

## EDITORIAL

# *Albanian and European Identities* \_\_\_\_\_

Perspectives in Communication, Education and Culture

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In this issue of Polis Journal (*number 22/2*) we are focusing on the Albanian and European Identities. Papers reflect upon perspectives in the fields of Communication, Education, International Relations, and Cultural studies. Albania, as a candidate country for membership of the European Union, has made some progress in aligning its laws and regulations with the EU “Acquis Communautaire”. However, challenges remain, particularly in the areas of democratic institutional building. Political and civil society actors are brought into question in the article by Mirela Bogdani emphasizing the lack of legitimacy and the unreliability of political parties and other domestic actors, that have increasingly amplified the importance of the International Community as an external actor in Albania. From within a critical stance, she argues that the inability of local actors to deal with domestic challenges and cooperate with one another have ‘promoted’ this actor, which has been trying to fulfill the role of facilitator and mediator that the state institutions have proved unable to perform. The article focuses on the role of the International Community as a pivotal and reliable actor in democratic transition in Albania, analyzing the role of various actors in the democratization process in Albania, with specific emphasis on one key participant which has played a significant role throughout the three-decade transition period. Therefore, the paper argues that legitimacy in Albania lies with the international community and its verdict tends to be considered as final. Furthermore, the author analyses the impact and influence exerted by the two most significant external actors: the European Union, because of Albania’s aspirational EU membership, steering reforms and providing financial assistance; and the United States, which, through its diplomats and ambassadors, has been very proactive in Albanian politics, helping the country to overcome persistent problems as corruption and organized crime, and more

recently the judiciary reform. The paper concludes that Albanian road towards democratization could have had a different trajectory without the involvement and guidance of the international community pushing for and directing reforms. While acknowledging the significance of assistance from external driving forces, the article suggests that the primary onus for the progress of a country should rest upon its domestic actors.

Touching upon the topic of the EU Enlargement, Malvina Tema reflects on the relations between European Union and Turkey and the challenges of the European Union further enlargement. Her paper is an effort to investigate the principal challenges associated with further enlargement of the European Union with a specific focus of the analysis in the case of Turkey that represents a dilemma for the EU. These concerns relate to political, economic, cultural, and geostrategic questions that are perceived as crucial issues for the Union. The author points out that despite the EU willingness, it plays an important part how Turkey will play the game of integration which. The article introduces political, economic, geostrategic and identity cultural challenges regarding the EU enlargement towards Turkey.

In their article about the relationship between Media Communication and Education, Dritan Idrizi and Tomi Treska bring an ethical perspective. Their work relates on two different but intertwined disciplines to explore the ethical standards behind advertising for children in Albania. Their study focuses the advertisements on the audio-visual media that have a national license, and that advertise various products of different companies during the advertising spaces. The method used in this case study is the observational method - the monitoring of the national TV media stations during time slots. They argue that advertisements in time slots, in which children are actively watching television, are not in accordance with the ethics that are trumpeted by the law on pre-university education and the law on audio-visual broadcasts.

Kejvin Jaku contributes to this issue with his work as a student of Communication in the Faculty of Humanities, Education and Liberal Arts. He reflects upon democracy in Albania and the navigation of economic, social and media obstacles in the post-communist era. His essay identifies the economic repercussions of communist governance, including prevalent unemployment and fragile market structures exploring the social impact, linking them to issues like suppression, fear, and weakened trust in government. It suggests targeted strategies for the government to strengthen democratic institutions.

From within an empirical researched approach, Redona Zhuleku and Elsida Sinaj bring a psychological discussion on burnout, stress and social support studying QSUT nurses in Albania. Their research conducted on nurses reveals that in emerging nations, burnout-related work issues are becoming more prevalent in professions like nursing. This essentially means that managers and supervisors in

the medical, administrative, and nursing fields place several contradicting demands on nurses in their professions. Their quantitative study sets out to investigate if QSUT nurses experience Burnout, Stress, and Social Support. Their study results for regression/stress at work supported the hypothesis that levels of social support (social integration, support for your values) are associated with burnout variables and social integration is the most important factor affecting increased stress at work.

The final work presented in this issue is a book review on the novel by the Albanian writer Fatos Kongoli with the title “Ivory Dragon”. Ermir Nika sets out to evaluate how China is revitalized through memory in this novel. He suggests that all the deformations of living as well as the occasional contrasts are arranged somewhat carelessly: the permanent pressure exerted by the wild discipline, the silent temptations, but also the spiritual and psychological related disturbances that one experiences during the experience of first love. At the same time, some elements and phenomena make up a somewhat separate world, forged by events and people who leave behind indelible traces, imbued with pronounced notes of lyricism and drama at the same time, gradually transforming into shadows of the past that haunts the protagonist of this novel on his way back from Beijing to Tirana, but also that of his departure years later from Tirana to Paris, to crucify the main character forever in the memory.