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ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY IN THE HISTORY CURRICULUM OF THE PRIMARY EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Zecir RAMCILOVIC* - Nedzad MEHMEDOVIC**

Abstract: The identification of people by their religion played a major role in the formation of the Balkan nation. Thus, religion became one of the key elements of the national identity. Religion played an important role in creating and raising the national consciousness, patriotism, and the homogeneity of the state, which most often led to various prejudices, discrimination and separation of the religious minorities. For this reason the education in the past has often been abused and the states built on the ruins of the former Yugoslavia not only need, but rather must work on the strengthening of the understanding and trust between the different nationalities and religions, which is best done. There is a need for an objective and adequate education, which will bring for elimination of prejudices and for positive interactions between different nationalities, religions and ideas.

It is especially the younger generations that develop themselves through the education and it is the education that creates the world views and vision for the young people. Very important period in the development of every person is the primary education. The History in particular, as a school curriculum about the past creates perceptions about one selves and the other. We take the Republic of Macedonia as an example, and make analysis of its history curriculum in the primary education and focus on two dominant religions – Islam and Christianity. The ministry of education in Macedonia makes genuine efforts to improve the content

* Mr. Zecir Ramcilovic, Yahya Kemal College in Skopje [z_ramcilovic@yahoo.com].
** Mr. Nedzad Mehmedovic, Center for Research and Policy Making in Skopje [mehmedovic@crpm.org.mk].
and eliminate courses that create divisions and prejudice, with an aim to put the education in the function of reconciliation, acceptance and understanding among different religions. This research seeks to identify the positive and/or negative sides of the history teaching, behind which are the institutions for promoting a competitive, creative, civic-oriented and ethical human capital. If education fulfills its mission, which is a key factor for mutual understanding, dialogue and tolerance we can expect a long-term social and economic development in the multi-ethnic and interreligious Macedonian society.

**Key Word:** Religion, Yugoslavia, Islam, Society.

### The Task of History in Education

Education is a fundamental human right which provides children, young people and adults to acquire knowledge and skills that would be useful for themselves and for the society. Education empowers them to think critically, so that they will have choice and improve their lives. Education breaks the closed circle of poverty and is a key element for long-term economic and social development. This definition itself is universal, and it applies to all of the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia. In that way, the development of the competitive, creative, civic oriented and ethical human capital is a key factor for mutual understanding, dialogue and tolerance in the Macedonian multi-religious society.

History as a science and as a subject is one of the social sciences, but at the same time it is a humanistic science. This means that the history not only provides knowledge about the past, but it also affects the education and the modeling of the students and humans in general, in the way that they will be more aware of themselves and of the others. Therefore, the history is the only science in the educational process, that is to say, it is the subject that explains the concepts of social theory and practice to the students, and it provides the basis for identity building. Through identity, the students for the first time learn about democracy, peace and tolerance, but also about the terms such as war, peace, contracts, government and historical processes. Given that the new Macedonian state needs a new historical legitimacy, different than the legitimacy of the federal Yugoslav system, in addition to the mentioned main objectives, the Macedonian historians had to make a huge
progress, often with invention of new myths or with rephrasing the old ones.¹

The Macedonian historians encountered resistance in the creation of their myths from the foreign historians, more than the historians of any other Balkan nation. At the same time, in the development of the Macedonian country, in defense of the Macedonian national identity, often Albanians, Turks, Serbs, Roma and other ethnic groups who live in Macedonia are marginalized. Their homeland is Macedonia, regardless of their nationality or religion. The fact that the historical teaching curriculum of the independence of the state has been changed 3 times until now, speaks about the inconsistent building of sustainable historical paradigm.²

The EU institutions are making new plans because of the importance of history for the development of every individual and their view for themselves, for the others and for the world in general. Their aim is the history to have a vital place in the preparation of responsible and active citizens. Furthermore, they are concerned about the development of respect for diversity, based on understanding of the national identity and principle of tolerance. Moreover, their aim is the history to be a key factor in the reconciliation, acceptance, understanding and trust between nations. Finally, their aim is the history to play a major role in the improvement of the basic values, such as tolerance, mutual understanding, human rights and democracy.

History should be a key factor in free Europe building on the basis of the common historical and cultural heritage, enriched by diversity, even in those aspects that are conflicting and sometimes dramatic. Teaching should enable the citizens of Europe to strengthen their individual and collective identity, through the knowledge of the common historical heritage in all dimensions – local, regional, national, European and global dimension. It should also be an instrument for prevention of crimes against humanity. The mentioned aims of the tuition in history should also be a basic part of the educational system in our country.

¹ Macedonian historians, as well as the other nationalistic historians, write myths about the legacy of the “golden age”, about the heroic deeds and virtues, about the destruction and reconstruction (destruction and rebuilding). They also write about the importance of Macedonians and Macedonian culture for the civil and world progress, with which they will transfer the value of the nation to the current generation, and show the way to the future.

² The last changes during 2005/2006 promoted the Macedonian identity, as well as the Albanian identity, but they lacked the identities of the other ethnic groups.
Institutional predispositions in writing the textbooks in the Republic of Macedonia

In the Republic of Macedonia there has been a huge progress in the implementation of the right to education of the different ethnic groups, primarily through the education in the mother tongue. The new strategies of the educational system, the implementation of the nine year education and decentralization have created all the assumptions for improvement of the education of youth. Because of the reform, people in Macedonia needed many new textbooks to be written and published. An important segment of the new textbooks, especially in the humanistic social sciences, are the contents that promote a mutual understanding and help the integration of all ethnic groups. Because of that, there are some criteria which are concerned with multiculturalism, multi-ethnicity and multi-religiosity in the Macedonian society. According to the Constitution, the history textbooks should respect the advantages of all the ethnic groups which are part of the development of the Republic of Macedonia as a country of all the people who live there.5

But the situation is not as simple as it seems, despite all the legal bases and criteria in making the textbooks in the Republic of Macedonia. The textbook should include multiculturalism and tolerance, besides the general criteria of the history textbooks which have educational function and promote positive attitude towards science and knowledge. First of all, when there is a history of the different ethnic groups that live in the Republic of Macedonia, their role in the history of the country should be highlighted, not only in the part of the history of the ethnic groups. Favoritism of one group or religion leads to further divisions. The textbook has contents (texts and illustrations), which should show the history, culture and tradition of all the ethnic groups and religions. The language that is used should be free of terms and expressions that suggest hatred and create an image of hostility.4

The criteria should present and promote interaction between the members of the different ethnic groups in the country, through the contents in which there is a prevalence of interreligious understanding and tolerance. The usage of names and characteristics of ‘the others’, in explaining the processes and occurrences is inevitable. Also, familiarizing with the history, culture and tradition of ‘the others’, familiarizing with the contents, characters and images which arise from different ethnic groups and religions is inevitable. Presenting the specific qualities of

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4 Ibid., pp. 43.
the different groups that live in our country, especially the specific qualities on the common ground in the development of the Macedonian society is inevitable. Their interaction and mixing of religions, customs and culture, in the past and today is inevitable too. History as a subject should offer contents and approaches which will develop civic identity to the members of all groups in the country, instead of contents and approaches which cherish closed religious identities and ethno centralism.\(^5\)

The Elementary Education Act prohibits discrimination in sex, race and color, national, social, political, religious, economic and social affiliation in the exercise of the right of education.\(^7\) The Elementary Education Act also provides the education with further tolerance, cooperation and respect for the different groups and for the basic human rights.

According to the methodology of evaluation of the textbooks, the history textbook has its own educational functions, as any other textbook. Those functions are very important, because they are connected with the familiarization of ‘the others’ (...surpassing the stereotypes and prejudices; familiarization with the similarities and differences, behavior, culture and customs, religion, gender affiliation, etc...).\(^6\)

According to the methodology, the textbook is not allowed to include terms and expressions that express derogation of the attitudes of any person, ethnic or religious group, and it should not include contents against the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia.

The concept of the nine year education is also important. In this concept there is one of the basic principles – the principle of understanding of ‘the others’ and understanding the multiculturalism. And the contents that are in the textbooks in the schools should promote tolerance and respect as values and heritage in the society.\(^7\) According to this principle, the Macedonian society requires promotion of the values among students from the elementary schools. These values should be about respect of the differences between people, their culture, language and tradition.

The teams from Bureau for Development and Education prepare syllabus.\(^8\) The working group, which is nominated by the Bureau for

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\(^8\) According to the established criteria, the working group consists of 6 Macedonians, 6
Development and Education, and which is composed from people who belong to different ethnicities, prepares syllabus for all the subjects. The authors of the textbooks are obliged to follow and respect that syllabus. With the latest changes, it is very important one of the authors of the textbooks to be an ethnic Albanian or Turk. After the vacancy published by the Ministry of Education and Science, the board selects the best textbooks. After that, the Minister confirms that they are approved for usage.

It is very important to mention that there are a lot of approved textbooks for one grade, so there is a selection. In the fifth grade, the syllabus provides the students to familiarize with the people who live in the Republic of Macedonia, with their culture, customs and differences. But in the general objectives of the syllabus, the multiculturalism as value which is expected to be promoted in teaching history is not mentioned in this grade.9

In the higher grades, more events and contents are proposed, and the teachers are expected to realize part of them by their choice.10

In this way, the students learn only little about ‘the others’, or they don’t learn at all about them, because it depends on their teachers what they will chose to teach their students.

In the syllables for 6th grade, there is no development of tolerance towards the other ethnic groups, as one of the aims of that syllable. When it comes to religion, they provide topics about the emergence of Islam as a religion. The syllables should analyze the “Thousand and One Night”, the Bible, the New Testament, the images in the textbooks and should make a comparison between Islam and Christianity.

Despite this positive progress, at the very beginning there is different approach, because there is no reading of the holy book of the Muslims, as there is reading of the holy book of the Christians. There is no multicultural tolerance provided as a general purpose and task in teaching, even in 7th and 8th grade. Even though there are topics about ‘the others’ in all grades, there is also a possibility these topics to be one of the twelve topics that the teacher can put aside and not teach Albanians and 1 Turk. But this composition breaks the efforts for integration of all the groups. However, only Albanians can familiarize their students with their history and with the significance of the Macedonian state. And the other groups that are majority and live in the Republic of Macedonia are marginalized.

10 Ibid.,pp.37.
them at all. Because of the great desire for self-defining, the major ethnic groups construct two separate national identities that lead to further divisions of the Macedonian society, instead of creating one civic identity of principles of multiculturalism, multi-ethnicity and multi-religiosity of the Macedonian state and society.

Analysis of the religious content in the history textbooks in primary education

The history textbook in primary education is written according to the only syllabus in which there are predispositions for creating a multicultural, multi-ethical and multi-religious society, with several disadvantages. It is a basis for the development of quality textbook, which at the same time would be qualitatively different. Because of that, it is very important that the educational institutions have the possibility to choose textbooks which will be used in teaching, in order to create mutual trust and understanding. This is very important for all the subjects, especially when it comes to the history textbooks. The differences between the textbooks from various authors are obvious and significant. The methodological units are the same, the titles of the lessons too, but the scope and the content of the given teaching unit is different. Even the introductions and the prologues of the textbooks have different qualifications. When the subject and tasks of history for 5th grade are defined, it is stated that: “Those who know the history better will love their country more”.11 This sentence, which at first glance seems like banal sentence, gives the history an ideological role, equating patriotism with history. This means that people who do not have sufficient knowledge of the history cannot be patriots and worthy citizens in the country in which they live.12

The remark of Violeta Petroska Beska is very interesting. According to her, the task of the history is to promote uncritical thinking. This is described in the following sentence: “The main task of the history as a subject is to create a sense of love towards the people and the homeland, but at the same time to foster a sense of co-existing and respect for all the people who live in our country, respect for their language, religion, culture, etc. Through the history we get to know each other and we become close to each other.”13

Not only this opinion should not be the main task of the study of history in the elementary schools, but it also hides other inappropriate meanings. Notably, the formulation of this opinion subtly sorts out the Macedonian ethnic community as holder of ‘the natural right’ to property of the Republic of Macedonia. However, people from the other ethnic groups who live in that country are like ‘tenants’ that should be respected and tolerated. Also, the conclusion about the nations that are minority is in that direction. It is suggested that: “With the new Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, the rights of minorities have been extended more than the anticipated international standards”.

This puts Macedonians in a dual role – generous, but at the same time victims of their own citizens. Giving that the research is made from the aspect of the two majority religions, in terms of the minorities who live in Macedonia and their history and continuity there are many inconsistencies that require further extensive analysis. Contrary to the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, the Bosniaks who are constituent nation in the country in some cases are represented as religious group. This sentence is one example (case) where Bosniaks appear as a religious group: “Islamized population is known as bosniaks, torbeshi and pomaks”. This statement is direct attack on the national identity of the Bosniaks it’s not true and will have far-reaching consequences. The statement is far from our historical facts and current realities in the Balkans and Macedonia.

A new historical paradigm in which there is ethno centralism is created along with these introductory remarks. Patriotism and national identity are created too in the textbooks. First, bipolar ethno centralism of the Macedonians and Albanians is promoted, with the same goals, but mostly in different directions. The drastic difference is just in terms of religion. Macedonian community represents the Christianity as inseparable part of the national identity, forgetting even the members of Islam that feel like Macedonians. The religion of the Albanians is not taken into consideration at all. Thus, in the history textbooks there is a qualitative difference in terms of the contents that represent Orthodox Christianity and the contents that represent Islam.

Macedonian authorities consider that the question of church in the country is inseparable part of the nation, and with that they present the strong relationship between these two phenomena. The case is the same in the history textbooks where the role of the Orthodox religion

14 Beska Petroska, Viloeta and others. 2011, pp.45.
16 Beska Petroska, Viloeta and others. 2011, pp.45.
and church is glorified in the processes of creating of the state and the nation. As a result, there are more texts, images and illustrations about them. In the history textbooks there is only a small part for Islam as a world religion. At the same time, Christianity is glorified mostly through the contents of the national history. For example, there are lessons about learning about the Orthodox Church, more precisely about the Archdiocese of Ohrid, in the two Macedonian textbooks for 6th grade in the part about Macedonia.\(^{17}\)

In the whole primary education, there is only one lesson dedicated to the emergence of Islam, and it is in the part for the world and Europe in the early middle ages. There is not a word for Islam as a centuries-old religion, and for its development and importance for the Republic of Macedonia. In addition to this, not only the Archdiocese is highlighted, but also it is said that Christianity is a religion that teach us “righteousness, goodness, knowledge, wisdom, patience, modest lifestyle, moral, respect between the husband and wife and child care”.\(^{18}\) Here is the question: Do other religions not teach us the same virtues? The position of the various ethnic groups and Islamic community is not presented even in the textbooks for 8th grade, although they are planned in the syllabus.\(^{19}\) In elementary education, Islam is defined as a concept that has its roots in “the obedience to God- and its followers are called Muslims – submissive\(^{20}\), which present a simplified definition of the Islam. Because of the absence of information, Islam is mentioned in the part of Ottoman period, and mainly in a negative context. For this period there is only some unimportant information for the social and economic society. There is not a word about the Ottoman Empire, about the millet system, education, literature, art, or any other significant information about the Ottoman civilization. There is not a word for the Islam and Muslims, although their religious monuments are presented in the illustrations and they exist today and decorate Macedonia. In one textbook we can find the following: “The population that did not want to abandon Christianity was punished by Ottomans. It means was Islamized with force”.\(^{21}\) The authors have the right to create and impose assumptions. In other textbook, it is said that “The feudal in order to keep and preserve their privileges and property accepted the Islam voluntarily. Islam was also accepted by

\(^{17}\) Boskoski, Milan and others” History for 6\(^{th}\) grade”.Skopje: Prosvetno Delo, 2009.; Nenad Naneski and others, History for 6\(^{th}\) grade, Zvezda, Skopje, 2006.

\(^{18}\) Naneski, Nenad and others.”History for 6\(^{th}\) grade”.Skopje: Zvezda, 2006,pp. 51-52.

\(^{19}\) Beska Petrovska, Viloeta and others.2011, pp.53.

\(^{20}\) History syllabus for 8\(^{th}\) grade, MON/BRO, Skopje, 2004,pp. 19.

\(^{21}\) Naneski, Nenad and others.,2006,pp, 96.
some of the poorest people, in order to get rid of the big taxes that Christians were paying.” 22 After the paragraph in a separate field for the analysis is stated: “Think about it: What were the reasons that some Macedonians to accept Islam?” In addition are stated only “two reasons” to accept Islam with which are devaluated the postulates of this Islam. On the same page in the manual it is said that “the teacher should explain the students the examples of forced islamisation in the Macedonian tradition. 23 Even if an adult reads this, it is not clear how the forced islamization can be part of the tradition of the Macedonian people. In this textbook, we can find the following formulation: “Macedonians who did not want to accept the Islam were killed”.

The students get the impression that the Ottomans were warlike and uncivilized people. The Ottomans are depersonalized in the texts, so the negative image about that system and people is generalized. In the textbook, it is explained that the Ottomans were trying to transform the country of the oppressed Christian people, through forced colonization, islamization and change of the names. 24 Macedonian Christians were “exposed to violence, poverty, fear, injustice, murder, taxes, islamization and other difficulties”. The so-called ‘blood tax’ is highlighted, even in the description of the Ottoman Empire in the XIX century, although this devirsime is abolished in the XVIII century. 25 In the 6th grade, the following descriptions are added: “Parents were hiding their children and in order to protect them they married them when they were 8-9 years old. They mutilated them, and carved a cross on their foreheads.” 26 In the history of the Balkan people a myth was made for the Law recruitment of non-Muslim youth – devsirme. In the same time the Bosniaks ask for a recruitment of the young Muslims 27, because they were dedicated to this system and education in Istanbul, which was for the biggest military and civil functions. It was a good action, with clearly defined criteria, where a number of young people received a support in the education from every administrative unit, while those with the highest psychological and physical capabilities were selected.

The aim of the previous mentioned description from the textbook for 6th grade, and the creation of the myth for separation of the chil-

22 Boskoski, Milan and others., 2009, pp. 100.
23 Ibid., pp.100.
24 Ibid., pp.100.
25 Naneski, Nenad and others., 2006, pp.98.
dren by force is to demonize one community and Islam as a religion. The whole mythologizing today is based on a paper which dates from 1898. This paper is from Jovan Tomic. The paper is rejected by the historians because they consider it as unscientific paper. The way it was presented in the schools, created one more negative image for Islam, which becomes part of the collective consciousness of the Balkan people. The thing that is disturbing is the creation of negative image in students’ mind not only for the Ottomans, also for the Muslims. All that is transferred to the so-called descendents of the Ottomans in this region or precisely it is transferred to the Muslims who live in Macedonia now.

There is no information about the millet system that represented one of the key principles for regulation of the Ottoman Empire and the religious rights of its citizens, even in the textbooks for 7th grade and in the teaching parts about “War for independent church” where the cultural autonomy of the religious community is explained. There is not a single sentence in the texts about the religious communities in the Ottoman Empire who had its autonomy. Especially there was not a single sentence for the “people of the books (Christians and Yews)”, who were communicating with the religious leaders of the millet society, and through them they communicated with the authorities in order to exercise their rights and freedom.

Ottoman Empire and the millet system secured preservation of most of the Christian heritage. The biggest part of the Christian religious buildings was built during the Ottoman Empire, and that is not mentioned anywhere in the books. Unfortunately, it is generalized and explained to the students that the churches were converted into mosques. This creates negative connotations for the complex Ottoman and Islam heritage, and the importance of all modern Balkan nations. The only thing that is positive is maybe the pictures of the mosques, inns, bezistens and cities in which we can clearly notice that they are Ottoman.

When it comes to the illustrations of the texts, it is clear that only the Christian symbols refer to the culture and identity of the Macedonian ethnic community, although not all Macedonians are Christians. The thing that is questionable is that in the lesson “Development of the citizenship in the Balkan countries”, there is an illustration of Petar Tomic N., Jovan “Blood tax. Study of the history of the Serbian people in XVI century”. Belgrade: Gorge Stanojevic, 1898, pp. 1-3.

Petrovic Njegos, and the cover of the book “The Mountain Wreath”.\textsuperscript{30} It is an epic that is full of violence, chauvinism and genocide over Bosniaks and over the other Muslims in Montenegro. This is a piece of work in which the massacre and persecution of the Muslims is portrayed as heroic and epic act. With this, the young generations will create an attitude towards Bosniaks and other Muslims.\textsuperscript{31} The worse of all is that there is a song of this genocide in the textbooks for secondary education, as an obligatory part of the reading material.

When it comes to Islam, there is an incorrect terminology used in the textbooks. Many concepts are explained incorrectly and inappropriately. For example: “Islamization – a process of imposing the Islamic (Muslim) religion on the Macedonian people”. This term is found in the dictionary of less known terms and expressions at the end of the textbook for 6th grade.\textsuperscript{32} The term ‘Islamization’ is questionable, and portrayed as a violent process. It is never used in a context of voluntary acceptance of the religion, as more acceptable system of belief or as the right of choice.

The definitions, with which Christianity and Islam are explained, indicate assigning different values and connotations. Christianity, its dissemination and acceptance by the population it is not explained as a process which in a certain historical moment was violent, but it is portrayed as a process which was accepted from the local population. “After the settlement on the Balkan peninsula started the Christianization of the Slavs. They started to cooperate with the indigenous people who had more developed culture. With their influence Slavs began to reject polytheism and accept Christianity.\textsuperscript{33} Christianity mainly is mentioned in a context of cultural development, where its role about the education of the population is highlighted, but also in a context about its impact on art and culture. It is emphasized that Christianity “will make a huge impact on the development of the world culture”.\textsuperscript{34}

Unlike Islam, Christianity is always mentioned in a positive connotation. There are only few inconsistencies and assertions that ‘Christianity is a religion of the poor people’, which is not correct because there were always rich Christians.\textsuperscript{35} In that textbook it is written that

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{30} Ibid., pp.39.
\item \textsuperscript{31} Ramcilovic, Zekir.” Bosniaks in Macedonia during XX century, with an emphasis on culture and education, doctor thesis).Skopje: INI, manuscript, 2013,pp. 193.
\item \textsuperscript{32} Naneski, Nenad and others.,2006,pp,116.
\item \textsuperscript{33} Ibid.,pp.116
\item \textsuperscript{34} Adzievski, Kosta and others. “History for 6\textsuperscript{th} grade”.Skopje: MOE, 2011, pp. 93.
\item \textsuperscript{35} Mircevski, Borce and others., 2005,pp. 115.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Jesus was arrested and executed in 33 BC42, instead of 33 years after Christ. There is one example of further religious confrontation between Islam and Christianity in a text for 6th grade: “Christians perform religious rites in the churches. They prey to their God Christ to help them...” – “Muslims satisfy their religious needs in the mosques. They prey to Allah to give them better life”. This comparison gives an impression that some of them are praying for help, and the others for greater comfort.

In the history textbook for 6th grade, in the part about the emergence of Christianity, it is said that “Jesus is the Son of God – creator of the world”. And in the part of the textbook about ‘let’s explore together’, it is said: “Try to find out the name of the mother of Jesus Christ. Who was his father.” If a student of different religion explores this question and asks their parents, he will get different answers about the assigned task. These questions are inadequate for the students at that age and for the multi religious Macedonian society.

In the textbooks, it is said that today’s Macedonian church has its roots in the early Christian period and that Apostle Paul laid the foundation of the “Macedonian church”. The term “Macedonian church” is not clear, because when it comes to today’s Macedonian church this statement is far from true. However, the use of the story and episode of Bible in the textbooks for children should be based on scientific truth, so the use of these terms is not allowed. Also, in the textbook for 6th grade, there is a statement about the Christian communities which were founded by Paul. It says that those “were the first Christian communities in Macedonia, and also in Europe”. The thing that is suggested about the heritage and the continuity of the Macedonian church is defined at the time of Tsar Samuel, when the church became Patriarchate, but continued to exist as an independent church during the Ottoman Empire, and was a protector of Christianity, Macedonian people and free Macedonia. We get the impression that the Ohrid Archbishopric was a national church of the Macedonians, regardless of the fact that half of the Balkan was under its jurisdiction.

The textbooks for 8th grade describe the role of prophecy. The lesson about the Macedonian Orthodox Church says that the recognition of the Macedonian Orthodox Church from the other churches is ‘...only a matter of time’. It would be fair if that textbook has parts in which
the religious life and the communities in the Republic of Macedonia are mentioned, and not only parts about the Macedonian Orthodox Church. Even in the lesson about “Emigration of Macedonians in the world after the Second World War”, there is a special subtitle “The role of the Macedonian Orthodox Church.” In this way, the students not only are deprived of the necessary knowledge about the religious life in Macedonia, but also create an unrealistic image of the Macedonian society in the past.

Unlike these quantitative and qualitative inconsistencies in the presentation of Islam and Christianity that lead us to interreligious understanding, there are positive examples and contents in the history textbooks. For instance, in the history textbook for 7th grade, there is a lesson about Krusevo Republic, where the arrangement of the republic and Krusevo Manifesto are emphasized. There is a part which invites all the citizens, regardless their religion or nation, for a free autonomous country (Macedonia).

In the textbooks for 8th grade, there is a lesson about Macedonia after the Second World War that speaks about the fact that there are rights about the people in Macedonia who are from different ethnicities to cherish their culture, religion and education in their mother tongue. It says that the Declaration for basic human rights of the citizens of Macedonia (ASNOM) is of particular importance. The Declaration confirms that all the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia are equal, regardless of their nationality, gender, race and religion.

The supporters of the idea about the necessity of multicultural approach in teaching, criticize the existing curriculum because it contributes to the creation of a monolithic view of the national history and ‘feeds’ the ethnocentrism. The aim of the history as a subject is to arouse the national awareness and to create patriotic feelings. However, there is a great potential danger that the future generations will develop national awareness and feelings based on two negative feelings: fear and hatred toward the other, instead of patriotism. Regardless of the historical facts, the mentioned contents in the textbooks regarding Islam and Christianity cannot contribute to the development of good relations between the various ethnic communities in the Republic of Macedonia or in the neighborhood.

39 Ibid., pp. 144.
40 Ristovski, Blaze and others.,2009, pp.122.
41 Ibid., pp. 104.
What is next?

Education by its nature always carries the seeds of enlightenment, it broadens the horizons, it improves the knowledge, and it carries positive beliefs and attitudes. Education helped or tried to help the individual to escape from ignorance and lack of education and to acquire a personal identity and self-determination. It also helped the individual to personalize, to productively participate in the society, culture and science, to gain flexibility, so that no one can easily manipulate them. Unfortunately, there are still a lot of abuses of education and knowledge. Those abuses are for purposes that do not help the humanization, human life, or democratization of society. Most totalitarian regimes manipulate with the facts, ‘truth’ and ‘knowledge’. On that way, they consciously direct the individuals and groups to think that they act in the way that it fits a particular system or regime.

In order the discrimination to be eliminated from the society, it should first be eliminated from the schools, but it is an ongoing process. The institutions in the Republic of Macedonia are trying to get rid of the contents in the textbooks that provoke intolerance, discrimination, prejudices and stereotypes. However, the analysis of the textbooks shows that there is still a lot of work when it comes to this matter. There are a lot of failures in the analysis of the history textbooks. One of them is silent and selective presentation of the facts for certain events and processes that create a distorted picture of the past and have serious consequences in the development and education of the students.43

The majority community needs to understand the multiethnic and multi-religious reality of the Macedonian society, and to face the demands of the other people living in the country as soon as possible. With the creation of its own independent state, Republic of Macedonia do not have right to create myths which will exclude the people with different religion or nation, as that is the case with some of the neighboring countries.

Thus, historians built ethno centralism and exclusivity of the Macedonian people as the sole holder of the Republic of Macedonia’s statehood, which according to the Constitution and reality is not correct. In this way, confrontations and misunderstanding between the ethnic groups and between Muslims and Christians are created. At the end of the twentieth century, in the institutions of the Council of Europe,

43 Beska Petroska, Violeta and others.2011, pp.16.
UNESCO and many other international organizations, many authors and creators of the educational policy agreed about the idea of the schools in all Europe working according to the curriculum in which 40-50% of the content would be identical for all states. The remaining 50-60% would be divided into national contents (30%) and individual contents (20-30%). Learning of the history in primary education in the Republic of Macedonia is not in favor of the multi-religious familiarization and understanding. The majority of the Christian population is not familiar with the everyday life of the Muslim. The history textbooks do not present sufficient information, and they deal with the past. This creates a huge gap between Muslims and Christians. There are no improvisations in the process of making a syllabus and textbooks and it requires maximum responsibility from all the subjects involved in the educational process.

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Abstract: Austen’s novels are known to commonly exploit how humanity can, within the limits of Christian humanism, participate in its individual and collective salvation (a word coined and derived from the Greek root soteria) in this world. Salvation can be understood as soteria in several this-worldly senses: wholeness, health, preservation from disease, deliverance from enemies, moral and spiritual deliverance, breadth or enlargement of vision or of self-knowledge. In her neoclassical context, Austen takes for granted the truth of the other-worldly sense of soteria; however, it is this worldly sense of soteria that dominate her novels. The primary theme in an Austen novel is social becoming, with a particular focus on the potential for human maturity and the consequence of human immaturity. That maturity depends on a character interpreting self, world, and other ‘correctly’; and on arriving at a ‘proper’ understanding of their dependent and interdependent social situation or context. It is Austen’s preoccupation with interpretation—and with the nexus between interpretation and soteria—that makes her a mainstream Anglican hermeneutics. Like other Austen novels, Sense and Sensibility reflects Austen’s sense of the importance of human agency, which is inherent to the Christian humanism. Thus, this paper attempts to exploit the fact that it is human behavior, rather than fate or providence, which determines how the story begins, develops, and ends. The paper also explores Austen’s concept of religious salvation through the establishment
of a real hope in which human beings can influence and participate, as reflected in the novel.

**Key Word:** Salvation, humanism, Anglicanism, Christian humanism, religious maturity, human behavior.

**Introduction**

Austen is considered as an author away from religion approaching to secularity first due to the fact that she has satirized her characters from the clergy because her Georgian context has recently been established. Georgian context, as described by Michael Giffin (2002: 3), is not secular and further gets focused on religion in a concentrated way. Victorians were known to develop an attitude against the Georgian history, which urges many critics to categorize Austen as a Victorian novelist. Victorian criticism was dominantly secular and thus, did not place Austen's Georgian context. Hence, the possibility of reading Austen from a theological view was downgraded for the so-called “secular” justifications (Giffin, 2002: 3).

Eighteenth century in the literary scene extends from 1660 to 1830 to the end of the Georgian period. As Fergus states (1991:7) although Austen is considered as a secular novelist, Georgians contemplated church and state as a combined entity. All in all, the faults of human personality and institutions like marriage, society and the church are criticized in Austen's novels. As a devout believer in the established church, Austen sees Anglican truth reflected in family, community and her church (Lane, 1986: 19). In her Georgian view, every person is in need of salvation; thus, she designs her novels with disordered personality, family, society and church that require reordering on the balance between neoclassical reason and romantic feeling. In establishing this balance, her novels can be read as those that can be understood as a microcosm of the state and the church.

Hermeneutic of the neoclassical Enlightenment is utilized in Austen's novel *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) with its link to reason, and Christian humanism. Neoclassical “truth” with connection to science together with the role of free will is considered a potential agent that effect good and evil in human relationships. In this light, as Giffin underlines, Austen treats the fall of humanity and how humanity can take part in salvation. He continues to state “the Greek root of ‘salvation’ is *soteria* meaning wholeness, health and self-knowledge” (Giffin, 2002: 3).
It is the physical and emotional senses of *soteria* that occupies her novel. Her primary view is social becoming with a target on maturity, which is based on a character interpreting self, world and other correctly. In the process of maturity, a character attains a correct interpretation of others in the social context. Thus, it is Austen’s occupation with the meaning between interpretation and *soteria* that classifies her as a neoclassical hermeneutic.

British Empiricism, a part of the Enlightenment, provided Austen a theoretical ground in which her practical concern was the “unregulated capitalism of the long eighteenth century” (Giffin, 2002: 7). Austen recognized destabilizing events on the Continent and that Britain was involved in a colonial experience which presented economic and moral difficulties. Austen describes the high degree of mobility that capital conveys on those who can produce wealth in a market economy. Thus, the best prospects of *soteria* are to be found in a successful marriage and effective husbandry. Families are dedicated to bettering their advantage in a process that mediates *soteria*. She is pragmatic about the social and economic change within a capitalist context. To achieve this, Austen believes in reforming the estate and parish, as microcosms of the state and the church.

Austen handles the mainstream Anglican position that humanity and divinity must co-work before evil can be controlled by good and produce soteria. She uses the term ‘evil’ to describe the absence of a good. The evil must be kept under control, and its effect must be mitigated by maturity in order to activate *soteria*. According to the logic of Christian humanism, Austen uses neoclassical logic to display “an economy of salvation” (Giffin, 2002:21) as the best way of assisting the fallen person and community. In this, there is a trinity of complementary marriages; between state and church, between estate and parish and between man and woman. “Each marriage is arranged to fulfill a particular human necessity according to what Austen recognizes to be a divine plan” (Giffin, 2002:23).

**Salvation in Sense and Sensibility**

In the novel *Sense and Sensibility*, the *oikonomia* (human management of the household) of the estate is a microcosm of the church. This domestic *oikonomia* and the *soteria* can affect both state and parish, depends on husbands and wives working together as equal partners exercising a complementary household (Giffin, 2002:68), and it is concerned to establish effective marriages in estates and parishes as a means of good *oikonomia* and mediators of *soteria*. 
The major theme of *Sense and Sensibility* is “how to achieve a proper equilibrium of reason and feeling within the individual, within the parish and the state” (Giffin, 2002: 67). The novel acknowledges the hard-won unity between the two classes; the clergy and the gentry. It is about how reason and feeling the influence the behaviors of characters and their ability to respond to their vulnerable condition in a fallen society. For example, Elinor’s sense makes her a neoclassical prototype of reason while Marianne’s extreme sensibility makes her a romantic prototype of feeling.

The novel is designed to show how and why Elinor’s rational response to the world is appropriate, and why Marianne’s irrational response is inappropriate. The novel does not discredit Marianne’s affinity with the irrational, and it is her affinity with sensibility that makes her a more suitable first lady of the estate than her sister Elinor. Austen feels that there is an appropriate temperamental difference between the ideal couples he establishes in her personages and ideal couples in her estates. Taken from this angle, *Sense and Sensibility* is a well-plotted social and religion commentary, which includes moral increase of romanticism that is likely to spoil the good *oikonomia* and *soteria* of the parish. This is written form of a neoclassical perspective handling parish and estate as microcosm of church and state.

*Sense and Sensibility* is about human maturity in Georgian England which requires living in a society that can be unjust and oppressive: civics and civility become heroic acts of rationality on which survival depends. Elinor’s reason pictures her much better oriented into the society than her sister to survive in an unjust community. Marianne’s irrationality makes her vulnerable due to her youthfulness and immaturity. This results that they are prototypes or reason and feeling in a novel that targets to illustrate the function of reason and feeling as to describing how behavior can contribute to Austen’s “economy of salvation”.

The novel depicts a society that imposes social and economic moral burdens on the individual. Austen’s interpretation is that these burdens must be tolerated because there is always hoping that these burdens will be overcome. Within the affiliation of Christian humanism, each person has been given the free will to modify their behavior and take part in whatever *soteria* is attainable in all conditions. Seen in this perspective of character traits of Elinor and Marianne, the novel renders itself as a source of interpretation on the self-destructiveness and godlessness of the romantic imaginary.
The novel displays the importance of human agency, an inherent factor in the Christian humanism. It has human behavior, rather than fate, which structures the plot story, its development and resolution. For Anglican, the human story cannot be tragic, or end in disaster because *soteria* is a genuine hope for all human beings. If human beings have produced the moral outrage that has befallen on Mrs. Dashwood and her daughters, then human beings are the agents of their *soteria*.

In the novel, Sir John Middleton rescues his cousin and Mrs. Dashwood’s daughters by offering a cottage in Devonshire (Austen, 2010:74). The trouble of two women at marriage age depends on finding the right husband. It would be an advantage if these husbands were rich; but in the novel, wealth does not buy happiness. In Austen’s perspective, it is important that a husband and wife are suited to fulfill their covenant towards each other, as lovers, as providers of mutual help, support and comfort in ideal households with complementary roles.

For many centuries, the church and the state were integral parts of complementary spheres in English life. In the Georgian period, these complementary spheres were informed by the spirit of Enlightenment in the form of British Empiricism. This informs that neoclassicism was dominated by a strong sense that reason needs to keep feeling under control. For Austen, the religious or clerical sphere and the secular were allowed to have their own characteristic differences between Ferrars and Brandon marriage.

If analyzed in this view, the focus between religion and society gets more apparent. The novel is not merely for the place of how sisters in a marriage market, or about the restrictions placed on women in the Georgian period. It is about establishing the Ferrars and Brandon marriages as happy unions of ideal clergy and gentry’s couples that fulfill complementary religious and social functions. Elinor and Edward share a characteristic affinity with reason appropriate to a clergy couple that is meant to be a sign to the community that is more religious than worldly. Giffin comments “Marianne and Colonel Brandon share a characteristic affinity with feeling appropriate to gentry’s couple” (2002:80). In telling the story of the evolving maturity and hard won happiness of these four characters, Austen uses the prism of British Empiricism and Georgian Anglicanism to describe her salvation.

Elinor’s association with reason permits her to become an ideal clergy wife. Her temperaments, caution and control are correct, so as not to judge others wrong or misjudge the nature of Marianne’s rela-
tionship with Willoughby. She is characterized in an acceptable relationship with Willoughby because her survival depends on emotional control. She says:

I am by no means assured of his regard for me. There are moments when the extent of it seems doubtful; and till his sentiments when the extent of it seems doubtful: and till his sentiments are fully known, you cannot wonder at my wishing to avoid any encouragement of my own partiality, by believing or calling it more than it is (Austen: 190).

She admits her partiality; however, she does not assume to know of other points to be considered besides his inclination. She is aware that Edward is far from independent, and that she has been cautious of ever considering Edwards as a potential husband by her sister-in-law. Elinor keeps her reticence, but Marianne rushes to judgment because her own romantic sensibility is out of touch with reality. So Austen implies that soteria is reserved for Elinor, not for Marianne.

Elinor’s selflessness requires good emotional sacrifice and forbearance. She places Marianne’s needs above her own, which brings her much sympathy. Elinor, however, must uphold the Christian law of love expressed in the Gospel according to Matthew, which teaches:

You have heard that it was said, ‘you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy’. But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust (Austen: 228).

Loving one’s enemies is a need in a world where evil is together with good. Her response is in line with divine command, and it is also well-reasoned response for a Georgian Anglican. In an Austen novel, the unjust do prosper, the evil person coexists with the good person, and the moral position is that the world will be a real place rather than ideal. Thus, it is better to spare ultimate judgments for God. In view of human justice, Elinor should adopt a more strict moral position against Willoughby; however, in proportion to divine justice her response of love and forgiveness is more appropriate for an Anglican.

Austen’s message is that human justice is not divine. Elinor may be justified in not agreeing with her mother that Marianne and Willoughby would have been unhappy if they had married in the end. The regret is Elinor’s, for the final symmetry of the ideal clergy marriage and the ideal gentry’s marriage can’t include Willoughby. Establishing that final
symmetry within Austen’s economy of solution is what the novel is about.

Edward is dedicated to his principles as a clergy despite many hardships rendering him at odds with the values of the world. His actions suggest the cost of Christian discipleship. Prepared to sacrifice his life for the sake of Christ, and for the sake of his conscience, Edward is blessed with Elinor and Christ. Edward can have integrity and true love in happiness, but not worldly wealth. Austen says:

... while Robert was inevitably endowed with a thousand pounds a year, not the smallest objection was made against Edward's taking orders for the sake of two hundred and fifty at the utmost; nor was anything promised either for the present or in future, beyond the ten thousand pounds, which had been given with Fanny (235).

Edward and Elinor have suffered social, economic and moral trials for most of the novel. Elinor has proved to be mature and wise, and Edward's fullness of his maturity and wisdom depends on Elinor's love. They both can stay in touch with reality which Marianne and Willoughby have lost touch with. The success in soteria is connected to the shared closeness with reason, which lets them overcome their trials in a constructive manner. Edward and Elinor are suitable to make an ideal couple of clergy, who can fulfill complementary and effective parishness in the church, which affects the good oikonomia of the Christian household.

Conclusion

The novel ends with a vision of unity that comprises both of the two classes that dominate the novel, which are the clergy and the other class she was strongly affiliated with marriage and social link, the gentry. Both gentry and clergy marriages are critical in her economy of salvation as the gentry's couple and clergy couple are influential units that affect the community, for better or for worse. Austen's novel stands against intellectual prism that dominated neoclassical hermeneutics, and Georgian Anglicanism. In Austen's world religious issues are invisible from secular issues; and religious observance has a public importance. Austen is a Christian humanist who belongs to the Enlightenment. She is not a secular humanist whose work can be justified within the post-Enlightenment critique of the traditional Christian world-view. Austen is an Anglican who writes Christian stories; thus, we are expected to grasp the focus of this fact in her novels for the depth of interpretation.
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Abstract: Reading is a complex cognitive process and one that is not acquired, but needs to be learnt. The aim of the paper is to provide an overview of phonics, especially synthetic phonics, as a way of mastering reading (and writing) in English by learning the sounds of letters as building blocks of words. It is the preferred method of learning how to read in the United Kingdom, following the Jim Rose report in 2005. The paper further outlines the phonics teaching programme for primary school teachers developed out of the Rose project (a programme known as Letters and Sounds). A brief mention of phonics is offered in the context of second language acquisition. In the end, the benefits of phonics are discussed as well as its limitations, and a combined method of reading strategies is advocated as the desired approach to the mastery of the reading and the writing skills.

Key Word: Phonics, English Learning, Teaching, Writing Skills.

Literacy - reading and writing

Learning how to read and write are one of the most essential skills in life and an important educational milestone both for children and parents. Reading and writing are prerequisites for one’s economic and
social survival and success. They are complex cognitive processes and such that are not acquired, but need to be learnt.

Eye-movement studies have revealed that skilled readers attend to almost every word in a sentence and process the letters that compose each word (McConkie and Zola, 1987). Prior to these findings, it was assumed that readers did not decode words, i.e. they did not process each letter in a word, rather, they recognised the word based on its shape, a few letters, and the context. Obviously, the aim of reading is comprehension, yet, although decoding does not guarantee comprehension, comprehension is impossible without decoding (Chew, 2005).

Reading and writing are interrelated and complementary processes (Pinnell et al, 1994). A word can generally be read before it can be spelled. Spelling, however, requires greater visual recall than reading and places higher demands on memory. Good spellers are generally good readers because spelling and reading share an underlying knowledge base (of the phoneme-grapheme correspondence). Poor readers, however, are rarely good spellers. Children usually become familiar with these two skills around the age of 4 and 5 and master them between the ages of 6 and 11.

**How should literacy best be taught?**

There are two main approaches to teaching literacy, especially reading, and they have been taking turns in their dominance over the national educational policies in the UK and the USA over the last 50 years. These approaches are the **Skill-based Hypothesis** (bottom up approach, a.k.a. **phonics** approach) and the **Comprehension Hypothesis** (top-down approach, ‘look and say’, a.k.a. **whole word** approach) (Krashen, 2002).

The supporters of the Skill-based hypothesis claim that literacy is developed from the bottom up; the child learns to read by first learning to read out loud, by learning sound - spelling correspondences (Just and Carpenter, 1987). This is done through explicit instruction, practice and correction. This knowledge is first applied to words. Ultimately, the child uses this ability to read larger texts, as the knowledge of sound - spelling correspondences becomes automatic. According to this view, reading of interesting texts is helpful only to the extent that it helps children ‘practice their skills’. Understanding that there is a direct relationship between letters and sounds enables a reader to retrieve the pronunciation of an unknown word and associate it with a spoken word. It is also the foundation of learning to spell.
The Comprehension Hypothesis supporters, on the other hand, claim that we learn to read by understanding messages on the page; in a logographic manner, students ‘look at the whole word’ and say it, without decoding it first (Goodman, 1982; Smith, 1994). Reading pedagogy, according to the Comprehension Hypothesis, focuses on providing students with interesting, comprehensible texts, and the job of the teacher is to help children read these texts, that is, help make them comprehensible. The direct teaching of ‘skills’ is helpful only when it makes texts more comprehensible.

The Skill-based approach was the one originally used to introduce literacy. However, it was later replaced by the Whole word recognition approach, partly with the intention to bolster those students who found phonics a strain. In the next section, we shall focus on the situation in Britain and the way literacy is introduced in this country.

The case of Britain

How best to teach children to read has been an issue in the UK since the 1960s. On one side were the supporters of the traditional method (phonics), on the other side the champions of the whole-word recognition. Following the American example, where the whole word method began to be adopted in many schools in the early 20th century, in the UK, the state system in the 1960s also abandoned phonic as unimaginative, didactic and boring and the whole word and real book approaches ruled over the next 20 years. The process of learning to read was merged with the activity of enjoying and understanding a story. After a while, it became clear to teachers that this new approach was not working especially for children of disadvantaged families and with reading difficulties. Surveys carried out by the government and universities over the years showed a marked decline in literacy standards except in the small number of schools that preserved the phonics approach.

In Britain, the National Literacy Strategy (DfEE, 1998) recommended a mixed approach that included an element of phonics instruction (only 15 minutes allocated to it among the 4 different activities devoted to learning how to read), but it has been argued that such an approach might lead to confusion among young children. While the mixed approach to reading – guessing at and memorising whole words alongside learning letters and sounds – continued to be practised in most schools, literacy standards did not rise significantly. According to a report carried out in July 2010 one in six working Londoners is functionally illiterate and in order to find the causes for this, one needs to
go back to the 25% of children who, beyond the age of 11, remain below the national literacy standards set by governments (Johnson, 2010).

Meanwhile, evidence was growing which indicated that reading was taught much more quickly and effectively in the ‘old fashioned’ way rather than through other methods. By this time, various enterprising teachers were also devising courses with the aim of making phonics, also called synthetic phonics, appealing to children and easy to teach. Two longitudinal experiments carried out in Scotland (over a 7 year span) by psychologists from Hull and St Andrews universities showed that children who had been taught solely through synthetic phonics were learning to read at a much faster rate than those who had been taught by a range of methods (Johnson and Watson, 2004). The study about the teaching of synthetic phonics to primary school 300 children in Clackmannanshire in Scotland showed that teaching children to read using synthetic phonics was hugely successful. The research put the children up to three years ahead in reading, but did not show a significant improvement in comprehension of words. Similar results came from studies in the USA (e.g. Ehri et al. 2001). By 2005, the Government was sufficiently worried to commission Sir Jim Rose, formerly Director of Inspections at OFSTED and senior government education adviser, to conduct an independent review into the teaching of early reading in England. His report (Rose, 2006), came down firmly on the side of synthetic phonics and since, phonics has been the preferred method of learning how to read and write in the United Kingdom: “The findings of this review argue strongly for the inclusion of a vigorous programme of phonics work to be securely embedded within a broad and language-rich curriculum.” It recognised that phonics was the best route to becoming a skilled reader for most children. Such findings echoed in other independent reviews of the existing research at the time which confirmed that systematic phonics instruction within a broad literacy curriculum was found to have a statistically significant positive effect on reading accuracy (in comparison to whole-word approaches) (Torgerson et al. 2006).

In 2007, the UK Government issued new guidance, recommending synthetic phonics to all primary schools. However, and in reality, the wordings of the Rose report let many teachers to continue with business as usual using a variety of methods and practitioners are constantly improving the existing and striving to discover new ways to teach reading and writing in primary schools (Gross, 2010).
In the next section we shall look at the phonics programme in more detail in order to understand better its efficiency for teaching literacy to young children.

What is Phonics?

As we have seen from the previous section, the UK framework for developing literacy encourages teachers to put a greater emphasis on using phonics. Phonics is a system which involves teaching learners how to connect the letters of words with the sounds they represent, rather than reading and comprehending whole words at once (Lloyd, 2000). Children begin learning how to read using phonics usually around age the age of 5 or 6.

Whole language advocates claim that the rules of phonics are complex and have numerous exceptions, which is why many are thought to be unteachable (Smith, 1994). Skill-building advocates claim that this is not the case, with Shanahan (2001:70), for examples, giving phonics instruction a major role in reading instruction because "more than 90 percent of English words are phonetically regular". Approximately 84% of English words are phonetically regular. Therefore, teaching the most common sound-spelling relationships in English is extremely useful for readers. To learn to read English, the child must figure out the relationship between sounds and letters. Thus, the beginning reader must learn the connections between the approximately 44 sounds of spoken English (the phonemes), and the 26 letters of the alphabet.

Phonics is a method of instruction that teaches students the correspondences between graphemes in written language and phonemes in spoken language and how to use these correspondences to read and spell words. This instruction should be carried out in a systematic way, i.e. by explicitly teaching all the major grapheme-phoneme correspondences and covering them in an organised way, in a clearly defined sequence, as opposed to incidentally, or on a ‘when needed’ basis. Proponents of phonics argue that this relationship needs to be taught explicitly and learned to automaticity in order to facilitate rapid word recognition upon which comprehension depends.

There are two types of phonics instruction, synthetic and analytic. In synthetic phonic students are taught to link an individual letter or letter combination with its appropriate sound and then blend the sound to form words. This blends or synthesizes the sounds of the alphabet into words, for example C-A-T, cat. In analytic phonics, students are first taught whole word units followed by systematic instruction linking
the specific letters in a word with its respective sounds, for example *cat*, C-A-T. (Brooks, 2003).

However, what research has taught us is that in order for a beginning reader to learn how to connect or translate printed symbols (letters and letter patterns) into sound, the would-be reader must understand that our speech can be segmented or broken into small sounds (*phonemic awareness*) and that the segmented units of speech can be represented by printed forms (*phonics*). This understanding that written spellings systematically represent the phonemes of spoken words (termed the alphabetic principle) is absolutely necessary for the development of accurate and rapid word reading skills. *Phonemic awareness* is necessary for phonics instruction to be effective: before children can use the knowledge of sound-spelling relationships to decode words, they must understand that words are made up of sounds, that they can be broken into smaller units — and sounded out (Adams, 1990). Many children come to school thinking of words as whole units — *cat*, *dog*, *run*. *Phonemic awareness* is the understanding, or insight, that a word is made up of a series of discrete sounds. Without this insight, *phonics* instruction will not make sense to children.

The benefits of *phonics* instruction have been reported in numerous studies. According to Chall (1996), "systematic and early instruction in phonics leads to better reading: better accuracy of word recognition, decoding, spelling, and oral and silent reading comprehension." Explicit (direct) instruction in *phonics* is considered the most effective type of instruction, especially for children at risk for reading difficulties (Adams, 1990; Chall, 1996; Honig, 1995). Moreover, early attainment of decoding skills is important because this accurately predicts later skills in reading comprehension (Beck and Juel, 1995).

Good readers rely less on context clues than poor readers do because their decoding skills are so strong (Gough and Juel, 1991). It is only when good readers cannot use their knowledge of sound-spelling relationships to figure out an unfamiliar word that they rely on context clues. "The whole word method (emphasis on meaning) may serve a student adequately up to about second grade. But failure to acquire and use efficient decoding skills will begin to take a toll on reading comprehension by grade 3" (Chall, 1996).

Whereas *phonics* is characterised by putting together sounds to form words that are printed, spelling involves breaking down spoken words into sounds in order to write them. To spell, or encode a word, a child must map a spelling onto each sound heard in the word. *Phon-
ics is a particularly powerful tool in improving spelling because it emphasises spelling patterns, which become familiar from reading. In the following section, we provide an outline of one instructional phonics method as an illustration of the phonics programme.

**Letters and Sounds**

*Phonics* is not a specific teaching method. In fact, there are many ways to teach *phonics*, among the more popular being: *Jolly Phonics, Read, Write Inc.* (Ruth Miskin), *The Butterfly Book* (Irina Tyk) and *Letters and Sounds*. *Letters and Sounds*, for example, is a free, high quality phonics teaching programme developed and published by the Primary National Strategy in the UK. It was developed by academics and reading consultants with a very strong phonics background and draws on the latest evidence and research, including recommendations from Sir Jim Rose's review into the teaching of early reading.

*Letters and Sounds* is a six-phase programme. *Phase One* activities concentrate on developing children's speaking and listening skills, phonological awareness and oral blending and segmenting. It develops children's knowledge of grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC), their skills of blending and segmenting with letters and recognition of high frequency words containing GPCs not taught at that phase. *Phase Two* lasts up to six weeks. It develops children's knowledge of 19 letters of the alphabet with one sound for each. It teaches and practices the skills of blending separate sounds together into whole words for reading and segmenting whole words into separate sounds for spelling. *Phase Three* lasts up to twelve weeks. It develops children's knowledge of the 7 remaining letters of the alphabet and graphemes to cover most of the phonemes represented by more than one letter. It teaches and practices the skills of blending and segmenting sounds represented by single letters and graphemes of more than one letter. The duration of *Phase Four* is between four to six weeks. There are no new GPCs to be learnt in this phase. Instead, it develops children's knowledge and skills of blending and segmenting words with adjacent consonants. *Phase Five* continues throughout Year 1 of primary school. Children learn more graphemes for the 40+ phonemes taught in Phases Two and Three and more ways of pronouncing graphemes introduced in Phases Two and Three. It teaches and practices the skills of blending and segmenting using all GPCs taught. The final stage, *Phase Six* lasts throughout Year 2 and beyond. The focus of this stage is to increase the fluency of the blending of words encountered for the first time in reading and accuracy of spelling choices. Some grammatical elements,
e.g. affixes, are also added. In order to understand the timeline of introduction of the phases, we shall add that the UK National Curriculum for 5 to 11 year-olds taught to all pupils in state schools is made up of blocks of years, known as key stages: Year 1 and Year 2 of primary school are known as Key Stage 1, Years 3 to 6 of primary school are known as Key Stage 2. Appendix 1 at the end of this paper offers example games for each phase of the Letter and Sound programme.

**Phonics in Second Language Acquisition**

Outside the UK, too, particularly in India and in the African countries, where English is not the first language, synthetic phonics programmes have achieved remarkable results (Gross, 2010). In the instruction of English as a foreign language (EFL) in the Republic of Macedonia the ‘look and say’ approach to reading has been predominantly practiced. Reading activities focus on comprehension, whereas spelling is introduced and practiced following the learning of the alphabet, i.e. learning the names of the 26 letters in the English alphabet. There is very little mention of phonics, mostly through the increasing incorporation of the programme within EFL textbooks.

Using phonics within the EFL context is not a straightforward decision for a number of reasons, for example, the average 5-year old first language acquirer of English already knows the meaning of around 6,000 words to which the sound-letter correspondence can be established in a meaningful way. The second language acquirer or English does not have the necessary prerequisite and any explicit phonics instruction risks to produce ‘mechanic’ spellers.

Despite these and similar observations of the different circumstances in which first and second language learners of English progress with the language, the dominant belief in scientific circles provides support for the incorporation of phonics in EFL instruction.

Anderson (2008) claims that beginning level readers should be exposed to a strong bottom-up component. According to him, perhaps the greatest weakness in the development of many reading syllabi has been the fact that little or no attention is given to the explicit instruction of bottom-up reading. Anderson (ibid.) further suggests a guideline in preparing a syllabus for beginning level readers as follows: allocating 50 percent of the syllabus to teaching bottom-up skills, 30 percent to top-down skills, and 20 percent to interactive skills. With a strong foundation in bottom-up skills, beginning level readers will become more proficient readers more quickly. Schwartz (2008) also ar-
gues for explicit instruction of the phonology of the foreign language based on the belief that it leads to dramatically improved spelling and noticeably improved ability to follow conversations.

What remains to be established and perfected is the appropriate modification of the original phonics programmes to suit the EFL circumstances of different learners, educational institutions and countries.

In Lieu of a Conclusion

Both scientific research and government commissioned reviews have suggested that phonics should be the key strategy for introducing reading in schools, by the age of five and to children who are acquiring English as their mother tongue. Moreover, the consensus seems to be that phonics should be taught early and fast, in a systematic, structured, and multi-sensory way.

Teaching reading through phonics should be preceded by attention to developing children’s speaking and listening skills as well as by raising children’s awareness of the segmentation of words into phonemes. As the Rose report stresses, equally important for the success of the phonics instruction is the quality of teaching, irrespective of method. Despite this positive consensus about the importance of phonics work, there are deeply divided professional views about how precisely phonics work should best be taught. Hence, teaching of phonics should be monitored to maintain standards.

It is widely accepted by practitioners, teachers and researchers that phonics work is essential though not sufficient in learning to read and write. Once the simple decoding of words is mastered, other reading methods can be introduced and exercised in order to enhance comprehension, learn irregular words and broaden literacy in general. The development of phoneme awareness and phonics, while necessary, are not sufficient for learning to read in the English language so that meaning can be derived from print. In addition to learning how to ‘sound out’ new or unfamiliar words, the beginning reader must eventually become proficient in reading at a fast pace larger units of print such as syllable patterns, meaningful roots, suffixes, and whole words. The term ‘whole language’ does not refer only to providing interesting comprehensible texts and helping children understand less comprehensible texts. It involves instilling a love of literature, problem-solving and critical thinking, collaboration, authenticity, personalised learning, and much more (Goodman, Bird, and Goodman, 1991).
Despite the revival of phonics as the best way to introduce literacy in the UK, a balanced and broader model for a complete mastery of reading in first language acquisition is recognised as the most appropriate approach throughout all the stages of gaining literacy. The situation is far more complex when it comes to introducing literacy in English as a second language: more research is needed to provide answers to the best ways of modifying the structured phonics programme to the diverse needs and circumstances of the second language learner.

APPENDIX 1.

Examples of language games with the instructions for the games illustrating the six phases of the Letters and Sounds programme. Brief explanation of the phases is also offered.

Phase 1 – Rhythm Safari

Listen to the animal names as they are tapped out for you, with one tap per syllable, e.g. 3 taps for butterfly, 1 tap for snake, etc. Next, you have to listen to a rhythm and click on the correct animal. In the next level you are shown an animal and have to click to produce the right rhythm. In this phase, children concentrate on auditory discrimination, on listening and speaking only (from CBeebies, http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/misc/games/misc-rhythmsafari/).

Phase 2 – Buried Treasure

Choose a coin with a word written on it, sound out each letter in it, then blend the sounds together to say the word. Decide whether it is a real English word or a fake one. If it is fake, move it to the dustbin. If it is real, put it in the treasure chest. See how many coins you can collect. Using fake words ensures that children have to learn to blend and not just recognise words by sight. Different sets of letters can be practiced this way, yet following the list planned for this phase. (from Phonics play, http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/BuriedTreasure2.html).

Phase 3 – Phoneme pop

Choose the phoneme you want to practice. You will hear and see your target sound, then you just have to click the bubbles that match the sound you are looking for. You can choose from the set of phonemes
planned to be covered in this phase, including some consonant and vowel digraphs (e.g. ch, ng, oi, ee). (from ICT games, http://www.ictgames.com/phonemePopLS_v2.html).

**Phase 4 – Blending sound buttons**

Click to choose the sounds and drag them to the display on the screen. Click the red buttons to hear the sounds. This is a useful activity for practicing CVCC and CCVC words. No new graphemes are introduced in this phase. Children practice words with adjacent consonants (e.g. string). (from Kent Ed, http://www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/kentict/content/games/literacy.htm).

**Phase 5 – Investigating alternative spellings**

Look at the text. How many different graphemes can you find for the /ai/ phoneme? After a while, the graphemes are highlighted. In this phase children learn more graphemes and phonemes. For example, they already know ai as in rain, but now they will be introduced to ay as in day and a-e as in make. Alternative pronunciations for graphemes are also introduced, e.g. ea in tea, head and break. (from Letters-and-sounds and Phonics play, http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/Phase5Menu.htm).

**Phase 6 – Tumbling tumbleweed**

The tumbleweed will blow away revealing a base word. What changes need to be made before -ing is added? The three cacti will show suggestions, students and teacher discuss them and choose one. In this phase, sounding, blending and segmenting should be perfected. Children can read automatically the most frequent words and manage to decode unfamiliar words quite well. Children learn adding suffixes (-ing, -er, -y) to verbs ending in different letters. (from Letters-and-sounds and Phonics play, http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/Phase6Menu.htm).
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THE ROLE OF MEDICINAL AND AROMATIC PLANTS IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNES OF MAQELLARA, SLLOVA AND FUSHË - ÇIDHËN

Florina PAZARI* - Merita DOLLMA**

Abstract: Medicinal and aromatic plants (MAP-s) are an important economic potential that generates substantial economic income. Processing industry of medicinal plants is one of the oldest industries in the world, which nowadays have an important share in the world's export-imports. Balkan countries are very rich in medicinal plants, which they export mainly to countries such as Germany, USA, Austria, etc. In Albania about 10% of the natural flora is represented by medicinal and aromatic plants, of which 90% grow in the wild and 10% are cultivated. The high market demands for medicinal and aromatic plants has led to their cultivation such as Salvia officinalis, Rosmarinus officinalis, Lavandula officinalis, Orchis maria, Lilium candidum etc..

In Albania the tradition of collecting MAPs continues from antiquity to the present day and MAPs constitute an important share in the total income of some rural areas. Dibra district has about 83,602 inhabitants, where 80% of them live in rural areas. The communes of Maqellara, Sllova and Fushë-Çidhën (Dibra district) have 22,340 inhabitants (Maqellara 13,919 inhabitants, Fushë-Cidhna 4010 and Sllova 4016). The main economic activity of these communes is agriculture, livestock and non-wood forest products (such as medicinal and aromatic plants, forest fruits, etc.). The income of this rural population is provided mainly from farms, immigration and the collection of medicinal and aromatic

* University “Aleksandër Moisiu”, Faculty of Bussines, [floripazari@yahoo.com].
** University of Tirana, Faculty of History-Philology, [meritadollma@yahoo.com].
plants. The investments made in recent years for cultivation of medicinal and aromatic plants have increased the opportunities for economical development of these three communes.

This paper analyses the land use change of the rural areas of the above mentioned communes, and the impact of the medicinal and aromatic plants (wild and cultivated ones) to the sustainable development of these three communes.

Key Word: Rural Economy, land cover, land use, medicinal and aromatic plants (MAP-s), cultivation, sustainable development.

Introduction

Albania has a great potential of medicinal and aromatic plants represented by over 300 plant species. About 90% of them grow in the wild and only 10% are cultivated plants. Albania is ranked the 13th in the world, for the export of medicinal and aromatic plants\(^1\). Medicinal and aromatic plants account for about 20% of agricultural food exports of Albania\(^2\). In 2011 Albania gained about 1.8 million USD from the export of medicinal and aromatic plants. Sage is one of the most required plants by the international market and exported to Germany, USA, Turkey, Austria, etc.

Dibra district lies in northeastern Albania and the diversified relief height that varies from 380 m (Black Drin valley) to 2751 m (Korabi Mountain) has conditioned the presence of a rich biodiversity. The vegetation is represented by Mediterranean bush in low altitudes and oak, beech and alpine meadows in the high altitudes. The mountainous area of Dibra has also high potential of wild medicinal and aromatic plants, which in some rural areas of this district are the main source of income.

Economic activities of Maqellara, Fushë-Çidhna and Sllova communes

Economic development of Maqellara, Fushë-Çidhna and Sllova communes is based mainly on the agriculture. About 85% of population of these communes is engaged in planting crops, livestock and collecting non wood products (medicinal and aromatic plants and forest fruits). The main source of income of the population working in agriculture is provided by the crops (40%), livestock breeding (35%), collection of

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1. TRAFFIC International, Medicinal and aromatic plants in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Germany 2003
medicinal and aromatic plants (20%) and fruit trees (5%)\(^3\). A small percentage of income of the rural population is provided by the remittances and small private enterprises, such as dairies or wine and alcoholic beverage canteens.

Maqellara, Fushë-Çidhna and Słowa communes have altogether about 5378 hectares of agriculture land (Maqellara 3067 ha, Fushë-Çidhën 558 ha and Słowa 1753 ha) which are used by farmers and 6328 ha is covered by forests and meadows\(^4\). Farms are classified as farms used only for familiar needs; farms used for family consumption and market. These kind of farms invest to buy their farm inputs and a handful of products (cereals, dairy products, potatoes, etc.) go to market. The third group are the commercial farms which have significantly expanded their productive and trade activity through investment. In these farms are planted those plants most required by the market. The traditional crops that are planted in these farms are cereals, fodder, potatoes, beans, vegetables besides fruit trees (apples, cherries, pears, walnuts, chestnuts, etc.) and vineyards etc. Collection of medicinal and aromatic plants in these communes provides considerable income for some families. Wild medicinal and aromatic plants and cultivated ones are also an important source for income generation for some families of these communes.

**Medicinal and aromatic plants of Maqellara, Fushë-Çidhna and Słowa communes**

Maqellara, Fushë-Çidhna and Słowa communes are very rich in wild medicinal and aromatic plants. In this area there are over 100 plants with high medicinal and aromatic values. In Słowa commune there are about 41 plant species that are medicinal and aromatic plants. In Maqellara commune there are 36 species and in the commune of Fushë-Çidhna there are about 32 species\(^5\). They are found in the wild and are highly requested by the international market. Some of the medicinal and aromatic plants that grow in these communes are: Gentiana

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\(^3\) The regional development of Dibra county, 2011  
\(^4\) Directory of Agriculture and Food, Dibër  
\(^5\) SNV/ProMal, Dibër 2011
lutea (yellow Gentian), Orchis maria (orchids), Arctostaphylos uva-ursi (pinemat manzanita), Vaccinium myrtillus (blueberry), Betula pendula (silver birch), Prunus spinosa (gooseberry), Tussilago farfara (coltsfoot), Crataegus oxycahantha (hawthorn), Matricaria chamomilla (camomile), Rosa canina (wild rose), Urtica dioica (nettles), Saturea montana (thyme), Taraxacum officinalis (dandelion), Sambucus nigra (elder), Malva silvestris (hollyhock), Trifolium pratense (red clover), Primula veris (cowslip), Salvia officinalis (sage), Helichrysum arenarium (Aku flower or dwarf everlasting), Colchicum autumnale (autumn crocus), Bellis perennis (daisy), Capsella bursa pastoris (shepherd’s-purse), Malus silvestris (wild apple), Ononis spinosa (spiny restharrow), Juniperus communis (black juniper), Tilia cordata (linden) etc. About 98% of medical and aromatic plants are found in the natural state (wild) and only 2% is cultivated. Most of these plants grow in 1000-1700 m heights up to 2000 m above sea level.

Medicinal and aromatic plants’ role to the economic development of Maqellara, Fushë-Çidhna and Sllova communes

Medicinal and aromatic plants have found a constant use, with a tradition of several decades due to their high medical, and economic values. Medicinal and aromatic plants were initially used by the population for the treatment of several diseases. Later on they were used for both

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6 Ministry of Finance, Directory of Statistics, Tiranë 2010
domestic and foreign markets. Before 1990 in Dibra district the collection and processing of medicinal and aromatic plants was limited. In this period there were only a few state plants for simple processing of medicinal plants. After 1990 (due to political changes) there was initially a decrease of the market demand for these kind of plants which after the year 2000 and nowadays has constantly increased. Currently the district of Dibra offers a potential of about 2000 tons of medicinal and aromatic plants per year (about 25 % of all Albanian potential), which are collected by the rural population.

Main medicinal and aromatic plants that are collected and traded by these communes are: Salvia officinalis (sage), Juniperus communis (black juniper), Rosa canina (wild rose), Sambucus nigra (elder), Primula veris (cowslip), Taraxacus officinalis (dandelion), Equisetum arvense L. (horsetail), Achillaea millefolium (yarrow or milfoil), Rubus idaeus L. (raspberry), Urtica dioica (nettles), Hypericum perforatum (balsam), Vačinium myrtillus (blueberry), Tussilago farfara L. (coltsfoot), Satureja montana (thyme), Papaver rhoeas (red poppy), Fragaria vesca (strawberry), Betula pendula (silver birch), Gentiana lutea (yellow Gentian), Orchis maria L.(orchids), Colchicum automnale L. (autumn crocus), Rubinia pseudoacacia (acacia), Thymus serpyllus L.etj.

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These plants have a potential of collection of about 512 tons/year, of which 264 tons/year are collected and traded in the collection centers of Dibra district\(^9\). Based on the current market prices, Dibra district provides an annual income of about 50.53 million lek. If all the potential of the medicinal and aromatic plants of this district would be collected, than Dibra district would gain about 87.42 million lek/year. Based on these calculations and the number of the families of the above mentioned communes that profit from the collection of medicinal and aromatic plants we can assume that the activity of collecting medicinal and aromatic plants is a very good source of financial support to local population.

On the basis of questionnaires conducted with villagers of Maqellara, Fushë-Cidhna and Sëlova communes in 2012, about 6% of the surveyed population provide the basic living income from the activity of collecting medicinal and aromatic plants. The highest percentage of families involved in the collection of medicinal and aromatic plants belong to Fushë-Cidhna commune (21%), than is Sëlova commune with 16% and Maqellara 13%. Maqellara commune has the lowest percentage

\(^9\) SNV Dibër, 2010
because the main income of the population of this commune is provided by other economic activities (agriculture, trade, etc.).

The high market demands for medicinal and aromatic plants have led to overexploitation and even extinction of some wild plants. Recent years in these communes there are applied several projects for cultivation of medicinal and aromatic plants. Four rural families of Fushë-Cidhna commune benefited from grants provided by ProMali/SNV Foundation for the cultivation of cowslip (Primula veris) and sage (Salvia officinalis). In this commune there are about 50 hectares of land planted with medicinal plants (35 ha with cowslip and 15 ha with sage). From a hectare of land planted with sage there is approximately 20 tons of dry sage collected, which with the market price (1.4 USD/Kg) provides about 28 000 USD/year for these farmers. Currently these farms are in the third year of production, while the peak production is expected to reach in the fourth or fifth year. Sage cultivation costs for a five year period reach around 800-1200 USD/ha.

About 16% of the population of Sllova commune is engaged in collecting medicinal and aromatic plants, providing about 700-1000 USD/year. In the period 2005-2006 some German projects supported by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit granted some farmers to cultivate sage (Salvia officinalis) and yellow gentian (Gentiana lutea).

In Maqellara commune there is not granted any project yet for medicinal plants cultivation but the farmers of this commune earn about

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10 SNV/ ProMali, Dibër, 2010
11 Market price of sage, 2013
12 K. Hajkola, I.Lloshi, Opportunities of Salvia officinalis cultivation in Malësi e Madhe, pg.2
13 SNV/ ProMali, Dibër, 2010
14 Analyses of questioneers, Dibër, June 2012
400-600 USD/year by the collection of the wild medicinal and aromatic plants\textsuperscript{15}.

The success of cultivation of these plants has stimulated the farmers to plant more ha of their land with medicinal and aromatic plants. Therefore the structure of the traditional cultivated plants on these farms is changing rapidly during these last years in favor of medicinal and aromatic plants.

**Conclusions**

The strategy of development of the rural economy of Maqellara, Fushë-Cidhna and Sllova communes along with agricultural crops and livestock, priority should be given to collecting of medicinal and aromatic plants. These plants have a significant potential which directly affect the income generation of rural population and poverty reduction. A serious concern for the rural area of Dibra district is that some species of economic importance are being overexploited such as Yellow gentian and Cowslip. Other concerns include the collection without criterion, low sale prices to collectors, the distance from the collection center, lack of processing facilities, lack of state control over harvesting and drying, etc.

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\textsuperscript{15} Anayses of the questioneers, Dibër, June 2012
Abstract: One of the main features of the actual economic and political systems is the close connection that exists between them. Many governments measure their success by the performance of the economy, such as levels of economic growth and employment, price stability and increased foreign investment and public, business development, growth of citizens' welfare, etc. There is a growing literature that documents the relationship between institutions, or different indicators of governance and economic achievements. It is estimated that part of the increase in economic growth can be explained by differences in the efficient allocation of resources, which come as a result of the success or deficiency to build appropriate institutions of governance. This element is of particular importance when studying economic performance in less developed countries or those in transition. The aim of this paper is to give light to the link between governance and economic development in transition countries. How much did the consolidated institutions help the transition countries to pass toward the market economy? And how obstacles for the economic development have caused a poor performance of institutions? The paper gives an overview of the situation of the transition countries in Europe with a special focus in Albania.

The paper has two parts: The first part refers to the structure of the political regime used by European post-communist countries in transition phase. To determine the effects of different political systems in the ca-
Capacity of governments to implement and sustain economic reforms, first need to differentiate types of political systems in transition. The second part is connected directly with the developments in Albania, highlighting elements of the government who have stimulated or hindered the progress of reforms.

Key Word: Systems, Institutions, Economy, Transition, Regimes, Europe, Albania.

Political systems in post-comunist European countries

To determine the effects of different political systems in the capacity of governments to implement and sustain economic reforms, first need to differentiate types of political systems\(^1\) in transition. One of the most important features of this variation has been political contestation of new regimes, which means that key decisions of political processes such as the selection of political leaders, the adoption of laws, involvement in the decision making process are subject to challenges from outside groups or within the government.

Competitive democracies

This regime refers to Central Europe countries and the Baltic Republics. After the fall of communism, political institutions began to be shaped in round tables with the participation of many parties such as the popular front, trade union, and many other organizations. Guided by the example of Western European countries were created political institutions oriented on multi-party parliamentary systems with restrictions on executive authorities. Creating institutions and wider participation of political groups increased government capacity and credibility that the potential benefits from economic reforms will be distributed across society and not acquired by certain interest groups. In this perspective, the concentration of economic power in this democracy was very small compared to other countries in the region. This contributed to a broad social consensus about the key directions that economic reforms need to take, despite the differences between the political parties in regard to the order and progress of reforms.

Concentrated political regimes

These forms of governance were present in Croatia, Bulgaria, Russia, Romania, and Slovak Republic. In these regimes, a decline of com-

\(^1\) World Bank (2002) Transition – The first 10 years, *Analysis and Lessons for Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union*
munism came more as a result of the opposition of elites, rather than as a broad social movement. New political institutions were designed from existing leaders to maintain their power. These new regimes were presidential systems with concentrated executive power. Political parties had no power and didn't represent wider social interests. Furthermore, the old nomenclature remained strong, especially in the economic system. Although comprehensive reforms were proposed in these systems, concentrated, in the early years of transition, they were not fully adopted; even those that were approved were wrongly implemented. This made the people lose the credibility on the government and hadn't a broad support for the reforms. Partial reforms regarding price liberalization, licensing and regulatory barriers of trading monopolies created opportunities for the acquisition of benefits from certain groups that constitute a small percentage of the population. There was also set a control to foreign competition. Providing ongoing benefits these groups were trying to block reforms that might threaten them. Many of concentrated systems stalled in a partial reform equilibrium economy, in which the concentration of political and economic power created markets distortions that led to higher profits for certain interest groups but with very high social cost.

**Noncompetitive democracies**

These include countries such as Belarus, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. In these states, the leaders of the period of the Soviet Union tried to secure economic stability while maintaining their dominance in the post-communist political system. Referring to the political and economic resources of these systems they refused the reforms that will orient the economy towards a market economy. The leaders were afraid of opening their countries to global markets and the involvement of many stakeholders in economic reforms and in their benefits would weaken their dominant position. They preferred to have the same continuously basic elements as in the centrally planned economy in order that the state could retain the same organic position in society as well as avoiding the costs that could come from economic reforms. In this case, the economic reform was not addressed by the beneficiaries of it, but by political authorities in power, who were trying to keep the same control policy and to provide some economic stability. In this context, partial economic reforms were undertaken in parallel with partial political reforms, as current leaders have placed strict restrictions on the political opposition. This situation prevented the integration of structures and capacities of the public sector. Although the state structures do not provide the establishment of market economy institutions they
provide a level of public goods, which was similar to the levels that were offered in the communist period.

**Regimes with political conflicts**

In these systems, efforts to promote economic reform in the first phase of transition was overshadowed by contests that which of the political parties will have the right to lead and define the rules for the community. States which have ethnic divisions were faced with a high risk that governments will come into force would try to acquire rivals wealth and resources, providing advantages in institutional structures that were taking place. Having felt threatened ethnic groups in many countries in the region violently opposed the legitimacy of the state. In such an environment, governments cannot take credible action on the distribution of future benefits from the reforms, or expropriate property. During periods of peace and stability, the governments of these countries have tried to implement comprehensive reform programs, but their continuity has always been threatened by a lack of confidence. Protracted conflicts have contributed to lowering product, living standards and resources, deterioration of physical and human capital as well as increased poverty, reducing public sector capacity to provide basic public goods etc. The combination of political instability, the existence of a weak state, the economic power of certain groups caught in illegal forms and hidden trades undermined economic reform in all states like Bosnia Herzegovina, Azerbaijan, Macedonia, etc.

This classification is rather theoretical, because in reality many of the above-mentioned states may have two or more features of different political regimes. Azerbaijan also features the regime with political conflicts, but also non-competitive political regime, or Croatia and the Slovak Republic have been displaced by competing concentrated regimes to democracies. The same can be said for Romania and Bulgaria, which have made progress in the expansion of civil and political rights. These changes suggest that states are not part of a particular political system unchanged. This makes it very difficult to classify them in certain political regimes.

**Performance of the major reforms in 2 decades of transition in European countries**

Passage of many countries from centrally planned to a market economy, would be accomplished through a process known as intermediate transition process. This intermediate stage serves to transform the economic and political system to respond to the needs of a market econo-
The core policies of the transition process in all post-communist states were identical from the economic restructuring point of view. They were designed by the new governments with the help of international organizations like the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the first institution that was created in order to assist the transition process).

Beginning of transition was accompanied by the decline of output in all countries, although the decrease was not the same. This decrease was associated with the rapid growth of inequality and poverty. According to de Melo, Denizer, and Gelb (1996) factors that explain the variation in the reduction of the product between different states in the first phase of transition and of an influence to economic performance are like: structural factors (the specific weight of the industry in gross domestic product, rate of urbanization, the level of trade exchanges with ex-socialist countries, the amount of natural resources that owns a country and initial income), distortionary (rising inflation, informal markets exchange rate (black market), the history of reforms in the communist period and the rate of economic growth in the period before the transition) and institutional (elements of a market economy that existed before the communist regime, the location of the states versus those of Western Europe and the creation of new states after the fall of communism).

Economists have different opinions about the fact that how defining the role of these factors in further economic performance of countries is. However they are in consensus about the first reforms to be undertaken at the beginning of the transition. These reforms would be:

**Price liberalization** – the process in which most prices are determined in free markets and reducing trade barriers that can close trade relations with other states.

**Privatization** – the reform and restructuring of enterprises, to become able to produce goods and services which are sold in the open market, or to transfer their ownership towards private operators.

**Macroeconomic stability** – keeping control of macroeconomic variables such as inflation, who suffered an immediate increase because of price liberalization, so the prudent fiscal policy to maintain low levels of budget deficit and monetary policy to control the money growth and a stable balance of payments.

**Legal and institutional reforms** – these reforms serve to re-frame the role of the state in post-communist countries by ensuring the rule...
of law and introduce appropriate policies to increase competition. The following table shows the progress of these reforms in the early years of transition in the former communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

Table 1. The progress of the reforms on the first phase of transition in Central and Eastern Europe (1998)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Private sector in % of GDP</th>
<th>Privatization</th>
<th>Price liberalization</th>
<th>Financial institutions Banking system reform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Small enterprises</td>
<td>Large enterprises</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CE and Baltics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4+</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4+</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4+</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4+</td>
<td>3+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>3+</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovak Rep.</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4+</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SEE countries</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3-</td>
<td>3+</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EBRD, Transition Report 1998

What seems clear from the table is the difference in the progress of reforms among the countries that have become part of the European Union in 2004 and other countries. Although these differences are not very large, they show that these countries are more advanced and have passed a faster process of transition to a market economy.

Also is worthy noting that structural factors have an effect on the early years of transition, and institutional factors in recent years. This clearly shows that countries with a consolidated institutional past have implemented successful reforms and swifter transition to a market economy. This is the case of the Central European countries like Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, which was the first post-transition countries that joined the European Union. These countries, which shifted from the communist system in transition economy in a very demo-
The democratic way reflected this advantage during the second decade of transition. They continued reforms in the development and institution building in coherence with economic reforms. Major reform progress in the consolidation of markets, financial institutions, increasing the size of the private sector through privatization and infrastructure reform are presented in the table below.

Table 2. The progress of the reforms on the second phase of transition in Central and Eastern Europe (2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Private sector as % of GDP</th>
<th>Privatisation</th>
<th>Markets</th>
<th>Financial institutions</th>
<th>Infrastructure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small scale</td>
<td>Large scale</td>
<td>Price liberalization</td>
<td>Competition policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE &amp; Baltics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>3+</td>
<td>4+</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4+</td>
<td>4+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4+</td>
<td>4+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>4-</td>
<td>4+</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4+</td>
<td>4+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3+</td>
<td>4+</td>
<td>3+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovak Rep.</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4+</td>
<td>4+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4+</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3+</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BiH</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macedonia</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>3+</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>4-</td>
<td>3-</td>
<td>4+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3-</td>
<td>4-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EBRD, Tranzition Report 2008

The table is divided into two groups of countries, where the first group include countries that have political systems under competitive democracies, in the second group countries like Bulgaria and Romania have features of competitive democracies, but there are also countries with features that belong on the other three regimes. From the table it is noted that the first group has a consolidated continuation of the reforms if we compare these results with that of the first table, but also if we compare them with the other countries.
Albania on the way toward transformation process, Governance features in Albania in 2 decades of transition

The first step toward democracy was the victory of Democratic Party in the 1992 elections. This was an anti-communist force that started with a series of economic and political reforms considered as a "shock therapy". The enthusiasm of the first years of democracy faded in the mid-1990s, when political force began exhibiting intolerance in political debates and a decisionmaking of a compelling type far from democratic one. This situation was added the creation of pyramidal schemes that after their bankruptcy in late 1996 took away 2/3 of the Albanian's savings and about 1/3 of GDP\(^2\). The worst would come on the following year where as a result of the opening of the prison and arms depots was created a state of anarchy in the country and it took the intervention of international forces to make it possible to stabilize the situation. In these conditions, the Albanian state began to strengthen the legislative base to increase security and order in the country. In 1998, was adopted the first post-communist constitution.

Second decade of transition has been calm for Albanians and without conflict; however, political tensions become present during pre-election periods. The economic development is quite fragile and vulnerable to external shocks; also the high level of informality has been always a drain on the developing business climate in country. What has been the development of some indicators of governance in these years of transition? This analysis will be provided as follows.

Political representations

Since the establishment of democracy the number of parties created began to grow significantly, but their political representations was mainly divided between two major forces DP and SP. Since the establishment of democracy the parliamentary elections are held 7 times, but have always been contested by the parties missed. The quality of elections is always used by international organizations as an indicator to measure how free and freely the citizens voted and how are them manipulated. During the elections held in recent years efforts have been made to reduce the possibility of manipulation by introducing electronic registry of voters, increasing the transparency of voter lists, issuing cards to vote, etc. Although there is nothing documented, but unofficial information is that during electoral periods there is an in-

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\(^2\) BTI (2012), Albania Country Report, Bertelsmann Stiftung’s Transformation Index (BTI) www.bti-project.de/.../2012/.../BTI%202012%20Al.
creased pressure on voters who are employed in public administration, or other public entities.

An important aspect is the change of the electoral system from a majority system combined with proportional to a regional proportional system. Although one of the reasons was to increase participation in the parliament by more political forces, there was no very great effect to small parties. The elections of 2013 were of a great interest, as this type of electoral system any political party can not have dominance; therefore the parties have created coalitions.

The power exercised by the government should be regulated by law, in order not to have an excess of competences and negatively affect private sector development. A problem related to this issue is when the power is strongly correlated with private interests, otherwise known as state capture. It can be expressed in several forms such as favoring certain businesses that state functionaries have interests in, paving the way for unfair competition and monopolies, the rent-seeking, inequitable allocation of public policy, or related to illegal businesses, etc. There were many cases of corruption and bribes, in Albania, that were made public in the media and had in the center public employees. But the most flagrant case was in 2010 where a senior functionary of the state was accused by another ex-functionar of the state for favorising certain companies’ in public tenders in order to obtain large amounts of money.

Freedom of speech and the right of citizens to protest are two important indicators for increasing the participation of civil society in public decision-making. From surveys made by prestigious organizations Albania has lost points in the world rankings in terms of these two rights. Albania has made even back steps in this direction if I refer to events happened during an opposition protest on January 21, 2011 where there were 4 people killed and several wounded among them a journalist. This event has significantly increased the scepticism of citizens to protest about different economic, political or social matters. Also, media freedom is violated, not less, if we refer to the attacks against certain media made by different politicians. Other pressure that the media is facing is related to the use of media as a political propagandistic tool.

Rule of law

According to the Albanian Constitution that excrision of political power must be limited and controlled by sanctioning mechanisms. This is
made possible by having not only a separation of powers (executive, legislative and judicial), but also a balance to them. During these 20 years of transition there have been positive examples of the operation of this separation of powers, but there have been also cases of overlapping competencies. Often parliament, which is also the supreme body, did not function properly in the decision making, as opposition forces have boycotted participation in parliament. This has happened so often over the years, but with long periods has been after the parliamentary elections of 2009, where after missing out the opposition boycotted parliament for 6 months. Under these circumstances, Parliament lost his role as restrictive to executive power and often become an instrument to adopt laws and policies without the participation of all political forces.

Judiciary system is most vulnerable and critical part of the chain of separation of powers. In many opinions and surveys the level of citizens' confidence in the system of justice is very low. This proves once again that the real division of powers is still difficult in the country. In the hierarchy of the judiciary, most affected by political pressure are the highest court, the constitutional court and the prosecutor's office. Another disadvantage of this fragile separation of powers is the undermining of whatever initiative for the prosecution of cases of power abuse. From either the left or the right opposition, there were raised and issued accusations against senior officials even in minister’s rank for corruption and abuse of power for personal benefits and no one has been tried and convicted. In general, the issues have been closed by the prosecution for lack of evidence, or for other reasons of this kind. Or in some cases the courts continue for a long time, until the issue was forgotten by the public and not pose for media news, as is the Gerdec case where during an outbreak in a state factory which deals with the dismantling of the weapons in March 2008, many workers were killed, dozens wounded and many houses damaged.

Democratic Institutions

Political crisis, created especially after the 2009 parliamentary elections, has shown that democratic institutions are not functioning adequately. One case of this poor performance is observed in the relations between central and local government, especially the local government is leaded by the representatives of the opposition. There have been many cases of delay in relation to the delegation of funds, or other obstacles by the central government such as cutting funds, which primarily harm the citizens and then the well-functioning of the process of
decentralization of power. Boycotting parliament by the opposition and street protests are facts to prove the lack of confidence in the functioning of institutions. Also, according to a survey made by Gallup Balkan, Albanians are probably the only country in the Balkans who believe more the internationally institutions than domestically ones. According to this survey made in 20103, 80 per cent of them had full confidence in NATO and 79 percent in the EU, only 9 percent of them had complete confidence in the Albanian government and 31 percent were somewhat confident to the government.

Political Integration

As noted above with the establishment of democracy increased significantly the number of political parties formed which represented different interest, but political representations was limited only to the two major parties, where democratic party (DP) was created by anti-communist forces and socialist party (SP) was a derivative of Working Party, which was then continuously reformed. With the coming to power each of the two major parties pursue the policy of monopolization of decision-making, totally excluding the opposition. Also the smaller parties that cannot represented in parliament have tried at all times to create alliances with two dominant parties to secure any seat in the parliament. Various interest groups derived from civil society passed through the vacuum created by the previous regime as first aid from foreign donors and then the development of structures within them. The involvement of these groups in the form of NGOs in public decision-making has been a step forward in the development of democracy; however this is not the same for all these organizations. Some of them are involved, some less.

This asymmetric participation in decision making is due to an asymmetry of information created, where many politicians, or ex-functionar of state, after being removed from political life have created their NGO. Using previously established connections that can ensure cooperation with the donor having the highest participation rate than other NGOs that do not have this advantage. One important issue on which Albania should work more is the involvement of citizens in decision making. Citizens are not so attached to no-governmental organizations, often for lack of information, or other factors.

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The impact of governance on economic development

Carrying out reforms in an unstable political and institutional environment has influenced their results.

Price and trade liberalization

At the beginning of the transition period the first reforms were price liberalizing and trade with foreign countries. Price liberalization has been a reform which has had a good performance by referring to the EBRD assessment presented in Table 2. It has a constant trend, being at the same assessment levels with other Central and South European countries during the first and the second of transition. Also, trade liberalization policies have positive developments, especially after 2000 where Albania joined the WTO. After this year, began to implement a series of free trade agreement with the countries of the region for the abolition of customs duties. Although according to experts benefits of the trade openness in respect of exports were not large due to the lack of competitive advantages and appropriate addressing of the policies toward the growth of these advantages. Benefits have been mainly in terms of low prices of import goods but not of a considerable degree to indicate a positive result. European Union is the main trading partner of Albania, concretely Greece and Italy are the countries with most trading fluxes.

Increasing competition and Antimonopoly policy

In its path towards a market economy, competitive policies and the establishment of market prices are quite substantial. To create space private market development, Albania has reformed the tax system, reducing the relative tax rates on work and on corporate profit, in order to develop and consolidate private markets. According to World Bank Doing Business report 2012, Albania ranks the best positions in relation to credit and investor protection (24.16 out of 183 countries) although it has lost some positions compared to a year ago\(^4\). Closing contracts and opening a business contract ranks Albania on 85 and 64 position. However, Albania has made progress with regard to the simplification of procedures for starting a business, compared to a few years ago.

Anti-monopoly policies are also important in relation to the growth of competition. It is worthy to mention the creation of the unit of the Albanian Competition Authority, which aims to monitor and investigate markets. In its operation worth mentioning fines on two mobile operators Telefonica for nonconcurrencial politics. Also the development of new laws by the government for the protection of the environment is another step towards the efficient functioning of private markets. Despite these improvements competitive policies and free market orientation raised in an environment not very consolidated from the standpoint of institutional capacity. Even under the above assessments of EBRD (Table 2) Albania has a poor rating compared to Central European countries, only on the same position with BiH and Serbia, as well as Macedonia is estimated somewhat better. Also the existence of a relatively high informal economy weakens policies for well-functioning markets.

Reforming the private property

The government has taken a number of legal and fiscal measures to improve the climate for the development of the private sector but also in order to encourage foreign investment. This policy is in line with the policy of increasing the size of the private sector through privatization. During the second decade of transition, Albania has experienced a huge wave of privatization, taking a positive evaluation for the privatization of large enterprises, but also the medium. These privatizations began with the banking system, telecommunications, to continue with the energy sector in recent years. Here it is worth mentioning also many concession contracts in the last two sectors. Although there has been a positive assessment, the failure of the privatization of CEZ distribution which had privatized electricity distribution network has put into question the success of privatization in Albania. This can be viewed as an inability of the government to protect the interest of the citizens towards third parties, based on the costs that the citizens will have to carry because of this failure. A major hurdle in terms of economic and social development is the lack of clear property rights. This issue which is not resolved after 20 years of transition has prevented Albania from absorbing foreign projects, especially in the sectors of agriculture and tourism, which are strategic for our country. In this failure a great role is played from judicial system and narrow political interests and corruption that pledge the resolve of this issue.
Financial sector

Banking sector as an important part of the financial sector has had a major development in the second decade of transition, after the privatization of the largest state bank in the country. After negative experiences of pyramid schemes, Central Bank policies have been for monitoring and consolidating the banking system. This system is relatively closed, since Albania has not a pure financial market. This is proved by the fact that our country was not affected by the world financial crisis. The insurance market is underdeveloped in comparison with the countries of the region. It has taking the lowest evaluation in comparison with other sectors of the economy.

Stabilization policies

Stabilization policies have always been the main attention of governments. These policies have been of particular importance, especially during the first phase of transition. Keeping inflation under control and other indicators such as the deficit and the debt was necessary due to the deterioration of these indicators because of liberalization policies. Albania is trying to keep these variables under control over the years, but in recent years there is a distortion of fiscal indicators and an increase in public debt. Debt crisis that has grabbed our neighboring European countries has even increased our exposure to risks that may affect the macroeconomic stabilization. The effect of these policies during the last years did not have any significant effect because of the economic crisis and the destabilized political environment.

Conclusions

Governance in transition economies is a crucial issue for achieving good economic performance. This paper highlights that keeping into a constant environment other factors positive performance of governance indicators has led to a consolidated economic development. This also explained why some countries have had a quick transition and other did not. The case of Central European countries that are now part of the EU indicates that the high level of democracy and participation of parties in decision-making has had only positive effects on their development.

Albania is classified as a problematic transition country, which has been difficult, especially during the first phase. However, even after the reform progress has been slow. Frequent political pressures and lack of continuity in politics attitudes adversely affect the sustainability of the reforms.
Fragile separation of powers and the environment with no clear definition of property rights has slowed the development of the private sector. Also the existence of phenomena such as state capture, rent-seeking, corruption, etc. has created market distortions and reduces the efficient allocation of resources and the level of competition. This has affected the concentration of some markets, where despite the measures taken by the state to increase their competitiveness and efficient operation, the results have been superficial. Privatization policies, although they are an important indicator for expanding the size of the private sector, have been adversely affected by the unstable institutional environment.

Based on the analysis made above one of the recommendations of this paper will be the rise of political will in terms of cooperation for reform continuosity. This would imply a wider range of benefits distribution to society. This political will has been almost inexistent during the entire transition, causing significantly increased polarization of the distribution of economic benefits to society, which is concentrated in a relatively small group, compared with the rest of the population.

Another recommendation would be linked with measures related to strengthening the rule of law and control of corruption, because as analyzed above these two indicators have lower achievement in our country, but are also strong bases for a structured development.

And ultimately increase the elements of democracy, such as freedom of media, freedom of individuals, representations and wider participation in public decision-making will serve as a support for the creation of peaceful political climate and a sustainable economic development.

Bibliography


World Bank (2012), Doing Bussines in a more transparent world, pg 85
Abstract: Shkodra is well-known for its high cultural and natural values as well as the high number of tourists that visit the town and the area close by. One of the cultural monuments of the district is Shkodra castel, known as Rozafa castel. Rozafa is a great historical, architectural and tourism property not only for Shkodra, but also for Albania. Rozafa castel is one of the major castel and one of the most frequently visited site belonging to the cultural tourism in Albania.

Rozafa castel rises from a rocky hill to the west of Shkodra. The waters of three rivers, the Buna, Drini and Kiri, surround it. Historians date back the castle to the Illyrians. The important geographical position together with archaeological and historical objects inside the castle (The Museum of Rozafa, Towers, The prison, Saranxhat, Mosque, water tankers, etc.), construction and improvement of restaurants with tradicional foods, souvenir shops etc., have turned the castle into a favorite tourist destination. Castle of Rozafa is involved in almost all tourist routes, which are organized in Albania, which is accompanied by the generation of income for residents, businesses and museums of the castle.

Spending patterns of tourists are favorable to economic development, because they prefer to interact directly with the community that they visit (shops, restaurants and other local businesses) and tend to buy a lot of products and services provided by them. Since the beginning of 2012, the castle of Rozafa has welcomed nearly 20 thousand visitors from 20 different countries of the world. During this summer the number of visitors has reached over 300 people in day. The purpose of this
study is to evidence the economic and touristic values of Rozafa Castle, presentation and analysis of the present situation, for stakeholders and assisting in the decision making of this castle in the future using. The methods used in the study are: the comparison method used especially in comparison the evolving data on the number of visitors from the years 2011 and 2012, the survey method, graphic, cartographic and technical methods.

Key Word: Castle, economic and touristic evaluation, hedonic price.

Potencial and tourist values of the citadels in Albania

Albania is a country with a rich past history. The existence of about 150 fortifications constitute a historical, architectural and tourist wealth of our country. Considering the size of the territory, we can say that Albania has a considerable number of citadels, which are located in the whole country. The first trace of fortifications in form of citadels date back from the Neolithic period (2800-2700 BC) until the nineteenth century, built as a defensive fortress in case of attack or even as settlement castles like Berat (Antipatrea), Rozafa (Shkodra), Limarit (Përmet), Petrela (Tirana), Mallathreja (Saranda), Chimero (Himara), Amantia, Dimal (Berat), Albanopolit (Zgërdheshi) in Krujë, etc. Some of the citadels have lost their function with time, while others kept their importance being reinforced and added new elements. Their dominant position, mainly over the cities, with the history that they hold and the diversity of their architectural styles, they have turned into attractive objects of a particular importance for cultural tourists. Today these citadels have become a very valuable legacy of the past and at the same time are a favorite tourist destination. Most of the travelling agencies, in their tourist itineraries, include visits to the most important castles of the country. Tourism values of the fortifications are confirmed by the high number of foreign visitors. Commonly, 92% of them visit castles in Kruja, Shkodra, Gjirokastra, Berati, Durresi etc. A lot of castles of Albania were built in nice landscapes, giving them at the same time geo-tourist values. For their architectural, historical and cultural values, most of the citadels in Albania have been declared cultural monuments and protected by the state. The citadels have the highest attendance with numerous historical and architectural objects, citadels which have suitable geography position such as being close to the capital or the most important urban centers, near airports, ports etc. The presence of museums, churches, mosques, the improvement of service, the presence of the traditional cuisine of the area, souvenir
shops etc. have turned Albanian citadels into the most frequented tourist destinations. The best example is Shkodra or Rozafa castle.

**Rozafa castle**

Rozafa castle is a castle near the city of Shkodra, in northwestern Albania. It rises imposingly on a rocky hill, 130 metres above sea level, surrounded by the Bojana and Drin rivers. Due to its strategic location, the hill has been settled since antiquity. It was an Illyrian stronghold until it was invaded by the Romans in 167 BC. The fortifications, as they have been preserved to date, are mostly of Venetian origin. The castle has been the site of several famous sieges, including the siege of Shkodra by the Ottomans in 1478 and the siege of Shkodra by the Montenegrins in 1912. The walls of the citadel of Rozafa have a length of 880 meters and a surrounding area of 9 hectares. Inside the castle there are five tankers, with 8 throat and a large number of towers, deposits, niches for guards, two secret exits and other debris from the annexes. The objects visitable inside the castle are the Cathedral of XIII century, which after the Ottoman occupation returned into a mosque, water tankers of XV centuries, towers etc. Also inside the citadel is the museum, which explains the different periods of the castle. This castle was declared a cultural monument in 1948 and protected by the state. The legendary castle of "Rozafa" in Shkodra has become the epicenter of visitors not only from all regions of our country and Albanian regions, but also by foreign tourists. Their great historical values, highlighted in the good organization of work, continuous investment, the right policies for the identification of different parts of the castle, are some of the elements that have considerably increased the number of tourists in the Castle of Rozafa.

How do we find implement some components of tourism in Rozafa castle?

a. **Tourist attraction**

Rozafa castle has a suitable position to attract the largest number of visitors. Its rich history, favorable geographic position and beautiful nature have become one of the favorite tourist destinations not only for Albanians, wherever they are, but also for thousands of tourists from all over the world. It offers a nice view of foreigners and a legend in which objects speak for. Its legend, archeology and history testify to its early existence. Also wonderful nature with the attractive areas make it a wonderful starting point for excursions and picnics during the days. The construction of some attractive hotels, restaurants with typical
cuisine and the improvement of the hotel service, have included Rozafa castle into a touristic destination and part of the Balkan tourist itineraries. Local people offer a welcoming atmosphere through some characteristic elements: characteristic houses, mainly cobblestone streets, traditional cuisine and cultural activities festivities that take place from time to time etc.

b. Rozafa castle, handicrafts and souvenir center

In the Rozafa castle are a large number of traders, who have recently chosen the entrance gate of the citadel to trade their goods. Driven by the large number of tourists visiting the castle, the inhabitants of Shkodra seen as a way of profit to trade their goods. There, we can find a variety of products, mostly souvenir and handicrafts. Traders anxiously wait for summer and winter, because these are two seasons where the citadel of Shkodra is mostly visited by tourists.

c. The promotion of tourism

Fig. 1. Map and the planimetry of the citadel of Shkodra
Aiming to grow number of tourists in our country, Albania has turned its eyes to promotion. Although much less than our neighbors, Albanians through advertising, publicity spots and guides, have turned the attention of the world towards itself. Some forms of promotion followed by AKT are:

- The realization of the virtual visit to some Albanian cities through the section "Albania 360 degrees".
- The organization of the tour by foreign journalists in some of the tourist points in Albania where was including Shkodra.
- The realization of a the cycle programs in Televizion
- The participation in different fairs
- Tourist guide in 3 languages, albanian, english and serbo-croatian.

**Analysis of surveys realized with visitors of Rozafa castle**

Among the methods used for the research we mention the comparison method used especially in comparison to the evolving data on the number of visitors and the income in 2012.

One of the main reasons of the reduction of the number of tourists, is the economic crisis which has also involved the most developed countries of the world. It is also evident that the number of foreign visitors has lowered, because of the image of a still insecure situation in Albania. Although this image is not in accordance with reality, it can not be ignored. The surrounding area makes Shkodra attractive for a longer stay, although infrastructure and accommodation are inadequate for a growing number of tourists.

Another method used, is the survey method that is used to create more precise perception of reality because the statistical data of state institutions not always represent the true situation. The work started with compilation of questionnaires to provide information about the evolution of the number of tourists who frequent the castle or accessible object inside the castel, specifically the museum of the castle. To make it possible an economic and tourist evaluation of Rozafa castle, there are implemented monitoring where in different periods of the year are conducted surveys that included various questions to evaluate concludes of economic and tourism evaluation of the castle of Rozafa.
Total were conducted 100 surveys in 2012. Below is an analysis of the 2012 survey. Rozafa Castle remains an attraction for foreign and domestic tourists through architecture, legend, historical values and geographical position. If we compared with the previous years the number of tourists has been increased, despite the lack of information from neighboring agencies. The most regular tourists of this castle are over 50 years old (40%). Those

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Native visitors</th>
<th>Foreign visitor</th>
<th>Total visitors with ticket</th>
<th>Price (leke)</th>
<th>Amount in leke</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>10000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>February</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>30880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>39200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>April</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>784</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>156800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>801</td>
<td>1052</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>210400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>968</td>
<td>1225</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>245000</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>1216</td>
<td>1542</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>308400</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>1587</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>370000</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>986</td>
<td>1125</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>225000</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>105000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>November</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>37200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>22400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total of visitors</td>
<td>1910</td>
<td>6855</td>
<td>8801</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total in leke</td>
<td>1760200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Office of Management of the castle

who prefer to travel and explore the rich cultural heritage are exactly the elderly and more men (56%). Nationality of the person surveyed is 20% Albanian, 30% from Kosovo, 50% from different countries of the world. During monitoring processed in terren is noted that visitors are not seen as casual and it has provided fruit there of. From surveys and monitoring implementation of at the castle of Shkodra we found that the number of organized groups of tourists who arrived from Poland,
Czech Republic, Slovakia, Russia, USA, Italy, Argentina, Austria, Germany, etc. is increased. Also is increase the number Albanians from Kosovo, Macedonia and mainly from Montenegro, who arrived in Albania for the summer holidays. Diplomatic Corps are another part of the tourists who occasionally travel to the historic part of the city. There come from Kukes, Gramshi, Erseke, Burrel, Tepelenë, Dibër, Kruja, Tirana etc. Even emigrants have been very active during the past year. They come with the children to made familiar with the story. According to the surveyed person, appears that the level of the education of the tourists who visit the castel of Shkodra is good with 70% university education, 20% high school and only 10% are with primary.

**How many time did you visited the castle?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>5%</th>
<th>25%</th>
<th>70%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 times</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 times</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Which are some of the objects that you visited inside the castle?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>museum</th>
<th>saranxhat</th>
<th>kapiteniera</th>
<th>tower</th>
<th>moqsu</th>
<th>other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In which of the object that you visited paid for?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The entrance of the castle</th>
<th>Museum</th>
<th>Mosque</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How did you hear about the object’s values of the castle?

- Historic books: 50%
- Tourist guide: 30%
- Documentary: 10%
- Leaflets: 5%
- Other: 5%

How do you evaluate the promotion of values of the castle?

- Very good: 80%
- Good: 20%
- Bad: 0%
The answers of the questions “How many times did you visited Rozafa castle” responded 70% only one time, 25% 2 times and 5%
more than 2 times. They were tourists who regularly frequented this castle almost for the first time, but also of those who had been the second time. Question "What are some of the objects that you visited inside the castle?", responded 97% the museum, 90% saranxhat, 20% kapiteneria, 100% towers, 100% mosque. This is because the tourists are not very informed about the numerous historical and architectural objects inside this castle. According to statistics from The Office of Management of the castle for the year 2012 are provided 1.7602 million in Leke income. The majority of the interviewees are known with the values of the castle through the guides and the general promotion of the castle. The presence of informational signs for tourists, infrastructure, the service towards visitor, the safety of the visitors they evaluate very well. Making a balance, Shkodra from the tourist point can be described as an attractive place to stay, where tourists are not stimulated to spend more than a day. Spending patterns of tourists are favorable to economic development, because they prefer to interact directly with the community that they visit (shops, restaurants and other local businesses) and tend to buy a lot of products and services provided by them. The majority of interviewees (95%) say that will come back again to visit the castle.

The management of the castle of Rozafa

Currently the management of the Albanian fortifications has a number of problems that directly or indirectly relate to lack of funds for research, restoration and maintenance. The main problems associated with their management are institutional, financial and technical. Despite the evolution of the legislation and the commitment of Albania to meet the requirements of UNESCO and other international organizations for the protection of cultural monuments, management and protection of monuments leaves much to be desired. National and local institutions involved in the managing of citadels are: The Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports, General Directorate of State Archives, Institute of Albanology, National Center of Inventorying Cultural Heritage Assets, Rescue Archaeology Agency and organs of local government, the respective field to tracking, protection, conservation, restoration, treatment, research, inventory and computerized cultural heritage objects. Local government organs cooperate with the Institute of Albanian Studies (Institute of Archaeology) and the Institute of Monuments of Culture for the preservation and protection of cultural heritage, located in the territory of their jurisdiction. Institute of Cultural Monuments (IMK) is a state scientific institution under the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports, which deals with the man-
agement and preservation of cultural monuments. Albania is a member of the International Council of Monuments and Historical Centers (ICOMOS) since 1989, and the International Centre of Research and Restoration of Cultural Monuments (ICCROM) since 1962.

Despite institutional efforts for the maintenance of the citadels, very little is done to maintain and preserve them from degradation that comes from natural and human causes. The legal framework for the protection of the citadels that are declared cultural monuments actually exists, but is not always applied. A number of fortifications need urgent intervention before they fall apart. A number of other fortifications, which are relatively far from major populated zones, are being stolen by residents, thereby losing witness traces of these buildings with historical and architectural value to our country.

Rozafa castle was involved in the project of Albanian Development Fund for the lighting of nine castles for the 100-th anniversary of Independence. It was intended that through this investment, the affirmation of the historical and cultural values of the country and increasing the income of local governments involved in it, by promoting and increasing the access to cultural heritage. There have also been some interventions in Rozafa castle for the restoration of the exterior wall of the castle which threatened to ruins. The ever-increasing incomes from ticket sales, have enabled important investments on the interior and exterior of the castle, highlighting historical values. Investments have been made in the castle prison, the first tower of the castel entrance and the prison area have been cleaned, as being seen as a big interest for tourists to visit. Work has also been done for the cleaning and restoration of 7 water deposits which are located on the interior of the castle, for the installation of information boards, cleaning the exterior walls at the entrance gate, building sanitary facilities, and expansion of space for parking.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- Considering the size of the territory, we can say that Albania has a considerable number of citadels, which are located in the whole country. The existence of about 150 fortifications constitute a historical, architectural and tourist wealth of our country.

- Today these citadels are become a very valuable legacy from the past and in the same time they are a favorite tourist destination. Most of the agencies travel in their tourist itineraries include visits in the most important castles of the country.
The presence of museums, mosques, the improvement of the service, the presence of traditional cuisine of the area, the souvenir shops etc have turn Rozafa or Shkodra castle in one of the most frequented tourist destinations.

The castles are evidence of every period of history and modern developments, expressed these in their construction, fortification objects, architectural objects, etc.

For their architectural, historical and cultural values, most of the citadels in Albania have been declared cultural monuments and protected by the state and one of them is Rozafa castle.

In addition to historical, architectural and tourism that have the castle, today they constitute a great economic potential for the country.

The castle of Shkodra, one of most frequented citadels in Albania, is involved in almost in all the tourist routes, which are organized in Albania, which is accompanied by the generation of income for residents, businesses and museums castle.

According to statistics from the Office of Management of the castle for 2012, are provided 1760200 income in leke.

From the surveys conducted during the 2012 is clear that Shkodra citadel welcomes visitors from various countries of the world (14945 to 79 thousand visitors in 2012)

Spending patterns of tourists are favorable to economic development, because they prefer to interact directly with the community that they visit (shops, restaurants and other local businesses) and tend to buy a lot of products and services provided by them.

The majority of interviewees are satisfied with the services, infrastructure and security to visitors.

However, the management of castles currently has a number of problems that directly or indirectly related to the lack of funding for their research, restoration and maintenance.

The Institute of Monuments of Culture should increase the number of qualified specialists for the restoration of these historic buildings and create a restoration laboratory with international standards and multidisciplinary staff of archaeological objects.
Well-managed of the castel of Shkodra but also of all other castles can create substantial income, but also affects the construction of a sustainable image to foreign tourists.

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NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE, A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN ISHEM – PORTO ROMANO COASTLINE REGION

Shkëlqim SIRIKA

Abstract: Current stiff competition among Mediterranean countries for tourist attraction has been focused on the distinct precious cultural and natural elements. From one side cultural tourism coordinates the economic progress with preservation of the regional cultural inheritance and local identity. On the other side natural monuments create an unique opportunity for tourists to discover certain elements of local nature which distinguish the area from other places they have visited. With economic globalization, tourism with all necessities and requirements, the means it flows, has shaped the attitude towards cultural heritage and environment by various social groups with different backgrounds and has created its own culture which brings together people not only from their race or nationality, but great desire to learn about other cultures. The coastline area Ishem-Porto Romano in the recent years is being turned into a tourist market, thanks to its natural resources and several monuments of historical heritage.

The purpose of this project is the identification and evaluation of these natural and cultural values as great potential for a constant development of the area. Tourist growth and particularly the cultural tourism will establish full concepts about the identity of this areas becoming the basis for a sustainable development.

Key Word: Natural Heritage, Cultural Tourism, Sustainable Development, Indititet.

M. Sc. Shkëlqim SIRIKA, University of Tirana-Albania, [shkelqim.sirika@yahoo.com].
Introduction

Natural and cultural monuments, as unique values give tourists the opportunity to know the most interesting sightseeings of different countries. This is the reason why these natural and cultural heritage values attracting the attention of touristic movement are included in sustainable development projects and strategies of tourism, in the tour guides and tourist schedules. In the coastal area of Ishem-Porto Romano, the recent economic developments indicate its position as an area having the perspective of sustainable development. This area is increasingly attracting the attention of local and foreign investors in tourism, energy, agriculture and fishing. In relation to this development, it is necessary for these investments to be associated with the preservation of natural and cultural heritage, enabling the transmission of information about these resources to the future generations.

Protection and preservation of human and natural heritage constitutes in setting ethical principles such as active and collective responsibility and awareness of creating the concept that this heritage constitutes an identity for this area like a beautiful coastline with a rich history and diverse culture. The development of a very popular tourism to attract local and foreign tourists as well as the integration of the area towards a sustainable development using the human and natural resources without damaging them would create a new image and we would have a revival of its ancient values. In ancient historical periods, the area has enabled commercial and cultural exchanges between regions of the country and among other countries of the Mediterranean region. This area is known as one of the most conserved areas in the Mediterranean region. The careful re-evaluation of nature and cultural values of this area means the conservation of wonderful landscape, biodiversity and preservation of historical, cultural and religious buildings.

General overview of Ishem-Porto Romano coastal area

The coastal area of Ishëm-Porto Romano is located in the central part of the Albanian coastal Lowland with an estuary in the Adriatic Sea having a strategic geographic position quite favorable for an economic and sustainable development. It is extended in the north-south from Rodoni Cape to Porto Romano and Bisht Palle, having a flat-hilly relief. The natural resources combined with the cultural heritage, make a
considerable potential for the development of tourism and the support of local economy.

The area is very interesting and has multiple values due to the various ecosystems in it (woodland, marine, coastal, river, marsh, reservoirs etc). The entire hilly massive of Rodoni hills is one of the rarest Mediterranean areas which has preserved as nowhere else the Mediterranean shrubs, oak, willow and many others so it has resources of sea, hills, forest, nature, landscape, climate and organic agriculture. The vegetation consists mainly of pine and oak forests, Mediterranean shrubs and deforested areas. The marine environment, as in the entire Mediterranean coast, consists of the most common species of Posidonia Oceanica that constitute of underwater meadows, considered as “Mediterranean green lungs”. In general this environment has biodiversity and water is of good quality. Social environment constitute socio-geographic areas which are quite accessible through many reconstructed roads. The agricultural activity is dominant in this area. It is suitable for echo-tourism and is characterized by typical villages which have preserved the tradition of family hospitality.

Methodology

In order to conduct this study we are based on and referred to contemporary literature of geography and tourism, basic model analysis of regional, world, rural and peri-urban development and approximation of evaluations based on them, compared similar examples (Golem area), our national projects and strategies about tourism development. We also had to study the existing literature dealing directly and indirectly with this area, consult with specialists of economic, environmental and social field, statistic data, personal observations, conversations with inhabitants and decision takers of this area

Natural heritage

The most important part of nature in this area is Lalezi Bay. It is situated between Rodoni Cape in the North and the cape of Bisht Palle in the South, bounded in the East and North by a range of hills with a maximum height of 274 m, while in south-east with drained fields. The area covered by Lalezi Bay is approximately 250 km², the main part of which is mainly agricultural land, while the former hydrophilic forest is almost disappeared and only some small parts of it are still present along the coast, in the north side of the estuary of Erzeni River.

The presence of the oak forest between Rrotulle and Lalezi, which is now regenerated after a cruel deforestation, is an absolutely unique
beauty of the Albanian nature. The boggy ground areas of Bishtarak e and Godulla present great natural values with a rich biodiversity and sand dunes resulting in vegetation resistant to salinity etc. Within this area there is the managed wildlife sanctuary of Rushkull, a total area of 744 hectares, which consists of 380 hectares of forest, a part of 260 hectares covered with water/marsh, 87 hectares sandy beaches and 17 hectares agricultural land¹.

In the area which we are studying, the declared natural monuments are: Falesa e Rodonit, Saint Peter’s Beach, while from the biomonuments we can mention the forest of Kolndrekaj, which is unfortunately in a very damaged situation.

![Image of Falesa of Rodoni](image)

**Fig. 1. Falesa of Rodoni**

*The Rodon Cape and Falesa* is situated in the north-west edge of Rodoni hilly ridge 30 metres above the sea level. The sandy bay is surrounded by live falesas of about 25 metres. The Scanderbeg’s castle and church are located in Rodoni Cape. The landscape is very attractive to the visitors. It has scientific, geologic, geomorphologic, historical, ecological, didactic and educational values. It can be visited by using the highway of Maminas-Field Draç-Shetaj².

*The St Peter’s beach* is located in the northern part of Lalezi Bay about 0.5 m above the sea level. It is an interesting beach, more or less unspoilt which is created by the accumulative activity of sea waves. It is 100 m long and 20 m wide. It has scientific geologic, geomorphologic,

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¹ Manual for the damp coastal areas of Albania pg. 52
historical, ecological, didactic and educational values. It can be visited by using the highway of Sukth-Hamalle-St Peter or Maminas -St Peter.

The forest of Kolndrekaj once a unique bio - monument, is now damaged but it is worth to mention it, based on the values it used to have. It was near the village of Bize in the commune of "Ishëm", about 160 metres above the sea level. It consisted of isolated beech trees (about 60 trees) which have been cut recently. This forest was estimated for its peculiarity as it was situtated in a small height above the sea level while breech trees usually grow on places which are 1000-1200 metres above the sea level. It was estimated for its scientific, biological, ecological, cultural and touristic values. It could be visited by using the rural road of Ishëm-Qafa e Zhurit.

Cultural heritage

Cultural heritage values for the study area are expressed in the rich history of this area with historical buildings, churches, castles, basilicas, tombs and old popular buildings engraved in the memory of local residents. In the historic-cultural meaning, the land in this area has maintained a fortune since the late paleolithic finding of flint tools in the hills of this area. Diggings have shown that the area has a very rich archeology. Evidence of very well-known written resources up to now are: pre-historic place of Bisht Palle (late neolithic); archaeological place of IV century BC (Porto-Romano) covered with water; Romano Gate, the wall of IV century AD; the area of Emporioni with the archaic temple of Bisht Palle; the antique furnace serving the temple, a unique monument; the Venetian Canal built in the harbour.

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3 The same place
4 Panarit N, Albanian – Geographical Studies , Tirana, 2008, pg 299-300
Evidence of Illyrian culture are the objects of iron period (X-VII century BC) such as: *bronze necklace, bipene axe* etc., and other objects discovered during diggings in a barrow in Hamallaj. There are identified two other barrows in the Ishmi valley but no diggings have been carried out. In the archaic period, local people began exchanging agricultural and livestock products with luxury products in the most developed centres of this period (evidence of findings of some temples). In the classic and Hellenistic period there was a rapid development of rural life and an increase of the economic and cultural level.

There were found parts of walls in Rodoni cape built with square bricks and collected brown glazed ceramic pots dating back to the III-I century BC. The roman period brought changes in the lifestyle of the inhabitants of this area. Traces of buildings of this period are found in the village of Shetaj, where the construction traces of II-IV century AD at the bank of Ishmi River identifying the ancient Pistumin as well, are of much interest. Based on ancient resources this name appears as a station on the road heading north from Dyrrachium, passing through the valley of Ishmi. The period of late antiquity and onward represents very important historical and cultural values where the area had an economic and cultural prosperity. Among the archaeologic and architectural monuments having important archaeologic and touristic values we can mention:

*Gjuricaj Basilica:* It is a church of basilica type dating back to V-VIth century AD (47 m long and 22 m wide)\(^5\). The archaeological inventory is rich: we can distinguish the pottery with various dimensions on the wall and crockery. The coins found in this archaeological place lead to the conclusion that this might have been an important trade center which had relations with the port of Shufadase, about 8 km further, which was established in the estuary of the river Ishem. It is thought that there has been a long

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\(^5\) Group of authors. *Ishmi and the revival of its values.* Durres 2005, pg 15
continuity as oral stories of the inhabitants of the area tell about a big market where people came from distant cities as well. These make the basilica have historical and cultural importance nowadays. The basilica is distinguished for the presence of architectonic elements such as capitals, imposta, columns etc., of high quality and artistic taste, with didactic and touristic values.

*The church of St Ndou,* was one of the most popular churches of the area during the Albanian Medieval period. The church is indirectly related to the Scanderbeg’s name because of the value that was given to it and the constructions made by Scanderbeg in that area of the cape during the XV century. It is situated in low saddle, between hills near the sea coast on the northern part of Rodoni Cape (the ruins of this church were conserved here and today this church is entirely reconstructed).

The monument has great values as it is a building which belongs to roman-gothic architecture of the 13th century. After its restoration, there are clearly distinguished a horseman on the horse and a double-headed eagle with its wings sitting down. Because of its monumental values, the connection of its existence to one of the most remarkable periods in the Albanian history and because of its geographic position and stunning landscape, the Church of St. Ndou is one of the most visited places for tourists and local visitors. This church and the surrounding areas are considered a sacred place and every year on 13 June, the Church becomes a pilgrimage and celebration place, where apart from thousands of local residents and people from the surrounding areas, there come tourists and other visitors. The church may be visited by using the reconstructed road of Fush Draç-Shetaj, but it can be reached by the sea as well as there is an ancient pier which is still functional.

*The castle of Muzhli of Scanderbeg (Rodoni)* built on the northeastern part of the cape on the foundations of antiquity has been the Scanderbeg’s residence to keep connections with the castle of Kruja by using medieval signaling tools such as fire. The constructions began in 1463 by raguzani masters on the ruins of an existing building, in an area of 4 hectares of hilly land. This castle was destroyed by the Turks after Scanderbeg’s death in 1467 (according to Barletious) and was reconstructed by the Venetians in 1500.

The castle is not maintained in the previous conditions because the atmospheric factors and the sea have created large falls. It presented a coastal territory fortification of about 400 m long and 100 m wide. The
wall thickness varies from 3 to 6.30 m, while their length is more than 10 m. Today only the exterior walls are preserved which have been restored recently. This area is greatly visited by visitors and researchers because of this cultural monuments, its vicinity to other important monuments, unique landscape and beauty of the area and its very rich flora and fauna. The castle can be visited by using the reconstructed road of Field Draç-Shetaj or by the sea.

The castle of Ishmi is one of the ancient buildings of the area which was built by the Turks to stop smuggling from the inhabitants of this area with Venice. It is situated in the hills of Ishmi, on the eastern side of the commune. Work for its construction began in 1572 and finished in 1574. It has historical values because it was used by Turks against the revolted people of Ishem and smuggling with Venetians. The walls have a quadrangular, rectangular plan with dimensions of 100x40 m$^6$. The castle has two gates opposite each other. The walls are strengthened with four towers, three of which have rectangular shapes, one of the towers has a circular plan and another one a pentagonal shape. The touristic importance of this castle increased by the construction of the monumental grave near it of the worldwide famous painter Ibrahim Kodra, who had his origin from Ishmi. A museum is expected to be built soon on the honour of this painter. The castle has been a Monument of Culture until 1990.

The tower in the village of Gjuricaj is another cultural monument protected by the state. It is believed to have been built during the early years of the eighteenth century. The architectonic features of this cul-

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6 Group of authors. Ishmi and the revival of its values. Durres 2005, pg 20-21
A cultural building present interest for the visitors. A building with three floors, the second and third floor of which are equipped with loopholes, adapting to the situation in which it was built, it takes the characteristics of a defensive tower. It has been built with local carved stones showing the handicraft used by the local masters.

Ethnographic heritage is characterized by traditional clothes with two special types of costumes: an ordinary one and a costume worn on festive occasions: the traditional costume of Catholic women is named “The Line”, while men used to wear black bloomers and worsted coat made of rough wool, filled with decorations. The casual dressing used by Muslims was long dresses filled with decorations and they also wore a triangular handkerchief in their head accompanied with colourful decorations called “ojnë (lacework)” whose function was to cover the hair. Other clothes for women were “dymijtë (loose breeches)”. The gastronomy of the area is presented with some traditional dishes such as: nettle pie, trahana, hasude, baklava, chicken with corn porridge and much more biological food such as: lamb, olive oil, sheep cheese etc.

Problems of natural and cultural heritage in the area

Nowadays great pressure is felt on the environment and cultural heritage of this area due to the rapid growth of investments as it has been a virgin and forgotten place so far. The current tendency to increase profits within a short period of time without considering the long-term effects on the environment constitutes one of the main concerns for the future of cultural and natural resources of this area.

The investments in tourism and in the energy sector will certainly play an important role in its economic future, but if we would talk about principles of sustainable development, these investments require optimal use of environmental resources and compliance with social and cultural features of the community so that in the future there would be profits for all the stakeholders. The excessive use of materials in Erzeni River along its entire length in the last 20 years has resulted in the greater erosion of the estuary at about 2200 meters, setting it in the position it had in 1910. The lack of gravel inflow which maintained the natural balance between the sea and land has led to an aggressive sea.

This environmental destruction put the river affected area completely in erosion conditions which might remove the tourist perspective of Lalezi Bay area. The deviation of Ishmi River (in the period of monism) to fill Godulla, where the designers didn’t take into considera-
tion the warning to be cautious about the way the river diverts in order not to affect the natural development of the coast led to many negative consequences. The pollution of the waters of this river makes the situation very alarming which is a disaster. The Ishmi River transports liquid and solid urban waste from the largest area of waste in Albania: the city of Tirana and Kruja district. These remains are deposited directly and unprocessed in the waters of this river. The Ishmi and Erzeni rivers are the main pollution resource of the natural environment of the study area due to urban waste. This pollution is so sensitive that along their estuaries in the sea, hundreds of meters of sea coast (formerly beaches) are polluted with all kinds of waste transported by these rivers. Taking into account the river condition when it was clean, it is seen that the pollution level has reached an alarming level which poses a threat for the inhabitants living nearby. The marine life does not exist anymore in these waters and apart from this they (waters) were used for irrigation which constitutes a serious problem for the agricultural development of this area. The damage of monuments constitutes another problem for the sustainable development of the study area. We should emphasize that leaving this monuments behind is threatening their existence. Until 1990 the castle of Ishmi has been a Cultural Monument preserved by the state. But after this year things changed and this ancient building was left at the mercy of fate. Although this castle is mentioned in all the texts of history and guidebooks of Durresi for the values and history it has, maintenance from respective institutions is almost inconsiderable. The castle is each year going towards total collapse. A large amount of stones have been removed from its walls and are used by the inhabitants in this area for constructions burying this way an important part of history.

Among the greatest damages of cultural heritage in this area was the theft of a Bassrelief of Archangel Mikel in the castle of Rodoni in June 2013. The cultural heritage buildings will be frequently visited by the tourists based on the development that the coastal area of Lalezi Bay is having in the industry of tourism.
Heritage and sustainable development

For a sustainable development is important the tourism specific link with the environment and society, as opposed to other economical activities. This happen because of the unique quality of the environment, distinctive cultural features, interfaces, safety and social welfare. The coastal area Ishem - Porto Romano is a beautiful and fascinating country. It has a wide range of attractions, historical, cultural and natural resources that constitute a major concern for international tourists. The place is safe and people are welcoming and friendly. An area still “authentic” in a large scale unaffected by foreign influence where people live and work in traditional ways and culture is expressed in many different ways on a local basis, even from village to village. Making tourism more sustainable will affect the sustainability of the best company in this space that would mean the achievement of sustainable tourism, which would consist in goals such as: economic success rate, quality of employment, social equality, welfare of visitors, local control, community welfare, cultural property (12 goals on the agenda of the World Tourism Organization).

Space is a very rich tourist offer, the use of which will require detailed and complex studies, construction and implementation of strategies and long-term programs, with the intention of making tourism in this area competitive in the region. Initiatives in this direction is very good, investment in building tourist villages in the Gulf of St. Peter Lalzi as and Hamalle , avoiding the phenomenon of urbanization policies are supported by the Development Fund is financing road infrastructure and promoting tourism cultural . Road infrastructure has improved over the space where many roads, which connect between their coast villages are restructured. The construction of the road Fuchs Drac - Shetaj - K. Rodonit last year (2012) that connects villages to the Adriatic coast, is a drive to increase the number of tourists who want to explore this area of rare natural beauty, as well as recognize the historical and cultural offers Rodon Cape. This road provides access to visit the castle and the church of St. Anthony Skanderbeg, two interesting points of history and culture. For a sustainable development this path is divided into two segments of the 11.9 km long, 4.4 km from where the rubble was left to preserve the natural landscape that this area offers. These developments are also a boost for the concentration of tourist trips throughout the year with major impacts on sustainability.

This affects not only in the success of the future and the ability for employment throughout the year, but also affects the social life of the
community and the rational use of natural resources throughout the year.

A new trend of agri-tourism that highlights local hospitality is what food or beverage produced from bio products, which is worth mentioning especially brandy, a traditional drink made from grapes, which are used in this dense space. It is also preparing agricultural tourism infrastructure where about 62 women were trained to become tourists coming services offering a traditional and contemporary cuisine, and simple flats with all conditions of hotel, such as: water, sleep, electricity. In this way are created some tourist pole with a complex housing beginning from Shkafanja in Bize-Drac-Shetaj. The miracle is that in this area, lamb, kid, poultry, cheeses, wines have a very unique flavor that comes from the geographical position and microclimate of the area, after being beaten by the salty sea winds, even in the village of Bize is found Tartuffe.

From interviews with local residents we learn that when Ana de la Vergine Maria, an Italian professor came to the area she decided to visit it again. She was delighted when he heard the bray of a donkey in the morning and after he had gone to participate in milking the cow. “You have infinite wealth - he had said it. Here is a tourist place for youngsters to find their parents’ past, but also for the elderly who come to find the lost past ... Those who I saw in this country - said Anna, - I had heard that my grandparents had, but I have not seen."

Conclusions and recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn we appreciate that this space has many advantages for the rapid development of sustainable, among which we emphasize tourism. The demand for natural environment intact and increasing preference for life in stored environments, coupled with history and culture of the area make an opportunity of this development.

Regional trend towards the development of a competitive tourism will have a positive impact on increasing revenues and the creation of new jobs is possible to improve the economic and social status of local residents, and the governance and sustainable use of natural resources is achieved by maintaining natural and cultural heritage for future generations. Very rich tourist offer of nature and culture, geographical location, sector development support, problem solving key infrastructure, power supply, water, building roads, improving intelligence, etc. are the guarantee of this development. Identification of natural and
cultural heritage of coastal space - Porto Romano Ishem would be the first step towards the promotion of this property. The inclusion of this significant potential in policies and strategic plan of the region, will not only boost their protection and maintenance, but will also encourage their implementation in the development of tourism. This indirectly would affect employment growth, trade development, alleviation of social problems, reducing environmental problems and thus will affect the long-term achievement of sustainable development in the study area. It is necessary awareness of investors, to make necessary interventions to protect the natural and human heritage, as an opportunity to protect their property.

Developing long-term strategies and initiatives of some powerful companies, the implementation of some major projects in this space, will provide financial resources for the protection of cultural and environmental heritage. It is immediate receiving education and training initiative, to increase public awareness in the protection of the natural and cultural environment. The volume and concentration of second homes development was also seen as a major challenge to the quality of life of local residents. In many villages, second homes inhabited only a few weeks a year and yet they occupy the country, change the value of assets received from community life, without great benefit to the local economy. In other cases, second homes have brought investment that would otherwise be impossible for the community, resulting in increased local prosperity and restoration of old buildings and putting them at the service of family tourism. Problems which are faced with today's natural and cultural assets coastal area Ishem-Porto Romano, necessitates the preservation and management of institutions and other interested bodies, to not only protect from damage and degradation, but with the intention of using their values for a sustainable development. For this purpose it is important to work towards providing a comprehensive basis and updated data about forms of engagement of the population, economic activities, and be carried out continuously monitoring and studies to identify trends in the development in the future.
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by MSc. Mevludin Ibish*

*Africa's new leaders: democracy or state reconstruction?* is a very prosperous and acceptable book where the author Marina Ottaway in a very systematic and specific approach tries to work out the political cases in three states and in a very interesting way analyzes their entrance towards the democratic processes. In this regard the author in the book tries to identify different perspectives and convincing on the political categories and dimensions for the three states of Africa: Uganda, Eritrea and Ethiopia.

Her concept and perception is that the democratic processes for states like Eritrea, Uganda and Ethiopia are problematic projects indeed because of being unprepared for fast transitions. Actually she stacks very deeply, with the political analysis and trying to offer the best coordinates, in order to give directions and possibilities but also warnings for the long and complicated path of these countries. Also she tries to explain that the democratic processes are difficult and they content in itself many obligations and commitments from the side of their states but also from the civil societies as well.

* International Balkan University-Skopje.
According to Marina Ottaway the transition process has to start actually on state liberalization and conditions for multi-party elections, civil education, offering NGOs partnership and a long stretch of democratic consolidation. The historical and the political background of, Ethiopia and Uganda plus some other countries is transmitted with many similarities, starting with the independency from the end of 1960s and early 1970s,(The last new state in Africa, Eritrea officially attained independence in 1993 although all Ethiopian control effectively ceased in May 1991).

At the very beginning of their independency the first concept that was introduced was socialism afterwards a mixture of Marxism and Leninism as well, but the second wave on political system changes actually is during 1990s when starts the process of transition towards democracy.

She also explain that in this period the US policies started to support and backed-up these new states in their commitments in many forms, starting from financial helping where the doors into the financial sectors for the countries of Eritrea, Uganda and Ethiopia were opened.

The book works out in great details how the three countries and their governments faced with many similar problems, starting from: how to establish the control over the entire country, how to institutionalize and legitimize the power, how to open better channels of communication between the government and the citizens etc. The author in the second half of the book explains the economical possibilities and the financial construction of each state. The reader can find many interesting and required information in order to have a clear understanding for several co-operations between the Africa’s governments and the international organizations, such as the U.S Agency for International Development (USAID), The World Bank and many other international donors. Information such as the GNP and the GDP of the states from the beginning of 90’s are available for the reader. The book covers two main key-points, the political obstacles and the economical possibilities for the new Africa’s states in reconstruction.

In the last part of the book Marina Ottaway makes a new political observation but this time for two new states such as Rwanda and The Democratic Republic Of Congo. In this part she refers to the main topics as power, political parties, government and economy. In (chapter 8) she makes a very sharp conclusion where she says: It was clear from the outset of this study that Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea are not democratic.
At the and she says that their aggressive foreign policies and their reluctance to yield to international pressure for a quick transition to democracy raise the possibility that they will sink into a new cycle of war and economic decay. The book could be a guide for all of us who want to know more about these states and their policies and also it is preferred for undergraduate and postgraduate studies. Basically as a format it is a short book but indeed it is a very precious and useful.

“In Praise of Sikov’s Film Studies: An Introduction”
by Asst. Prof. Dr. Benjamin Shultz*

Film analysis, not unlike arts and literature analysis, has a tendency to get bogged down in theoretical jargon. To some extent this is a necessary evil, but for the beginning student, a textbook laden with academic terms can be discouraging. Rather than learning analytical techniques that allow a student to appreciate film on a new level, many books become tedious studies in vocabulary and little else. That is why Ed Sikov’s Film Studies: An Introduction (Columbia University Press, 2010) is such a valuable tool for the beginning film scholar.

Sikov is a former student of John Belton, author of American Culture/American Cinema, which is one of the most the highly regarded film texts for the college classroom. At over 420 pages, however, students may find Belton’s text to be rather imposing. Sikov, on the other hand, establishes a firm foundation on which to build for further film analysis and appreciation in a tidy 185 pages. For beginning students, this is far more manageable task.

The book guides the reader through a wide variety of fundamental concepts in film analysis such as mise-en-scene, genre, direction, and performance. Even though the book also includes chapters on the more technical aspects of film like editing, cinematography, sound, and special effects, Sikov maintains a tight focus on the meaning of those aspects rather than their mechanics. Perhaps the most useful chapters
concern the topics of narrative and segmentation, both of which provide the reader with some basic tools to move beyond simple reviews and towards more complex analysis.

Importantly for both students and professors, Film Studies includes exercises at the end of each chapter. The final chapter of the book is a sample paper from a previous student, complete with notes, editorial notes, and corrections from the professor himself. Rounding out the content of the book is an extensive glossary of terms to include in a final paper.

As strong as this book is, its most obvious weakness is the organization of content. After reading the book and taking details notes from each chapter, I found that I had to rearrange my notes in order to develop lectures that I felt presented information in an organized way. To be fair, however, the author never states that the book is intended as a teacher’s aid. As a written textbook with examples, the writing style and presentation of ideas accomplish the goal of informing the reader. As a teacher’s aid, it could use a better structure.

In sum, Film Studies: An Introduction is one of the better recent additions to the canon of film analysis textbooks. While more advanced readers will likely find the material too basic, many students will find the writing style to be a welcome relief from jargon-heavy alternatives. Professors using this book in a standard 3-hour university course will likely want to supplement it with an additional book that has a more extensive history section to really develop contextual background. That being said, this book is also sufficient to prepare students to write an insightful, high quality term paper on various aspects of film analysis.

The book Islam and Politics (Muslims political experience)
by Asst. Prof. Dr. Shener Bilalli

In this ambitious work author Bejtulla Demiri stress his idea about very complex phenomena in 21 century. The book Islam and Politics (Mus-
lims political experience) represent a political analysis of Islam religion and political models of some Muslim states. We should mention the role of Islamic Conference and Arab league in international affairs is explained in the book as international organizations. In this book the main concept of Islamic religion and politics are defined and explained in detailed way. The author in explicit way explained his stands and ideas related with this issue. The author has used adequate and scientific sources thus the book gains more credits.

If we are accepted some details of the book we can conclude that the political situations has brought some new values and factor in international affairs. The negative aspects of globalization result in production of different dimension of Islam. These aspects are widely explored through concrete political examples thus through concrete paradigms (states).

The main objective of this book is to explain the political aspects of Islam. The concrete examples (countries and international organizations) chosen as typical instances where the main and the most important characteristics of Islam are manifested as a political paradigm are: (1) The Republic of Turkey, a combination of a homogeneous Muslim community and a secular state, with a well-set pro-Islamic governing political party (AKP) and a politically inferior ulema (diyanet: the Department of Religious Affairs); (2) Bosnia and Herzegovina, a secular state with a multireligious and multi-national society; a significant pro-Islamic political party (SDA) and a politically important religious Islamic leadership (rijaset); (3) The Islamic Republic of Iran, a typical example of fusion of the Islamic society and the Islamic state: velayat-I faqih (Shia's theocratic principle: government of the judicial consultants/Islamic lawyers, namely of higher religious authority; "rule by jurisprudence", sometimes called "Islamic republicanism" in the West); (4) Malaysia, a constitutional monarchy with a system of parliamentary democracy and an example of growing Muslim society, organized in neo-liberalist Western style where the religion (Islam), Muslim values.

Muslim identity and Islamic institutions are the bases of societal integralism. In the sphere of the international politics and international institutions there is a special accent on The Organization of Islamic Conference, a representative body of the Islamic world and of its political habitus at global level, and the Arab League, a promoter of the unification of the Arab world and of an identity based on Islamic values, as typical examples of international organizations and the institutionaliza-
tion of the Muslim world. In this research we have sought to explain a good deal of the political situation in the Muslim world and Islam through different political paradigms (political systems), in particular in countries with majority Muslim population stressing Muslim values and identity, and building up Islamic institutions.