interest, central, local and foreign institutions, in order to create a convenient climate for the successful progress and preserving of that important part of the spiritual heredity.

Polyphonia Centers at the in the area of Southern Albania and the North of Greece (WP5) will provide tourist information to the visitors in the intervention area, as well as knowledge & information about the cultural heritage of the region to all target groups. Moreover, the Center established in Dropull will serve as a recording studio to be used by polyphonic groups. The Centers Action Plan will be elaborated by PB3, who will also, in collaboration with the LB & PB4, conduct Workshops in polyphonic music tradition; part of those will be addressed to students to initiate the new generation into polyphonic music. For the establishment of the Centers & their Operational Services responsible will be LB & PB5, while PB3 will be responsible for the CB Polyphonic Caravan.

The Polyphonia Center at the area of Southern Albania and the North of Greece side of the borders will be established in existing infrastructures of PB5 and no design, license, permit or land acquisition are required. For the Center established in Epirus, for which responsible will be the LB, LB will sign a Programming Agreement with the Filiates Municipality, in order for the Centre to be established within the premises of Filiates, in an existing infrastructure.

The polyphonic music scene in Greece & Albania

The evidence, knowledge, and continuing consolidation of the stages where is performed Polyphonic centers in Albania and Greece, represents one of the main objectives of that program.

Additionally, besides the permanent work in the terrain-related to the knowledge and selection of creative and performative aspects, the overall success of that project remain the daily enrichment of stages themselves at local, and national level with groups and individuals, who would perform at Albanian and Greek's stages, aiming the dissemination and enlargement of the audience with preferences to the polyphony and its values.

Polyphony implies many periods of time. Representing an ancient tradition and culture, from early times to nowadays, the stages of antique and medieval times, including the contemporary ones, will create the proper atmosphere.

From that point of view, thanks to polyphony, the combination of various periods of time, as a continuous and successive process, would be a unifying trait. Because of that, the public will not only have the possibility to know more directly the polyphonic art but at the same time he could communicate and being involved inside previous times, which represents the Albanian and Greek civilization.

It would make possible the full functioning of the stage's infrastructure, and at the same time, its renovation, thus enlarging the interest of the local and foreign people. The latest, are increasing more and more their curiosity and interest toward that ancient form of art.

Cultural tourism in Greece & Albania

Including a selective repertoire with polyphonic music inside the touristic and guide itineraries, would better orientate local and foreign tourists not only towards the knowledge of cultural monuments or archeological parks in Albania and in Greece but at the same time it would broaden the vision of foreign visitors on real dimensions of the cultural and spiritual heredity of the respective countries.

Besides, making available the antique and classic stages of the various archeological parks, or different monuments of culture for the interpretation of Polyphonic centers, it could have an impact to the growth of the touristic contingents, in order to create a wider complete view of the traditions and rites of these areas.

In addition, this touristic flux would orientate the attention toward the manufacture's productions, such as clothes, brass, or culinary products, which offer a full view of the polyphonic tradition.

As in most cases, despite the multifaceted development that Albanian tourism has undergone in recent years, including elements of culture, the fact is that in various tourist programs, in addition to many cognitive aspects, in terms of natural resources of some historical indicators and culinary peculiarities, it remains a lukewarm and incomplete dimension, as long as it does not include and unfold to the proper extent the cultural background.

In this regard, if we talk about an elite tourism mainly in the southern areas of Albania, polyphony will undoubtedly need to occupy a considerable space, as it has accompanied the previous life in every era and continues to nowadays.

Therefore, in order to know a society in more detail, it would be useful not only to provide a larger place of its most representative features, in this case polyphony, but, among others, to become a real objective, as it penetrates from one generation to the other the very prominent values of spiritual heritage, in other terms for the survival and progress of this society.

In base of "National Strategy for Culture 2019- 2025" Ministry of Culture of Albania aiming the preservation and integrated protection of cultural heritage values, as testimony of inherited values from the past, as an expression of national identity and collective tradition property, the strategic document defines the

projects package for the restoration, preservation and conservation of objects - culture monument, based on the programs and sectoral and governmental priorities. Some of the basic criteria defining the priorities for the restorations of monuments are: monuments at risk, return of the invested value, development of the administrative area where the monument is located, through tourism, establishing of new businesses and employment opportunities etc. Part of these criteria are also the projects for the revitalisation of historic centres and museum centers, in urban and rural areas of the country. This measure includes also the planned activities in the National Strategy for the Sustainable development of Tourism 2019-2025, through activities related to cultural tourism, reconstruction of characteristic architectural objects turned into cultural objects and accommodation structures, improvement of road infrastructure and signage in cultural heritage destinations. The measures and activities planned in this objective envisage close cooperation with all stakeholders, to ensure the development of historical and cultural itineraries of the cultural routes of the Council of Europe in which Albania is a part, commitment to participate in other cultural routes that traverse the region or other regional initiatives aimed at creating new cultural routes, candidates for adoption as Council of Europe cultural routes. The strategic document defines several mechanisms for creating conditions for the functioning of the market of movable or immovable cultural assets. The inventory, cataloging, digitalization and monitoring of the movements of movable or immovable cultural assets will serve not only for the registration and digitalization of funds of public institutions, but also for the regulation of the regime of circulation of privately owned cultural assets. In order to meet certain standards of quality, education, security, preservation and protection of cultural values, in accordance with the legal framework, the strategic document provides for the licensing of commercial entities and experts assessing

The main indicators and expected results of the second policy goal are: architectural heritage and landscape objects restored and maintained versus the total, increasing public access to museums, number of cultural monuments and archeological parks for cultural tourism, number of facilities registered in the National Register of Cultural Assets, number of accredited museums, number of commercial entities and licensed cultural property evaluation experts. 6.1. Internationalization of art and cultural heritage values This objective defines specific measures and activities for the promotion and internationalization of the values of Albanian art and cultural heritage in the country and in the world. This objective aims to revive the great potential, which is the intangible cultural heritage, passed down from generation to generation and created over the centuries and gives them a sense of identity and continuity, thus helping

to promote respect for cultural diversity and traditional human creativity. The measures include the organization of annual, existing and new activities, in country and abroad with the aim of preserving, promoting the values of cultural heritage and raising public awareness of the real potentials that this heritage constitutes and presents.

For the preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage of national minorities in the country will be determined the financial support for various cultural and research activities of this heritage with the aim of protecting, cataloging and digitization for preservation of culture and identity of national minorities and prohibition of practices aimed at assimilation of their distinct culture and identity. This document decision explicitly provides “ Education through culture “, it provides and creates the necessary conditions for the preservation, promotion, protection, cataloging and digitization for the preservation and development of culture and identity of persons belonging to national minorities, such as wealth, value and part of the national cultural heritage Preservation and promotion of intangible cultural heritage values, which are considered at risk will be done initially by creating a register of intangible heritage carriers and through financial support schemes as well as training to create opportunities for knowledge transfer from consolidated artisans and craftsmen to different interest groups. This activity will be implemented in close and continuous cooperation between the National Center of Traditional Activities and the National Chamber of Crafts. In order to include national cultural assets in the representative lists of UNESCO world heritage in cooperation with professionals in the field, a list of elements will be initially compiled, on the basis of which files are prepared by experts in the field. The main indicators and expected results of the third policy goal are: number of intangible cultural heritage activities organized in the country and abroad, number of researches and publications on the cultural heritage of national minorities, register of intangible heritage holders, number of trainings in order to preserve artisans and crafts at risk, the number of tangible and intangible values registered in the UNESCO representative lists, the number of participations in international activities and the number of international activities organized in the country, as well as the number of projects participating in international funding programs. 44 The Committee for National Minorities is a representative body of minorities, according to the regulations in DCM no. 726, dated 12.12.2018 which aims to ensure the protection and promotion of the rights and interests of national minorities

Increasing public interest in cultural programs by improving services, products as well as artistic quality. This objective envisages the establishment and restructuring of new institutions for art and culture, which aim to supplement and update the cultural sector with new products and services. The establishment

of these institutions is based not only on the need to create modern products and services, but also on the requirements of different interest groups. One of these institutions that is intended to be established is the Center for Research of the Cultural and Creative Industry, which will fill the large gap that exists in relation to research in the field of culture and related indicators of impact. Among other things, this center will have as its objective the organization of trainings and research, fundraising for the implementation of local and international projects, the creation of a central statistical system for data on culture and creative industry in Albania, the collection and publication of cultural data from all public and private actors, creation of promotional platforms for cultural tourism, etc. The design of project ideas for the establishment of arts and heritage institutions, as well as new cultural centers is a measure based on the government's policies and priorities for development.

Infrastructure reform policies of cultural institutions through investment in new modern buildings, as well as qualitative and technological modernization of existing buildings aim not only to increase the quality of products and services offered by cultural institutions, but also a better management of them through revenue growth. In order to continue the positive trend in increasing the quality of cultural products and financial collections, various packages of cultural services and products will be designed and implemented.

The application of digital technology to increase the quality of services, products as well as the promotion of art and cultural heritage implements government policies for digitalization of services and citizens' access to cultural institutions. Performing services through online platforms, digitization of institutional funds, promotional platforms, etc. are some of the areas where the application of technology will bring increased quality of products and services. Through the assessment of the needs for employment services and vocational training in the field of creative industry, together, we shall draft a detailed plan for training and capacity building of individuals, independent cultural operators and the creative industry for activities in the labor market. The main indicators and expected results of the fourth policy goal are: creation of new institutions, reconstruction of buildings, increase of creative and competitive capacity of cultural products inside and outside the country, number of art and cultural heritage activities in general and activities for promoting and protecting the traditions, culture and cultural identity of national minorities in particular, increasing the number of employees in the culture sector and interacting with other sectors⁴⁸, as well as the digitalization of cultural services and products. The program aims that educational and cultural institutions help the younger generation to develop self-confidence, as individuals and members of various groups within the society; encourage them to develop a wide range of their skills and interests; identify and foster their potential as well

as develop their creativity. It also aims to recognize the values of tangible and intangible heritage of the country through various projects within the program. Design and implementation of an educational platform through art and cultural heritage institutions and the pre-university system. The problem identified during the implementation of the program for several years is the concentration of activities mainly in urban areas of the country, especially in the city of Tirana, where the largest number of cultural subordinate institutions are located. This objective aims to extend the education program throughout the country starting from the existing successful projects, which in cooperation with the local level and their subordinate institutions can be implemented in other cities, but also the emphasis will be on the design of new projects according to the identified specifications. The education program will be extended to independent operators through call for proposal projects aiming to have a wider participation of young people in places where local and central cultural institutions find it difficult to expand their activities. The integration of people with disabilities and national minorities through the Education through Culture program is one of the measures taken that will be implemented not only through existing projects, but also through projects designed specifically for access according to the needs of communities. In content, the program provides and creates the necessary conditions for the preservation, promotion, protection and development of culture and identity of persons belonging to national minorities such as property, value and part of national cultural heritage. The preparation and publication of monitoring and evaluation reports will continuously affect the improvement and updating of education program projects by adapting to the field conditions, as well as the circumstances in which they take place. The main indicators and expected results of the fifth policy goal are: increasing the number of educational projects within cultural institutions at the local and central level, better geographical spread of the program in the territory, increasing the number of participants in educational programs and conducting monitoring and evaluation reports within the program

The role of the polyphonia centers

Taking into consideration the importance of traditional polyphony in Albanian culture and its place inside the world polyphony, thanks to an initiative of Albanian specialists and not only, the Polyphony Centers at the area of Southern Albania and the North of Greece will be based on the project "Polyphony", a project which is being implemented by Albania and Greece. So far, having no specialized structure for the further protection and cultivation of this considerable arsenal of our cultures, everything has remained to the inertia and spontaneous ritual, represented by any folklore activity or festival.

UNESCO's protection of polyphony contributes to face and solve the problems created by the influence of tendencies of globalization, and from various demographic movements and immigration. Actually, it is necessary to proceed with convenient policy and care, which could be consolidated by the establishment of such a center. Its specific projects and programs would create the proper climate for the preservation of that great potential, giving continuity to the further generation of the polyphonic song. Action Plan refers to the Centers developed in the entire Project Intervention Area; thus, you should not focus your analysis only to the Albanian polyphony.

The centers Southern Albania and the North of Greece will be multifunctional, it will create the opportunity to preserve this musical current, and the teaching and heredity of the polyphony to future generations, as well. It will approach more the performances of polyphonic works toward the large public, which is not the case today.

Actually, there are very few events because this musical genre has not aroused interest to the younger generations.

- The Polyphonia Centers at the Southern Albania and the North of Greece are at the local public institution, established in accordance with the legislation in force and subordinated to the local government unit.
- The object of its activity is the preservation and conservation of this musical genre, the teaching, and inheritance of polyphony towards future generations, and the realization of the performances of polyphonic works for the large public, training, seminars, etc.
- The structure, and way of organization and functioning will all be determined and coordinated by PED Epirus in collaboration with the local Municipality based on the proposal of the section of Art and Culture, after being approved by the Municipal Council.
- The way of organization and functioning of the Polyphony Centers in the area of Southern Albania and the North of Greece are determined by the statute, which should be approved by the Mayor, based on the proposal of the head of the Center.
- The statute of the Polyphony Centers in the area of Southern Albania and the North of Greece are proposed by the head of the institution and approved by the council of the unit of the respective local government.
- The centers in the area of Southern Albania and the North of Greece are headquartered in the local administrative unit.
- The activity of the Centers in the area of Southern Albania and the North of Greece are closely related to the activities of polyphonic groups in intervention areas .

Strategic development practices & tools

The various analyzes carried out by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Albania also by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture, by local government bodies, or the Institute of Popular Culture and various academic instances, have created a complete picture of the situation, its escalation, progressive and regressive factors, in which polyphonic culture is actually.

Various statistical indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, dictate the design of a specific strategy to intervene and change the overall situation, mostly in areas where it is observed a significant demographic movement, which not only reduces its performance, but presents also a very high risk for the continuity of the preservation of this tradition. It is already clear that the design and implementation of a specific strategy on the preservation and continuous generation of polyphonic tradition in Albania and Greece, is the most effective tool and mechanism to keep alive this inalienable value of the cultural and artistic identity of these countries.

Following that, it is necessary to identify:

- Human resources
- Creative and artistic resources
- Traditional and contemporary repertoire
- Stakeholders
- Financial indicators
- Natural and cultural resources
- Epicenters where there is a greater concentration of artistic formations
- Infrastructure and general
- This objective will be possible by identifying, selecting, and classifying values and indicators that dominate and represent song creation and interpretation of the polyphonic song, according to various specifics. Like that, the specialized and professional expertise will have a clearer picture of better orientation towards stable and transient values along this long and uninterrupted process of generating polyphonic traditions.
- A deep knowledge based on scientific and artistic criteria regarding the overall origin traits and characteristics of marked areas, as foci of the generation of polyphonic song, would directly affect the expansion level of its efficiency. Furthermore, any strategy or project would be easier to navigate to those points where it could intervene both with financial means and with infrastructural and logistical mechanisms.
- Every Intervention on spaces where a specific study has previously been conducted would have an effect regarding the reduction of the risk's margin of any possible financial abusing, or human resources.

Selection of the Head of Centers:

- As regards the Center in Greece: The Head of the Center will be appointed by PED Epirus, in cooperation with the local Municipality will be appointed by the Councils of the local government unit and will be selected between two professional candidacies of the art sector. He will be proposed by the chairman of the local government unit.
- The criteria for the appointment of the Head of the local public artistic and cultural institution are defined in the statute of this institution, which is approved by the council of the local government unit. The juridical relations in the Polyphony Center in Albania is regulated by the Labor Code of the Republic of Albania, as well as by the laws, the statute and the internal regulation. At the same time this only concerns the Albanian Center: "The juridical relations are regulated by the appropriate Greek legal framework"

The Head of the Polyphony Center has the following competencies:

- a) He is the main responsible for the functioning and management of the Center
- b) He exercises the competencies to direct the administrative-economic activity of the Center
- c) He represents the institution in relations with third parties;
- d) He approves the regulation of the internal functioning of the Institution, after the approval of the statute by the Mayor.
- e) He approves the annual plan of the center's activities, and he concludes contracts with the beneficiary entities of the center
- f) He selects and classifies polyphony projects from the point of view of artistic and economic values;

To achieve the above objectives, the Center uses its resources and cooperates with academic staff, specialists in the field, composers, singers, instrumentalists, etc. The staff of the center is approved through a series of instructions referring to the structure, staff selection criteria and organizational work devised on the basis of the function of this institution. Any contractual employment relationship between employees and the Center is regulated via an individual employment contract, according to the Labor Code of the Republic of Albania, by-laws, statute and internal regulations.

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the polyphonic song, according to various specifics. Like that, the specialized and professional expertise will have a clearer picture of better orientation towards stable and transient values along this long and uninterrupted process of generating polyphonic traditions.

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Every Intervention on spaces where a specific study has previously been conducted would have an effect regarding the reduction of the risk's margin of any possible financial abusing, or human resources. Development of the polyphonia centers in the area of Southern Albania and the North of Greece

The center aims to:

1. Supports the study of polyphony mainly in Albania and Greece and beyond.
2. Expands the boundaries of ethnomusicological research in terms of ethnological, cultural-anthropological, social, philosophical-aesthetic, psycho-physiological aspects.
3. Introduces the features of the local styles of local polyphony.

The objectives of the center are:

1. Cooperation with international ethnomusicological organizations, active participation in ethnomusicological life of scientific-research centers for traditional music as well as phonogram archives in Albania and elsewhere
2. Creating a map of the geographical distribution of our traditional polyphony in the country, accompanied by scientific comments;
3. Organization of symposia on traditional polyphony, publication and reflection of these activities on the website.
4. Translation of ethnomusicological publications in Greek, Albanian and foreign languages”.
5. Presentation of the polyphony of Albania and Greece in the international arena through the presentation of the works of scholars.
6. Studies on the current state of polyphony based on archival and historical-ethnographic archival data
7. Establishment and cooperation with “Polyphonia” Centers in other countries
8. Implementation of various local and international projects;

Strategic planning

Plan for sustainable operation for both countries and the Centers after the closure of the project.

The Albanian reality after UNESCO's protection of iso-polyphony, has evidenced the lack of a special structure to monitor and administer the progress and problems of protection and development of the polyphonic tradition. For this reason, after the closure of this project, the center will focus on its activities:

Establishment and updating of the national register of polyphonic groups and artists at the region level, for both LABE and TOSK polyphony.

Coordination between state and international institutions and the artistic community in regard to the participation in various artistic and cultural festivals or events, inside the country and abroad.

It will apply for various projects at UNESCO structures or EU programs for organizing various artistic activities at the national and international levels.

Among the priorities of the center will be the organization and support of various activities, such as scientific conferences or various symposia regarding the protection of this heritage and its continuity in front of time's challenges.

The center will be able to monitor the entire polyphonic territory, getting acquainted with appearing problems and innovations in the field.

The center will organize and conduct as well, various research expeditions with local and foreign researchers.

Business plan

Polyphonia Centers at the area of Southern Albania and the North of Greece will build their function based on the budget provided by the Polyphonia Project. Meanwhile, other funding schemes, such as support from the Local Government, do not affect the implementation phase of this project. However, this source of funding can be useful and provide expectations and perspective for the continuity of these centers proposed for the operation of the Centers, especially in the closing phase of the project.

Financing sources of the Center during the Project's implementation phase:

- Polyphonia Project funding
- Financing sources of the Center after the Project's implementation phase:
- local government budget for culture
- revenues provided from various projects
- incomes from the sale of the artistic and cultural work

- incomes from tickets, services provided by the institution to third parties
- Sponsorships and donations other legal incomes.

The fund of Polyphony Center will be approved every year, it will develop and finance polyphonic projects, aiming to preserve the heritage and national values, in function of cultural policies for Polyphony, such as festivals, national competitions, jubilee activities, column promotions and publications; etc.

“Polyphonia” Centers will have the following competencies:

1. Implements policies in the field of art and culture, in accordance with corresponding law;
2. At the beginning of each year the Centers plans and announces the annual calendar of activities and the respective fund;
3. It administers and plans the public fund, according the areas of activity of the Center, it supports and finances, fully or partially, the activities related to Polyphony through projects presented by individuals and legal persons, in accordance with the program and policies of the Municipality;
4. Every year, it presents to the Municipality the requests for budget support, which supervises the use of that financing:

Art Gallery and Museum

The Art Gallery and the Museum of Polyphony will be another pace of the center where visitors will get acquainted with numerous materials about Albanian polyphony, and not only.

Some materials of the Museum and Art gallery could be:

1. Distribution of maps of different polyphony forms, at home and abroad.
2. Various books on polyphony
3. Manuscripts
4. Works
5. Photo
6. Archival records
7. Clothing collections
8. Musical materials
9. Musical instruments
10. Scientific works
11. Video materials
12. Transcriptions

Marketing plan

The Polyphony Centers at the area of Southern Albania and the North of Greece, from the approved annual budget fund, develops and finances polyphonic projects, with the aim of preserving national heritage and values, in function of cultural policies for Polyphony, such as festivals, national competitions, jubilee activities, promotions and column publications; etc.

“Polyphonia” Centers will have the following competencies and functions:

- Implements policies in the field of art and culture, in accordance with applicable law;
- Plans and announces publicly, at the beginning of each year, the annual activity calendar and the relevant fund;
- Administers and plans the public fund, according to the areas of activity of the Center, supports and finances, in full or in part, activities related to Polyphony through projects submitted by natural and legal persons, in accordance with the program and policies of the Municipality;
- It submits annual requests for budget support from the Municipality, as well as supervises the use of financing by the entities supported by it.
- Operation of the polyphonia centers
- The Polyphonia centers in both Albania and Greece will have a construction and operation typology. They will function as independent, non-profit organization, which will exercise their activity based on initiatives or projects in order to protect and guarantee the continuity of polyphonic traditions.
- Besides, the centers will coordinate, support projects with mutual budgets, according a common calendar of activities with central and local government bodies, and with various international organizations.
- To achieve the above objectives and expectations, the centers will operate on the basis of the following parameters:

Location

The Centers at the area of Southern Albania and the North of Greece are structural unit of Municipalities, with the facilities provided by the existing infrastructure. The staff will consist of the Director and specialists, who could be employed according to the objectives and order of the Mayor.

The centers will be built on the existing infrastructure provided by the Municipalities.

The center has a bureau which creates national and international contacts;

- The centers will have a section for scientific research
- The centers will have three classrooms, where specialists in the field teach polyphony to future generations.
- The centers will have two rehearsal classes, one for instrumentalists and the other for singers.
- The centers will have a large hall for various polyphonic groups in order to perform rehearsals before the concert and to record the songs via music studio.
- The centers will have a concert hall which serves for the realization of performances by Albanian polyphonic groups and foreign ones, in the function of the activities that this center will perform.
- The centers will have its own production studio equipped with all necessary equipment for the registration and preservation of polyphonic works, and for the creation of new polyphonic works by Albanian and foreign composers. The Production Studio will be located between the rehearsal hall and the Concert Hall, in order to record the polyphonic works that take place in these two halls, both in audio and video.
- The centers will have an Art Gallery and Museum of the Greek and Albanian polyphony where all the accessories of the Albanian polyphony, clothes, photos, various videos of performances of polyphonic groups, books, documents, etc. are exhibited.
- The Centers will be headed by the Director who is appointed by the Mayor;
- The Centers will be accountable to the Mayor for its activities.

Scientific Research and Publications Office

The Research Office focuses on its research, collection, preservation of polyphonic music and its enrichment with new polyphonic materials, elements and works, trainings and seminars. Based to its scientific-research activities, the research office could be considered as a music research laboratory.

The office will be an active part of the teaching process by dint of agreements with universities in the country and abroad, and its counterpart offices, wherever the subject of polyphony is taught. In cooperation with external experts the office can propose measures, teaching curricula, training, seminars, workshops, competitions in order to make the polyphony more sensible to young researchers and musicians.

On behalf of the main promoter of growing attention and interest to the Albanian polyphony in the international arena, the office will systematically

examine different aspects of polyphonic music, it will participate in international forums, will organize scientific conferences, establishing new polyphonic ensembles, as well.

The office will invite and engage several experts, such as: folklorists, historians, theorists, composers and ethnologists. One of the other missions of the office is the registration section, where, according to a certain calendar, the office prepares all those materials to be registered by the polyphonic groups. These materials will be recorded, copied-updated, restored, processed and edited, transcribed, included in the database, audio, photos and other materials which, once identified, will be certified. The office will also occasionally publish works on polyphony, books, archival recordings, collections, articles, reviews in national and international forums, etc.

Offered services

The Center offers effective training / seminars on polyphonic music, according to selected target groups, it collects, processes and distributes valuable data to art and culture subjects in fields of production, education and promotion of polyphonic activity; it encourages, cooperates, finances or co-finances projects and programs in the field of polyphony, production and distribution of national and international polyphonic activities; it registers polyphonic entities, according to the requirements and professional criteria already approved by the Center; it provides technical assistance, in the service of quality growth and standardization of polyphonic music.

Southern Albania and the North of Greece Polyphonic Centers:

Following the parameter's details on which Southern Albania and the North of Greece the Polyphonic Centers will operate, here below there is a list of other tools needed for a more visible efficiency of this center:

- The centers will function only for protection and generation of polyphonic song. Any other activity, whether cultural or artistic, will not be the subject of this center.

The infrastructure of the center may include:

One conference hall for meetings and various seminars.

- One recording studio with the necessary equipment. The studio needs only several brass instruments, typical of the area.

- One small hall where different groups or individuals could practice or perform polyphonic song
- Requisitions with traditional clothing of the area, with which the polyphonic groups perform on the stage.

Studio Production Audio and Video

The production studio represents the central direction where the musical parts of both halls will be recorded, such as rehearsals and concerts. The production studio will also serve for the restoration of old previously recorded music materials, bringing them into the proper formats, making them accessible to everyone. The center will also have its own Youtube channel where it will be able to reflect sounds and images of all its musical activity.

The studio, like other rooms, will be acoustically isolated to enable the mixing and mastering of every piece of music performed in this studio. The isolation will be done with gypsum with the following parameters: Partition wall, Knauf W112, with UW-CW75mm structure (isolated with acoustic adhesive), with 1 white GKB tile layer and 1 Knauf Diamant Board GKF-I tile layer on both sides + Knauf Stone Wool NB VentAcusto D = 75kg / m³ = (isolation up to 70 dB). After being isolated with gypsum, the studio will be paved with ceiling and floor parquet, while the walls will be covered with fur material curtains mixed with dock, or with acoustic sponges so that the acoustics inside the classroom are in the required parameters and the sounds do not collide with each other and create acoustic pollution. In order to have visibility between the premises, the studio will be situated between the two halls and it should have partitions in the glazed wall. The production studio will be divided into two rooms.

1- Audio part

The audio part will be professionally equipped to enable the operation of the studio, namely:

- Study table
- PC workstation with core parameters I9 9th generation
- Two 32-inch PC monitors
- Nuendo 10 software program or its relative
- Sound card p. Mixer ssl g. Microphone preamplifiers
- Headphone amplifiers
- Monitor Yamaha 2 pieces HS 8 Studio and 2 pieces HS5 Studio
- Three pairs of Sennheiser HD300PRO headphones

- 8-octave Midi testers l. VST Native Instruments Complete Control 12 full upgrade Editor
- Different cables
- UPS batteries for apparatus
- Digital converters to convert the signal from analog to digital and vice versa
- Master clocks to synchronize 2 or more signals
- Hardware Analog (equalizer, compressor, reverb, mastering, echo, etc.)

2- Video part

- The video part will be equipped to enable the operation of the studio, namely:
- Study table
- PC workstation with core parameters I9 9th generation
- Two 32-inch PC monitors
- Software program complete package of Adobe and Da Vinci
- Personalized graphics card
- Monitor Yamaha 2 pieces HS5 Studio
- UPS batteries
- A pair of ATH-M50X Audio Technica Headphones. Last Red One or DSRL camera (2 or 3 pieces)
- Static camera (2 or 3 pieces)
- Stabilizer Camera DJI Ronin-SC Gimbal (2 or 3 pieces)

The Southern Albania and the North of Greece polyphonia centers: a music hub

Following the details of the parameters on which the Southern Albania and the North of Greece Polyphonic Centers will operate, we are listing several other tools needed for a more visible efficiency of this center:

- These centers will only work for the protection and generation of polyphonic song. Any other activity, whether cultural or artistic, will not be the subject of this center.
- The centers will have an infrastructure with conference halls, meetings and various seminars.
- Recording studio with all the right equipment. In this studio it will not be necessary to equip with various musical instruments other than any pastoral wind character.

- Small hall where different groups or individuals will be able to practice or perform the polyphonic song.
- Requisites with traditional clothing of the area, with which polyphonic groups will take performing at the stage.
- Another important aspect of the function of these centers is that of continuing professional qualification. Through different platforms will be presented clear panoramas of current situations in the circuits marked as polyphonic areas. Further, specific training programs will be prepared where experts in the field will be continuously trained who will further specialize various trainees who will be interested in engaging as performers in various polyphonic song projects.

Dissemination & future development

The establishment and operation of such centers affect the final solution of this problem carried over the years, managing not only the problem of surviving of the Polyphony, but even avoiding the inevitable danger of its slowly extinguishing.

This kind of functioning typology will favor the absorption of funds and projects, it will, as well, have constant supervision and presence in the identification and reduction of many problems of extinctions, more concretely, a development process guaranteeing the future in terms of preserving and further strengthening of this culture.

Considering the Polyphony, a very important side of our cultural and spiritual heritage, we strongly support the conviction that the establishment of such centers is not only useful, but also vital in terms of protection and general development of this tradition.

Bearing in mind the above arguments, hereby there are some of the sustainable objectives:

- Creative and interpretive resources remain the main source of enrichment and continuous generation of the repertoire with new creations, in those areas where polyphonic song is used, as artistic expression and a companion of rites and traditions.
- The return of these villages to tourist spaces will significantly increase the need of local visitors, and especially foreign ones, not only treating it as an evocation of history, but as an artistic phenomenon of today's reality.
- Increasing contacts and intensifying relations with the diaspora will raise the need of setting up specific participation programs in different countries of the region, and in Euro-Atlantic areas, focusing on creative and interpretive values that the song incarnates in itself.

- Besides, in addition to popular songs of the past, enriching the polyphony with young performers will renew the fund of songs, it will bring creations that contain motifs of modernity such as, for example, the theme of immigration, or even those with the vital and social phenomena of the time we live in.
- Participation in various polyphonic song festivals organized and supported by the regions of Vlora and Gjirokastra, and the Ministry of Culture, will create the climate and the opportunity to be present in these important cultural events with new energy and new creations, new songs which respond to the form, content and ideas of the actuality, and finally representing the new generation on festival stages. in addition to popular songs of the past.

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Decision No. 433, date 26.06.2019 “On the functioning and the manner of conducting the activity of the National Center of Traditional Activities”

Ministry of Culture of Albania “National Strategy for Culture 2019- 2025”

Book Review

Influencers- Journalists Versus Politicians

*On the Book “Influencers/Ndikuesit” by Belina Budini, UET Press,
Winner of the National Prize “At Zef Pllumi”, Albania 2019*

Dr. Irena Myzeqari

Media is the common denominator of this generation. Every single major event that has happened in our era is being *shaped, formed, and transformed* by the eyes and insights of those who run mediums. Thus said, instead of looking for facts, today's people tend to look for those who defined the course of the event and the answer in most of the cases is: the influencers.

Influencers are those who affect or change the way other people behave and in a media context, those are to be found among politicians, journalists, and media owners. And it is in this light, that the scholar and author Belina Budini, combining the scrupulosity of research and the creativity of journalism, brings to the readers a much-needed study on the role of the journalists in the Albanian context. The book is an in-depth analysis of the relationship between journalists and politicians but in a counter-pedal sense, it is not looking to understand more about the nature of politics or those who do it; it sheds light on how journalists are *structuring/ selling* themselves as agents of symbolic power, in a context where freedom of expression and the free will to exercise power or produce change may seem impossible due to country democratic fragility.

Divided in 5 chapters, the book raises 3 fundamental questions:

1. Who defines news events in Albania?
2. How journalists exercise their power?
3. Which roles do journalists play/ take in the public space?

While the first chapters take a methodological stance, trying to explain through theoretical lenses the roles and the mechanisms of power, the third chapter offers a set of detailed interviews with the most prominent journalistic figures in Albania, such as Blendi Fevziu, Adi Krasta, Ben Blushi, Fatos Lubonja, Baton Haxhiu etc, interviews that are to be considered little gems thanks to the insightful analysis and diagnosis they provide on the complex relationship between media and politics in our country. Its final chapter is an attempt in tracing down the features of the Albanian press in the 30's, aiming to find similarities and differences with the actuality, believing that some things are perpetually changing, still remaining the same.

Who defines current events in Albania?

“The agenda is set by the Prime minister” is the sad but hard truth accepted by one of the interviewed journalists in the book. Even for Artur Zheji, who has written the introduction, the truth is that politicians are those who lead the events, dividing media and journalists in two main camps: those with the party in power and those against it. Almost all journalists have given the same answer to this question, affirming that despite the increasing power of the journalists as symbolic agents, the short connections that media owners have with politicians seem to control or decide the version of the truth that is going to be given to the audiences. Journalists might have turned into *popstars*, but the truth is that in most of the political crisis or serious events in this country, their role was reduced in mere spectators or even worst transmitters of the messages produced by the state agenda. Are still voices to be heard? Of course! But as it happens in these cases they are like small ponds, destined to be drained by the flow.

How do journalists exercise their power?

The author provides a thorough analysis on possible roles that journalists might play and possible means of power. Language seems to be the most relevant among other weapons in terms of identity construction and public discourse. It is especially relevant the analysis that Budini conducts on the division between normative language and negative language. From one side stand the politicians, mainly represented by the PM Rama, who is directly interested in demonizing media and on the other side, the journalists who use his language to create discrepancies among themselves. Thus said, it seems that journalists *are fallen victims* to a compulsory circle, being unable to create an alternative discourse

different from what politics pushes towards them. Social media or even their prime time talk shows are not capable to change the route of what is about to be sent to the dinner table of every Albanian.

What roles do journalists play?

In democratic societies journalists tend to be informers, analysts, critics, radicals, educators, and facilitators. The truth is that those roles tend to be acquired based on cultural values of the place where they are exercising their activity. So, if we want to understand the roles journalists play in Albania, we must pose some serious questions on possible systems of values, expectations, and even historical concerns. Albania has been through difficult historical moments that have created the chances for journalists to run excellent stories; some have seized the moment, leaving traces of qualitative media and investigation, while others went with the flow. Still the present dwells between these two extremes; between a minority of journalists who are faithful to their mission and a majority who serve as a mike for the state propaganda.

The future lying ahead will not be a walk in the park for none working in the media. While the rise of the *citizen-journalist* is challenging the daily tasks of the journalists, the need for qualitative journalism and courageous individuals who look after the truth, is more present than ever. Fake news, disinformation and propaganda are gaining more territory and this war requires well – equipped and solid professionals, ready to fight difficult battles against a lack of media literacy on the part of the audience and in front of defiant politicians, who are looking for someone to serve their agenda and not to reach the truth.

*Country Branding: International Public Relations Discussions in the Book PR Today**

Trevor Morris

Simon Goldsworthy

INTRODUCTION

International public relations is more talked about than practised. It sounds glamorous and contains many of the ingredients which attract people to PR in the first place, but in practice PR seldom travels well: what works in one culture often fails to do so in another. However, one area where there is a genuinely high volume of international PR activity is the realm of branding countries, cities and places. Usually this involves a judicious blending of PR activity originating within the place of origin and within the country of the target audience. In a globalised world with ever freer movement for people, trade and investment, countries now have to compete ever more creatively for favourable publicity. Even countries with controlled media have to look to international public relations campaigns if they want to promote themselves internationally – or at the very least counter unfavourable coverage: however much power they wield at home they cannot dominate or censor all international media outlets. This section looks at the role PR can play in branding countries; similar principles apply to cities, regions and places of all kinds.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- to understand what country (or nation branding and destination marketing) is;
- to understand the key elements involved in constructing a country branding plan;
- to understand what PR can contribute to country branding.

* This is a textbook that is going to be published soon by UET Press, translated by the Department of Communication Lecturers.

Countries, cities or regions that are lucky or virtuous enough to have acquired a positive reputation find that everything they or their citizens wish to do on the global stage is easier... Places with a reputation – no matter how ill-deserved – for being poor, uncultured, backward, dangerous or corrupt will find that everything they do... is harder.

Simon Anholt, in *Engagement: Public Diplomacy in a Globalised World*,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London, 2008.

CAN PLACES BE BRANDED?

As we have seen (Chapter 4, *PR Today*) branding originally referred to the way the identity of commercial products was protected and promoted to the outside world: increasingly people no longer simply bought commodities such as soap, beer or chocolate but instead bought specific, branded versions of the same products. These were carefully packaged and advertised as separately identifiable brands by the companies which produced them. So popular has the idea become that the concept of branding is now applied to most areas of life. How relevant is it to countries and places?

Think of a country or city. If you know anything about it all, almost inevitably some words or images will spring to mind. They may be favourable or unfavourable, or they may balance out. They may even be ill-informed or unfair, but your emotional response to that place constitutes its brand value – at least for *you*. It may make you want to visit that place on holiday or to avoid it. It may make you want to go and study or work there, or even live there permanently. It may affect whether you wish to do business with that country or to buy its products. And, to the extent that all governments have to some extent to take into account public opinion, it may affect your government's relations with that country. Taken collectively, our responses to places matter, socially and culturally, but also economically and politically. This makes the increased attention paid to country branding understandable.

But countries – and indeed cities and other places – almost always fall short on the other ingredients needed for successful brand building. Commercial brand managers insist on tight control of their brands: they, and they alone, determine how their brand appears and is promoted. Not so with countries, which are normally made up of millions of very different people, who to a large extent are free to do their own thing (exceptions such as North Korea are hardly very encouraging!). Indeed the paradox of “branding” places is that often it is precisely that lack of tight control which makes them exciting: people want to visit places where there is variety and the unexpected may happen, and by definition the vibrant business and cultural life which entices people cannot be precisely pre-planned. Successful country branding has to live with these limitations, but that does not mean that PR cannot make an important contribution.

PEOPLE, PLACES, POSSIBILITIES

Our perceptions of a place are built around what we call the **3 Ps**: **p**eople, **p**laces and **p**ossibilities.

People include, most obviously, celebrities of all kinds. These may include sports stars, actors and singers but also other cultural figures, politicians, business people – even historic figures and fictional characters. It is difficult for people to grow familiar with a place unless they can associate it with actual names and faces. Sometimes the association might be more generic: a country might be associated with particular expertise in a field of work, or its leading academics might be pioneers in a particular field of research. But more broadly it includes the general public: people have ideas – often stereotypes – about what the people in another country might be like, and this has a powerful influence on their attitudes. For example, when North Europeans are asked to describe Italians, they will often talk of them being fashionable, emotional and dark haired, brown eyed and olive skinned. The fact that many Italians are not at all like this does not change Northern Europeans' overall perception of them.

Places. We cannot think of another country or place without thinking about what we might see there – its natural and its man-made environment. On the positive side this includes famous and historic buildings and monuments, dazzling examples of modern architecture, interesting city neighbourhoods, charming countryside or spectacular mountain or coastal scenery. It also includes workplaces, places of study and more. Of course perceptions of place can also be negative, or a country or city can just seem dull.

The head of a PR agency appointed to boost travel to Turkey in the North American market pointed out that one of the major challenges would be to carve out a distinct image for Turkey as a destination. "If something happens in the Middle East, Turkey is associated with that, but it's a distinct place."

Source: *PR Week*

Possibilities. Ultimately our interest in a place is about the possibilities it offers us and others – for example, to enjoy ourselves, to study, to create an attractive lifestyle, to work and to make money. Possibilities are what bring together the other two Ps.

KEY QUESTIONS

The key questions you have to ask at the start of any country branding campaign are similar to those for any PR activity:

- Where are you starting from?

- Where do you want to get to?
- How are you going to get there?

These questions have to be answered in a hard-headed and realistic way. Few countries start from where they would wish to: they have to take into account negative perceptions and real problems. Well-established images can be incredibly hard to dislodge: a surprising number of people around the world still associate London with dense fog, even though that problem was resolved around 50 years ago! On the other hand, huge events can be relatively quickly forgotten, raising doubts about the long-term impact of one-off events on branding. (Without looking them up, see how far back you can go in remembering cities which hosted the Olympic Games – yet rest assured that for each of the cities it was a huge commitment which seemed to guarantee long-standing fame! Now try it with the Winter Olympics!)

At the same time countries have to be realistic about their ambitions – they can seldom transform themselves overnight nor is it likely that they can be all things to all people. Finally, the way you get there has to take into account the limitations of time and budget. PR can only achieve so much – at a certain point more substantive action, over and above what constitutes normal PR activity, may be called for.

The Bilbao Effect

When the Guggenheim Museum of Art in Bilbao, Spain, opened its doors in 1997 it was widely seen as transforming the fortunes of a hitherto run-down and little-visited industrial city in northern Spain. The combination of Frank Gehry's striking and innovative architecture and the Guggenheim collection's celebrated artworks transformed Bilbao into a destination for international tourism. Although the Museum's opening coincided with other improvements in the city, the Guggenheim's impact is often described as the Bilbao Effect – something which other cities have tried to copy.

Audiences and messages

Country branding messages can be addressed to very different audiences.

One key focus is often *tourism*, but even then there are distinct categories of tourist: is the aim to attract large numbers of relatively low-spending visitors or smaller numbers of wealthier tourists? (Too many of the former might well put off the latter, and some countries have had to attempt elaborate rebranding exercises as they seek to reposition themselves as destinations for higher spending tourists.) Which age groups are to be targeted? Clearly the messages must be appropriate: the 3 Ps mentioned above are certainly relevant, but tourism does not imply any deep commitment. As a result some of the further-reaching concerns of other audiences (see below) are usually less of less concern.

Another common target is *inward investment*. If there are substantial amounts of money to be made business people are willing to try and overcome all kinds of problems – something which is amply demonstrated by the presence of international business people in all kinds of dangerous but natural resource rich areas of the world. Cheap labour also has its attractions. However, if all other things are equal, investors will inevitably opt for stable, fair and efficient government, and an open legal system. Businesspeople are reluctant to make serious or long-term commitments unless they can satisfy themselves that the likely benefits outweigh any likely risks. They will also be interested in the quality of the workforce and the infrastructure and, depending on their nature of their business, in the local or regional markets.

However business concerns cannot be wholly separated from the kind of criteria which influence tourists and more besides. Businesspeople and their families will be interested in lifestyle and leisure opportunities, property options, educational and medical choices, shopping facilities and so forth. Business-orientated country branding has to deal with these realities.

Some countries attract large number of overseas students. Here the obvious focus may be the image of the places of learning where they hope to study, but in practice once again many other factors come into play: leisure facilities and the scope to enjoy oneself, a cosmopolitan culture and the country or city's popularity among other overseas students, plus opportunities to find work.

The fundamental requirement is to understand where your target audience is coming from – their starting point in terms of their knowledge and attitudes and their interests and desires.

China and the Beijing Olympics

How Chinese officials treat foreign journalists

Wang Hui, General Director, Information Office of Beijing and
Chief Spokesperson for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games

With China's policy of reform and opening to the outside world deepening and widening, Chinese officials recognize the importance of good public relations. The 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing was an important example of the Chinese Government's increasingly sophisticated handling of public relations. In August 2008, 32,278 journalists from around the world came to work in Beijing, and 4.7 billion people watched the Olympics via various media outlets. The Chinese Government made good use of this chance to elaborate on China's opening to the world and its image in the eyes of the international community via the media, having

adopted appropriate measures to serve the media better. These measures included the following:

- A large number of news conferences, both regular and *ad hoc*, were held, providing plenty of information for the foreign media. During the Beijing Olympics, we held more than 300 news conferences.
- One-stop media services were provided, including the opening of a 24-hour hotline and determining the days when Chinese officials would meet foreign journalists, along with other measures to serve the foreign media better. My colleagues and I did not reject any applications for foreign media interviews.
- Training programmes for officials were provided, enhancing the confidence and capabilities of the officials to communicate

with the media. As for myself, I trained more than 10,000 officers before the Beijing Olympics.

- A new emergency system was established that provided accurate and useful information to media representatives in good time to prevent the spread of falsehoods and rumours.
- Media reports were closely studied in order to find ways to meet the requirements of the media, resulting in information being provided

via the media that would enhance Beijing's image around the world.

A British journalist once raised his hand to ask me for a chance to pose a question during the final news conference of the Beijing Olympics. When I pointed to him, he didn't ask a question but said, "Ms Wang, you and your team have provided good services for the media. If there were an Olympic gold medal for serving the media well, the gold medal should be awarded to you and your team!"

WHAT CAN PR CONTRIBUTE TO COUNTRY BRANDING?

In the field of country branding, as in other areas of marketing communications, PR usually works hand-in-glove with other marketing disciplines, not least advertising. And, even more than in many other areas of PR work, PR cannot truly control the product. It cannot build new buildings, improve transport or change the legal system. However there are significant contributions PR *can* make:

- It may not be able to transform the "product", but through its dealings with the media and its understanding of wider public opinion PR people can advise those who do control such matters on the problems the country faces. Sometimes this will include the duty of relaying unpalatable but vital messages about current perceptions to very senior people.
- It can seek to encapsulate the brand's key qualities – its unique selling proposition – in a strong slogan or through simple reiterated messages and images.

Using PR to secure a major international event

Even though Russia is the most successful winter sports nation it has never played host to the Winter Olympic and Paralympic games. This will change in 2014. In 2007 it was announced that the city of Sochi on the Black Sea, with the help of a PR team from PR consultancy Weber Shandwick, had won the battle to hold the 2014 Olympic and Paralympic winter games.

The successful worldwide PR campaign included the creation of profile raising events;

the hosting of 300 journalists – including providing access to President Putin; the development of an 'Ambassadors Programme' to ensure backing from sporting, political and cultural leaders from around the world; and, as the day of judgment in Guatemala where the IOC committee was meeting drew near, 24/7 media relations activity.

By combining global and local PR events effectively the Sochi campaign ensured a massive new international profile for the city and its region.

Source: *PR Week*

- Through media relations it can promote positive stories. All media are keen for good quality content, and this is particularly true for the travel media – newspaper supplements, magazines, TV programmes and websites – which can seldom finance their own work and are effectively reliant on the travel industry to fund their activities. An unacknowledged *quid pro quo* has grown up – the travel industry provides free facility trips and the media – usually – offers favourable coverage in return.
- It can advise on crisis management. Every country will from time to time suffer a crisis, be it a terrorist outrage, a strike or a natural disaster such as an earthquake. How the country is seen by the outside world to respond to such a crisis can be critical to its brand image... (see Chapter 13 of *PR Today*).

Some of the factors that drive tourism

Iconic buildings, parks and gardens, scenery
 Iconic products, shopping, fashion
 Performing arts: music, theatre, opera, dance, comedy, festivals of all kinds
 Other forms of culture: museums, galleries, literature
 Clubs, pubs, bars and restaurants
 Sport, leisure and outdoor pursuits, both for participants and spectators
 Ceremonial events, celebrity spotting
 Practicalities: cost, travel facilities, hotels, language
 Weather

Some of the factors which deter tourists

Crime
 Dirt
 Expense
 Overcrowding
 Transport problems
 Threats of terrorism, unrest or conflict
 It is interesting to note that some hugely popular destinations such as London and Rome succeed despite their weaknesses.



Think of a country, region or city which you know well. How would you promote it as a) a tourist destination; and b) a centre for inward investment to the relevant target audiences in a different country? Include an appropriate slogan in your answer.

