

Albanian National Identity in the twenty-first century: Escaping from the Ottoman heritage?

Perparim Xhaferi

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
The University of Sydney
2019

Authorship Statement

This is to certify that to the best of my knowledge, the content of this thesis is my own work. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or other purposes.

Chapters 5 of this thesis contains material published as "The Political Contribution of Albanian Writers in Defining Albanian Identity: the Debate between Ismail Kadare and Rexhep Qosja". *European Journal of Language and Literature*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2017, 121-8, and

Chapter 6 of this thesis contains material published as "The Post-Ottoman Era: A Fresh Start for Bilateral Relations between Albania and Turkey? ". *Australia and New Zealand Journal of European Studies*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2017, 42-62.

I designed the study, analysed the data and wrote all drafts of these papers.

I certify that the intellectual content of this thesis is the product of my own work and that all the assistance received in preparing this thesis and sources have been acknowledged.

Signature

Perparim Xhaferi

9/11/2018

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank my Principal supervisor, Professor Peter Morgan for his constant support during my candidature. With his persistence and trust he guided me from day one until the completion of this thesis. Peter's guidance was also crucial in opening my eyes to different ways of thinking and being.

I wish to thank Ismail Kadare who, despite his busy agenda, in August 2013, allocated some time to meet with me and discuss his thesis regarding Albanian identity. I also want to thank both Ilir Yzeiri and Hajro Limaj for their electronic correspondence and their support; forwarding me some of their publications.

I would like to thank my colleagues and friends Jacob, Elizabeth, Chiara, Marco, Biaggio and Maren for their support and suggestions. I have learned a lot from them and I feel extremely privileged to have had such a positive group of friends, whom I have shared the pain and the joy over the duration of this research.

I would like to thank my wife, Anila, for being patient with my studies. I simply couldn't have done it without her moral support, culinary and other housekeeping skills, but most importantly, being there for our kids, at times that I was challenged by this research.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my daughters, Jona and Greta who have been fantastic teenagers, while I was wrestling with my thesis. They have been my inspiration to finalise this research. Their support through the entire journey is highly appreciated and there are no words to describe the gratitude and love.

Abstract

Albanian identity is contested. Albanians have developed an idiosyncratic and syncretic ‘identity’ over the centuries, reflecting the layered elements of the nation’s past. Of the Byzantine, Roman, Ottoman and Communist periods, it is the long centuries of Ottoman rule that inevitably left the greatest impact on Albanian culture and society. Communist dictator, Enver Hoxha attempted to shift Albanian identity dramatically to another path, but the short-term impact of communism pale in comparison to the long-term, deep-seated effects of the Ottoman Empire. Debates about Albanian identity and its belonging to the Ottoman heritage are far from resolved and in the current Albanian environment, scholars and writers, politicians and media commentators, are divided in their perceptions of the national identity. Many support prominent Albanian writer, Ismail Kadare’s argument in favour of a still-extant European identity underpinning Albanian culture. For Kadare this “frozen” identity survived the Ottoman centuries and must be freed from the remnants of the Ottoman heritage still clinging to it. Others position themselves with Rexhep Qosja—the leader of the opposing camp who argues that Albanian identity is different from that of Europe, that Albanian civilisation draws on both East and West, in particular, that Albanians lost their Christian origins, becoming deeply influenced by Muslim culture during the past centuries, and hence belong to the East rather than the West. Thus, in the twenty-first century, Albanian society is divided, and perceptions of identity mirror these two dominant lines of thought.

Tensions remain high in the Western Balkans, Turkey is now a powerful state, and Turkish influence has been strongly directed towards the Albanian, Kosovar and Bosnian governments, as well as to local Muslim populations, many of whom are Albanians. Turkish foreign policy has been aggressively promoted in Albania and Kosovo, on the basis that deep-seated cultural similarities, geo-political, economic, regional and energy security matters bind their futures together. This influence, and present-day Albania’s engagement with Turkey, will have important consequences for Albanians in the future.

The aim of this thesis is to shed new light on the nuances of the expression of Albanian identity in relation to the Ottoman heritage, and to gauge the extent to which Ottoman heritage, Turkish influence and Albanian identity and self-understanding are linked at the beginning of the twenty-first century. It is hoped that scholars, policy makers, educators, and academics will use the findings detailed in this thesis to better inform themselves regarding the ways Albanians identify themselves in terms of both East and West.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION	8
1.1 Introduction	8
1.2 The research question	9
1.3 Lack of existing scholarly literature in the field	11
1.4 Personal reasons for conducting this study	13
1.5 Methodological considerations	15
1.6 Some limitations of this research	17
1.7 Terminology	18
1.8 The structure of the thesis	22
CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW	24
2.1 Debates that surround Albanian and Turkish national-identities	24
2.1.1 Introduction	24
2.1.2 The gap in the literature	24
2.1.3 Complexities in contextualising Albanian identity: ignorance, speculation and stereotypes	26
2.1.4 Albania: location, demography and population	30
2.1.5 Albanian identity – a contested space	31
2.1.6 The origins of the concept of the Albanian unity under the Ottoman Empire	35
2.1.7 Stages the Albanian speaking lands were occupied by the Ottomans	38
2.1.8 What do we know about the Ottoman occupation of the Albanian speaking lands?	40
2.1.9 Turkey and Albanian Islam	42
2.2 Turkish national identity in the post Ottoman era	45
2.2.1 Introduction	45
2.2.2 Contested post-Ottoman Turkish identity: Escaping the East, but not part of the West	45
2.2.3 Islamism in modern Turkish politics and neo-Ottomanism of the twenty-first century	48
2.2.4 Turkey and the EU	51
2.2.5 Contribution to literature	52
CHAPTER 3. THEORETICAL TERRAIN	54
The conceptualisation of the Albanian ‘nation’ through lenses of ‘nation building’ theories and civilization	54
3.1 Introduction	54
3.2 The conceptualisation of the ‘nation’ as a concept	54
3.3 The concept of ‘ethnicity’	56
3.4 The role of nationalism	59
3.5 The role of ‘religion’ in constructing nations	61
3.6 Nation building theories	63
3.7 Primordialism and Perennialism	64
3.8 Modernist and post-modernist theories: The role of nationalism	66
3.9 Smith’s ‘ethno-symbolic’ approach	67
3.10 Religion and civilization	69
3.11 The concept of political influence	73
3.12 Imagining the Balkans – ‘Balkanism’, stereotypes and legacy	75
3.13 Todorova’s Christian Balkans	78
3.14 Why investigating the Albanian case using these concepts?	79
3.15 Conclusion	81
CHAPTER 4. CONTEXTUALISING IMPLICATIONS OF THE OTTOMAN INFLUENCE IN ALBANIAN SPEAKING LANDS: 1385-1912	83
4.1 Introduction	83
4.2 The political aims of Ottomans in organising the society in Albanian speaking lands	83
4.3 The Ottoman’s social, economic and administrative reforms in Albanian-speaking lands	86

4.4 The Ottoman impact on the Albanian speaking lands: demographic, social and environmental effects	89
4.5 The Ottoman infrastructure development in Albanian lands	90
4.6 Albanian political stability under the Ottoman rule	93
4.7 The Ottoman's political aim to halt Albanian nationalism and creation of an 'Albanian nation'	94
4.8 Albanian language and the written word within the Ottoman Empire	99
4.9 Albanian language trapped between the objectives of the State and Orthodox schools	102
4.10 The Ottoman-Islamic polity: Conversions to Islam	104
4.11 The 'soft' policy of conversions—Albania's Bektashism	107
4.12 Conclusion	112
CHAPTER 5. IMAGINING ALBANIAN IDENTITY.....	114
5.1 Turkey and Greater Albania: between myth and veracity.....	114
5.1.1 Introduction.....	114
5.1.2 Re-emergence of 'Greater Albania' in the twenty-first century	114
5.1.3 The Ottoman-Albanian territories ready for the taking—Albanian nationalism in ascent	115
5.1.4 The London Conference – the confirmation of a "little" Albania	117
5.1.5 The unification into the 'Natural Albania'	119
5.1.6 A 'Greater Albania' under Turkish leadership?	122
5.1.7 The Albanian unification into a 'Greater Europe'	123
5.2 Albanian identity and the Ottoman culture in the work of Ismail Kadare.....	125
5.2.1 Introduction	125
5.2.2 Kadare— "the Albanian-Aeschylus"	125
5.2.3 Albanian identity perception through Kadare's thesis.....	126
5.2.4 Kadare's 'others'	130
5.2.5 Kadare's Post-Ottoman era: The role of religion in nation building	134
5.2.6 Kadare-Qosja debate: Albanian Christian and Islamic civilizations.....	135
5.2.7 The Albanian 'sanguine temper', two distinctive writing styles, or different interpretations?	138
5.2.8 Albanian politicians and scholars differ between Kadare and Qosja, West and East, Orient and Occident.....	139
5.2.9 Albanian <i>rhisomatic</i> identity in the twenty-first century.	143
5.2.10 Albanian identity in the making	144
5.2.11 Conclusion	145
CHAPTER 6. FROM RULERS TO THE MAIN SUPPORTERS: THE POLITICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND ALBANIA IN THE POST-OTTOMAN ERA	147
6.1 Introduction	147
6.2 The Post-Ottoman Era: A Fresh Start in Bilateral Relations between Albania and Turkey?	147
6.3 The post-communist decade: the establishment of the bilateral relations.....	152
6.4 Continuity of the Turkish-Albanian political relations in the twenty-first century	157
6.5 Turkey's twenty-first century 'zero problems with neighbours' foreign policy.....	161
6.6 The rise of the Turkish-Albanian post-Cold War economic relations	164
6.7 Turkey: a NATO ally and Albania's guarantor.....	168
6.8 Geopolitics and energy security drivers in the Albanian-Turkish relations	170
6.9 Islamic revival during Albania's post-Cold War period	172
6.10 The continuation of Turkish-Islamic policy in Albania.....	174
6.11 Conclusion	176
CHAPTER 7. ESCAPING THE OTTOMAN HERITAGE UNDER THE TURKISH INFLUENCE IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY?	178
7.1 Introduction	178
7.2 Escaping the Ottoman heritage under the pressure of Turkish influence	178
7.3 Blaming the Ottomans and aligning with Turks in the twenty-first century.....	181
7.4 Restoring five centuries of historical humiliation	182
7.5 Political interference in Albania's domestic affairs	186
7.6 Regional security	190

7.7 Energy and economic security.....	192
7.8 Culture resistance in preserving Turkish loanwords	193
7.9 Islam—the main ally of Erdoğan in Albania	198
7.10 Erdoğan’s political pressure through political deals with Russia and Serbia	199
7.11 Summary of key findings	202
CHAPTER 8. CONCLUSION.....	205
8.1 Personal reflections	205
8.2 Reflections on the methodological and theoretical foundations of this thesis	206
8.3 Unexpected findings.....	207
8.4 Avenues for further research	208
8.5 Concluding remarks	209
References	212

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Since the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, and with the collapse of Communism in Europe and the Balkans by the early 1990s, Albanians have wrestled with questions of identity, heritage and belonging in cultural, ethnic, economic and political terms. Communist rule which lasted from 1944 until the death of Enver Hoxha in 1985, imposed a distinctive brand of nationalism on Albania. Moreover, Albania's pre-communist history and its post-communist reality have rendered Hoxha's vision of Albanian identity obsolete. Questions from the pre-communist past have re-emerged as the new state struggles to establish a new, post-communist identity. The issues of Kosovars and ethnic Albanians in the adjacent Balkan states of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia have reappeared with the break-up of the former Yugoslav Republic, which have further complicated issues of Albanian identity.

Foreign interests were quick to begin penetrating the once-closed Albanian state soon after the end of the communist regime. European and American business interests began to arrive as did Saudi and Kuwaiti money which was channelled into the country to assist the re-establishment of Albanian Islam.¹ Albanians themselves looked to both East and West, as well as to the European Union and the newly powerful regional state, Turkey, to both ascertain their new identity and build links with appropriate partners in the context of post-communist democracy and globalization.²

Turkey has emerged as a powerful player over the past decade in contemporary discussions of Albanian existence and its identity. The reasons for this may be historical as the Ottoman Turks occupied parts of the Albanian Balkans from the late fourteenth century onward, imposing their culture, language, beliefs and more, and drawing the Albanians into the cultural and civil sphere of the Orient, of Islam and Ottoman rule.

The issue of the 'Ottoman identity' of Albania has been hotly debated in the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The recent revival of Neo-Ottomanism is but one example of the

¹ Christopher Deliso, *The Coming Balkan Caliphate: The Threat of Radical Islam to Europe and the West*, Westport, Connecticut and London: Praeger Security International, 2007, 30-1.

² Miranda Vickers and James Pettifer, *Albania: From Anarchy to a Balkan Identity* New York: New York University Press, 1997, 105.

ongoing debate in the region.³ While Turkish power in the Eastern Mediterranean generally is not to be underestimated, the significance of Turkish engagement in Albania and Kosovo has deeper roots in the culture, history and regional-area relations of the region.

1.2 The research question

This thesis will explore specifically whether *Albania is bidding farewell to its Ottoman heritage and whether and to what extent Turkish influence is influencing Albanian strategic alignment with the East in the twenty-first century*. This research question is a response to ubiquitous discussions over the past two decades of Albanian national identity as newly “European,” and aiming to join the ‘Euro-Atlantic’ family of the West, thereby farewelling its historical legacy of Ottomanism. According to the Albanian government and policy makers, Albania’s post-Cold War foreign policy is based on two pillars: the USA and the European Union (EU).⁴ It is assumed by leaders on both sides of Albanian domestic politics that only the ‘Euro-Atlantic Orientation’ will guarantee Albania’s survival and prosperity in the international arena.⁵

However, as an old Italian proverb states: *tra il dire e il fare c'è di mezzo il mare* [there is many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip]. Albanian politicians may assert that Albania is going

³ In the twenty-first century, the Turkish government is under ‘considerable domestic pressure for greater military aid to beleaguered Muslim and Turkic communities’ in the Balkans. At the same time a tendency to Neo-Ottomanism is present in Turkey. According to Hakan Yavuz, Neo-Ottomanists hope to construct a new Turkey that is based on the Ottoman values, and thus Islam. See for instance Sabri Sayari, “Turkish foreign policy in the post-Cold War era: The challenges of multi-regionalism”, *Journal of International Affairs*, 54, no. 1, 170; M. Hakan Yavuz, “Turkish identity and foreign policy in flux: The rise of Neo-Ottomanism”, *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies*, 7, no. 12, 1998, 24.

⁴ “Shqipëria dhe Këshilli i Partneritetit Euroatlantik (EAPC) [Albania and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council]”, author’s translation, *Albanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, 3 March 2011, accessed 23 March 2013, http://arkiva.mfa.gov.al/index.php?option=com_multicategories&view=article&id=7555%3Ashqiperia-dhe-keshilli-i-partneritetit-euroatlantik-eapc&format=pdf&Itemid=65&lang=en.

⁵ “Topalli mbështet Kadarenë: Kemi Identitet Evropian [Topalli’s support for Kadare: We have European Identity]”, author’s translation, *Shekulli Online*, 31 May 2006, accessed 11 January 2011, <http://www.shekulli.com.al/shekulli/?s=%E2%80%98Topalli+mbeshtet+Kadarene%3A+Kemi+Identitet+Evropian%E2%80%99>; Bamir Topi, “Albania's Domestic and Foreign Policy 2008 Agenda”, *AIIS*, 7 February 2008, accessed 23 February 2011, <http://www.aiis-albania.org/>; Mustafa Nano, “Kultura Perëndimore dhe Qytetërimi Lindor i Shqiptarëve [The Western Culture and Albania’s Oriental Civilization]”, author’s translation, *Shqip*, 22 May 2006, accessed 17 July 2015, <http://albanur.eu/showthread.php?t=282>; Fatos Nano, “Nuk u Globalizua Terrorizmi, por Lufta kunder tij [No globalisation of terrorism, but the war against it]”, author’s translation, *Shekulli Online*, 12 September 2002, accessed 11 September 2011, <http://www.shekulli.com.al/shekulli/?s=Nano%3A+Nuk+u+Globalizua+Terrorizmi%2C+por+Lufta+kunder+tij>.

West, but the reality seems to contradict this. One might merely mention the strong historical-cultural bridge that links Albanians in the twenty-first century with five million Turks, who according to Genci Muçaj, the Albanian former Ambassador in Turkey, are conscious of and proud to mention their Albanian heritage.⁶ The political statements in the direction of the West may well be reversed. A more aggressive Turkish foreign policy to get closer to Albania is already using historical-cultural links between Albania and Turkey in their favour, to bring about Albania's alignment with the East. Turkey may also use Albania's economic, geo-political and security concerns, which remain high for Albanians in the twenty-first century. Albanians continue to be the most scattered people in the Western Balkans, and the refusal by Greece and Serbia to recognise the independence of Kosovo in 2008, without mentioning the ghost of 'Greater Albania' that seems to be still alive⁷, are some concerns that might affect Albanian's decision to re-align with East and thus, Turkey.

The reluctance of both Albanian and Kosovar governments to clearly specify whether Albanian identity will be distanced by that of the Ottoman-Turks creates confusion for Albanian society. Recent arguments between Kadare's thesis and Qosja's opposing position with regards to the Albanian national identity have divided Albanian politicians, scholars, media and the entire society. This debate is the best example of Albanian identity contestation. However, while governments, scholars and media can be instrumental, they cannot stop Albanian people to imagine their identity as belonging to the Western-Christian-European or Eastern-Muslim-Turkish civilisations, but also part of both Eastern and Western civilizations.

⁶ "Ambasadori i Shqipërisë në Turqi: Feja e shqiptarit është shqiptaria, në Turqi janë pesë milionë shqiptarë [The Albanian Ambassador in Turkey: The Albanian religion is Albanianism, in Turkey live five million Albanians]", author's translation, *Telegrafi*, 2 August 2015, accessed 17 November 2015, <http://m.telegrafi.com/lajme/ambasadori-i-shqiperise-ne-turqi-feja-e-shqiptarit-eshte-shqiptaria-ne-turqi-jane-pese-milione-shqiptare-2-67961.html>.

⁷ The paranoia of a 'Greater Albania' seems to have not come to an end. While for First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivica Dačić, the danger of Albanian expansionism seems to be everywhere – 'in the drone flying over the now [infamous Albania-Serbia football match](#); at Albanian Prime Minister [Edi Rama's residence](#), where a light display projected the map of Greater Albania for New Year's; and in the West's silence', Greek defence minister condemned and punished seven Greek soldiers of the Albanian origins that formed the Albanian double eagle symbol with their hands. See "Two years of SYRIZA ruling Greece - The Albanian eagle in the Greek army!", *SBS Australia, Greek language podcast*, 26 January 2017, accessed 12 February 2017, <http://www.sbs.com.au/yourlanguage/greek/en/content/two-years-syriza-ruling-greece-albanian-eagle-greek-army>; Sidita Kushi and Odeta Kushi, *The Paranoia over 'Greater Albania' Returns*, *New Eastern Europe* (21 January, 2015).

1.3 Lack of existing scholarly literature in the field

Albanian Studies remains largely an internal affair, bounded by a language that few specialists outside Albania have mastered. The current shortage of informed scholarly literature (ie with access to the language) on Albania will be discussed in more detail in the second chapter. This shortage prompted me to undertake this research and offer my contribution in the field. Only small amounts of Albanian literature have been translated into English, and much of my argument depends on working with original language sources and making relevant sections available to the English reader. The well-known contemporary Albanian writer, Ismail Kadare remains one of the most influential Albanian writers and public intellectuals whose position regarding the Albanian national identity in context of the Ottoman Turks has been powerful, but also provocative as shown through his debate with the Kosovar scholar Rexhep Qosja. This debate has polarised Albanian politicians, scholars, media and society, and this thesis will be part of these analyses in bringing these authoritative voices to the English reader through a direct translation from Albanian. Kadare's recent non-fictional works, and much of his fiction, which together comes to twenty volumes in the Albanian complete works edition, have been little translated into English. In March 2018, the Albanian media *Mapo* revealed that for the first time, Kadare's *Essays On World Literature: Aeschylus - Dante-Shakespeare*, were translated directly from Albanian to English by Ani Kokobobo in 2018.⁸ These are unsupported claims as John Hodgson has become the leading translator of Kadare's work directly from Albanian to English.⁹ Others such as Robert Elsie, Peter Constantine and Arshi Pipa have translated various shorter writings, and several works were published in communist Albania, including *The Wedding* (trans. Ali Cungu) and *The Castle* (trans. Pavli Qesku).¹⁰ However, most of Robert Elsie's translations of Kadare's works into English, have taken place via the French translations of Jusuf Vrioni and Tedi Papavrami. Therefore, many of those which have appeared in English have been based on French translations, rather than the Albanian originals, thus bringing to the English reader a doubly mediated version. David Bellos who has also

⁸ "Tri esetë në anglisht: Bota e Kadesë, drama e pamundur e Shqipërisë [Three essays in English: Kadare's world, Albania's impossible drama]", author's translation, *Mapo*, 13 March 2018, accessed 29 August 2018, <http://www.mapo.al/tri-esete-ne-anglisht-bota-e-kadarese-drama-e-pamundur-e-shqiperise/>.

⁹ Peter Morgan, *The Three Worlds of Ismail Kadare* (Unpublished manuscript authorised by Professor Morgan: 20 October 2018).

¹⁰ Ibid.

translated in English from French: *The Pyramid*, *The File on H*, *Spring Flowers*, *Spring Frost*, *The Successor*, *Agamemnon's Daughter*, *The Siege* and *Twilight of the Eastern Gods*, has recognised difficulties of translation in English from French—“a language with extensive, elaborate, and extremely rigid rules about verbal tense and mood”—to the less rigid and “sturdy, verb system of English”.¹¹ For Bellos, both French and English “have only one tense for the doubly remote past” used in Kadare’s writings.¹² As a result, there are enormous difficulties when translating from Albanian (which has 36 alphabet letters) to French (with 26 letters) due to differences in grammar, tense and structure. Although Bellos does not know Albanian, through translation of Kadare’s works, and speaking directly to him, he has appreciated the difficulties of translating from Albanian to English via the French. While Bellos is challenged by these translations, he arguably “...can’t rule out that that language of ambiguity and manipulation is Albanian”.¹³ In addition, Kadare’s master crafts in such a difficult language, and his purportedly invention of universal time in his narratives, makes his powerful imagination and conscious artistry unique, whilst adding more to the difficulties of translation. Although Jusuf Vrioni is considered the best translator of Kadare’s works in French¹⁴, according to Bellos, his translations were “apparently not perfect”.¹⁵ Indeed, the title of *Eskili, ky humbes i madh*, contains a mistake when translated in French as *Eschyle ou le grand perdant*. The use of ‘ky’ by Kadare is a determinative and clearly does not allow room for speculation—Aeschylus is a great loser. In short, the direct translation from Albanian to English would have been: *Aeschylus, this great loser*, or more accurately, *Aeschylus, the great loser*. However, the use of ‘ou’ in French, which means ‘or’ in English, may complicate the reader’s perception of Aeschylus being a great loser.

Furthermore, lack of scholarly literature on Albania, not only opens the way for the ongoing propagation of stereotypes, but also means that crucial concepts have remained uncomprehended outside their Albanian context. One of these has been the role of religion and

¹¹ David Bellos, "On Translating Ismail Kadare", *TRANSLATION REVIEW*, vol. 1, no. 76, 21 August 2012, 19-20.

¹² *Ibid.*, 22.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Peter Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, Oxon and NY: Modern Humanities Research Association and Routledge, 2010, 29.

¹⁵ Bellos, 18.

its relationship with nationalism in crafting the nation. This thesis will engage with the debate on Albanian religion; testing also theories of prominent scholars such as Hastings, Weber and Smith, who all believe in the power of religion and its role in shaping nationalisms. It will be informative to explore religion role in Albania and the way it shaped the Albanian nationalism and national identity.

1.4 Personal reasons for conducting this study

Another reason to conduct this research is its reflection on my personal life. Various scholars have recognised the importance of personal reflections while conducting qualitative research. According to Marshall and Rossman (2011), and Strauss and Corbin (1990), personal motivation and interests are important and valuable sources of insights about the phenomenon analysed in the study.¹⁶ For this reason, this section discusses the personal motivation and interest of the author for conducting this study.

I have a long-standing interest in the perception of the Albanian identity by the world outside Albania. A year after the Albanian communist regime ended, I found myself as a migrant in Europe where I struggled to express my Albanian identity, which evidently was not compatible with the Italian-European identity of those around me. Moreover, I was not familiar with the Italian language as well as the traditions of Catholicism, of Sunday mass and the religious celebrations, of the gestures while speaking and the expectations of social intercourse. Despite my best attempts to learn and communicate in Italian, difficulties abounded. Living as an ‘undocumented’ migrant was challenging. However, I realised that my customs and traditions, while different from those of Northern Italy, did not prevent me from integrating into this new society. I also realised that while some elements of my culture and tradition, such as songs, ceremonies and the ‘Albanian way of life’ were slipping away from me, I started to absorb elements of the Italian culture and identity. While I never doubted Italy’s hospitality to millions of migrants across the region, the settlement and integration remained a constant challenge. Mascitelli and De Lazzari argue that “multiculturalism did not fail in Italy...it

¹⁶ See for instance, Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss, *Basics of qualitative research*, vol. 15, Newbury Park, CA Sage, 1990; Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman, *Designing qualitative research*, 5th ed., Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2011.

simply never existed”.¹⁷ In fact, for some Italians, I remained an ‘*Albanese*’, a term that meant thieves, criminal gangs, rough and backward people.¹⁸ Notwithstanding the fact that, alongside Greece, Italy provided shelter for nearly one million Albanians after the Cold War, feelings towards Albanians are influenced by stereotypes. These sentiments are exemplified in the lyrics of a piece, published online, under the title: “*Spara All’ Albanese*”¹⁹, which states:

*gli albanesi sono quasi tutti negri
e se non sono negri sono musi gialli
sono tutti ladri e contrabbandieri
prima o poi bisognerà' eliminarli*

Albanians are quasi all Negros
and if they are not Negros they are yellow perils
they are all thieves and smugglers
sooner or later they need to be exterminated.

These racist sentiments on social media are complemented by the Italian media which has played a pivotal role in painting Albanians as thieves and smugglers, for instance in the television series *Commissario Montalbano*. Thus, my personal experience, representing a generic post-Cold War Albanian migrant experience, fleeing political persecution, food shortages and economic instability, in the search of a better life, may also be useful to understand contemporary Albanian national identity and the way it may develop in the future. I, as a researcher, am inside this story, and my own experience colours my interpretation.

As outlined above, my history can be seen as representative of a common Albanian history: born in Albania, I lived in Italy for twelve years, and am now a citizen of Australia. Therefore, I brought to Australia a sort of an ‘Albanian identity’ that in reality was mixed with an ‘Italian identity’, which then amalgamated again with the ‘Australian way of life’. While this might be a common contemporary story, the identity of my ancestors evolved and

¹⁷ Bruno Mascitelli and Chiara De Lazzari, "Interculturalism, multiculturalism and Italianess: the case of Italy", *Australia and New Zealand Journal of European Studies*, 8, no. 2, 2016, 61.

¹⁸ Giuseppe Caliceti, *Italiani per esempio: L'Italia vista dai bambini immigrati [Italians for example: the Italy viewed from immigrant's children]*, Milano, Bergamo: Giangiacomo Feltrinelli Editore Milano, 2010, 103-4.

¹⁹ "Spara All'albanese [Shoot the Albanians]", author's translation, *Lyrics Box-Cetomedia Lyrics*, accessed 25 August 2017, <https://www.lyricsbox.com/cetomedia-spara-all-albanese-lyrics-4bcdfrl.html>.

transformed in a way similar to my own, although they did not leave the place where they were born. While my family is Albanian, our family name changed during the Ottoman occupation; but there is no knowledge of how, when and why, and the original name is still unknown.

In other ways Klein emphasises that integration of ethnic minority groups who arrive and settle in another place “...always presents opportunities and challenges to host countries”.²⁰ However, the Ottoman colonial history of Albania was a different reality, as the distinct difference between a minority group settling somewhere and the Ottoman conquerors settling in Albania and imposing their rule is obvious. At the end of the fourteenth century, not only Ottomans conquered Albanian speaking lands, they imposed their language, culture, religion and traditions.

Albanian identity is contested on many levels. In the domestic sphere, Albanians are still wrestling with poverty issues and meeting basic economic needs. Arguably, poverty and globalisation have had an impact on domestic Albanian cultural norms and behaviours. However, in the international arena, Albanians are still paying for their close alliance with the Ottoman Turks.

1.5 Methodological considerations

The methodological approach for this study will be a cultural studies framework. According to Saukko, “The methodological project of cultural studies is structured around a three-dimensional interest in lived experiences, discourses or texts and the social context”.²¹ For Marshall and Rossman the domain of cultural studies includes a broad range of evaluations and analyses of culture, which includes the entire social mosaic such as our identities, language, text and power.²² Albanian national identity construction will be analysed against some theoretical concepts such as ethnicity, nationalism, religion, nation, civilisation and political

²⁰ Maren Klein, "Managing diversity: is Australia bucking the post-multiculturalist trend or on its way to embrace interculturalism?", *Australia and New Zealand Journal of European Studies*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2016, 65.

²¹ Paula Saukko, *Doing Research in Cultural Studies: An introduction to classical and new methodological approaches*, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2003, 33.

²² Marshall and Rossman, 23-4.

influence. A brief scrutiny of nation building theories will follow, to then conclude with Todorova's reflection on 'Balkanism'.

McNabb discusses the two main methodological research approaches in political science, namely positivist and post-positivist traditions.²³ According to this author, while the positivist approach is based on quantification and statistical analyses, post-positivist research is based on qualitative approaches such as explanatory, critical and post-modern research. This thesis will make use of quantitative data as evidence for specific lines of investigation. The quantitative research will be based on primary sources, namely Albanian, European Union and Turkish government archives, their foreign ministry websites and other research institutions such as the Eurostat and the Albanian Institute of Statistics (INSTAT). The quantitative data will not, however, tell us the entire story and must be supported with qualitative and theoretical material, as there are also invisible aspects of Albania's behaviour rooted in the Albanian heritage which exerts a strong influence on Albanian politicians and policy makers. In addition, Albania's attempt to join European Union (EU), which appears to be never ending, due to its limited progress on democratic reforms is a case in point. Thus, a qualitative analysis will help for example to pinpoint whether Albania's corruption has roots in its colonial past, and if so, whether this may further delay Albania's dream to join European Union.

In their *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2005), Denzin and Lincoln (et al) trace the rich history of qualitative research in its many and varied forms. These authors emphasise the plethora of approaches and orthodoxies within and across disciplines and the vast compendium of techniques available for collecting, analysing and presenting data. They argue that current methodological techniques used by scholars are more sophisticated than in previous eras, while causing a backlash with the approach of governments that are still more interested in quantitative research.²⁴ However, despite the ruptures and changes, the qualitative research and its central principle of researcher engagement within the researched field remain strong. Patton highlights the importance of qualitative research as "an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context..."²⁵

²³ David E. McNabb, *Research approaches for political science: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*, 2 ed., London and New York: Routledge, 2015, 27.

²⁴ Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research* Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications, 2005, 1-26.

²⁵ Michael Quinn Patton, *Quality in qualitative research: Methodological principles and recent developments*, Chicago: Invited address to Division J of the American Educational Research Association 1985, 1.

Qualitative research can give us more information about Albania's identity and its self-perception. The qualitative sources include primary interviews published by the Albanian media and secondary sources such as the media, literature from scholars, government reports etc. This thesis seeks to cast new light on the issue by drawing on English, through Albanian language sources, and drawing on little known economic and military secondary data.

The first post-communist Albanian military attaché in Ankara, Hajro Limaj, who served for the period from 1990-2000 has published in book form a diary called *Midis Ankarasë dhe Tiranës: 1990-2000. Nga ditari i një atasheu ushtarak* [*Between Ankara and Tirana: 1990-2000. From the diary of a military attaché*]. This book published in Albanian, in 2012, contains valuable data regarding the political, economic and military relations between Turkey and Albania especially after the Cold War and will be part of analyses in chapter five. Therefore, throughout this thesis, a large amount of relevant and hitherto inaccessible data primarily from Albanian is translated into English and is used for the re-interpretation of the narrative in this research.

1.6 Some limitations of this research

It has to be noted that there are some limitations to this research. Firstly, all government sources, be they Turkish or Albanian, are likely to display a certain level of bias, raising concerns regarding accuracy. Turkey and Albania claim to be liberal democracies, however, the European Union in the review of the two countries' membership applications has raised concerns about their slow path to democratisation. Analysing documents from Turkish government sources needs to be read in light of its poor record on human rights within its own country and thus, not only government documents, but also the media can be politically manipulated. Attention is also required when analysing the often-politicised Albanian media and government data, as the government and its opposition parties are still far from being free of bias. However, in this thesis, media articles from both Albania and Turkey are only used to retrieve concrete facts and not as a source of analyses.

Secondly, there is an issue with accessibility of some secondary sources as these keep disappearing after a certain period of time from some Turkish and Albanian media websites. Although throughout my research I have accessed Albanian media sites on daily basis, I have noticed that articles from *Panorama on line* and *Top Channel* for example seem to vanish after

a period of approximately six months from the access date. In addition, since the last Turkish coup d'état in 2016, the Turkish government closed down a number of Turkish newspapers and media sites; removing all material and data from those websites.²⁶ *Zaman* was a reputable Turkish media, used in this thesis.

Ultimately, the lack of Albanian literature and documentation prior and during the Ottoman period, creates more challenges to address claims such as the ethnic origins of Albanians and the time when Albanian speaking people populated the Balkan Peninsula. An exception is the period of Skenderbeg which is largely covered by Albanian and European literature.²⁷ However, in general, Albanian literature is essentially absent from more than five centuries of the Ottoman rule. The analysis of the interaction between Albanians and the Ottoman Turks are often based on Ottoman documentation archived in Turkey and frequently inaccessible to researchers. Although *rilindja* writings at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century are valuable secondary sources, the absence of Albanian literature from the Ottoman period is extensive and problematical. Furthermore, the communist regime of Hoxha set Albanian identity on a different path, which raises questions about research outcomes of some Albanian writers in this period.

1.7 Terminology

To facilitate a better understanding, it is important to discuss some of the key terms used in this field of research. The section that follows will discuss the meanings of the terms to guide the reader through the study as well as to describe the terminological choices made by the author.

Firstly, **Albanian identity** is the overarching concept of this thesis and one that goes to the heart of this research. Discussing Albanian identity is not only complex but can also be controversial. The first question to be clarified is whether 'Albanian identity' encompasses all ethnic Albanians that live in Albania and elsewhere, or whether it relates only to those

²⁶ "Turkey coup attempt: More than 130 media outlets shut", *BBC News*, 28 July 2016, accessed 21 September 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36910556>.

²⁷ Naim Frashëri, *Historia e Skënderbeut [The History of Skenderbeg]*, author's translation, Tiranë: Instituti i Historisë dhe Gjuhësisë, 1967; Marin Barleti, *The Siege of Shkodra: Albania's Courageous Stand Against Ottoman Conquest, 1478*. Originally published as "*De obsidione Scodrensi, 1504*", Tirana: Onufri, 2012; Harry Hodgkinson, ed. *Scanderbeg*, ed. Bejtullah D. Destani and Westrow Cooper (Centre for Albanian Studies, 1999); Nelo Drizari, *Scanderbeg; His Life, Correspondence, Orations, Victories, and Philosophy*, The University of Michigan and National Press, 2008; Oliver Jens Schmitt, *Skanderbeg: der neue Alexander auf dem Balkan*, Pustet, 2009; Ismail Kadare, *The Siege*, Canada: Doubleday, 2010.

Albanians in Albania. This thesis will conceptualise ‘Albanian identity’ as a whole, including the identity of those Albanians who live in Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Kosovo and Albania. However, this thesis is mindful about similarities and differences of identity between Albanians. An example is the development of a new Kosovar identity. This identity, while according to Mehmeti, still possibly imaginary, may emerge in the future, thus challenging Albanian identity.²⁸ Differences between Albanians in terms of religion, culture, language and identity will be briefly highlighted in order to provide a deeper understanding of what is considered as Albanian identity.

Greater Albania is linked to the concept of Great Powers, and the decline of the Ottoman Empire. While for Albanian nationalists the unification of all those territories into the so called ‘Greater Albania’ would end centuries of humiliation and injustice, Western Balkan nationalists view this as merely an irredentist idea trying to destabilise the region. Greater Albania is not the only concept of ‘greater nation-states’ in the Western Balkans, however, in the twenty-first century, it seems to be of great concern. None of the Balkan countries was happy with the way the Great Powers drew the Balkan borders in 1913. However, in the twenty-first century, it seems that projects of Greater Serbia (*Nacertanie*), Greater Croatia, and Greater Greece (*Megali-Idea*)—all older than ‘Greater Albania’—have been put to rest²⁹, while, as Tanner mentioned, the ghost of Greater Albania is yet to disappear.³⁰

In relation to the previous concept of Greater Albania, **Kosovo**, or **Kosova** needs further explanation. Following the Ottoman downfall in 1911, Western Kosovo (*Metohija*) was integrated into the Kingdom of Montenegro and Eastern Kosovo into the Kingdom of Serbia.³¹ Various administrative reorganizations of the territory took place during the 1920s and, in 1929, Kosovo was included³² as part of the new formation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.³³

²⁸ Leandrit I. Mehmeti, "Kosovar Identity: Challenging Albanian National Identity", *Australia and New Zealand Journal of European Studies*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2017, 25.

²⁹ Mirela Bogdani and John Loughlin, *Albania and the European Union: The Tumultuous Journey Towards Integration and Accession*, London, New York: I.B. Tauris, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, 233.

³⁰ Marcus Tanner, "The Ghost of Greater Albania Won't go Away", *BalkanInsight*, 27 March 2015, accessed 14 July 2015, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/the-ghost-of-greater-albania-won-t-go-away>.

³¹ Peter Morgan, 'Strange commerce of memory and forgetting': *Albania, Kosovo and Europe in Ismail Kadare's File on H...* (Manuscript, authorised by the author: 2015).

³² Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History*, London: Harper Perennial/HarperCollins, 1999, 251-63.

³³ The Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was renamed 'Yugoslavia'.

After WWII, Hoxha subscribed to the long-term Moscow policy of merging Albania with Yugoslavia and Bulgaria to create a so-called 'Balkan Federation'.³⁴ Kosovar Albanians were threatened by discriminatory policies in the areas of language and education, and government policies of relocation of Serbs into Kosovo led to further population movements of ethnic Albanians.³⁵ It was only under Yugoslav leader Josip Broz (Marshal Tito) that Kosovo was recognised as an 'autonomous region' and as a result after 1966, the situation for Albanians improved.³⁶ However, Stalin became suspicious of Tito's intentions, expelling Yugoslavia from the Comintern in 1948. Hoxha continued to remain loyal to Stalin and thereby ending the relationship with Tito and Yugoslavia. As a result, Tito developed a distrust of Hoxha and the Kosovar Albanians.³⁷ The end of the Cold War coincided with the disintegration of the Yugoslav Federation although Kosovo only separated from Serbia in 1999, through NATO military intervention. In 2008, a country with 90 per cent ethnic Albanian population, proclaimed its independence to then become the Republic of Kosovo but this did not stop five European member states: Spain, Greece, Slovakia, Cyprus and Romania, from refusing to recognise its existence because, according to Abazi, it would "... impact on relations between regional actors, including the EU, Russia, NATO and Turkey".³⁸ In citing the Turkish former Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit, Abazi emphasises that Turkey perceives Kosovo, "as a debt it owes to its own history".³⁹ While an important issue, an examination of the Kosovar nation-state or state identity is outside the scope of this thesis, though. This thesis will consider the identity of Kosovar-Albanians who live in Kosovo or Kosova as part of the Albanian national identity.

The Western Balkans is a region that comprises Albania and the former Yugoslav states of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

³⁴ Malcolm, 319.

³⁵ Morgan, "Strange commerce of memory and forgetting: Albania, Kosovo and Europe in Ismail Kadare's *File on H...*".

³⁶ Edwin E Jacques, *The Albanians: An Ethnic History from Prehistoric Times to the Present*, vol. 1, Jefferson, North Carolina and London: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2009, 43; Malcolm, 316.

³⁷ Morgan, "Strange commerce of memory and forgetting: Albania, Kosovo and Europe in Ismail Kadare's *File on H...*".

³⁸ Enika Abazi, "Kosovo Independence: An Albanian Perspective", *Seta, Policy Brief*, 11, April 2008, 2.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

According to Bego, two and a half decades after the end of communism, “Western Balkan countries have become halfway democracies and the region struggles with ethnic, religious and nationalistic tensions”.⁴⁰ Although Croatia is the only EU member state, Bego argues that three are challenges for the Western Balkans: the failure of democracy to deliver healthy political competition, Russian interference in the Slavic-majority nations in recent years, which has further complicated the political landscape, and the reluctance of Europe to accept Western Balkan states as EU members. Nevertheless, the reluctance of the EU to include Western Balkans may create a perfect environment for Turkey to get closer to the region, and Albanians might be their best supporters to achieve this.

Ultimately, there is indeed much scholarship on the issue of the **East-West** dichotomy. The following is only a very brief overview in order to contextualise this paper and elucidate the complexity of Albanian identity orientation. Western European countries are considered ‘Eurocentric’ at the core of the West (usually together with North America); marginalising the periphery of the Eastern countries.⁴¹ A more rigorous definition of the East-West dichotomy is problematic, as it is unclear whether it relates to geography, history, culture, politics, identity or religion.⁴² In the global era of interconnectedness where the West has more links with the East and vice versa, some believe that the concept of West and East is losing importance. A small country such as Albania displays the complexity of emerging relations between West and East. At present, Albania is seeking to re-imagine itself and bolster its links with the West, while expanding concurrent links with Turkey (which would like to portray itself as “a bridge between East and West”⁴³) as part of the Eastern world.

⁴⁰ Ingrid Bego, "Why are the Western Balkans in crisis? These are the three primary tensions", *The Washington Post*, 26 June 2017, accessed 10 October 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/06/26/why-are-the-western-balkans-in-crisis-these-are-the-three-primary-tensions/?utm_term=.a52a7f984eb5.

⁴¹ Alison Stenning, "Out there and in here: studying Eastern Europe in the West", *Royal Geographical Society*, 37, no. 4, 13 December 2005, 381. Edward W Said, "Orientalism Reconsidered", *Cultural Critique*, no. 1, autumn 1985, 89-107.

⁴² James Gow, *Defending the West*, Cambridge: Polity, 2005, 7. Stenning, 378-83.

⁴³ Metin Heper, "Turkey between East and West", Working Paper AY0405-16, Institute of European Studies, University of California Berkeley, 16 May 2004.

1.8 The structure of the thesis

This thesis is divided into eight chapters. This introductory chapter aims to introduce and explain the journey of this research, its importance, the research questions, methodological considerations, limitations, some key terms used and a brief explanation of the contents.

The second chapter, which can be considered a literary review, will draw on the existing literature to provide a short background of the contested arguments that surround Albanian identity and contemporary Albanian-Turkish relations. The objective of this chapter is to highlight the main debates that have affected Albanian identity, the origins of the Albanian nation concept and its struggle for survival in relation to Turkish influence and legacy. These debates will then be part of discussion and analyses in later chapters. However, the aim of this literature review is to highlight gaps on the existing scholarly literature, and thus to fit this research as a possible contribution to the literature.

The third chapter covers the theoretical terrain, providing a theoretical foundation, that will be relevant to explain Albanian identity. Drawing on a number of scholars who offered different nation-building approaches such as primordialism, perennialism, modernism, '*ethno-symbolism*' and post-modernism, the study seeks to explore Albanian identity. It will be interesting to investigate how currently two Albanian nation-states: Albania and Kosovo, but also other Albanians who live within other nation-state borders such as Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia comply with nation building theories. Furthermore, the chapter will shift its focus to issues such as ethnicity, nations, nationalism, religion, civilization, influence and legacy. It will briefly discuss Todorova's 'Balkanism' in order to build the theoretical foundation for exploring the main theme of the research question: to what extent and how Turkey's influence is creating ramifications for Albanian identity in the twenty-first century.

Drawing back in the history, since the Ottoman arrival in 1385, chapter four will discuss major implications of the Ottoman influence in Albanian-speaking lands until the declaration of the Albanian Independence in 1912. This chapter aims to discuss how the Porte affected Albanian nationalism and the creation of the Albanian entity. It will explore the Ottomans influence in the Albanian speaking lands, in areas such as social organisation, infrastructure, written language, the system of education and the role of religion. The Ottoman impact on Albanian nation and identity, ethnicity, nationalism, religion will be part of this debate.

The fifth and the sixth chapters will go to the heart of the research question. The fifth chapter will analyse two main controversies in the twenty-first century that surround Albanian identity in relation to the Ottoman heritage and culture. The first one is an attempt to understand

whether Albanian identity has in its composition elements of the Ottoman heritage, and thus belongs to Eastern civilization, or rather reflects elements of the Western civilization. This will be through a direct engagement with thesis proposed by the Albanian prominent writer, Ismail Kadare, who has written extensively regarding the Ottoman culture and its influence over the Albanian identity. It will also explore Kadare's main opposing voice, Rexhep Qosja, through discussions that while contradicting Kadare's thesis, also shows how debated these arguments are. The second myth discussed in this chapter is the current quest of the Albanian nation in the twenty-first century: the question of a 'Greater Albania'. For Albanians, this is 'unfinished business' even though its origins can be found at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, a time when the Ottoman Empire was on the verge of collapsing and boundaries of the Porte were redesigned by the Great Powers.

The sixth chapter will then discuss relations between Turkey and Albania since the creation of both nation-states at the beginning of the twentieth century. The research and analyses on this matter are minimal, if not non-existent. The political influence of Turkey in fields such as economy, foreign policy, geopolitical alignments and security, which may affect the Albanian 'Euro-Atlantic' orientation will be the focus of this chapter.

The seventh chapter will provide findings of this research and develop some recommendations. This chapter analyses how and if Albania can escape from the Ottoman heritage; what and why Albanians are doing this, and what this might look like in reality. The chapter will focus on regional and energy security areas, politics, and traditional understandings of historical, cultural, religious and linguistic identity factors.

The final chapter will conclude with a confirmation of the approach, methodology, findings and some remarks to better understand Albanian identity in the twenty-first century and challenges that its historical past and the Ottoman legacy pose to Albania's political orientation towards the Euro-Atlantic 'family'. The twenty-first century is already offering surprises: 'Brexit' may have a domino effect, but perhaps for the Albanian nation, the decision of Turkey to whether abandon the idea of joining Europe and the West is crucial. In the conclusion of this section, the study will offer further reflections and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Debates that surround Albanian and Turkish national-identities

2.1.1 Introduction

Drawing on the existing literature, this chapter will identify a number of themes that are covered with a focus on both Albanian and Turkish national-identities. The chapter will scrutinise existing and unknown literature to scholarly and non-scholarly audiences in original Albanian hitherto unsourced and sighted. These themes are not in any particular or chronological order, and the aim of the chapter is to highlight these arguments in order to set up the scene for an in-depth analysis of the research question, establish the literature gap and the contribution to knowledge.

2.1.2 The gap in the literature

Since the mid nineteenth century, literature on many aspects of Albania have flourished. Along with *rilindja* writings, other scholarly literature on Albania has covered much of the process of nation building since the Albanian National Awakening in 1878⁴⁴. Much literature has also addressed the creation and consolidation of the Albanian state⁴⁵, the communist era⁴⁶, and the

⁴⁴ Stavro Skendi, *The Albanian National Awakening, 1878-1912* Princetown, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967.

⁴⁵ Owen Pearson, *Albania and King Zog: Independence, Republic and Monarchy, 1908-1939*, vol. I, III vols., *Albania in the Twentieth Century: A History*, London: The Centre for Albanian Studies in Association with I. B. Tauris, 2004; Owen Pearson, *Albania in Occupation and War: From Fascism to Communism, 1940-1945*, vol. II, III vols., *Albania in the Twentieth Century: A History*, London: The Centre for Albanian Studies in Association with I. B. Tauris, 2005; Richard C. Hall, *The Balkan Wars 1912–1913: Prelude to the First World War*, London&New York: Routledge, 2000; Bernd Jürgen Fischer, *King Zog and the Struggle for Stability in Albania*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1984; Renzo Falaschi, "Ismail Qemal Bey Vlora and the making of Albania in 1912", in *Perspectives on Albania*, ed. T. Winnifirth, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992; Bejtullah Destani and Robert Elsie, eds., *The Balkan wars: British Consular Reports from Macedonia in the Final Years of the Ottoman Empire* (London&New York: I.B.Tauris in association with the Centre for Albanian Studies, 2014).

⁴⁶ Elez Biberaj, *Albania: A Socialist Maverick*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1990; Elez Biberaj, *Albania and China: A Study of an Unequal Alliance*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1986; Mario I. Bléjer et al., "Albania: from isolation towards reform", *Occasional paper (International Monetary Fund)*, 1992; William E Griffith, *Albania and the Sino-Soviet Rift*, Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1963; Harry Hamm, *Albania-China's Beachhead in Europe*, New York: Frederick A Praeger, 1963; Stephen F. Larrabee, "Whither Albania?", *The World Today*, 34,

post-Cold War period.⁴⁷ A common theme throughout much of this literature has been the constant struggle of the Albanian nation to survive in the international arena. However, little research has been conducted on the historical relationship between Ottoman Turks and Albanian speaking populations. Exceptions are the periods of Skenderbeg (1443-1468), and to some extent, Ali Pasha's upheaval (1790-1822), which focused on the analyses and context of Albania's resistance. There is need for further scholarship that examines the relationship between Albanian speaking people and the Ottoman Turks, and this study is seeking to contribute to this scholarship.

Equally, there has been scholarly engagement, with analysis of the Turkish new activism during the post-Cold War period in the Balkans and the continuous evolution of Turkish foreign policy.⁴⁸ Yet, the analyses of bilateral relations between Albania and Turkey after the creation of both nation states at the beginning of the twentieth century are almost non-existent.⁴⁹ Therefore, this research will engage with discussions and analyses of the

no. 2, 1978; Anton Logoreci, *The Albanians : Europe's forgotten survivors*, London: Gollancz, 1977; Daniel Tretiak, "The Founding of the Sino-Albanian Entente", *The China Quarterly*, 10, 1962; Miranda Vickers, *The Albanians: A Modern History*, London: I.B. Taurus, [1995] 2001; Tom Winniffrith, *Perspectives on Albania*, New York: St.Martin's Press, Inc., 1992; Raymond E. Zickel and Walter R. Iwaskiw, eds., *Albania: A Country Study*, 2 ed. (Washington, D. C.: Library of congress, 1994); Owen Pearson, *Albania as Dictatorship and Democracy, From Isolation to Kosovo War 1946-1998*, vol. III, III vols., *Albania in the Twentieth Century: A History*, London: The Centre for Albanian Studies in Association with I. B. Tauris, 2006.

⁴⁷ "Shqipëria dhe Këshilli i Partneritetit Euroatlantik (EAPC) [Albania and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council]", 3 March 2011, http://arkiva.mfa.gov.al/index.php?option=com_multicategories&view=article&id=7555%3Ashqiperia-dhe-keshilli-i-partneritetit-euroatlantik-eapc&format=pdf&Itemid=65&lang=en; "Albania", *Oxford Economic Country Briefings*, 29 Jul 2009, accessed 12 September 2013, <http://0--proquest-umi-.com-.alpha2-.latrobe-.edu-.au/pqdlink-?did=1868557581-&Fmt=3-&clientId=20828-&RQT=309-&VName=PQD>; Abazi; Albanian Institute for Intentional Studies, *The European Perspective of Albania: Perceptions and Realities 2010* (Tirana: 2010); Bogdani and Loughlin; Ismail Kadare, *Kombi Shqipëtar në prag të mijëvjeçarit të tretë [The Albanian Nation at the Door of the Third Millenium]*, author's translation, Tirana: Onufri, 1998.

⁴⁸ Erhan Türbedar, "Turkey's New Activism in the Western Balkans: Ambitions and Obstacles", *Insight Turkey*, vol. 13, no. 3, 2011; Ömer Taspınar, "Turkey's Middle East Policies: Between Neo-Ottomanism and Kemalism", *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.*, 10, September 2008; Halil İnalcık, "Turkey between Europe and Middle East", *PERCEPTIONS: JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS*, vol. 3, no. 1, March - May 1998; Heper, 16 May 2004; Edward J. Erickson, "Turkey as regional hegemon - 2014: strategic implications for the United States", *Turkish Studies*, vol. 5, no. 3, 2004; Svante E. Cornell, "Changes in Turkey: What Drives Turkish Foreign Policy?", *MIDDLE EAST QUARTERLY*, Winter 2012, published in *Hürriyet* 13 June 2011.

⁴⁹ Little studies about bilateral relations between Albania and Turkey after the Cold War has been conducted by Tase, Pajaziti and SÜLKÜ. See for instance, Peter Tase, "Albania And Turkey: Two Nations With Common Vision To Strengthen Bilateral Cooperation, 1990-2000", *Foreign Policy News*, 25 January 2014, accessed 14 April 2016, <http://foreignpolicynews.org/2014/01/25/albania-turkey-two-nations-common-vision-strengthen-bilateral-cooperation-1990-2000/>; Peter Tase, "Turkey and Albania establish a dynamic agenda of bilateral relations", *Foreign Policy News*, 2 May 2014, accessed 12 January 2016, <http://foreignpolicynews.org/2014/05/02/turkey-albania-establish-dynamic-agenda-bilateral-relations/>; Mehmed

contemporary bilateral relations between Albania and Turkey. The aim is to investigate whether Turkey's influence over Albania in the twenty-first century is still present. The relationships between externally constructed representations of Albania and the ways in which Albanians construct their own identities in relation to similarities or differences with Turkish identity will be at the core of this analyses.

After the fall of communism in 1990, Albanians have struggled to address questions regarding their identity, heritage and belonging in cultural, ethnic, religious, economic and political terms. Since then, debates within the Albanian society have overtaken taboos created by the communist regime of Enver Hoxha with regard to the 'new person'—the invented socialist identity that was crafted in a way to serve the communist regime. Who are Albanians?

2.1.3 Complexities in contextualising Albanian identity: ignorance, speculation and stereotypes

Since the Middle Ages, Albanian people have been perceived as “mysterious” and subject to other poorly informed perceptions. Morgan points out that Albania entered the “European imagination as a place of adventure, romance, and exoticism”.⁵⁰ Information about Albania emerged from reports from a small number of Western travellers, who visited Albanian villages in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and who conveyed their subjective impressions about the Albanian lands to the West. Schwandner-Sievers informs us of the different interpretations of Albanian identity by German and British travellers at the beginning of the twentieth century. While German “Schmidt-Neke has shown that ideal-type descriptions of Albanian customary law, noble masculinity and warrior's honour underpin German Wehrmacht autobiographies”, the British view as expressed by Durham concentrated on the Ottoman occupation and displayed a “measure of sympathy with the emerging insurgencies against the ‘Ottoman Yoke’”.⁵¹ In 1928, Durham requested the British King and government to send troops to

Sülkü, "Political Relations between Turkey and Albania in the post Cold War period" (Middle East Technical University, 2010); Ali Pajaziti, "Turk and Turkey perception at Albanians in the beginning of 21st century", *Past, Present and Future of Turkish-Albanian-Macedonian Relations*, 27-29 May 2011, International Symposium, Skopje, Macedonia-Prishtinë, Kosovo. Ankara Center For Thought And Research and International Balkan University.

⁵⁰ Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 5.

⁵¹ Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers, "Albanians, Albanianism and the strategic subversion of stereotypes", *Slovene Anthropological Society*, vol. 14, no. 2, 2008, 57.

Albania, as she felt sympathy for local Albanians who were externally “threatened by Slav, ‘Teuton’ and Greek ambitions”. On the other hand, she emphasised that Albanians were subject to “the fierce violence of local customary laws”.⁵² Other artwork reflected subjective opinions of travellers about the Balkans and Albanians. An example is the description by Karl Krumbacher, an archaeologist, philologist and founder of the German Byzantine studies, who visited the Balkans in the late nineteenth century; reporting that “Albanians [were] street sweepers”.⁵³ A further example includes Ami Boué’s nineteenth century description of the Ottomans as “serious and good-natured”, Greeks as “refined”, Serbs as “militant”, Bosnians as “rough” people, Herzegovinians as “cheerful”, whereas Albanians as “witty”.⁵⁴ Those narratives presented at best superficial descriptions of the Balkan people that poorly reflected the spectrum of Albanian culture.

Although stereotypes are common on the Balkan Peninsula⁵⁵, Albanians suffered more from them than other Balkan nations. Both externally and within the Balkans, Albanians were portrayed to be the ‘worst of the Balkans’. In 1913, Serbian Prime Minister Vladan Djordjevic (1844-1930) created and distributed pamphlets (‘as part of anti-Albanian nationalist propaganda’) portraying Albanians “as inferior and thus, little capable of nation-building themselves”, to the point that Albanians were seen as ‘primeval’, ‘gypsy like’ and also the only ‘tailed’ devil-like people; still quite undeveloped.⁵⁶ Before and after the collapse of the Porte⁵⁷, along with being labelled ‘primitive’, Albanians were considered to be Turks and thus, enemies to their neighbours. Being portrayed as a weak and frail existence Muslim in a sea of Christianity is the way the stereotype sought to be vindictive, provocative and demeaning. The Albanian support for the Ottomans was, and still is, used as the reason Albanians are portrayed

⁵² Mary Edith Durham, *High Albania*, new ed., Boston: Beacon, [1909], 1985, 168. in ; Schwandner-Sievers, 57.

⁵³ This painting was the result of comparing ten males in seventeen categories like temperament, nature, intelligence and so on. At the bottom of Syria’s ‘research’ (scoring less points) were Turks and Greeks. The position of the missing Albanian male in Syria’s picture would have been no higher than Turks and Greeks if not below them. Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, 72.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 81.

⁵⁵ Kevin Sullivan, "Those Nasty Stereotypes", *BalkanInsight*, 9 December 2013, accessed 12 December 2014, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/blog/those-nasty-stereotypes>.

⁵⁶ Schwandner-Sievers, 52.

⁵⁷ The central government of the Ottoman Empire is also known with phrases such as Sublime Porte or High Porte.

as ‘Muslims’ in the middle of the Balkans. The attempt to stigmatize Albania in this way is at best a misunderstanding of the facts in their historical context, and at worst, a systematic attempt to craft Albanianism as an association with Said’s concept of “Orientalism”⁵⁸. The overarching theme of Said’s Orientalism is that of “Western hegemony over the Orient”⁵⁹, but applying this approach to Albania is problematic as it was not the West’s but rather the Oriental Ottoman’s domination which had more influence in re-shaping Albanian identity. However, the Western scholarship as part of the Western hegemony, have portrayed Balkans as the backward region, where Albanians were more damaged in the overall context.

Josef Stalin, in a display of his ignorance and disregard for Albanians and Albanian culture, upon meeting Hoxha in Moscow on 14 July 1947, stated that Albanians “can be as faithful as a dog, that is one of the traits of the primitive”.⁶⁰ These stereotypes have remained powerful and unchanged to the present throughout the Balkans and the West.

Hence, the current Western perception of Albania and Albanians has also been coloured. It remains a “space for imaging, the dark, evil and dangerous”⁶¹ world, as is portrayed in JK Rowling’s *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* or in the movie *Taken*. Over the past decades various scholars have noted these stereotypes as Schwandner-Sievers reminds us:

The power of such imagery cannot be ignored, not least because it supports the arguments of particular, often violent Albanian interest groups, while effectively forcing the average, non-violent Albanian, faced with the outside world, into everyday mimicry, self-denial or apology, to mention just a few of the symptoms of Albanianism at work.⁶²

Schwandner-Sievers agrees with Todorova’s suggestion that only during the decline of

⁵⁸ Edward W Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*, New York & London: Penguin Books, 1995, 7-8.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ During the first official visit to Moscow, Hoxha was shocked by Stalin's lack of knowledge with regards to the Albanian culture. In reality Stalin's ignorance was sprinkled with stereotypes against Albanians. This was shown during a meeting of Stalin with Tito’s foreign affairs advisor Edward Kardelj, where Stalin stated that Albanians “can be as faithful as a dog”, which means “primitive”. See for instance Vickers, 171.

⁶¹ Schwandner-Sievers, 60.

⁶² Ibid., 61.

the Ottoman Empire, “the Balkan people entered the Western European imagination as potential nation-states”, while this area was “colored by romanticism and/or ‘Realpolitik’, resulting in polarized advocacy or demonization of these populations”.⁶³ Pettifer mentions that, even today, “racial and religious” stereotypes depict Albanians as “dangerous, Muslim and criminal; and Serbs as democratic, Christian and European”, which continues to “make [Albanians] a convenient scapegoat”.⁶⁴ It can be argued that this judgment for Albanians did not change, even after Serbian atrocities in Kosovo came to an end with the collapse of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. Judah argues that the Albanian insurgency in 2001, witnessed through the adventurism of a few Albanians in the Presevo Valley and Macedonia, rather confirmed more stereotypes: “Serbs are good, Albanians bad”.⁶⁵ The danger is that this stigma is not only reinforcing the Albanian perception of ‘humiliation’, but it may also have “very negative consequences for European Union political decisions”.⁶⁶ Casting the ‘Muslim’ Albanian people as the lowest ethnic group in the Balkans customises the Balkan’s version of Orientalism, and indeed, makes Albanians feel marginalised and excluded. In fact, what these stereotypes have shown most clearly is a cohesive Albanian identity with which academics and social commentators may engage. Portraying Albanians as ‘Muslims’, if not Turks, ‘dangerous’ people who are situated at the bottom of the European civilization, can only create more stereotypes, whilst the Albanian identity continues to be illusive.

One reason for conducting this research is to explore the multifaceted Albanian identity, which at best is poorly understood, and at worst, crafted purposely to misinterpret one of the oldest cultures of the Balkans. The lack of research on Albanian culture and the misunderstanding of its links with the Ottoman-Turkish heritage prompted me to undertake this research as an insider and outsider and thus to make this contribution to knowledge. My research can be considered as contributing analysis from an ‘outsider’ who has deep knowledge about the Albanian language and culture to the field.

⁶³ Maria Todorova, "The Balkans: from discovery to invention", *Slavic Review*, no. 53, 1994, 461; Schwandner-Sievers, 56.

⁶⁴ James Pettifer, "Greater Albania", *The World Today*, vol. 57, no. 7, 2001, 19.

⁶⁵ Tim Judah, "Greater albania?", *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, vol. 43, no. 2, 2001, 15.

⁶⁶ Pettifer, 19.

2.1.4 Albania: location, demography and population

Albania has a total area of 28,748 square kilometres and shares its borders with Montenegro to its North and North-West, Kosovo to the North and North-East, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) to the North-East and East, and with Greece to the South and South-East. To the West, Albania's coastline along the Adriatic and the Ionian Sea is located close to Italy—the distance between Vlorë and the Strait of Otranto in Italy is less than 75 kilometres. Although both Greeks and Albanians live on both sides of the South-Eastern Albanian border neither⁶⁷ are satisfied with borders drawn by the Great Powers at the beginning of the twentieth century. Nor are Albanians happy with borders (shown in the map below) that see Albanian speaking people and territories included within Montenegro, Serbia and Macedonia, which according to Pettifer, are a reason for instability in the Western Balkans.⁶⁸



Source: Raymond E. Zickel & Walter R. Iwaskiw, *Albania: A Country Study*, p. 70

Albanians continue to be the poorest country in the Western Balkans⁶⁹, with 25% of the population living on less than 2 US dollars per day.⁷⁰ After the end of the Cold War, internal

⁶⁷ Zickel and Iwaskiw, 59.

⁶⁸ Pettifer, 18.

⁶⁹ West Balkans as part of Balkan Peninsula, but often described as part of South-East Europe, are Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia. Geographically also Croatia, an EU member, is included in Western Balkans.

⁷⁰ "Poverty in the Balkans", *European Western Balkans*, 24 January 2017, accessed 23 March 2017, <http://europeanwesternbalkans.com>.

migration to cities at the expense of rural areas⁷¹ took place, the large number of Albanians left their country and are now living abroad. Based on Albanian Government data from 2005, Vullnetari lists the following countries as those with sizeable Albanian migrant populations: Greece 600,000, Italy 250,000, USA, 150 000, UK 50,000, Germany 15,000, Canada 11,500, Belgium 5,000, Turkey 5,000, France 2,000, Austria 2,000, Switzerland 1,500 and the Netherlands 1,000.⁷² In 2005, the number of Albanian migrants was estimated to be 1,093,000; that is approximately one third of the Albanian population of 3.3 million. The outward migration of Albanians is an unstoppable phenomenon and seemingly another challenge for Albania in the twenty-first century.⁷³ Other data from the Albanian Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) shows that from 2006 to 2015, the number of young people in the country has steadily decreased while net emigration is still on the rise.⁷⁴ Even though this data is from government official sources, its veracity is questionable: accurately calculating undocumented migrations is a challenge as my own migration illustrates. I was one of those migrants who left Albania and lived in Italy for some time without informing either the Italian and Albanian authorities.

2.1.5 Albanian identity – a contested space

Albanian identity is contested and multifaceted. Complexities start with the ethnic origins of Albanians. Scholars claim that modern Albanians are descendants of Pelazgo-Illyrians.⁷⁵ Albanian nationalist writers of the nineteenth and twentieth century, in search of Albania's origins, replaced the Pelasgian theory with that of Illyrian belonging, which became the

⁷¹ Julie Vullnetari, "Internal migration in Albania: A critical review", in *Legacy and Change: Albanian transformation from multidisciplinary perspectives*, ed. Robert Pichler, Zürich and Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2014.

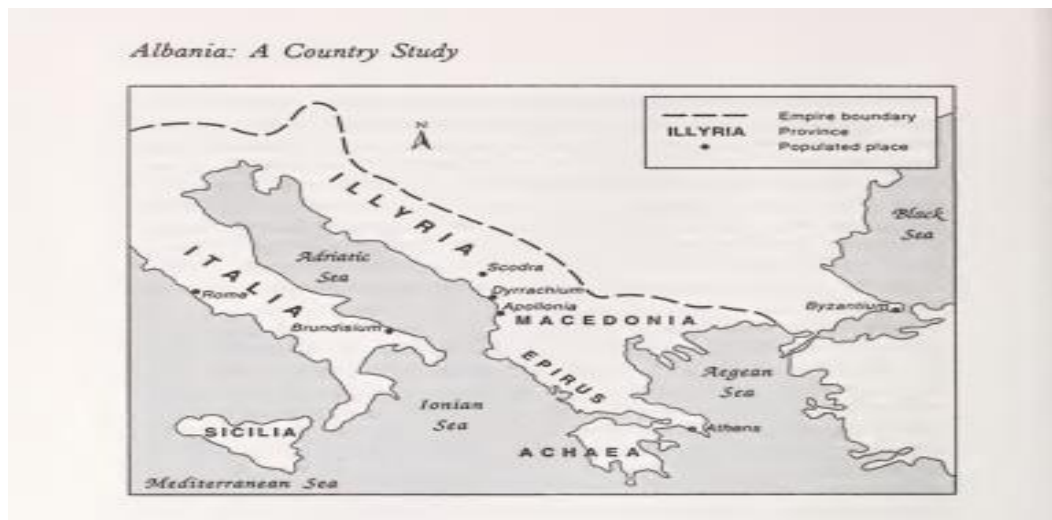
⁷² Julie Vullnetari, *Albanian Migration and Development: State of the Art Review*. Amsterdam: Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (IMES), 18 September 2007, 36.

⁷³ "Femra dhe Meshkuj në Shqipëri 2016 [Women and Men in Albania 2016]", *INSTAT - Albanian Republic, Statistics Institute*, 2016: 21.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 21-2.

⁷⁵ Based on archaeological analysis and facts, Edwin Jacques states uncontested facts about the origins of Albanians that belong to Illyrians, stating: "Our historical sources thereafter demonstrate the unbroken continuity of these Pelasgian and Illyrian forebears down to the additional centuries to the Albanians of our days." Jacques, 28.

principal pillar of Albanian nationalism as it served to protect Albania from Serbian and Greek land claims.⁷⁶ Some scholars have agreed that Illyrians were the inhabitants of Illyria during the seventh century BC⁷⁷, as shown on the map below.



Illyria under Roman Rule, First Century B. C

Source: Raymond E. Zickel & Walter R. Iwaskiw, *Albania: A Country Study*, p. 6.

Illyrians lived within tribal communities of blood relations such as Liburni, Ardaei, Dalmatae, Albani, Dardani, Taulanti, Orestes, Labeati, Molossi, Chaones and Thesproti and conducted their political and social affairs based on the tribal system.⁷⁸ Socioeconomic patterns, such as “clan or tribe living in hilltop towns fortified with walls of huge roughly hewn stones”, “burial rites” and ceramic potteries founded in Albania, are three factors that, according to Edwin Jacques, “indicate the cultural unity of this entire Illyrian region”.⁷⁹

Complexities has also arisen in determining the exact age of Albania. Although different archaeological sites in Albania such as Dyrrahu (Durrës), Rozafa (near Shkodër), Apollonia (near Fier) and Butrinti (near Sarandë) are clear examples of Albania’s ancient past, an agreement in the field is missing. Stocker and Davis argue that Apollonia (an important Illyrian maritime port) was founded in 588 B.C. and not in the seventh century B.C. as claimed

⁷⁶ Pirro Misha, "Invention of a Nationalism: Myth and Amnesia" in Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers and Bernd Jorgen Fischer, *Albanian Identities: Myth and History*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002, 42.

⁷⁷ Vickers, 1.

⁷⁸ Fatmir Shehu, "The Influence of Islam on Albanian Culture", *Journal of Islam In Asia*, Special Issue, 1, March 2011, 398.

⁷⁹ Jacques, 28.

by the Albanian archaeologist Neritan Ceka.⁸⁰ If anything is clear, it is the fact that the inhabitants of Illyria spoke a different language from ancient Greeks—the Illyrian language, which according to Stocker and Davis, formed part of the old Indo-European family of languages.⁸¹

Drawing on the scholarly historiography of Albania, Morgan posits that Illyria was “situated between East and West” and, unlike Greece, it suffered at the hands of the Romans, Byzantines and Ottomans, in “one of the major fault-lines of global civilization over the following millennia”.⁸² Greek influence was superseded by Latin civilization after the third century BC. The Illyrian Wars against the Romans started in 229 BC and ended in 168 BC, after the Romans defeated Gentius, the last Illyrian king. As a result, the Illyricum Peninsula “were forced to submit to increased Romanization”.⁸³ The huge crises of the Roman Empire in the fourth century, and a slow collapse in the fifth century, transformed the Illyrian lands into a battleground, attacked and invaded by Huns, Visigoths and Ostrogoths. Slavs expanded into the South; and the unsuccessful siege of Thessaloniki in 586 did not stop them conquering and settling next to the Shkumbin River. These invasions weakened the Byzantine Empire until the beginning of the ninth century when the Byzantine Empire expanded again into the present-day Albanian territory and almost the entire Balkan Peninsula. Therefore, the invasion of the Albanian speaking lands did not come to an end as described by Malcom in his essay “Myths of Albanian National Identity” where he cites an earlier Albanian writer, Kostandin Cekrezi, who in 1919 considered the pre-Ottoman invasion of the Albanian-speaking lands by “...the Gauls, the Romans, the Goths, the Slavs, the Normans, the Venetians, and, finally the Turks” as continuous and never ending.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Sharon R. Stocker and Jack L. Davis, "The earliest history of Apollonia: Heroic reflections from beyond the acropolis", in *New Directions in Albanian Archaeology*, ed. Lorenc Bejko and Richard Hodges, Tirana: International Centre for Albanian Archeology, 2006, 85.

⁸¹ Rodger D. Woodard, "Language in ancient Europe: an introduction", in *The Ancient Languages of Europe*, ed. Rodger D. Woodard, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008, 7-8.

⁸² Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 5.

⁸³ Leonard Fox, *Kanuni i Lekë Dukagjinit [The Kanun of Lekë Dukagjini]*, Albanian text collected and arranged by Shtjefën Gjeçov New York: Gjonlekaj, 1989, xvi.

⁸⁴ Kostandin Cekrezi cited in Noel Malcom, "Myths of Albanian National Identity", in *Albanian Identities: Myth and History*, ed. Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers and Bernd J Fischer, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002, 80.

In the fourteenth century, when the Ottomans arrived, the Albanian-speaking people were organised in small groups or clans, that had blood relations in which Albanians identify as *fise*.⁸⁵ Hodgkinson describes these tribes as formed by “kinship [that] remained in principle”, while organised in groups that in “later times, if not earlier”, had a strong and capable military, which, as a unit, fought together.⁸⁶ The main two ethno-linguistic groups divided by the Shkumbin River—*gegs* (in the North) and *tosks* (in the South) are unique groupings that had Albanian language in common, whereas folk and cultural elements were different across the region.

The nature of the Albanian *fise* could not conform to the notion of ‘civilized society’ which according to Crone required a society to be gradually transformed through agrarianism and industrialisation,⁸⁷ but rather, as Jenkins discusses, they formed “primitive” organisations of people, grouped together in order to defend themselves from other groups⁸⁸. This is in line with Ernest Gellner’s idea that only civilised societies created their own polities.⁸⁹ The question then becomes how to understand those common bonds that at the end of the nineteenth century, forged the concept of the Albanian nation. Answering this question will help examine the Albanian nation and the origins of its existence, a concept which Bismarck to the detriment of the region was unable to grasp in 1878.⁹⁰

It is argued that Albanian tribes’ rules and legislations, such as the famous *Kanun i vjetër* [Old Kanun], which is known as *Kanuni i Lekë Dukagjinit* [The Kanun of Lekë Dukagjini], date back to ancient times. According to Fox who translated *Kanuni i Lekë Dukagjinit* [The Kanun of Lekë Dukagjini], written in Albanian by Shtjefën Gjeçov, this jurisdiction was widely used as “customary law” for the Dukagjin region and later, at the

⁸⁵ Miranda Vickers, *The Albanians : A Modern History*, London I. B. Tauris, 1999, 22.

⁸⁶ Harry Hodgkinson, *Scanderbeg*, London and New York: I.B.Taurus in association with The Centre for Albanian Studies, 2004, reprinted 2017, 15.

⁸⁷ Patricia Crone, *Pre-industrial Societies: Anatomy of the Pre-modern World*, Oxford: One World Publication, 2003, 1-10.

⁸⁸ Richard Jenkins, *Rethinking Ethnicity: Arguments and explorations*, London: SAGE publications, 2003, 16.

⁸⁹ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Blackwell: Oxford, 1983, 55.

⁹⁰ Vickers, *The Albanians : A Modern History*, 34. During the Berlin Congress in 1878, the Prussian Chancellor Otto von Bismarck expressed his scepticism regarding the Albanian question, which according to him, did not exist.

beginning of the fifteenth century, expanded to other Albanian principates.⁹¹ Although Roman occupation and its iron rule forced a temporary abandonment of the *kanun*, Fox argues, they could not stop this unwritten law from being “transmitted orally to succeeding generations”⁹² of Albanians. Neither were the Byzantines successful in abolishing it. As Hodgkinson posits:

The old laws of the mountains, though they endured longer than any other system of authority in Europe (and probably still command the loyalty of the older Albanian highlanders) remained essentially the law that great Greek tragedians grappled with and transformed: a law whose sanctions come into operation mechanically, like a natural phenomenon, without regard for the motive of the offender or the gravity or triviality of the offence.⁹³

According to Fox, while in North, the old *kanun* served as a control mechanism, regulating social and political life as “the only code of customary law used in Albania”, the centre and South Albania had their own customised legal codes, or different versions of *kanun*.⁹⁴ The influence of the Byzantine Empire in the South of the Albanian speaking lands was evident in a number of ways: the manner its legislation was implemented to resolve family disputes; Orthodox religion; music; myths; dresses; paintings; architecture; and the influence of the Greek language.

2.1.6 The origins of the concept of the Albanian unity under the Ottoman Empire

The existence of Albanians is not a surprise anymore, however their major support for the Ottoman-Turks is debatable. It can be argued that Albanians implemented strategies of resistance against the sometimes-perceived invincible enemy. This is shown in the ways Albanians resisted the Ottomans during different periods of their occupation. Although the concept of the Albanian nation itself is post-colonial, the League of Lezhë, or Alessio (known in Albanian as *Besëlidhja e Lezhës*), met on 2 March 1444 at the castle of Lezhë, which according to Hodgkinson, was in effect “the first national effort of military and political union”

⁹¹ Fox, xvi.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Hodgkinson, *Scanderbeg*, 4.

⁹⁴ Fox, xvi.

of Albanian speaking people against the Ottomans.⁹⁵ Gjergj Kastrioti, known as Skenderbeg, or Lord Alexander, was “a genius in waging guerrilla cavalry operations”, and under his leadership he kept the Ottomans (described as ‘the mightiest army of the world’) at bay for a quarter of a century.⁹⁶ The secessionist movement under Skenderbeg aroused the vigilance and mistrust of the Porte, as did Ali Pasha’s uprising at the beginning of the nineteenth century.⁹⁷ Following the assassination of Ali Pasha in 1822, the mistrust of Sultan for Albanians increased; punishing harshly those Albanians who continued to resist the Porte. In August 1830, he sent the Ottoman general Reshid Pasha to Bitola who invited 1,000 Albanian *beys* (landowners) in a military celebration-parade against Greek resistance. Reshid Pasha killed 500 of them⁹⁸, indicating a tightening of the control of the Porte. In the short term, this strategy succeeded in forcing further conversions to Islam and in a sense delaying an Albanian resistance against the Porte. However, according to Vickers, in the longer term, it paved the way for the beginning of the Albanian national movement.⁹⁹

Only in the second half of the nineteenth century, did Albanian nationalism increase.¹⁰⁰ As Vickers argues, that Albanians suffered severe punishment by the crisis of the Porte.¹⁰¹ During the second half of the nineteenth century, failed attempts at modernizing and re-organizing the Ottoman Empire¹⁰² coincided with a further weakening of the Porte due to their defeat in the war against Russia. The victorious Russians forced the Ottomans to sign the Treaty of San Stefano in March 1878. This Treaty forced the Ottomans to cede part of their Balkan

⁹⁵ Under the leadership of Skenderbeg, or Lord Alexander, nine chieftans of the main families of Albanian speaking lands: Musachi, Balsha, Arianiti, Thopia, the Montenegrin Crnojevic, Dukagjini, Zaharia, Spani and Dushmani united their political and military efforts against the Porte. See Hodgkinson, *Scanderbeg*, 74.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁹⁷ Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 10.

⁹⁸ Zickel and Iwaskiw, 15-6.

⁹⁹ Vickers, *The Albanians : A Modern History*, 25.

¹⁰⁰ Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 11.

¹⁰¹ From 1826 until 1877, the Porte made a major effort in reforming its empire, which had been precipitously declining its expansion since the 17th century. Despite efforts of these reforms, which had an aim to change the entire Ottoman society, insufficient political commitment led to bureaucratic behaviour inconsistent with modernization, and thus, predestined failure of these reforms. See Vickers, *The Albanians : A Modern History*, 21; Walter F. Weiker, "The Ottoman Bureaucracy: Modernization and Reform", *Administrative Science Quarterly*, vol. 13, no. 3, December 1968, 451-70.

¹⁰² Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 11.

territory to be distributed between Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro and Greece. Some scholars agree that this “fuelled the rise of Albanian nationalism”, as there were fears that the “lands they inhabited would be partitioned”.¹⁰³ Therefore, Charles and Jelavich believe “Albanians were forced to act” against their neighbours and not the Ottoman government.¹⁰⁴ Once again, Albania suffered at the hands of more powerful nations. While the Treaty of San Stefano “created a large independent Bulgarian state and enlarged Serbia and Montenegro” at the Ottoman expense, Hall argues that none of emerging Balkan states were happy with the new borders created by the Treaty of San Stefano.¹⁰⁵ Less happy were Albanian speaking people who suffered from both, the Porte and their neighbors.

Six months later, the Prussian Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, who offered to chair as an “honest broker”, initiated the Treaty of Berlin.¹⁰⁶ However, this Treaty further fractured already tense relationships and alliances in the region. One example was the fact that the Treaty of Berlin failed to recognise ethnic Albanians and reversed the recognition of Macedonia within the larger Bulgaria, returning its territory to the Ottoman Empire.¹⁰⁷ Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro, and Serbia “perceived in the Treaty of Berlin a barrier to their national aspirations”, therefore, after 1878, “all the Balkan states strove to overcome the Berlin settlement and realize national unity”.¹⁰⁸

Bismarck’s famous proclamation in 1878 “that an Albanian nation did not exist”¹⁰⁹ terrified Albanians, who had been taught by bitter experience not to trust Russia in their plans of how to end the Ottoman rule and ‘aggrandize’ themselves with territories of Macedonia,

¹⁰³ Zickel and Iwaskiw, 17; Barbara Jelavich, *The Ottoman Empire, the Great Powers, and the Straits Question: 1870-1887*, Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1973, 111-6; Skendi, 31-110.

¹⁰⁴ Charles and Barbara Jelavich, "The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920", in *A History of East Central Europe*, ed. Peter F. Sugar and Donald W. Treadgold, Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1977, 224.

¹⁰⁵ Hall, 2.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 3.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 5.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 3.

¹⁰⁹ Zickel and Iwaskiw, 18.

Epirus, Thrace and Albania.¹¹⁰ At best, there was a real danger that Russia was going to encourage Albania's neighbors, Serbia and Greece to partition all Albanian-speaking territories, considered Ottoman domains at the time. As Wasti discusses, the Albanians understood this danger only too well once they realised "the beginning of the end of the Empire, at least in its European territories".¹¹¹

2.1.7 Stages the Albanian speaking lands were occupied by the Ottomans

The Ottomans occupied Albania for a period of more than five centuries and their influence is undeniably profound. There are conflicting opinions regarding the occupation of Albanian-speaking territories by the Ottomans. The majority of Turks believe that the Ottoman occupation was welcomed and thus, beneficial to the Albanians, whereas other scholars think that Albanians consider their country to have been oppressed and held back during the time of this occupation.¹¹² The particular nuances of the relationship changed with the different stages of the Ottoman Empire. Through these stages the Porte changed policies based on the will of the Sultan, internal and external developments, the influence of the Great Powers, a number of wars and the dynamics of Balkan nationalism. Analysing the Ottoman policy shifts is not the objective of this thesis, rather the way in which the Ottoman Turks affected people's lives in the Albanian speaking lands during various stages of the Empire may still have existing effects over Albanian identity.

The main contribution to the Albanian literacy regarding the Ottoman period has been that of *rilindja* writers. One of the main *Rilindja* figures, Sami Frashëri identifies three major

¹¹⁰ Christophoros Psilos, "Albanian Nationalism and Unionist Ottomanization 1908 to 1912", *Mediterranean Quarterly*, vol. 17, no. 3, Summer 2006, 41.

¹¹¹ Syed Tanvir Wasti, "Three Ottoman Pashas at the Congress of Berlin, 1878", *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 52, no. 6, 2016, 938.

¹¹² Enis Sulstarova, *Në pasqyrën e Oksidentit: Studime dhe artikuj [In the mirror of Occident: Studies and articles]*, author's translation, Skopje: Logos-A, 2010, 354; Klodiana Beshku, "The Albanian relationship with Greece and Turkey: Perceptions and Realities in the framework of the Foreign Policy Partnership", *Working Paper*, February 2015: 5, accessed 26 July 2018, https://www.academia.edu/17005495/_The_Albanian_relationship_with_Greece_and_Turkey._Perceptions_and_Realities_in_the_framework_of_the_Foreign_Policy_Partnership_?auto=download.

periods in which the co-existence of Albanians in the Ottoman Empire significantly differed.¹¹³ In his book titled *Shqipëria – Ç'ka qënë, ç'është e ç'do të bëhetë?* (*Albania – What it was, what it is and what it will become*), first published in 1899, Frashëri considers the permanent return of Skenderbeg to Albania in 1443 until his death in 1468 as the first period. Frashëri views this period as a time when Albanians 'protected Europe' from the advance of the Ottomans: "All European governments of that time had hope on Skanderbeg and expected to be rescued by the Albanians".¹¹⁴ The second period, according to Frashëri, lasted from Skenderbeg's death until the middle of the nineteenth century. During this lengthy period Albanians became more integrated into the Ottoman Empire—progressing into the high ranks of the Ottoman government, which included "more than 25 Albanians who served as great viziers" (prime ministers of the Sultan).¹¹⁵ Along with the pre-Ottoman period, this is the longest and less well researched by scholars and historians. The third period of the Albanian speaking people under the Ottoman Empire is known as the Albanian Awakening (or *Rilindja*); it began in the second half of the nineteenth century and lasted up until the declaration of the Albanian Independence in 1912. For Frashëri, this period was characterized by a deep crisis in the entire Ottoman Empire, but this time "the dearest price was paid by Albanians".¹¹⁶ He states:

the Albanians long were comrades of the Turks and not their slaves, but now they are suffering under great oppression and are being beaten and trampled underfoot more than the rest. If this be the case, why are the other nations endeavouring to throw off the heavy burden, while the Albanians are struggling to maintain it? Do they not see that they are leaning against a wall which is collapsing, and which will crush and bury them?¹¹⁷

¹¹³ Bülent Bilmez, ed. *We, the People: Politics of National Peculiarity in Southeastern Europe*, ed. Diana Mishkova, "Shemseddin Sami Frashëri (1850-1904): Contributing to the Construction of Albanian and Turkish Identities" (Centre European University Press, 2013), 341.

¹¹⁴ Sami Frashëri *Shqipëria: ç'ka qënë, ç'është dhe ç'do të bëhetë?* [*Albania: what it was, what it is and what will become*], p. 34, in Mehmeti, 41.

¹¹⁵ Frashëri *Shqipëria: ç'ka qënë, ç'është dhe ç'do të bëhetë?* [*Albania: what it was, what it is and what will become*], 34, in *ibid.*

¹¹⁶ Sami Frashëri, *Shqipëria: ç'ka qënë, ç'është dhe ç'do të bëhetë?* [*Albania: what it was, what it is and what it will become*], Tirana: Mësonjëtorja e parë, 1999, 70-1.

¹¹⁷ Frashëri *Shqipëria: ç'ka qënë, ç'është dhe ç'do të bëhetë?* [*Albania: what it was, what it is and what it will become*], 70-71, in Mehmeti, 41.

While Frashëri's question of lateness of the Albanian nationalism is astute, what is missing from first stage is the period when the Ottomans entered Albania until the return of Skenderbeg in 1443. This period is also lacking from Albanian historiography, and history textbooks of Hoxha have merely depicted the Ottomans as conquerors; entering Albania to their own decision.

2.1.8 What do we know about the Ottoman occupation of the Albanian speaking lands?

As Winnifrith argues, it has been proposed and seems historically accurate that the feudal lord of Durrës, Karl Topia, invited the Ottoman Turks into what constitutes today's Albania, to assist him in his conflict with the Balsha family.¹¹⁸ After five years of attacks from troops led by Karl Topia, in 1367, the Duchess of Durrës, Joanna of Anjou and her first husband, Louis of Navarre, stepped down. Jacques argues, Topia, who claimed the title of *Princeps Albaniae*, ruled the regions of Durrës, Elbasan, Peqin, Krujë, Mokra and Gora, as far as the Lake Ohrid, which today represents central Albania, located on both sides of Via Egnatia.¹¹⁹ In 1370, Topia attacked the powerful family of Muzaka in the South and conquered their plain lands situated between the Shkumbin and Seman rivers. This forced Muzaka to ally with another powerful family, Balsha, whose army was led by Balsha II. In 1385, the troops of Muzaka and Balsha II captured the city of Durrës in a surprise attack. Topia immediately called for help. The Ottomans first entered the Albanian speaking lands through Via Egnatia and crushed the Balsha army at the battle of Savra on 18 September 1385. Balsha II was killed and this defeat introduced a new era for the Albanian speaking lands, as the fifteenth century historian and priest Marin Barleti write:

Upon his death, the barbarians set off to tread upon Epirus for the first time and plunder it. From that moment, they [the Ottomans] took over Kastoria, Berat and Kruja...¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Winnifrith, 77.

¹¹⁹ Jacques, 169.

¹²⁰ Barleti, 60.

Other Albanian lords and powerful families soon became *vassals* of the victorious Ottomans, as did local Serbs after the defeat at the Battle of Kosovo (*Polje*) in 1389. Although Balkan forces led by King Lazar of Serbia united in the battle of Kosovo Polje in 1389, the Ottomans crushed the united Balkan army, resulting in the loss of their leader, King Lazar of Serbia. The same night the battle ended, Sultan Murat I was also assassinated. For Albanian and other Balkan principates, Kosovo Polje had a ‘domino’ effect that resulted in further capitulation to the Sultan Murat II and later to his son, Sultan Mehmed, who was named ‘the Conqueror’. Although many Albanians fought and died next to Serbs, including the feudal lord Teodor I Muzaka, Serbian nationalism appropriated Kosovo Polje and mythicised this battle as a spiritual doctrine; using it to describe themselves as defenders of European Christianity against ‘the other’ Asian-barbarian-Turks.¹²¹ According to Payton, initially Albanians who converted to Islam and, later on, all ethnic Albanians regardless of their religion were viewed by Serbian nationalism as “others”.¹²² Therefore, the Kosovo Polje battle marked a turning point in the relations between Albanians and Serbs, and entered history via Serbian folklore, songs and myths, which were “...enriched with nationalistic tones only in the nineteenth century...”.¹²³ One of the central tenets of Serbian and Balkan’s nationalism, which considers Albanians as Turks, is not only based on a superficial analysis of equating Albanians as Muslims and thus Turks, but is also misleading and unfounded as, under the Ottoman rule, ethnic Albanians experienced the same level of sufferings as other Balkan ethnicities.

Charles and Barbara Jelavich emphasise that Albania was identified as one of the “most backward”¹²⁴ areas of the Ottoman Empire. Throughout the Ottoman period, the majority of Albanian speaking people – especially peasants, lived within the “limits of what their rural homeland could support”.¹²⁵ On the other hand, the national tradition in Balkan historiography tended to equate Albanians with Turks, which for Anscombe is “incomprehensible,

¹²¹ Paulin Kola, *The Search for Greater Albania* London: C.Hurst & Co. Ltd, 2003, 4.

¹²² Jr James R. Payton, "Ottoman Millet, Religious Nationalism, and Civil Society: Focus on Kosovo", *Religion in Eastern Europe*, vol. XXVI, no. 1, February 2006, 22.

¹²³ Kola, 4.

¹²⁴ Jelavich, in *A History of East Central Europe*, 223.

¹²⁵ Frederick F. Anscombe, ed. *The Ottoman Balkans: 1750-1830* ed. Frederick F. Anscombe, "Albanians and Mountain Bandits" (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2006), 93.

incorrigible, intolerable”.¹²⁶ Although many Muslim Albanian leaders were part of the Ottoman privileged strata, it is not at all clear whether the entire Albanian speaking populations accepted the Ottoman rule. We have to consider the influence of the Ottoman Turks over Albanian identity and its culture in a historical context.

On the other hand, the view that Albanian culture came under siege from the Ottomans is also misleading. It will be rather instructive to explore that the arrival of the Ottoman-Turks, and thus their language, culture and religion in Albanian speaking lands, brought about more confusion for the existing contested Albanian identity. As Fox argues, the Ottomans fostered a new religion along with Turkish customary law that was heavily based on *Sharia* (Islamic law)¹²⁷, which will be discussed later in this study. The ways in which the Islamic doctrine and its way of life slowly blended with that of the Albanians to create a mix of culture and identity that was neither Roman, nor Byzantine needs more refinement to be understood. The arrival of the Ottomans in Albania inevitably introduced terminology and elements of Turkish culture into all spheres of the Albanian life such as military, administration, language and religion. Nor can one ignore the Turkish culinary tradition that was incorporated into the cuisine of Albania, and other Balkan countries, from a simple Turkish coffee to *dollma*, *shishkebab*, *qofte*, or even the turko-Byzantine *burek* and so on – culinary elements that are still present in today’s Albanian and Balkan society. Therefore, thorough analysis of this influence, and its positive and negative effects, will be the focus of the discussion of the fourth chapter.

2.1.9 Turkey and Albanian Islam

Unlike their Greek and Serbian neighbours, the Albanians did not have real attachment to their Christian religion since the Middle Ages. They embraced religion according to the advancements of Roman or Byzantine Empires. The process of shifting religion in Albania happened to both *gegs* and *tosks*. Vickers and Pettifer paraphrased Skendi who mentioned the case of Prince Gjon Kastrioti (Skenderbeg’s father) changing his religion several times from “Catholic as an ally of Venice and turned Orthodox as an ally of Stefan Lazarevic of Serbia”.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Ibid., 87.

¹²⁷ Fox, xvi.

¹²⁸ Vickers and Pettifer, 96.

It is well known that the Albanian national hero, Skenderbeg, was born into an Orthodox family, educated as a Muslim, and died as a Catholic. Therefore, since the late Middle Ages, "...the Albanian feudal lords—often followed by their populations—espoused Catholicism when the West was in the ascendant"¹²⁹ and embraced Orthodoxy at times when Byzantium prevailed. Thus, the process of alignment with the religion of whoever was in power at the time often occurred.

Malcom points out that religion was not an element considered crucial by Albanian tribes since Illyrian times and "...did not greatly matter for Albanians".¹³⁰ The same scholar argues that Albanian identity existed independently and is rooted in their Illyrian past.¹³¹ Another fact to consider is the absence of an Albanian Kingdom which might have unified Albanian speaking people under a specific religion. From the defeat of the last Illyrian Kingdom by Romans in 168 BC, until the arrival of the Ottomans at the end of the fourteenth century, Albanians had been divided into tribes and clans and religion mattered less compared to other issues crucial for survival. Analysing the Islamisation of Albanians, Jacques points out that "in Albania the unique internal religious disunity, and the peculiarity decadent character of Christianity greatly weakened their defences".¹³² Thus, according to Jacques, had the attachment of the Albanian speaking peoples to their religion been stronger, they might have resisted conversion to Islam and might have retained a different identity into the twenty first century.

The process of Islamization in Albania is highly debated and controversial. It needs closer attention as voluntary and forced conversions often happened simultaneously.¹³³ As Sugar discusses, the phenomenon of religious change occurred before, during and after the Ottoman occupation.¹³⁴ Along with shifting their religion to Islam, Albanians also shifted from Muslims to Christian-Orthodoxy. Karalis argues that "the project of historical Christianity" in

¹²⁹ Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 8.

¹³⁰ Malcom, in *Albanian Identities: Myth and History*, 87.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Jacques, 240.

¹³³ Albert Doja, "The Politics of Religion in the Reconstruction of Identities: The Albanian Situation", *Critique of Anthropology*, vol. 20, no. 4, December 2000, 435.

¹³⁴ Peter F. Sugar, *Southeastern Europe under Ottoman Rule, 1354-1804*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977, 52.

Greece, which began in 1453 with the fall of Constantinople, created new opportunities for the Eastern Christendom; culminating with the Greek national uprising in 1821.¹³⁵ However, according to Karalis, following this revolution, the Greek “national identity did not really mean religious affiliation”, as both Christian and Muslim Albanians, fought the Ottomans side by side with Greeks.¹³⁶ Misha found that during the uprising of Greeks in 1821-1830, many Albanians underwent a process of Hellenization, a process that was accelerated by their participation in the War for Independence of Greece. Their participation, Misha argues, played an important role as they led a substantial faction of the resistance to The Porte during this war.¹³⁷ However, while some Albanians converted back to Christian Orthodoxy, more converted to Islam. Following on the argument of both Karalis and Misha, a couple of points need to be highlighted in the Albanian context. Firstly, why the ‘project of the historical Christianity’ did not reach Albanian speaking lands? And secondly, why Albanians fought for Greece and not for Albanian Independence? Although answering both questions is not the aim of this thesis, analysing the role of religion during the Albanian Awakening (*rilindja*) period, a time when foundations of the Albanian national identity were crafted, may help to explore Albanian identity.

It might be speculation, but the Albanian *rilindja* leaders knew that religion would have been problematic to unite Albanians in their struggle to create their nation. As a result, little importance of religion prompted the Albanian *rilindja* leaders to place religion second to ‘Albanianism’. The famous poem of Pashko Vasa “the Albanian’s faith is Albanianism”¹³⁸ was a call to all Albanians to protect their forefathers’ motherland, regardless of their religion. However, it is inaccurate to claim that the *rilindja* movement was anti-religious. One example is the position of the influential *rilindja* leader and writer, Naim Frashëri, who commanded all Albanians to have one belief in God; claiming that God cannot be that of unattached religions,

¹³⁵ Vrasidas Karalis, "Greek Christianity after 1453", in *The blackwell companion to Eastern Chritianity*, ed. Ken Parry, Malden and Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010, 156-84.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 166.

¹³⁷ Glenny Misha, *The Balkans 1804-1999: Nationalism, War, and the Great Powers*, London: Granta Books, 1999, 25.

¹³⁸ Pashko Vasa, "Oh Albania, poor Albania", in *Albanian Literature: a Short History*, ed. R. Elsie trans first published in English, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2005, 82-8.

but that of “pantheism, included and unified as it is into the nature and universe”.¹³⁹ Therefore, the matter requires more attention to understand conceptualisation of religion by *rilindja* nationalist leaders, and the way it affected the future Albanian identity. Analyses of religion and its interaction with nationalism in forging Albanian identity at the end of the Ottoman rule will assist to better understand the nation building process and Albanian identity.

Albanian identity issues are covered at length in this thesis. Threads are interlaced throughout, and issues such as Albanian identity, nationalism, culture, language, religion and traditions will be returned to numerous times. However, a broad-brush definition that does not appreciate the volatile, complicated and manifold facets of Albanian identity today would only be counterproductive. Rather, a narrowing of the focus of Albanian identity issues and, indeed, debates with regard to their heritage and similarities with regard to Turkish culture and identity will be helpful in setting the scene for this research.

2.2 Turkish national identity in the post Ottoman era

2.2.1 Introduction

This second part of the chapter will briefly discuss the contested Turkish national identity since the creation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923. The discussion will emphasise controversial attempts by Turkey’s leaders to abandon the Ottoman ideology and create the Republic of Turkey as a modern secular nation-state. The struggle of modern Turkey to abandon the Islamic ideology as part of the state, have created tensions with Islamic sympathisers who felt Ottoman nostalgia. It will provide a strong foundational knowledge in order to initiate the debate about the contested Albanian identity and the historical influence of Ottoman Turks that in the twenty-first century, may continue to complicate Albania’s Euro-Atlantic orientation.

2.2.2 Contested post-Ottoman Turkish identity: Escaping the East, but not part of the West

¹³⁹ Enika Abazi and Albert Doja, "Further Considerations on the Politics of Religious Discourse: Naim Frashëri and his Pantheism in the Course of Nineteenth-Century Albanian Nationalism", *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 49, no. 6, 2013, 870.

Turkish national identity is no less contested than Albanian identity and since the creation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, according to Yavuz, Turkish national identity is one of the most contested in the world.¹⁴⁰ Turkey is geographically located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia. Debates about Turkish cultural belongings has engaged scholars in discussions to whether Turkey is an Islamic or Secular, Western, Eastern, a bridge between the Western European and Middle Eastern civilisations¹⁴¹, or a bridge “between East and West”.¹⁴² Mango thinks that Turks have a strong sense of national identity, although simultaneously “experiencing a crisis of identity, torn between East and West”.¹⁴³ The Turkish elite sees Turkish national identity as being part of Western culture but, according to Huntington, the “West refuses to accept Turkey as such”.¹⁴⁴ This is because, as Huntington notes, Turkey is culturally a Middle Eastern Muslim society, or what he describes as a “torn” country that has the opportunity to become the leader in the region; “involving seven countries from the borders of Greece to those of China”.¹⁴⁵

While Turkey’s Ottoman past has marked Turks as Easterners, a new Republican era began to embrace the famous sentence of the late Ottoman intellectual, Abdullah Cevdet, who stated: “Civilization means European civilization”.¹⁴⁶ The post-Ottoman Turkish elite praised European civilisation, which, following Cevdet’s thought, “must be imported [to Turkey] with both its roses and thorns”¹⁴⁷. The ‘father’ of modern Turkey and the President of the first Republic of Turkey—Mustafa Kemal Atatürk—initiated stringent reforms that aimed to secularise Turkish polity and society.¹⁴⁸ Atatürk’s pragmatic reforms aimed to separate the state from religion in a similar way to what occurred in Western polities. Herper argues that

¹⁴⁰ Yavuz, 19.

¹⁴¹ İnalçik.

¹⁴² Heper, 16 May 2004.

¹⁴³ Andrew Mango, *The Turks Today*, Great Britain: John Murray, 2004, 4.

¹⁴⁴ Samuel P Huntington, "The clash of civilizations?", *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 72, no. 3, Summer 1993, 42.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Dankwart A. Rustow, *Turkey: America's Forgotten Ally*, New York: Council for Foreign Relations, 1987, 14.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Heper, 16 May 2004.

the abolition of the Caliphate, replacement of religious courts with secular counterparts, introduction of a Western-style education system, substitution of the traditional Arabic-Islamic scripts with the Latin alphabet, and adoption of the European theatre, music and law codes from different European countries aimed at “*reformation* rather than the *renaissance* of Islam”.¹⁴⁹ Atatürk, attempted to bring Western culture closer to Turkey. However, his legacy was challenged and questioned soon after his death in 1938. In the post-Ottoman era, religion has divided Turkish society into two political groups: those who subscribe to a secular, republican view, known as “Kemalists” and those who side with “Islamic neo-Ottomanists”.¹⁵⁰ For Yavuz, from 1947 to 1974, Turkey’s foreign policy was driven by the new “statist elite”¹⁵¹ who tried to split the Ottoman era from the modern-day Republican Turkey; portraying the former as founded on obsolete Islamic ideology. However, this scholar argues, the policy of “disengagement” with Islam created a considerable gap between the general populace and the Turkish elite.¹⁵² Perhaps the radical reform of Islam, in such a short period of time, meant changing everyday life, customs and laws was a very ambitious task.

Another characteristic of Turkey’s new elite was its aspiration to be part of Europe—a decision that, Mango argues, was reinforced after 1 December 1964 when Turkey became an associate member of the European Economic Community (EEC, later EC, and more recently EU).¹⁵³ During the Cold War, the Turkish political elite adapted to the international system of two poles¹⁵⁴; receiving NATO membership in 1952, which ended Turkey’s long struggle to be portrayed as anti-European. Analysing the Turkish foreign policy, Erickson discusses positive relations with Western Europe and the US, which became temporarily strained in 1974 when Turkey invaded and occupied Northern Cyprus¹⁵⁵ ultimately leading to economic and military sanctions against Turkey. The US ban on the provision of spare parts and logistics support for

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 5.

¹⁵⁰ Taspinar, 28.

¹⁵¹ Yavuz, 27.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Mango, 258.

¹⁵⁴ Yavuz, 27.

¹⁵⁵ Erickson, 26.

previous armaments sold to Turkey, and for Erickson, Turkey's first coup¹⁵⁶ in 1960, diminished the capacity of the Turkish military.¹⁵⁷ The US embargo ended in 1980, when the US realised the importance of Turkey as a secular and pro-western Islamic state.¹⁵⁸ However, according to Erickson, six years were enough for the Turkish economy to deteriorate, generating much social unrest. A second military coup occurred in 1980; relative normality was re-established in 1985, and since then, the Turkish state has been in the hands of "conservative, moderate, and Islamic parties".¹⁵⁹

Since 2001, when the current Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan founded the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (AKP), which came to power in 2002, the Turkish political and religious orientation started to shift. AKP was established on the foundations of a moderate Islamic ideology and united a number of existing conservative Parties. It was successful in five consecutive elections, in 2002, 2007, 2011, 2015 and Presidential elections in 2018. While AKP seems to be Turkey's preferred Party in the twenty-first century, attempts to re-introduce Islam as the foundation of Turkish society, remains a constant in Turkish political life.

2.2.3 Islamism in modern Turkish politics and neo-Ottomanism of the twenty-first century

Islam is an important link with the Ottoman past when Turkey enjoyed relative prestige. In the twenty-first century, a new Turkish middle class, close to the Turkish government, is embracing Islam as an ideological tool in order to craft a new Turkish national identity. The concepts of "neo-Ottomanism" and "Islamism" in contemporary Turkish politics are associated with the Islamist AKP. In November 2002, AKP secured control of the Turkish parliament allowing Erdoğan to become prime minister the following March.¹⁶⁰ Soli Özel considers a

¹⁵⁶ "Timeline: A history of Turkish coups", *AlJazeera*, 4 April 2012, accessed 23 March 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/europe/2012/04/20124472814687973.html>.

¹⁵⁷ Erickson, 26.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 27.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Soli Özel, "Turkey Faces West", *The Wilson Quarterly*, vol. 31, no. 1, Winter 2007, 21.

‘paradox’¹⁶¹ the fact that Turkey is being led by the (AKP), a Party that in appearance seems to rush toward reforms and the EU, while going back to discover values of Islam and the days of the Ottoman glory. Others such as Ömer Taspınar believe that Turkey is not aiming to resurrect the Ottoman Empire, but is rather extrapolating Turkish influence in a way that bolsters Turkey as “a bridge between East and West, a Muslim nation, a secular state, a democratic political system, and a capitalistic economic force”.¹⁶² The declaration of the Turkish Head of Parliament, Ismail Kahraman, in April 2016 stating that Turkey is a “...Muslim country and this is why we need an Islamic constitution” was immediately criticised by Opposition Leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu who argued that the ‘father’ of modern Turkey, Atatürk, built the modern state based on laicism and thus, religious freedom.¹⁶³

Erdoğan’s centre-right wing AKP, is an Islamic Party that is aiming to align Turkey to the Middle-East; abandoning the West. It is questionable whether Turkey has achieved any separation of religion and state, as the AKP and its Islamic ideology, seems to be the preferred choice for the Turkish people. The alliance between the AKP and the far-right Nationalist Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*, MHP), regarding the 2019 presidential elections, was secured in February 2018¹⁶⁴; further supporting Erdoğan’s rule in the future. During the parliamentary and presidential elections in June 2018, the AKP lost its sole majority in the assembly after nearly 16 years; having to rely now on the support of its nationalist MHP allies, who outperformed expectations to win more than 11 percent of the vote.¹⁶⁵ As an extreme-right party, MHP espouses a mix of nationalism and scepticism towards the West¹⁶⁶, which is now

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Taspınar, 3.

¹⁶³ "Turqi, kryeparlamentari: Kushtetutë islamike, s'na nevojitet laicismi [Turkey, The head of Parliament: Islamic constitution, we don't need laicism]", author's translation, *Top Channel*, 26 April 2016 accessed 19 September 2018, <http://top-channel.tv/2016/04/26/turqi-kryeparlamentari-kushtetute-islamike-sna-nevojitet-laicismi/>.

¹⁶⁴ Ali Kucukgocmen, "Erdogan's AKP says to ally with nationalists for 2019 elections", *Reuters*, 22 February 2018, accessed 6 October 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-election-regulation/erdogans-akp-says-to-ally-with-nationalists-for-2019-elections-idUSKCN1G52DP>.

¹⁶⁵ "Turkish opposition parties say election alliance no longer necessary", 5 July 2018, accessed 5 October 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-politics-opposition/turkish-opposition-parties-say-election-alliance-no-longer-necessary-idUSKBN1JU1X4>.

¹⁶⁶ Ali Kucukgocmen, "Erdogan's AKP says to ally with nationalists for 2019 elections", 22 February 2018, accessed 6 October 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-election-regulation/erdogans-akp-says-to-ally-with-nationalists-for-2019-elections-idUSKCN1G52DP>.

added to the Islamic ideology of the AKP. Erdoğan, however, expanded new powers under a powerful executive presidency narrowly approved in the 2017 referendum.¹⁶⁷ The opposition group led by the centre-left wing of secular Kemalists or the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, CHP), allied before 2018 elections with the pro-Europeans—*Iyi Parti* (Iyi Party), and the Sunni far-right-conservative—*Saadet Partisi* (Saadet Party).¹⁶⁸ The pro-Kurdish Peoples Democratic Party (HDP) was not part of an alliance and earned 11.7 percent of votes to become the assembly's second largest opposition party after the CHP.¹⁶⁹ Opposition parties have not been able to halt Erdoğan's march. As Aksoy argues, criticism continuous to rise regarding Erdoğan's move towards abandoning the West and aligning Turkey with the Middle East by using sectarian politics to help him to turn himself into a regional leader, a sort of "new caliph", or the leader of the Islamic world.¹⁷⁰

Nonetheless, it is not clear whether domestically, Turkish people voted AKP due to its Islamic orientation or whether the majority of Turks support Erdoğan's position towards what the Turkish government considers 'Kurdish terrorists'. Erdoğan's decision to position Turkish's foreign policy against the Syrian regime of Bashar Al Assad, the self-declared 'Islamic State' (ISIS) and Kurds of Syria that helped to defeat ISIS is contentious. As Brown argues, for Turkey, the Kurds are a big "imbroglio"¹⁷¹, despite the fact that Syrian Kurds demonstrated to be the best coalition ally in fighting ISIS on the ground. Republican Kemalists also see Kurdish ethnicity in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria as a threat to the Republic of Turkey, whereas, according to Taspinar, the 'Neo-Ottomanist' approach of the AKP, "seeks to rise above this Kemalist paradigm"¹⁷²; portraying a sort of Muslim "macro-identity among populations that share the Ottoman Islamic heritage".¹⁷³ The reality on the ground is different:

¹⁶⁷ "Turkish opposition parties say election alliance no longer necessary", 5 July 2018, accessed 5 October 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-politics-opposition/turkish-opposition-parties-say-election-alliance-no-longer-necessary-idUSKBN1JU1X4>.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Murat Aksoy, "Erdoğan's Atatürkian visions", *Today's Zaman on line*, 10 November 2015, accessed 12 November 2015, http://www.todayszaman.com/op-ed_erdogans-ataturkian-visions_403887.html.

¹⁷¹ James Brown, "The Turkish Imbroglio: Its Kurds", *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science: Small Wars*, 541, September, 1995, 116.

¹⁷² Taspinar, 3.

¹⁷³ Yavuz, 40.

Kurdish people who also practice Islam are considered second-class citizens in Turkey. Turkey's aim is to stop every attempt for recognition of the Republic of Kurdistan, to avoid its secession from Turkey. Although the assimilation of ethnic Kurds in Turkey has failed¹⁷⁴, according to Schoon, persisting economic underdevelopment and "longstanding social inequality"¹⁷⁵ might further exacerbate the ethnic Kurd's relationship with Turks. While the relationship of Turkish national identity and the issue of an independent Kurdish state are beyond the scope of this thesis, this issue may be another case to further explore the concept of ethnic groupings as the basis for the formation of nation states. However, the Kurdish struggle can also rise a question: Why is Turkey trying to protect their Muslims-brothers in the Western Balkans and fight Kurdish Muslims in Turkey?

2.2.4 Turkey and the EU

Turkey is aiming to get closer to Europe and thus, the Balkans. On the other hand, Erdoğan and his AKP are convincing the Turkish people that the EU is not the only alternative. Erdoğan's ambition to become the regional Muslim leader may influence the EU to reject Turkey's application for accession. In return, Europe's reluctance to accept Turkey as a EU member, may generate more "Islamically" shaped neo-Ottomanist foreign policies in the future".¹⁷⁶ This may shift Turkey's foreign policy position towards Asia, the Middle East and perhaps an attempt to drag the Western Balkans back to the East, enabling Turkey to become the regional "hegemon".¹⁷⁷ The deadlock between Turkey and the EU is at a critical stage. The EU is waiting for Turkey to resolve its issues with Cyprus and quickly progress with the EU recommendations on issue, such as corruption, free media and human rights. Nevertheless, the question to be asked is whether Turkey will wait endlessly for Europe's decision to include it as a member state or whether it will redirect its energy toward the alternative of becoming a regional leader. Membership of the European Union represents not only an aspiration but also

¹⁷⁴ Brown, 129.

¹⁷⁵ Eric W. Schoon, "The Paradox of Legitimacy: Resilience, Successes, and the Multiple Identities of the Kurdistan Worker's Party in Turkey", *Social Problems Advance Access*, May 4, 2015, 17.

¹⁷⁶ Yavuz, 41.

¹⁷⁷ Erickson, 44.

a challenge for Turkey.¹⁷⁸ Although Europe remains the main goal for Turkish foreign policy, Erdoğan has used the alternative as a political bargaining tool.¹⁷⁹ Since 2015, Turkey's leverage towards the EU has increased due to Europe's difficulty in accommodating large numbers of refugees fleeing ISIS and Syrian war. Turkey is a crucial player for the NATO forces using the proximity of Turkish bases to defeat ISIS and Syrian regime. Secondly, so far, Turkey has received the largest number of Syrian refugees in Europe; functioning as a buffer zone for Europe.

Ultimately, as Taspinar mentions, it is becoming clear that "Turkey is deeply polarized over its Muslim, secular, and national identities".¹⁸⁰ It is argued by Turkish opposition and Western media that the last Turkish coup d'état, in July 2016, was organised by Erdoğan, trying to shift the attention from the corruption scandal of 2013¹⁸¹, whereas the Turkish government insists that the coup was organised and led by the Turkish cleric in exile, Fethullah Gülen.¹⁸² At the beginning of the twenty-first century, politics in Turkey are marked by titanic contradictions. If anything is clear, Erdoğan's authoritarianism goes hand in hand with Islamic ideology and will be challenging not only Turkey, but the entire region.

2.2.5 Contribution to literature

The question of Albanian identity is not a new area of scholarly debate as the literature demonstrates. Debate and controversy around the Ottoman legacy and its influence on Albanian identity across the Balkans is an open question with many dimensions. The centre of this debate has been the five-century love-hate relationship between the Ottoman-rulers and Albanians living in the Western Balkan region. However, after the decline of the Ottoman

¹⁷⁸ Mango, 4.

¹⁷⁹ "Erdoğan: Turqia bën edhe pa BE-në [Erdoğan: Turkey can do without EU]", author's translation, *Top Channel*, 12 July 2017, accessed 2 May 2018, <http://m.top-channel.tv/lajme/artikull.php?id=359400&homepage>.

¹⁸⁰ Taspinar, 2.

¹⁸¹ In 2013, Turkish opposition made officially anticorruption allegations against government high officials, including President Erdoğan and his son Bilal. See for instance Mustafa Garbuz, *The long winter: Turkish politics after the corruption scandal*, *Rethink Paper 15*, Institute Washington DC, May 2014, 3.

¹⁸² Peter Beaumont, "Fethullah Gülen: who is the man Turkey's president blames for coup attempt?", *The Guardian*, 16 July 2016, accessed 13 March 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/16/fethullah-gulen-who-is-the-man-blamed-by-turkeys-president-for-coup-attempt>.

Empire and the creation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, scholarly analyses of a further continuation of bilateral relations between Turkey and Albania are very limited. Turkey and Albania during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries has continued to cooperate in various economic, political, diplomatic, cultural and defence levels, however, this has been overlooked by scholarly analyses. This research will contribute to the existing literature with bringing closer to the English reader debates that surround Albanian identity by embedding it in the broader analysis of the bilateral relations between Turkey and Albania, with a focus on the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In doing so, this thesis will attempt to address many of the misapprehensions and stereotypes regarding Albanians and Albanian identity that continue to exist, but also offer a contribution to the literature and policy makers of how to better envisage Albanian identity in the future. The thesis will attempt to enlighten the role of religion and its relationship with Albanian nationalism, in Turkish context, which is lacking scholarly analyses. This thesis may also offer a contribution to the EU policymakers, at times when Albania is invited to become a candidate member of the EU. Whether the EU is ready for its enlargement is a question of further research, however, if and when it happens, Albania, if not Bosnia and Kosovo, may be European Union members with a majority Muslim population. Therefore, a better understanding of Albanian identity will only help through the EU accession-membership process.

CHAPTER 3. THEORETICAL TERRAIN

The conceptualisation of the Albanian ‘nation’ through lenses of ‘nation building’ theories and civilization

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide some theoretical scaffolding that will be the basis of contemplating Albanian national identity and its relationship with Ottoman cultural heritage. The chapter will discuss notions such as ‘nation’, ‘ethnicity’, ‘nationalism’ and ‘religion’, which according to Hastings, are important for understanding modern society.¹⁸³ A brief review of a number of substantive nation-building theories will follow. Secondly, the chapter will continue to discuss other theoretical concepts such as ‘civilization’ and ‘political influence’. Ultimately, it will focus on Todorova’s analyses of the Ottoman legacy in the Balkans. This chapter will thus provide the platform to build on theoretical foundations required to investigate whether the Turkish influence is encouraging a realignment of Albanian national self-identity, to then advance with the second part of the research question: discovery of a number of implications that a realignment with the Ottoman culture would have for Albanian identity in the twenty-first century.

3.2 The conceptualisation of the ‘nation’ as a concept

Hastings argues that ‘nation’, ‘ethnicity’, ‘nationalism’ and ‘religion’ concepts are considered as “distinct and determinative elements within European and world history”.¹⁸⁴ As he argues, these concepts are closely interrelated, and scholars must consider all of them equally. These four concepts and the interrelation between them, will be helpful to scrutinise some nation-building theories. The discussion will commence with the concept of ‘nation’.

‘Nation’ as a word originates from the Latin *natio*, which means birth. The ‘nation’ conceptualisation is a relatively new term that coincides with the arrival of modernity and

¹⁸³ Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion, and Nationalism*, Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997, 1.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

nationalism at the beginning of the nineteenth century¹⁸⁵, but is also a contested concept. Questions of how and why nations are created remain crucial to this thesis. Much work has been done by scholars and many different approaches have been applied to explain the concept of ‘nation’.¹⁸⁶ The French theorist Ernest Renan who was also influential in Benedict Anderson’s theory of conceptualising a ‘nation’ as an ‘*imagined community*’¹⁸⁷, defined the nation as “a large scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of sacrifices that one has made in the past and of those that one is prepared to make in the future”.¹⁸⁸ Smith delineates ‘the nation’ as “a named human population inhabiting an historic territory and sharing common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members”.¹⁸⁹ In one of his later writings, Smith identifies five features required for a nation in order to exist, namely: a collective proper name, myths and memories of communal history, a common public culture, common laws and customs and an historic territory or homeland.¹⁹⁰ For Hastings,

A nation is a far more self-conscious community than an ethnicity. Formed from one or more ethnicities, and normally identified by a literature of its own, it possesses or claims the right to political identity and autonomy as a people, together with the control of specific territory,

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 3-4.

¹⁸⁶ Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A critical survey of recent theories of nations and nationalism*, London and New York: Routledge, 2003. First published 1998. This edition published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library; Anthony D Smith, "Nations and History", in *Understanding Nationalism*, ed. M Guibernau and J Hutchinson, Cambridge: Cambridge Polity, 2001; Ernest Renan, "What is a Nation", in *Becoming National: A Reader*, ed. Geoff and Suny Eley, Ronald Grigor, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996; Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990; Hastings; Gellner; Walker Connor, "When is a Nation", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 13, no. 1, 1990; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, 2nd ed., London Verso, 1991.

¹⁸⁷ According to Benedict Anderson a nation is ‘an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign’. Anderson considers the nation an imagined as not all members of even the smallest nation know each-other. Anderson, 6-8.

¹⁸⁸ Renan, in *Becoming National: A Reader*, 52.

¹⁸⁹ Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991, 7.

¹⁹⁰ Anthony D. Smith, "When is a Nation", *Geopolitics*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2002, 17.

comparable to that of biblical Israel and of other independent entities in a world thought of as one of nation-states....¹⁹¹

While a distinction between ‘nation’ and ‘ethnicity’ needs to be made, Hastings coins another modern paradigm here; the ‘nation-state’, which according to him

identifies itself in terms of one specific nation whose people are not seen simply as 'subjects' of the sovereign but as a horizontally bonded society to whom the state in a sense belongs. There is thus an identity of character between state and people.¹⁹²

3.3 The concept of ‘ethnicity’

For Smith, nations and *ethnies* “must be differentiated in a number of dimensions”.¹⁹³ In his earlier book published in 1986, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Smith defines ethnic communities (*ethnies*) as

named human populations with shared ancestry myths, histories and cultures, having an association with a specific territory, and a sense of solidarity.¹⁹⁴

The term “ethnicity” is vague with no clear definition and a lot of overlap with similar terms and concepts and thus leads to misunderstandings of race, tribe, nation and minority groups.¹⁹⁵ According to Eller, “some of the most perplexing problems arise from the vagueness

¹⁹¹ Hastings, 3.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Anthony D. Smith, "A Europe of Nations. Or the Nation of Europe?", *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 30, no. 2, May 1993, 130.

¹⁹⁴ Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Blackwell: Oxford, 1986, 32.

¹⁹⁵ Each of these terms has a vast literature and a tradition of its own. Ethnicity, at least in the English language, appears to be the most neutral of the terms. Eller writes: "One of the main problems for social scientists is the specification of its difference from or relation to other social collectivities such as nation, people, society, tribe, minority, race, or class. Students of ethnic phenomena offer various definitions and characterizations; some even suggest differentiations or substitutions within the term itself". See for instance Jack David Eller, "Ethnicity, Culture And The Past", volume XXXVI, issue 4, Fall, 1997, 552. In Enoch Wan and Mark Vanderwerf, "A review of the literature on ethnicity and national identity and related missiological studies", *Global Missiology*, http://www.globalmissiology.org/portugues/docs_pdf/featured/wan_literature_ethnicity_april_2009.pdf, April 2009, 4.

of the term and phenomenon called *ethnicity* and from its indefinite and ever-expanding domain”.¹⁹⁶ As an example, he continues, “not all ethnic groups are organic social entities; some can make the claim, while others are noticeably recent”.¹⁹⁷ Therefore, there are a number of different conceptualisations of ‘ethnicity’. The term ‘ethnicity’ is relatively recent and derives from the Greek *ethnos*, which means “a large group of people bound together by the same manners, customs or other distinctive features”.¹⁹⁸ Reflecting on the anticipated disappearance of “ethnicity” and “race”¹⁹⁹ in the modern world, Cornell and Hartmann argue that the twentieth century “turned out to be an ethnic century” that started with ethnic and racial cleansing in Nazi Germany before WWII, and ended with similar methods in 1999, during the ethnic cleansing in the Balkans.²⁰⁰ The notion of ‘race’, in use until 1945, was gradually replaced by the term ‘ethnicity’²⁰¹, which began to be used more widely in the 1960s. Therefore, anthropologists started to shift the meaning of race to what Jenkins called a “less embarrassingly colonial ‘ethnic group’”²⁰² that was included under the “roof” of a broader “church”.²⁰³ The gradual replacement of the concept of ‘race’ with ‘ethnicity’ was a complex process. Focusing on the “composition and context”²⁰⁴ of ‘ethnicity’ and ‘race’, Cornell and Hartmann state that “a race may be, but is not necessarily, at the same time an ethnic group; and an ethnic group may be, but is not necessarily, at the same time a race”.²⁰⁵ Distinction also need to be made between the concept of ‘nation’ and ‘ethnicity’ that Hastings describes as follows:

¹⁹⁶ Jack David Eller, *From Culture to Ethnicity to Conflict: An Anthropological Perspective on International Ethnic Conflict*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999, 7.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 8.

¹⁹⁸ Wan and Vanderwerf, 3.

¹⁹⁹ Stephen Cornell and Douglas Hartmann, *Ethnicity and Race: Making Identities in a Changing World, Sociology for a New Century*, 2nd edition, Thousand Oaks, California: Pine Forge Press, an Imprint of Sage Publication, 2007, 5.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 1-3.

²⁰¹ Jenkins, 9.

²⁰² Ibid., 18.

²⁰³ Ibid., 11.

²⁰⁴ Cornell and Hartmann, 13.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., xix.

An ethnicity is a group of people with a shared cultural identity and spoken language. It constitutes the major distinguishing element in all pre-national societies, but may survive as a strong subdivision with a loyalty of its own within established nations.²⁰⁶

Therefore, it becomes problematic to fit the ethnic concept within modern nations. British scholars, like their American and Australian counterparts, usually ascribe ethnicity to minority groups in a society.²⁰⁷ For them an ethnic group is “a distinct collective group” of the “population *within the larger society* whose culture is different from the mainstream culture”²⁰⁸, and as a result, according to Cashmore, members of the group “feel somehow marginal to the mainstream of society”.²⁰⁹ In this way, the use of the term ‘ethnic’ is loaded as it is in counterpoint to a perceived mainstream norm. Unlike the British, American and Australian approaches, in the European tradition, ethnicity is understood not as a synonym for minority groups, but as a synonym for “nationhood” or “peoplehood”.²¹⁰ Following the European approach, everyone, (minorities and also the mainstream majority groups) belongs to an “ethnic group”.

In his discussion, Isajiw writes that because ‘ethnicity’ is an abstract concept, the meaning of ‘ethnicity’ depends on the meaning of “ethnic group and ethnic identity”.²¹¹ For Isajiw, ethnic groups can be divided in primary and secondary groups.²¹² Ethnic groups that have lived in the same place in which historically they have been formed are called primary (or indigenous), while those who live in a different place, such as Italians, Germans or French living in the United States or Canada²¹³ are secondary ethnic groups.

²⁰⁶ Hastings, 3.

²⁰⁷ Wan and Vanderwerf, 5.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Ellis Cashmore, "Ethnicity", in *Encyclopedia of Race and Ethnic Studies*, London: Routledge, 2003, 245.

²¹⁰ See for instance, Wan and Vanderwerf, 5-6.

²¹¹ Wsevolod W. Isajiw, *Definition and Dimensions of Ethnicity: a theoretical framework*, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, Challenges of Measuring an Ethnic World: Science, politics and reality: Proceedings of the Joint Canada-United States Conference on the Measurement of Ethnicity Joint Canada-United States Conference on the Measurement of Ethnicity, 1-3 April 1992, 5.

²¹² Ibid., 10.

²¹³ Isajiw also divides ethnic groups in folk-communities, which he describes as ‘one whose members are predominantly of peasant background, and nation-community are those groups who have traditions that include literary, artistic and intellectual achievements – culture, however, tends to center around an ideology’. He also

Other scholars such as Pires and Stanton consider the ‘ethnic group’ a community that is organised around kinship and shared solidarity between group members.²¹⁴ Eller argues that ethnicity is “one of the most elastic social concepts” and a successful claim to identity and rights can make a group of people an “ethnic group”.²¹⁵

The interesting question that Smith then asks is whether “such ethnic myths, memories and attachments persist over centuries to form the cultural basis for nation-formation?”²¹⁶ Albania is a case in point to answer this question as it fulfils Smith’s compulsory features to be considered as a nation-state: a collective and uncontested name; myths and memories of communal history, such as the *Rozafa* legend and Skenderbeg, its folklore and oral songs such as ‘*Eposi i kreshnikëve*’; a common public culture, which while showing similarities, can be distinguished from other shared cultures in the Balkans; common laws and customs, and a historic territory or homeland. Despite these features, the nationalistic role of *Rilindja* leaders in forging Albanian identity should not be underestimated.

3.4 The role of nationalism

The notion of nationalism is linked to modern-nation states and thus, is modern concept. Gellner explains that “nationalism is rooted in modernity”, “a political principle which maintains that similarity of culture is the basic social bond”.²¹⁷ In line with Gellner, Hastings also argues that

‘Nationalism’ means two things: a theory and a practice. As a political theory - that each ‘nation’ should have its own ‘state’ – it derives from the nineteenth century.²¹⁸

divides ethnic groups in ‘minority’ and ‘majority’, ‘old’ and ‘young’. Ibid., 10-4.

²¹⁴ Guilherme D. Pires and John Stanton, *Ethnic Marketing: culturally sensitive theory and practice*, New York: Routledge, 2015, 56.

²¹⁵ Eller, 8.

²¹⁶ Smith, in *Understanding Nationalism*, 25.

²¹⁷ Ernest Gellner, *Nationalism*, London: Phoenix, 1997, 3.

²¹⁸ Hastings, 3-4.

Other scholars agree that nationalism is a modern phenomenon; dating back to the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, which, according to Smith, originated in Western and Central Europe, and the United States.²¹⁹ According to Smith, ‘ethnicity’, “whether in the sense of ‘race’ or culture, is largely irrelevant to modern nationalism”.²²⁰ Smith considers Anderson’s seminal and highly influential *Imagined Communities* as “a novel and path breaking account of nationalism” that provides “a postmodernist reading of the nation within a modernist framework”.²²¹ For Smith, Hobsbawm and Anderson were both instrumental in their modernist approaches in the way they connected networks of communication and symbolist concepts “in forging national communities”.²²² Together, Hobsbawm’s, Gellner’s and Anderson’s work, along with Breuilly’s examination of nationalism represent “the principal current orthodoxy in nationalist studies”, which according to Hastings, is challenged by medievalists.²²³ Citing Stringer, Hastings believes there is a need for both medievalists and modernists to learn from each-other to close the gap of the “current crisis of historiography”.²²⁴ Hobsbawm argues that in the late twentieth century we witnessed a revival of an ethno-linguistic type of nationalism that “sometimes [is] combined with religion”.²²⁵ It is interesting indeed to explore how, under the Ottoman rule, Albanian nationalists of the Awakening period used the Albanian language and religion in crafting the concept of the Albanian nation.

²¹⁹ Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A critical survey of recent theories of nations and nationalism*, 119-26.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 122.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, 136.

²²² *Ibid.*, 224.

²²³ Hastings, 2.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

²²⁵ Hobsbawm, 164.

3.5 The role of 'religion' in constructing nations

Ultimately, Hastings argues that 'religion' is another element that has been instrumental in shaping nationalism and nation-states.²²⁶ For him, religion is embodied in "many cultures, most ethnicities and some states"²²⁷, and both Anderson and Breuilly overlooked nation-state and religion; focusing on the rise of nationalism as an ideology. According to Smith, the main two reasons that have shaped the process of nation-formation are the inter-state warfare and religion.²²⁸ In his book *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1912), Durkheim defines religion as a system of practices such as rites and cults, but also "ideas whose object is to express the world".²²⁹ Durkheim argues that beliefs are considered to be the essential element²³⁰ of religion, which brings into play spiritual powers and acts upon moral life.²³¹

The relationship between religion and modern society has been thoroughly analysed by Weber, who according to Turner, discovered "the roots of modern society in religion", but also posed the question "whether that religious legacy could in fact survive into modern times."²³² Smith agrees with both Durkheim and Weber about importance of religion; mentioning that religion "transcend[s] all boundaries of caste, class and nation".²³³ For him nationalists contemplate language and religion a "must become" feature of the common public property, "or official, distinctive culture".²³⁴ On the other hand, Smith argues with Kedourie's approach to consider modern nationalism as "a purely modern and secular doctrine and movement";

²²⁶ Hastings, 4.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Smith, "When is a Nation", 23.

²²⁹ Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, New York: First published in 1912. Translated by Karen E. Field. This publication: The Free Press, 1995, 430.

²³⁰ Ibid., 419.

²³¹ Ibid., 422.

²³² Bryan S. Turner, "Introduction to Max Weber on Religions and Civilizations", *Revue internationale de philosophie*, vol. 2, no. 276, 2016, 140.

²³³ Smith, "When is a Nation", 5.

²³⁴ Ibid., 20.

stating that “nationalism is also the secular heir of a religious millennialism”.²³⁵ Therefore, Smith highlights the importance of religion, mentioning that in the pre-modern era, there was no need for a nation state. With the arrival of industrialism, though, traditional religion

acted as barriers to the formation of both nations and the desire for social change and development. With the erosion of traditional religions and the rise of nations, national self-government was the only way to harness the social and political resources necessary for social development.²³⁶

Smith thus provides a generic conceptualisation of the regressive role of traditional religion in relation to the ‘nation’ creation process, as he admits that religion replaced the role of the nation in pre-modern societies.

Kapferer has analysed the relation between religion and nationalism in two case studies: Sri Lanka and Australia. In both cases Kapferer found there is a correlation between these two concepts. While he believes, in Sri Lanka traditional Sinhalese Buddhism has been politicised and its peaceful rituals have been hijacked by nationalists to serve the violent meaning of an inter-ethnic warfare, the Australian secular nationalism is framed by emphasising religious forms, which are evident while reinventing themes of self-sacrifice, suffering, death, and rebirth of the Australian national identity through the narrative of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (known as ANZAC soldiers), who died in the disastrous Gallipoli campaign of 1915.²³⁷ Smith argues that in both cases analysed by Kapferer, but also in the ‘religious nationalism’ coined by Mark Juergensmeyer, “the past plays a vital role, linking the sacred to the secular”, and transforming nationalism in a “religion of history”.²³⁸ Juergensmeyer sees a new cold war emerging and replacing the old one between the West and the Soviet ideological block with one between a secular, liberal West and religious-revivalist, if not fundamentalist ideologies and movements stretching from the Protestant revival in America, to the Shi’ite revolution in Iran, from the Sunni revival in Egypt, Saudi Arabia and

²³⁵ Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A critical survey of recent theories of nations and nationalism*, 113-4.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 21.

²³⁷ Bruce Kapferer, *Legends of People, Myths of State: Violence, Intolerance and Political Culture in Sri Lanka and Australia*, Washington DC and London: Smithsonian Institution, 1988, ch 2-4 & 5-6.

²³⁸ Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A critical survey of recent theories of nations and nationalism*, 114.

Pakistan to the Hindu revival in India and the Buddhist in Sri Lanka.²³⁹ In his 1927 book *Does civilization need religion? A study in the social resources and limitations on religion in modern life*, Niebuhr mentions that “Religion is not in a robust state of health in the modern civilization”.²⁴⁰ However, he argues, the future of both religion and civilization “are thus hung in the same balance”.²⁴¹ On the other hand, Hobsbawm argues, nationalism has not stopped its mission that “sometimes [is] combined with religion”.²⁴² It will be interesting to see how Albanian nationalism has combined ‘religion’ throughout their mission. Exploring the role of religion in forging Albanian identity will also be useful to examine beliefs of some prominent scholars in the field (discussed above) such as Weber, Hastings, Smith, Kapferer and Juergensmeyer, who all are convinced of the impact of religion on nation and nationalism.

Although in his 1997 book, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion, and Nationalism*, Hasting attempts to end the nation-building debate by placing nations, nationalism, ethnicity and religion within a larger historical context, it will be helpful to briefly scrutinize some nation-building theories and see how these concepts are interrelated, and whether they can fit the Albanian case.

3.6 Nation building theories

The field of nation-building scholarship is not a homogeneous field, and at times scholars have little agreement with each other. This, according to Smith, while providing theoretical foundations for understanding the nation-building process, has also generated confusion.²⁴³

Nation-building processes have been explored by various scholars in their theories.

²³⁹ Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism confronts the Secular State*. Berkeley CA and Los Angeles CA: University of California Press, 1993. In *ibid*.

²⁴⁰ Reinhold Niebuhr, *Does civilization need religion? A study in the social resources and limitations on religion in modern life*, Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock. Previously published by Macmillan, 1927, 1.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

²⁴² Hobsbawm, 164.

²⁴³ Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A critical survey of recent theories of nations and nationalism*, 223.

Smith describes theories of nation building developed in 1950s and early 1960s as “relatively crude models” of approach, focusing on ideologies of nationalism *per se* or on the “sociodemographic correlates of ‘nation-building’”.²⁴⁴ This trend, he continues, shifted since the 1960s, as scholars started to pay greater attention to “*subjective* dimensions of collective cultural identities ... and the influence of ethnic symbol, myth and memory”.²⁴⁵ Despite contributions to the field, nation-building theories have also generated confusion, in particular regarding the definition of the nation, when the ‘nation’ was created, and factors that brought about the making of a nation. For Smith, due to basic disagreements and different approaches, the idea of having a unified methodology is “quite unrealistic and any general theory [is] merely Utopian”.²⁴⁶ Following Max Weber’s warnings of difficulties in attempting to construct a unified ‘sociological typology’ of ‘community sentiments of solidarity’, Smith thinks that “paradigms” in the field still remain.²⁴⁷ Despite these constraints, theories of ‘nation-building’ can be grouped into five main approaches; namely primordial, perennial, modernist, ethno-symbolic and post-modernist.²⁴⁸ These theories differ in their explanations of when, how and why the ‘nation’ was created.

3.7 Primordialism and Perennialism

Primordialist approaches are the oldest in sociological and anthropological literature.²⁴⁹ Sociobiological and sociological analyses of the origins of ‘nation’ as a primordial phenomenon sustain the idea that nations are a natural form of a collective identification, created not as historical development but due to natural social bonds between members. These

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Smith defines five main problems in the field such as “failure to reach a consensus on the delimitation of the field” (for example disagreements between the modernist with the perennialist and primordialist), “the notorious terminological difficulties in the field”, “the problems of definitions”, “many divergent research programs and interests in the field” and finally, “the problem of different value-orientations to issues of ethnicity and nationalism”. See *ibid.*, 221-3.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 223-5.

²⁴⁹ Isajiw, 2.

theories place great emphasis on ethnicity being fixed at birth. Wan and Vanderwerf state that “Ethnic identification is based on deep, ‘primordial’ attachments to a group or culture”²⁵⁰, and derives from “the kin-and-clan-structure of human society, and hence something more or less fixed and permanent”.²⁵¹ While for Clifford Geertz, an earlier primordialist scholar, the strength of such primordial bonds, “differ from person to person, from society to society, and from time to time”²⁵², for another primordialist, Van den Berghe, society is based on kin selection, reciprocity and coercion.²⁵³ In short, primordialist theories do not link modernisation and development with nations but rather, they treat nations as descendants of ethnic groups. Smith believes that primordialist scholars in their cultural or sociobiological approaches have alerted us to intimate links between ethnicity and kinship, and ethnicity and territory, and the way these correlations “can generate powerful sentiments of collective belonging”.²⁵⁴ If we apply Van den Berghe’s concept, the Primordialist approach can only explain the existence of modern Albanians as linked to Illyrians by primordial ties²⁵⁵, which is not a convincing approach for nation building.

Perennialist theories, on the other hand, hold that nations existed before modernity. While the theme of perennialists is linked to the question of when nations were created, the phenomenon of nation creation is not treated as natural or primordial. In his analysis of ethnicity and language in Eastern Europe, Fishman found that the “human body itself is viewed as an expression of ethnicity and ethnicity is commonly felt to be in the blood, bones and flesh.”²⁵⁶ For another perennialist scholar, Connor, a ‘nation’ is basically “a group of people”

²⁵⁰ Wan and Vanderwerf, 9.

²⁵¹ Isajiw, 2.

²⁵² Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, London: Fontana, 1973, 260.

²⁵³ van den Berghe Pierre, "Race and ethnicity: a sociological perspective", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 1, no. 4, 1978, 403-4.

²⁵⁴ Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A critical survey of recent theories of nations and nationalism*, 223.

²⁵⁵ Pierre, 403-4.

²⁵⁶ Joshua Fishman, "Social theory and ethnography: neglected perspective of language and ethnicity in Eastern Europe", in *Ethnic Diversity and Conflict in Eastern Europe*, ed. Peter Sugar, Santa Barbara: CA: ABC-Clio, 1980, 84-5.

who are “ancestrally related”.²⁵⁷ For Smith, perennialism considers nations “over the *longue durée*” and focuses on the long-term role to acknowledge nations as “temporally continuous or recurrent in history”.²⁵⁸ Therefore, for perennialists, nations are eternal. This model is not applicable for the case of Albania, as the Albanian ‘nation’ is a modern phenomenon that dates only to the beginning of the twentieth century.

3.8 Modernist and post-modernist theories: The role of nationalism

Unlike primordialists and perennialists, modernists describe the ‘nation’, as a ‘novel’ and ‘recent’ concept, and, a product of nationalism. For most Modernists, modernity (itself a contested notion) provides the foundation for development of nationalism which then leads to the creation of nation-states and the problems associated with nations. The more elaborate Modernist theories are, compared to Primordialist and Perennialist theories, perhaps better able to explain nation-building processes. However, Modernists struggle to explain the Albanian case. During the nineteenth and the twentieth century, the Balkans were associated with economic, cultural, technological and political backwardness, and thus, according to Modernist theories, should not have advanced to the stage of nationalism and nations. Albanian nationalism started to rise in the second half of the nineteenth century, which was before the creation of the ‘Albanian nation’, although its instrumental role needs to be understood and explained “within a broader context that exceeds Albanian ‘exceptionalism’”.²⁵⁹ Indeed, Gellner recognises the paradox of Balkan nationalism, which constitutes a major problem for his theory, “given the backwardness of the Balkans by the standards of industrialism and modernity”.²⁶⁰ Furthermore, the process of Albanian nation building was not only an invention of Albanian nationalism, but rather needs to be seen “as a product of controversial political

²⁵⁷ Walker Connor, *Ethno Nationalism: The Quest of Understanding*, Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994, 202.

²⁵⁸ Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A critical survey of recent theories of nations and nationalism*, 223.

²⁵⁹ Jonilda Rrapaj and Klevis Kolasi, "The Curious Case of Albanian Nationalism: the Crooked Line from a Scattered Array of Clans to a Nation-State", *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, vol. 44, 2013, 127-8.

²⁶⁰ Gellner, *Nationalism*, 41.

elites' interests, struggle for independence, social engineering and Great Power rivalry situated in particular political, social and cultural conditions".²⁶¹

Ultimately, postmodern theories are seen as a continuation of modernist approaches. They suggest a post-national model that is the next phase of globalisation. For Wan and Vanderwerf, these approaches are more concerned with nations and nationalism than with ethnicity.²⁶² Smith describes postmodern analysis as a "fragmentation of contemporary national identities, and suggest the advent of a new 'post-national' order of identity politics and global culture".²⁶³ Therefore, Smith argues, "postmodernists stress the hard bedrock of 'cultural difference'", in "joining of hands with perennialism over the heads of the modernists".²⁶⁴ For him, studying nations and nationalism is not helpful; but rather, one has to proceed to the earlier stage of 'ethnicity'.²⁶⁵

3.9 Smith's 'ethno-symbolic' approach

As a student of Gellner, Smith elaborated modernist theories, drawing heavily on the origins of culture and *ethnicity*. Smith agrees with Modernists in considering the existence of nations as a modern phenomenon, stating that 'nations' and 'nationalism' is a postmodernist phenomenon that "commences in the nineteenth century, or... even later".²⁶⁶ However, Smith does not agree with the structural sociological and chronological analysis of modernist approaches²⁶⁷ with regards to the concept of the nation. Smith believes that nations are modern but always rooted in ethnicity as even "if the nation is modern and perhaps 'invented', it does

²⁶¹ Rrapaj and Kolasi, 227.

²⁶² Wan and Vanderwerf, 11.

²⁶³ For Smith "Postmodern analyses have revealed the analyses of such postmodern themes as fragmentation, feminism and globalisation can be seen as continuations of components of the modernist paradigm". See Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A critical survey of recent theories of nations and nationalism*, 224-5.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., 218.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Smith, in *Understanding Nationalism*, 25.

²⁶⁷ Smith, "When is a Nation", 6.

not, cannot, emerge out of nothing.²⁶⁸

As he continues to explain, nations are likely to be formed by those groups that “have had, at their core, a substantial ethnic community with its own memories, symbols, myths, and traditions, and whose populations share common sentiments and aspirations”.²⁶⁹ Therefore, Smith redirects the focus back to ethnicity and culture in order to explain the concept of ‘nation’. In short, he explains that his focus of analysis “began to shift from nationalisms to nations, and from nations to ethnic communities”.²⁷⁰

In his seminal *Nationalism and Modernism*, Smith commences his discussion by analysing Renan’s “large scale solidarity”²⁷¹, which according to Smith, can be considered as a group or community who feel and try to preserve its own values. Smith firstly explores who are the communities that form nations.²⁷² He thinks “the key” to answering this question “lies in their [communities] pre-modern ethnic base” and not in the concepts of the Modernists who think that “nation is a category of modernity” because it is “a territorial unit, with clear borders, ... a legal political community ... legitimated (if not created) by nationalist ideology, ... a mass community...”.²⁷³

In order to address the above issues, Smith defines another paradigm, that of ‘*historical ethno-symbolism*’.²⁷⁴ Defining the historical ethno-symbolic approach, Smith draws attention to the seven constitutive elements of collective-cultural identities.²⁷⁵ The concept of ‘ethnicity’

²⁶⁸ Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A critical survey of recent theories of nations and nationalism*, 113.

²⁶⁹ Smith, "A Europe of Nations. Or the Nation of Europe?", 130.

²⁷⁰ Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A critical survey of recent theories of nations and nationalism*, 191.

²⁷¹ Renan, in *Becoming National: A Reader*, 52.

²⁷² Smith, "A Europe of Nations. Or the Nation of Europe?", 130.

²⁷³ Smith, "When is a Nation", 9-15.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 14.

²⁷⁵ According to Smith these seven issues are: continuity, recurrence and appropriation” as different methods of connecting past, present and future; ‘*ethnies*’ in creation of nations; “symbols, memories, myths, values and traditions for an understanding of ethnic and ... collective cultural identity”; “the peculiar role of memories” such as myths, ancestors and other “in the formation and persistence of national identities”; “the different kinds of *ethnie* that serve as basis and points of departure for the formation of various kinds of nation” and the special contribution of nationalism and “the role of nationalists as ‘political archaeologists’”. See for instance Ibid., 14-5.

is the foundation of Smith's ethno-symbolism paradigm, and that becomes clear in the way he summarises his own theory:

Ethno-symbolism aims to uncover the symbolic legacy of ethnic identities for particular nations, and to show how modern nationalisms and nations rediscover and reinterpret the symbols, myths, memories, values and traditions of their ethno-histories, as they face the problems of modernity.²⁷⁶

It also shows that 'ethnicities' are not fixed entities, but rather there is a correlation with modern nationalism, although the relationship between them is problematic. For Eriksen, for example, the main difference between ethnicity and nationalism lies "in their relationship to the state".²⁷⁷ The assumption is that ethnicity can be transformed into nationalism but not the other way around. However, for Eriksen, if a group cannot mobilise a community via nationalism, then they might latch onto ethnicity as their "members reside more or less uncomfortably under the aegis of a state which they do not identify with nationality or ethnic category".²⁷⁸

3.10 Religion and civilization

Another term that is highly debated in contemporary discussions regarding Albanian identity is the concept of 'civilization'. 'Civilization' lacks an agreed upon definition and is thus used in varied ways.²⁷⁹ For example it can be used to describe developmental stages of societies, which gradually transformed through agrarianism and industrialisation from primitive into

²⁷⁶ As Smith states: '... the attempts by Armstrong, Hutchinson and myself to trace the role of myths, symbols, values and memories in generating ethnic and national attachments and forging cultural and social networks, have added to our appreciation of the subjective and historical dimensions of nations and nationalism. This is matched by a parallel concern with investigating the ways in which nationalists have rediscovered and used the ethno-symbolic repertoire for national ends, in particular the myths and memories of ethnic election, sacred territory, collective destiny and the golden age'. See Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A critical survey of recent theories of nations and nationalism*, 224.

²⁷⁷ Thomas Hylland Eriksen, "Ethnicity versus Nationalism", *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 28, no. 3, August, 1991, 265.

²⁷⁸ See for instance, *ibid.*

²⁷⁹ Andrew Targowski, "Towards a Composite Definition and Classification of Civilization", *Comparative Civilizations Review*, vol. 60, no. 60, 2009, 1-2.

civilized societies.²⁸⁰ Crone envisages that “primitive (or simple), and civilized (or complex), are too different to be treated together”.²⁸¹ Jenkins believes that “primitive” people organized into tribal groups, after they realized the danger of being colonized by other groups.²⁸² According to Gellner, ‘civilized’ societies created their own polities to protect their cultures within the boundaries of their power.²⁸³ Another example is the use of the term ‘civilization’ to differentiate development between various groups of society. Targowski, who analysed some early and contemporary definitions of the term civilization proposes that civilization is a large society that differentiates

from other civilizations by the development of its own advanced cultural system driven by communication, religion, wealth, power, and the sharing of the same knowledge system within complex urban, agricultural infrastructures, and other infrastructures such as industrial and information ones. It also progresses in a cycle of rising, growing, declining and falling.²⁸⁴

For Mandalinos, civilizations contain “a multiplicity of communities – religious, linguistic, ethnic, national, indigenous and regional – and their resultant forms of identity”.²⁸⁵ According to this scholar, civilizations construct a self-image, which is civilized, and an “other”, which is considered as uncivilized, or “barbarian”.²⁸⁶

Huntington defines civilization as “the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity ... [that] distinguishes humans from other species”, defined by common objective elements, such as “language, history, religion, customs, institutions”, and by “the subjective self-identification of people”.²⁸⁷ For Huntington, civilization is a cultural entity, as “villages, regions, ethnic groups, nationalities, religious groups, all have distinct

²⁸⁰ Crone, 1-10.

²⁸¹ Ibid., 1.

²⁸² Jenkins, 16.

²⁸³ Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 55.

²⁸⁴ Targowski, 94.

²⁸⁵ John Mandalinos, *Civilization and the Human Subject*, Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999, 25.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ Huntington, 24.

cultures at different levels of cultural heterogeneity”.²⁸⁸ Therefore, Huntington’s unit of analysis does not include either ‘nation’ or ‘ethnicity’, but rather the concept of ‘civilization’. This is explicated in his theory that in today’s world, conflicts will not occur between nations but rather nations will be challenged by different civilisations through conflicts, or what he calls “clash of civilizations”.²⁸⁹ As he so famously laid it down, in what was an exaggerated and controversial context:

The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future.²⁹⁰

Huntington highlights differences between civilizations, mentioning five factors, such as profound differences in history, language, culture, tradition and, more importantly, religion; perception of people’s “local identities”, which is stronger than nation-states; “de-Westernization and indigenization of elites”, and finally, “cultural characteristics and differences” that are less variable and negotiable than political and economic ones.²⁹¹ These differences are further exacerbated by geographical propinquity, which “gives rise to conflicting territorial claims”.²⁹²

Huntington claims there are eight civilizations²⁹³ coexisting in today’s world, however he focuses almost exclusively on the clash between the West and Islam. The clash of civilizations, Huntington continues, will occur at micro and macro levels²⁹⁴ on what he calls

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 23-4.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., 22.

²⁹¹ Ibid., 25-7.

²⁹² ‘As people define their identity in ethnic and religious terms, they are likely to see an “us” versus “them” relation existing between themselves and people of different ethnicity or religion’. Cited from *ibid.*, 29.

²⁹³ Huntington states that ‘civilization identity will be increasingly important in the future, and the world will be shaped in large measure by the interactions among seven or eight major civilizations. These include Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and possibly African civilization’. *Ibid.*, 25.

²⁹⁴ ‘micro-level, adjacent groups along the fault lines between civilizations struggle, often violently, over the control of territory and each other’ and “the macro-level, states from different civilizations compete for relative military and economic power, struggle over the control of international institutions and third parties, and competitively promote their particular political and religious values’. See *ibid.*, 29.

“the fault lines” between Western Christianity “and Orthodox Christianity and Islam”, which coincides with the historic boundary between the Hapsburg and Ottoman empires in the Balkans.²⁹⁵ In short, for Huntington, “the interaction between Islam and the West is seen as a clash of civilization”²⁹⁶ by both, West and East. As an example, Huntington cites the conflict that erupted at what he calls the “northern border of Islam” between Orthodox and Muslim faiths, “including the carnage of Bosnia and Sarajevo”, which was followed by the “simmering violence between Serb and Albanian”²⁹⁷ individuals at the end of the twentieth century—an analysis far removed from what Cornell and Douglass define as “ethnic cleansing”.²⁹⁸ This thesis will take a quite separate position from the controversies provoked by Huntington’s original piece, however, Huntington’s perception that it was not ‘ethnicity’ which sparked the conflict between the Albanian and Serbian regimes, but rather religion, especially Islam that provoked other civilizations, as he believes that “Islam has bloody borders”²⁹⁹ is misleading. Although in Huntington’s views, Islam is regarded as the main cause of many conflicts across the world, in the case of the Kosovo war of 1999, this claim does not seem credible. The conflict in Kosovo was not only of a religious nature, but rather ethnic Albanians opposed the Serbian regime in the same way other Christian-ethnicities of ex-Yugoslavia did in 1991-1992.

Maria Todorova maintains that after the Cold War, while the idea of “Central Europe” died, the West, as part of Habsburg nostalgia, pursued “new trench lines”³⁰⁰ reinvented by Huntington. This is the case in the current rise of some far-right political parties in France, Italy, the UK and the Netherlands, reviving his controversial work. Huntington’s ‘clash of civilizations’ is however unable to explain the Albanian situation. The paradox of the claims that Albanian identity belongs to the West (which according to Huntington means Christian) or East (interpreted as Islam) is one of the main topics of the twenty-first century discourse in

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 29-30.

²⁹⁶ Ibid., 32.

²⁹⁷ Ibid., 33.

²⁹⁸ Cornell and Hartmann, 1-3.

²⁹⁹ ‘On the Eurasian continent, however, the proliferation of ethnic conflict, epitomized at the extreme in ethnic cleansing, has not been totally random. It has been most frequent and most violent between groups belonging to different civilizations. In Eurasia, the great historic fault lines between civilizations are once more aflame’. See Huntington, 34-5.

³⁰⁰ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 190.

Albania and this thesis will engage with this debate through analyses of the Albanian prominent writer, Ismail Kadare. However, Albanians live in a global world where interaction with others, or the decision to follow a certain path may be influenced by other actors. Therefore, two other theoretical concepts in this context are important to be discussed: power and influence.

3.11 The concept of political influence

Both ‘power’ and ‘influence’ are contested concepts.³⁰¹ For Nye, a longstanding scholar of power, changes in modern tendency and the political environment are having significant effects on the nature of power and the resources that produce it.³⁰² As Nye argues, concepts such as “cultural attraction, ideology, and international institutions” are all influencing techniques used to achieve success in world politics.³⁰³ However, the concept of influence needs to be distinguished from power. Nye defines power as “ability to influence the behaviour of others to get the outcomes one wants”.³⁰⁴ According to Cox and Jacobson, “Power may be converted into influence, but it is not necessarily so converted at all or to its full extent”.³⁰⁵ In line with these arguments Arts and Verchuren made a “distinction between power as the general ability to influence, and influence as the realisation of a single effect”.³⁰⁶ They also believe that “part of the definition of power should refer to the ability of actors to achieve or prevent outcomes against the will of others.”³⁰⁷

Banfield defines influence as the “ability to get others to act, think, or feel as one intends”.³⁰⁸ This means that in a political field, we are considering two political actors

³⁰¹ Bas Arts and Piet Verchuren, "Assessing Political Influence in Complex Decision-making: An Instrument Based on Triangulation", *International Political Science Review*, vol. 20, no. 4, 1999, 411.

³⁰² Jr. Joseph S Nye, "Soft Power", *Foreign Policy*, no. 80, Autumn, 1990, 164.

³⁰³ Ibid., 167.

³⁰⁴ Jr. Joseph S Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World politics*, New York: Public Affairs, 2004, 2.

³⁰⁵ Robert W. Cox, Harold K. Jacobson, and Gerard Curzon, *The anatomy of influence : decision making in international organization*, New Haven Yale University Press, 1973, 3.

³⁰⁶ Arts and Verchuren, 413.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Edward C. Banfield, *Political Influence*, New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, Third printing 2009, 3.

(symbolically: $A \rightarrow B$); actor A can be an individual or a collective player such as a pressure group that modifies the behavior of actor B in a political arena. Arts and Verchuren point out that most social scientists agree on this general-definition of influence.³⁰⁹ According to these scholars, while “the phenomena of influence and power are elementary aspects of political and social life” it is difficult to measure them objectively as both are contested concepts.³¹⁰ As a result, Arts and Verchuren, extended the three classical approaches³¹¹ of assessing power (and influence), to include a fourth concept, the so-called “stakeholder model”, “a set of stakeholders who try through formal and informal bargaining practices to influence a decision that must be taken by a set of formal decision-makers.”³¹² In short, they offered a tridimensional – the “EAR Instrument”³¹³, which includes: ego-perception (E), alter-perception (A) and researcher analysis (R).³¹⁴ It is generally accepted that in bilateral relations between two actors, the power exercised by the stronger actor will influence the weaker. Therefore, the rising power of Turkey, which might influence Albanian identity is crucial to this thesis. As seen in the previous chapter, ‘cultural attraction, ideology, and international institutions’ are all concepts that Turkey might exercise to influence Albanian identity in the twenty-first century, and thus, pull Albania back towards Eastern civilisation as it did for more than five centuries.

³⁰⁹ Arts and Verchuren, 412.

³¹⁰ Ibid., 411.

³¹¹ Classical approaches assessment of power and influence is based on three methods: position, reputation, and decision-making. See for instance C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1956; Foyd Hunter, *Community Power Structures*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1953; Robert A. Dahl, *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.

³¹² Arts and Verchuren, 416.

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Arts and Verschuren consider ego-perception (E) as views of key players with regard to their own influence (or its lack) on key topics in complex decision-making; alter-perception (A) as views of other key players with regard to the influence (or its lack) of ‘ego’ on key topics in complex decision making and researchers analysis (R) as the validity of ‘E’ and ‘A’ by the researcher on the basis of indicators ‘goal-achievement’, ‘intervention’, and ‘anticipation’. Ibid., 417.

3.12 Imagining the Balkans – ‘Balkanism’, stereotypes and legacy

Maria Todorova's *Imagining the Balkans* (2009) has added significantly, to scholarly analyses of the Ottoman legacy in the Balkans. Todorova argues, the ‘Balkan concept’ has never been seriously considered a central category of identity³¹⁵, but is rather considered a “subspecies of the larger identity problem of small peripheral nations”.³¹⁶ As a result, Todorova is “convinced that the problem merits a whole genre of work on ‘balkanism’”.³¹⁷ This thesis will add to the Balkan studies. Narrowing Todorova's research on the Ottoman legacy in the Balkans this thesis will emphasise the Turkish impact on Albanian identity.

Todorova is concerned with the difficulties of the Balkan states to make democratic progress. This is affected by ongoing territorial disputes, which increases nationalism, but for her, the main cause of little success is “the ethnic complexity of the Balkans ...”.³¹⁸ Todorova asserts that the elites of Balkan countries must assume some responsibility³¹⁹ for their unsuccessful story, rather than using the “Ottoman Empire and Turkey as the convenient scapegoat for all their misfortunes and misconducts” and demonising each other.³²⁰

‘Balkan’ is the name of a mountain, also used in a metaphorical way since the fifteenth century.³²¹ Since then, the Balkans have been depicted as dangerous and savage, in a way that Todorova considers “more than a stereotype”.³²² This all began by the “very use of ‘tribal’ [that] relegates Balkans to a lower civilization category, occupied primarily by Africans, to

³¹⁵ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 51.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 57.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Preface.

³¹⁸ “Unlike the Western Europe where nations lived in more or less homogeneous blocks, in the East they were jumbled in a way that added the word *macedoine* to the vocabulary of menu writers... Practically nobody, however, emphasised the fact that it was not ethnic complexity per se but ethnic complexity in the framework of the idealized nation-state that leads to ethnic homogeneity, inducing ethnic conflicts. Not only was racial mixture conducive to disorder, racial impurity was disorder”. See *ibid.*, 128.

³¹⁹ Although she is ‘not writing of behalf of a homogenous Balkan abstraction ...’, Todorova is speaking ‘among Balkan intellectuals who think about problems of identity and have internalised the divisions imposed on them by previously shaped and exclusionary identities’. See *ibid.*, Preface x.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, 187.

³²¹ *Ibid.*, 193.

³²² *Ibid.*, 184.

whom the term is usually applied”.³²³ Different travellers, in different times and circumstances published various opinion pieces about people living in the Balkans. While traveller’s literature became a fashionable genre³²⁴ and produced a significant body of writings all over Europe, Todorova argues that in reality, traveller’s writings served as a “combination of all elements that shaped the existing stereotypes of the Balkans”.³²⁵ An example is an eighteenth century painting which was painted in Syria and it shows Germans above other Europeans.³²⁶ At the beginning of the twentieth century, the understanding of the Balkans image had already been shaped³²⁷ in such a way in European literature that its connotations conjured a pejorative image, “triggered by the events accompanying the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of small, weak, economically backward, and dependant nation-states, striving to modernise”.³²⁸ According to Todorova, the Balkan’s image of Albanians is “aggressive, intolerant, barbarian, semi-developed, semi-civilized and semi-oriental”.³²⁹

In the updated edition of *Imagining the Balkans*, Todorova explains that ‘region’ as a term is complex and does not relate only to geographical territory. It is rather shaped by global developments in a way that “regions can supersede the nation-state”, such as the case of the EU.³³⁰ It is useful to remember that Todorova distinguishes region from tradition and legacy—terms that, according to her, are “less straightforward” and require more attention in order to

³²³ Todorova states that ‘the old aristocratic European paradigm garnished with nineteenth century’ represented an evolutionary belief in the superiority of orderly civilization over barbarity, archaic predispositions, backwardness, petty squabbles, un conforming and unpredictable behaviour, that is, tribalism’. See

Ibid., 184-5. For stereotypes regarding African societies as the lowest civilization, see for instance William Petersen, *Ethnicity Counts*, New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 2012, 246.

³²⁴ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 69.

³²⁵ Writings of travellers, diplomatic missions, merchants, pilgrims and war prisoners during the sixteenth and the eighteenth century were more culturally rooted than the later French and English counterparts that were ‘unique in their quality compare to later descriptions’. Ibid., 64-9.

³²⁶ Ibid., 70.

³²⁷ Ibid., 116.

³²⁸ Ibid., 194.

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Ibid., 196.

be understood.³³¹ For Todorova, tradition is “a conscious selection of elements bequeathed from the past”, whilst “legacy encompasses everything – chosen or not – that is handed down from the past”.³³² The European peninsula before the nineteenth century was shaped by political legacies (for example, the Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman Empires and even the communist era), however, Todorova focuses particularly on:

the half millennium of Ottoman rule that gave the peninsula its name and established its longest period of political unity. The Ottoman elements – or those perceived as such – have contributed to most current Balkan stereotypes. In the narrow sense of the word, then, one can argue that the Balkans are, in fact, the Ottoman legacy.³³³

Not only does Todorova have no doubt about the Ottoman legacy in the Balkans, she argues that Turkey also shows elements of Balkan legacies, as “modern Turkey is a Balkan state”.³³⁴ Todorova identifies two forms of legacy: legacy by continuity and, legacy by perception.³³⁵ Legacy by continuity carries characteristics of entity as the ‘survival’, which will decline “immediately before its collapse”, and on the other hand, Todorova defines legacy by perception as “the articulation and rearticulation of how the entity is thought about at different times by different individuals or groups”.³³⁶ Therefore, Todorova suggests that by the end of WWI the Ottoman legacy in the Balkans had shifted from continuity to perception; a shift that she names as one of the main “pillars in the discourse of Balkan nationalism” that “displays striking similarities in all Balkan countries”.³³⁷

Todorova’s analysis of historical legacies of the Balkans and Eastern Europe assists us to better understand the Balkans’ different identities and questions the tendency to consider

³³¹ Ibid., 198.

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Ibid., 199.

³³⁴ Ibid., 49.

³³⁵ See *ibid.*, 198.

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Todorova hopes only ‘Europeanization of the region will end the Balkans as a metaphor and, the Ottoman legacy’. *Ibid.*, 199.

“others”– lessons that Europe should have learned as a result of two world wars. However, as Todorova suggests,

Europe, in this vision, emerges as a complex palimpsest of differently shaped entities, not only exposing the porosity of internal frontiers, but also questioning the absolute stability of external ones.³³⁸

Albania is not immune to these developments as, in the twenty-first century, the Albanian question in the Balkans, is often portrayed as ‘Greater Albania’.

3.13 Todorova’s Christian Balkans

One of Todorova’s more challenging concepts is the definition of the Balkans as a ‘Christian’ region, especially when applied to Albania and Bosnia, countries with a Muslim majority population. While it is known that prior to the Ottoman arrival, Christianity was largely diffused in Albanian speaking-lands, the current debate of what Todorova calls ‘legacy’, involves the Ottoman and the post-Ottoman era. For Todorova, Albania is part of the Balkans, however, Albanian elites are “externalizing undesired qualities on some imputed Balkanness”.³³⁹ However, when it comes to religion, Todorova thinks that, before Albania

became atheist [it] was 70 percent Muslim bespeaks the naïveté and straightforwardness of the new Albanian political discourse that has not mastered the ennobling façade of the pluralist vocabulary.³⁴⁰

³³⁸ Todorova writes ‘In this respect, the task for balkanists and East Europeanists consists not so much of “provincializing” Europe but of “de-provincializing” Western Europe, which has heretofore expropriated the category of Europe with concrete political and moral consequences. In the academic sphere, this translates as the continuing necessity on the part of East Europeanists to have a good grasp of the West European fields, as well as to challenge the sanctioned ignorance of West Europeanists about developments in the eastern half of the continent. If this project comes to fruition, we will actually succeed in “provincializing” Europe effectively for the rest of the world, insofar as the paradigm will have broadened to include not only a cleansed, abstract, and idealized version of power, but also one of dependency, subordination, and messy struggles’. See *ibid.*, 202.

³³⁹ *Ibid.*, 46.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 45-6.

Todorova's appeal to the Christian values of Balkans is an interesting point, as religion generates much discussion within Albanian society, its politicians and scholars. With analysing the effects of religion and the Ottoman legacy in Albania, this thesis will compliment and narrow down Todorova's research on the Ottoman legacy in the Balkans.

3.14 Why investigating the Albanian case using these concepts?

Albanian identity is contested as is the Albanian nation, ethnicity, nationalism, religion and civilisation. Each of these concepts presents a different aspect and often they are intertwined. Investigating these notions in the post-Ottoman context, will not only help to scrutinise these theoretical concepts, it will also add to the scholarship to better understand Albanian identity in the twenty-first century.

The first key issue addressed in this study is the concept of the Albanian national identity. This pointed the study towards nation-building theories. The Albanian 'nation-state' was only created at the beginning of the twentieth century, after other 'modern' nation-states in Europe were created. As a result, this study started to use Gellner's and Hobsbawm's modernist approaches who both consider creation of 'nations' as a 'modern' phenomenon. This, in turn, lead to the realisation of the importance of 'nationalism' in building the 'nation'; however, this was not an easily applicable concept as 'modernism' arrived in Albania (and indeed the Balkans) after 'nations' and 'nationalism' had been established. Albanian nationalism only became prominent during the Albanian Awakening period at the end of the nineteenth century, however, it arrived before industrialisation and modernity reached Albanian-speaking lands. Anderson's concept of 'imagined communities' was also not of great aid as today's Albanian 'nation' does not include those Albanians living in territories that are currently part of other Balkan countries, although they imagine themselves as 'Albanians'. This is related to the "Greater Albania" issue, which will be discussed in chapter five.

This led to question the ethnic composition of Albania and pointed the study to consider earlier nation-building theories of primordialism and perennialism. However, these approaches were not well suited to explain the Albanian nation. The former could only link to the contested concept that Albanians are related to Illyrians through primordial and unchanged ties, whereas for the latter, the Albanian nation has always existed. The existence of Albanians in terms of language and culture, is proof of a different ethnic group that inhabited the Balkans. Archaeological sites and artefacts found in Albania are indeed the only proof that Illyrians

inhabited these lands. However, finding the link between these two distant eras is not a simple task, and the lack of Albanian archaeological and historical literature does not help either. This was the reason to look at this issue from Smith's lenses of 'ethno-symbolism'.

According to 'ethno-symbolism' the Albanian nation as a concept is modern, but rooted in ethnic Illyrian culture and language, myths and memories that have evolved since Illyrian times. In the context of Albania, 'ethno-symbolism' uncovers the symbolic legacy of Illyrian ethnic identities, and shows how Albanian nationalism rediscovered and reinterpreted symbols, myths, memories, values and traditions of Albania's ethno-history.³⁴¹ However, 'ethno-symbolism' has also limitations. It lacks historiography and research to link how "far earlier forms of ethnic sentiment and later forms of nationalism were similarly imbued with religious beliefs and sentiments"³⁴², to put it in Smith's own words. This drew my attention to another paradigm, religion, which further completed the puzzle. As discussed in this chapter, the important role of religion and its connections with nationalism and ethnicity in creation of nations are recognized by many scholars, including Smith. One of the contributions of this thesis to the scholarly literature is to explore the role of religion in Albanian context, which appears to have had inadequate treatment.

At this point in the exploration, Hastings' advice to focus equally on nations, ethnicity, nationalism and religion, aided building the theoretical scaffold. Deconstructing nation-building theories and focusing on the holistic picture of concurrent analyses of nation, ethnicity, nationalism and religion, in Albanian case is more convincing, as none of those five nation-building theories discussed earlier could provide the theoretical framework.

The theoretical groundwork regarding Turkish influence on Albanian national identity and reflection of Ottoman culture on Albanian identity is more complex, as little analyses in this field exists. This provided the opportunity to introduce Todorova's seminal work on the Balkans and the Ottoman legacy into the discussion and direct the focus on Albanian particularism. Therefore, another contribution of this thesis will be an attempt to add and

³⁴¹ As Smith states: '... the attempts by Armstrong, Hutchinson and myself to trace the role of myths, symbols, values and memories in generating ethnic and national attachments and forging cultural and social networks, have added to our appreciation of the subjective and historical dimensions of nations and nationalism. This is matched by a parallel concern with investigating the ways in which nationalists have rediscovered and used the ethno-symbolic repertoire for national ends, in particular the myths and memories of ethnic election, sacred territory, collective destiny and the golden age'. See Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A critical survey of recent theories of nations and nationalism*, 224.

³⁴² Ibid., 227.

complement scholarly analyses in the field by narrowing down Todorova's concept of the Ottoman legacy in the Balkans to that of Albania.

Theoretical concepts of influence also help to comprehend Albanian identity influenced since the Middle Ages by the Roman and Byzantine Empires. However, as Todorova argues, the effect of the Ottoman Empire on Albanian speaking lands was far more pronounced due to its length, but also to the fact that it is the more recent event. Thus, a combination of the concepts of nation, ethnicity, nationalism religion, civilization and influence, along with Todorova's 'Ottoman legacy', can assist explaining Albanian national identity and analysing the ways it may be influenced by the Ottoman culture.

Finally, theories of nation-building have not been able to explain Albanian national identity for another reason. The reason lies in Albanian identity itself: while contested, Albanian identity is also unique. First and foremost, what makes it unique, are all of these discussed theoretical concepts, which in Albanian case are all contested. However, it is a fact the Albanian national identity survived in the face of the Ottoman-Turks and Albania's neighbours. In addition, the more inexplicable role of religion compared to other Balkan states with stronger religious backgrounds than most Western countries makes the Albanian case distinctive. It is this uniqueness that makes it even more difficult to fit Albanian identity into the scholarly literature. This thesis will try to offer its contribution to close this gap in the literature.

3.15 Conclusion

This chapter provides the theoretical platform that will be the basis for exploring both parts of the research question. It was decided to employ a deconstructed approach that does not analyse Albanian identity using a specific nation-building theory, but rather use Hastings' approach to analyse proportionally concepts such as 'nation', 'ethnicity', 'nationalism' and 'religion'. The chapter briefly reviewed substantive nation-building theories, that is primordialism, perennialism, modernism, post-modernism and 'ethno-symbolism'. However, not only do these nation-building theories have limitations, they are not able to explain the unique Albanian identity.

In order to complete the theoretical scaffold, the chapter briefly discussed other theoretical concepts such as 'civilization', 'influence' and 'legacy'; to address the second part

of the research question: the ramifications of past and present Turkish influence in Albania in the twenty-first century. Ultimately, the chapter emphasised Todorova's Ottoman legacy in the Balkans. Although Todorova's analyses are valuable, they emphasise the Balkans as a Christian entity. This precludes explaining all different ethnic and religious groups, nations, and nation-states in the Balkans using Todorova's 'Balkanism. It also creates the opportunity for this thesis to address the gap and contribute to the wide scholarly literature through analyses of the Albanian case.

CHAPTER 4. CONTEXTUALISING IMPLICATIONS OF THE OTTOMAN INFLUENCE IN ALBANIAN SPEAKING LANDS: 1385-1912

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss major implications of the Ottoman occupation of the Albanian-speaking lands from their arrival in 1385 until the declaration of the Albanian Independence in 1912. While drawing on historical narratives of the Ottoman occupation, the aim of this chapter is to discuss how the Porte impacted, or suppressed the creation of the Albanian entity. It will explore how the Ottomans affected the Albanian speaking lands, focussing on social organisation, infrastructure, written language, the system of education and the ongoing debate regarding the role of nationalism and religion.

4.2 The political aims of Ottomans in organising the society in Albanian speaking lands

The social and political structure of Albania has changed significantly over time. Prior to the Ottoman arrival, Albanian identity was not homogenous and reflected both Christian—Catholic and Orthodox elements. Albanian Catholics of the North, and Orthodox in the South, were dissimilar not only in terms of religion, cultural differences between *gegs* and *tosks* were evident. One of the most eminent scholars on Ottoman civilisation, Speros Vryonis, believes that during the Byzantine rule, Southern Albania was included in a partial Byzantinization or in a “semi-Byzantinized zone”, while the Byzantine effects did not affect Albanian mountain regions.³⁴³ In a sense, this version explains the presence of Albanian Catholics in the North—an area that was ruled by Rome for a considerable period of time. Nevertheless, there were no simple divisions based on religion and culture between *gegs* and *tosks*, as not all Albanian *gegs* were Catholics, and similarly, not all *tosks* were Orthodox-Christians.

Vryonis emphasised that the Ottoman system, in a broad sense, was similar to the centralized bureaucratic theocracy of the Byzantine Empire.³⁴⁴ However, he argues that on a

³⁴³ Jr Speros Vryonis, "The Bysantine Legacy and Ottoman Forms", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, vol. 23, no. 24, 1969-1970, 256.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 267-308.

macro level of analysis, the upper levels of society, the Seljuks and Ottomans were “Islamic rather than Byzantine”, whereas with regard to folk cultures, the Ottoman structure isolated the Balkan peoples from developing contacts with the West.³⁴⁵ As Morgan outlines, Romans, Byzantines and then the Ottoman Empire, transformed Albanian speaking lands into “badlands”³⁴⁶, but according to Todorova, the impact of the Ottoman Empire has been greater.

Following an old system used in the Middle East, the Porte organised its society based on the *millet*³⁴⁷ system. This system served to regulate all inhabitants of the Empire who did not believe in Islam and thus, could not use Islamic law to participate in the social structures of the Empire in terms of legal, and administrative jurisdictions. Licursi thinks the decision to organize the social structure in *millets* “laid the groundwork for the institutionalized incorporation” of non-Muslim population, which according to Barkey, “would evolve, eventually, into a fluid system of *millets*”.³⁴⁸ All *millets* were considered to be at a lower level than Muslims.³⁴⁹ However, despite the systemic imbalances of *millets*, the system guaranteed a certain language and religious autonomy, provided that *millets* accepted their “inferior status”³⁵⁰ compared to Muslims.

As the *millet* system was based on religious affiliation, the concept of the Albanian ethnicity and social groupings were completely ignored.³⁵¹ In Albania, deep divisions between powerful families, and the differences between *gegs* and *tosks*, were further jeopardised by the *millet* system. They now had to re-group into Muslims, and Christian-Orthodox that belonged to the Rum *millet*. Albanian Muslims were considered as ‘first class citizens’, equal to Islamic Turks. They were subject to lower taxes and regulated their social interaction through Islamic

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

³⁴⁶ Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 5.

³⁴⁷ *Millet* derives from the Arabic (*millah*), which means people of a religion other than Islam.

³⁴⁸ Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective*, Cambridge University Press, 2008. Cited in Emiddio Pietro Licursi, "Empire of Nations: The Consolidation of Albanian and Turkish National Identities in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1878 – 1913" (2011, Unpublished thesis. Department of History, Columbia University), 26, https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/download/fedora_content/download/ac:131865/content/Licursi_Senior_Thesis.pdf.

³⁴⁹ Ger Duijzings, *Religion and the Politics of Identity in Kosovo*, London: Hurst, 2000, 28.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

courts. After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Orthodox Patriarchate set the rules under which the Albanian Christian-Orthodox *millet* lived, while reporting directly to Sultan Mehmet II. The situation of Catholic Albanians was different. While they were not ‘Turks’, they were not considered as a separate *millet* either. Since 168 BC, a time that Romans defeated Gentius, the last Illyrian king, Albanian Catholics were part of “the jurisdiction of Rome until 731 when Illyricum was placed under the Patriarchate of Constantinople”.³⁵² However, both Romans and Venetians continued their influence and protection of North Albania, as it did later Austro-Hungary and France.³⁵³ However, according to Doja, during the long reign of the Byzantine Empire, Albanian Christians “entered further into the orbit of Eastern Christianity”³⁵⁴—a situation that was further complicated after the Ottoman occupation as Christian Albanians found themselves in the middle of the existing East-West “fault-line and the Muslim faith of the conquerors”.³⁵⁵

Despite claims of cultural and religious pluralism within the empire³⁵⁶, the coexistence of various ethnicities, languages and creeds proved difficult. As Misha emphasises, at the end of the nineteenth century,

the *millet* system had resulted in complex demographic patterns throughout the Ottoman Empire. This may explain the confusing mixture of races, faiths and nationalities, which confronted the ‘map makers’ of Europe when they turned their minds to the Balkans in the second half of the nineteenth century”.³⁵⁷

³⁵² Doja, 427.

³⁵³ Licursi, 28.

³⁵⁴ Doja, 427.

³⁵⁵ Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 8.

³⁵⁶ George W. Gawrych, "Tolerant Dimensions of Cultural Pluralism in the Ottoman Empire: The Albanian Community, 1800-1912", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 15, no. 4, Novembre 1983.

³⁵⁷ Misha, 145.

The Porte abolished the *millet* system at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a time that *tanzimat* reforms replaced *timar*—a system that aimed to collect feudal taxes (*timars*) through the ‘holy’ Islamic soil, which was considered to be the property of Sultan.³⁵⁸

4.3 The Ottoman’s social, economic and administrative reforms in Albanian-speaking lands

Along with the *millet* system, the *timar* system lasted for more than four centuries and left an indelible mark on Albanian lands. It reduced the majority of Albanian peasants to living in poverty: “many who worked the land, pushed others off it, and contributed to the problems of feeding the [Albanian] population in troubled times”.³⁵⁹ This not only affected the land and agriculture, but also demographically re-shaped Albanian lands; creating uncertainty in the already fragile Albanian society.³⁶⁰ The Albanian middle class started to disappear, while Albanian Christians lived under the constant pressure of paying higher taxes to their chieftains and the Porte.³⁶¹ By the end of the eighteenth century, through the *timar* system chaos and anarchy reigned in the Albanian-speaking lands.³⁶² At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the religious composition of Albanian-speaking lands changed permanently in favour of Islam, whereas with exception of Bosnia, other Western Balkan countries through the *millet* policy, maintained more easily their Orthodox-religious composition.

By then, following the change in the administration of the Empire, the relationship between landowners and peasants also changed: The ‘livelihood’—a grant that was “sufficient

³⁵⁸ See for instance Karl Kaser, "Serfdom in Eastern Europe", in *Household and Family in the Balkans: Two decades of historical family research at University of Graz*, ed. Karl Kaser, Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2012, 152.

³⁵⁹ Anscombe, 95.

³⁶⁰ Ibid., 94.

³⁶¹ Christian families who lived in these territories paid 10-20 percent of harvest and several days of free service to the Sultan. See for instance Kaser, in *Household and Family in the Balkans: Two decades of historical family research at University of Graz*, 153.

³⁶² Zickel and Iwaskiw, 15.

to support a cavalryman and his horse”—*dirliks*³⁶³ started to now be organised in *çiftliks*³⁶⁴, which were given to *sipahis*.³⁶⁵ Larger villages and territories were grouped under a new system that Kaser calls “*çiflik* economy”.³⁶⁶ The Albanian clan-chieftains who had virtually become independent rulers (*beys*), often took advantage of their wealth and power and refused to pay taxes, while attacking each other.³⁶⁷

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire started to face military, economic, demographic and political challenges. While the Porte was under increasing pressure to protect itself from external powers who wished to conquer parts of their lands, difficulties of communication between people within the Empire, other external factors such as “outside interests” and the rise of nationalism on the Balkan Peninsula further weakened the Empire economically.³⁶⁸ Sultan Mahmud II was thus forced to introduce *tanzimat* reforms in 1836, in an attempt “to strengthen and modernise the state”.³⁶⁹ During the reigns of Abdülmecid I (1839-1861) and Abdülaziz (1861-1876), the *tanzimat* reforms aimed “to strengthen the Ottoman State both to resist outside pressure and to preserve inner unity by the adoption of certain Western institutions and ideas”.³⁷⁰

The *tanzimat* reform had three arms: the substitution of Ottomanism as an ideology to suppress nationalism³⁷¹, controlling corrupt provincial administration, and a change of the

³⁶³ Based on the number of *dirliks*, the *dirlik* holder was obliged to returning men, equipment and horses, upon the call of Sultan. See for instance, Tobias P. Graf, *The Sultan's Renegades: Christian-European Converts to Islam and the Making of the Ottoman Elite, 1575-1610*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2017, 39-40.

³⁶⁴ According to Karl Kaser, *çiflik* was a ‘large territory, similar to East-European domain, and based on the deteriorating legal status of peasant families.’ Those peasant Christian families encountered real difficulties living as part of a Muslim State. See for instance, Kaser, in *Household and Family in the Balkans: Two decades of historical family research at University of Graz*, 153.

³⁶⁵ Individuals included in the policy who officially owed privileges such as land given by Sultan. In exchange, *sipahis* were responsible to serve in the army and supply additional armoured soldiers from local peasants.

³⁶⁶ The more *çiftliks* concentrated in big feudal families, the more economic disparity increased. See for instance Kaser, in *Household and Family in the Balkans: Two decades of historical family research at University of Graz*, 153.

³⁶⁷ Zickel and Iwaskiw, 14.

³⁶⁸ Jelavich, 4-5.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 22.

³⁷¹ which began to rise in the Balkans at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Ottoman constitution in order to be more flexible and inclusive with regard to the non-Islamic population of the Empire. Scholars agree regarding unsuccessful *tanzimat* reforms.³⁷² The *tanzimat* seemed to be a step forward toward the establishment of the Western type of private property, however, in reality, the *tanzimat* reform “was merely an oriental ruse, and not... a serious attempt to rejuvenate the ailing Empire”.³⁷³

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the stage of expansion and establishment of the Ottoman Empire had ended. For Weiker, the insufficient political commitment to changing the Ottoman structure of society, led to a bureaucracy that was inconsistent with modernisation.³⁷⁴ As Sugar argues, the golden times of the Ottoman Empire were gradually replaced with a

need to act evasively, if not dishonestly, [that] became a necessity when the well-organised and governed Ottoman state was transformed into the chaotic and corrupt polity...It was the most corrupt, ruthless, selfish lawbreaker among the bureaucrats who prospered the most...³⁷⁵

The beginning of the nineteenth century showed that it was too late for the Ottoman Empire to survive.³⁷⁶ However, the Ottoman system not only drained resources, it also had long-term effects on Albanian lands, collecting taxes but giving little in return. Along with the *millet* system, in Albanian speaking lands, both *timar* and *tanzimat* systems primarily benefited the Sultan, and their servants—Albanian *beys*. However, Zickel and Iwaskiw in line with Morgan’s ‘badlands’ analogy, argue that during a period of more than five centuries of

³⁷² Weiker for example argues that all three areas of this reform were unsuccessful and thus, the modernisation that required the ‘abandonment of the Islamic state and [its] absolute monarchy’ failed. Weiker, 470.

³⁷³ Bureaucracy for example was also becoming very cumbersome for the Empire, and it was difficult and expensive, if not impossible for the Porte to administer Albanian-speaking living in mountainous region. See for instance Misha, 83.

³⁷⁴ Weiker, 470.

³⁷⁵ Sugar, 288.

³⁷⁶ It faced problems on a number of different fronts such as the nationalistic movements of Serbia and Greece, the Albanian revolts of “bandits” such as Ali Pashë Tepelena in the South and Kara Mahmud Pasha in the North, the Great Powers, the Russian front and more importantly, its autocratic and corrupted system that had failed to modernise. See for instance, Anscombe. Sugar, 287-90.

Ottoman rule, “the Albanian lands remained one of Europe’s most backward areas”.³⁷⁷ How did the Ottomans transform Albanian-speaking lands to badlands?

4.4 The Ottoman impact on the Albanian speaking lands: demographic, social and environmental effects

Vryonis establishes that the Ottoman advance in Albania at the end of the fourteenth century was at a later stage of their transformation from nomadic *Seljuks* with a deep-rooted destructive behaviour to a more “sedentary” Ottoman culture.³⁷⁸ The Ottomans’ political goal was to conquer more land, but when they entered Albania, the environment shocked them. Two thirds of Albanian-speaking lands were mountainous and not arable at all; and half of the flat land was prone to flooding from the Adriatic Sea on the coastline and inland rivers.³⁷⁹ The Ottomans did not have the time, nor were they interested in recovering the Albanian wetlands, as they wanted simply to conquer arable land with a minimum effort. By the time all Albanian powerful families fell to the Sultan, the iron rule caused terror in Albanian lands. After the death of Skenderbeg in 1468, many Christian Albanians in fear for their lives were forced to migrate to Italy and neighbouring European countries. This forced migration significantly changed the demographics of the Albanian lands. It caused a considerable brain drain effect as demonstrated by the loss of educated Albanians such as the historian Marin Barleti (1458-1512), scientists and philosophers (Gjon Gazulli (1400-1465), Maksim Arioti (1480-1556) and Leonik Tomeu (1456-1531) who continued to work in Italy or elsewhere, rather than assisting with knowledge and skills in the development of Albania.

It is a fact that the main aim of the Porte was to collect taxes and give little in return; failing even to maintain the existing infrastructure, let alone creating development policies. Lack of such policies caused the destruction of the most economically developed Albanian cities of Shkodër, Lezhë, Krujë, Durrës and Vlorë at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

³⁷⁷ Zickel and Iwaskiw, 14.

³⁷⁸ Theoretically, the ‘destructive tendency’ of *Seljuks* was supposed to be restrained by a well-organised and centralised Ottoman State. See for instance Vryonis, 263.

³⁷⁹ A large part of today’s Albanian *myzeqe* flatland from Vlorë to Durrës had no drainage and thus, was transformed into giant, filthy, permanent lakes that introduced wide scale malaria.

Others, such as Deja, Drishti and Sarda, disappeared altogether.³⁸⁰ The Ottoman rulers never had total control of the Albanian speaking lands, nor were they interested in protecting the Albanian cities and their inhabitants, unless the Albanian “bandits” threatened the Sublime Porte.³⁸¹ The Porte turned a blind eye at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a time that rivalry between *ayans*³⁸² brought about more tension and unfair commerce in Albanian speaking lands; resulting in a disastrous situation of *reaya* who not only suffered due to malaria and other infection diseases, but also a shortage of food due to uneven arable land distribution.³⁸³ By the beginning of the nineteenth century, there was a complete failure by the Porte to establish economic and social order in Albanian speaking lands.

4.5 The Ottoman infrastructure development in Albanian lands

Another area that has received scarce attention from the Porte was infrastructure, which only included military and religious constructions. For the State, the term “infrastructure” in Albania was limited to the construction of bridges to connect fortifications, city castles and fortress-walls. Other scholars such as Charles and Jelavich agree with the concept of ‘badlands’. As they discuss, by 1912, “Albania had remained one of the most backward areas of the empire ... there were only about 200 kilometres of paved roads”.³⁸⁴ A significant proportion of these was Via Egnatia³⁸⁵, which the Ottomans took advantage in using it, but they did not maintain

³⁸⁰ Local Albanians who found themselves rivals and in total ignorance sold part of their cultural heritage such as sculptures, paintings and other religious objects in return for a few ounces of gold. After ten years of feudal anarchy, rape, warfare and devastation, in 1780, the most developed Albanian town of 40,000 inhabitants, Voskopojë, completely disappeared.

³⁸¹ Anscombe, 103.

³⁸² Deputy Governors. For more information see for instance Gabor Agoston and Bruce Masters, *Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire*, New York: Facts on File Library of World History, 2009, 65.

³⁸³ When a *sancak*’s (a district, which derives from the Arabic word, flag or banner) governor felt threatened by another feudal family and asked The Porte for help, the Ottomans showed little ‘interest in investigating matters of justice’ and thus, the *sancak* was often given to a stronger feudal family. For the state, the main priority was the collection of taxes and therefore, the control of a *sancak* often reverted to another governor. See for instance Anscombe, 93-103.

³⁸⁴ Jelavich, in *A History of East Central Europe*, 223.

³⁸⁵ A road built by the Roman Empire, which at one time was considered as “the biggest nexus between East and West”. See for instance Mehmet Bulut and Mesut Idriz, *Turkish Albanian Macedonian Relations: Past, Present and Future*, Ankara: Adam-Actor, 2012, 9.

it, nor did they construct alternative roads. A few longer stone-arch bridges built between 1770 and 1780 were used for military purposes, while they also facilitated the transport of people and their goods. However, due to lack of road construction, remote Albanian areas continued to be connected via historical routes maintained by locals. Transport, travel and commercial exchange remained sparse due the challenge of almost non-existent civilian infrastructure.

As discussed previously, select powerful Albanian pashas enjoyed the privileges of the *tanzimat* reforms and the support of the Sublime Porte. They were able to use the support of the Porte to resolve their rivalries and gain wealth and power. The conflict of Ahmet Kurt Pasha (Ali Pasha's grandfather) and Mehmet Pasha Bushati at the end of the eighteenth century can serve as an example.³⁸⁶ However, with the exception of religious and military infrastructure, the Ottomans played no more than a passive role in all other developments. This suggests they were focussed on taxes, rather than stimulating or planning the development of Albanian cities and improving living conditions.

The Porte benefited from all of the existing infrastructure in Albania, but it can be argued the Ottomans invested in religious and military policies. Upon their arrival in the Albanian speaking lands, the Ottomans introduced their faith, Islam. The religious orientation of Albania and the influence of *Sunni* and *Bektashi* Islam 'exported' to Albania by the Ottomans will be discussed later in this chapter. For the Porte, Albanian infrastructure came second to religious and military advancement, therefore, the Ottomans invested in erecting Islamic buildings such as mosques and *madrasas*.³⁸⁷ After the death of Skenderbeg, a number of mosques, unknown in Albania, started to appear: The Mosque of Gjin Aleks (1450) Delvinë, Mirahorit (1496) Korçë, Plumbit (1553-1554) Berat, Muradijes (1570) Vlorë, Nazireshtes (1600) Elbasan, Daut Pasha (1605) Prizren and the Ethem Beu (1794) Tiranë. The Mosque complex (1820) in Peqin started to integrate the concept of religious services with more inclusive facilities for people such as local bazars (in Albanian called *pazars*) and small artisan shops.

³⁸⁶ Ahmet Kurt Pasha managed to gain the support of the Sultan to create the *pashalik* of Berat in 1774. To strengthen his reputation and gain more power from the local people, Ahmet Pasha built the Gorica Bridge over the Osum River between 1777-1780 and Rüfai *teqe* that was then used by the *bektashi* order. The third Head Vezir of Albania and the pasha of Shkodra, Kara Mahmud Pasha, could not afford to stay behind his *tosk* rivals and, in 1780, built the longest Albanian Bridge of Mesi (around 108 meters near Shkodër), connecting his *pashalik* with Prishtina.

³⁸⁷ Schools for training primarily jurists, but also preparing teachers of Sunni school of law.

The Albanian occupation by the Ottomans commenced while the Byzantine Empire was falling apart and was fully conquered by the House of Osman on 29 May 1453, after the fall of Constantinople. A couple of months later, Sultan Mehmet II – “the Conqueror”, decided to expand the Ottoman Empire further into Europe.³⁸⁸ During the second half of the fifteenth century the attack of Europe through Albania never happened, and Albanian resistance under Skenderbeg was the main reason for this. However, things changed after the death of Skenderbeg and the power rise of Sultan Süleyman I at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Due to logistic issues and the difficulties of consolidating a large force, which was far from the major centres of Ottoman power, in 1529, the Ottomans failed to conquer Vienna. As a result of this failure, the Sultan decided to place more attention to Albania, from where the Ottomans launched a direct attack to Southern Italy in 1537, expecting a promised French attack in the north, with the objective of a combined conquest of Italy.³⁸⁹ But Yapp and Shaw argue that France withheld the diversion, fearing a hostile European reaction to its alliance.³⁹⁰

In line with these attacks, the objective of the Porte was to build a permanent military structure in Albanian lands. Despite arguments about the ambiguous role of France to support the Ottomans, scholars agree that the political aim of the Sultan was to expand the Ottoman Empire to the West.³⁹¹ Barleti is convinced that “the key of conquering Rome” was to firstly take Epirus, as the only way for the Sultan to achieve his goal.³⁹² The geographic proximity of Albania and Italy explains the Sultan’s decision of building permanent military structures in Albanian lands. Some examples were the sophisticated castle of Vlorë that was built by Sultan Süleyman in 1531; the castles of Ishmi (Durrës), which was built in 1574; the castles of Tepelenë, Gjirokastër, Butrint and later, fortification walls in the castles of Janine, Preveze, Sul, Arte and Porto-Palermo. Military fortifications were followed by some small bridges such as the Prizren, Miraka (Librazhd), Tanners and the Kollorcës (near Gjirokastër), which were merely constructed to connect military fortifications.

³⁸⁸ Payton, 12.

³⁸⁹ Malcolm Edward Yapp and Stanford Jay Shaw, "Ottoman Empire: Historical Empire, Eurasia and Africa", *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 30 May 2018, accessed 27 July 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Ottoman-Empire>.

³⁹⁰ Ibid.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² Barleti, 56.

4.6 Albanian political stability under the Ottoman rule

Given the divisions among Albanians, it could be argued that the Porte offered more political stability to Albanian lands. However, it is important to remember the Porte controlled access to resources. This included the political power of Albanian notables such as Ali Pashë Tepelena of Janinë and Kara Mahmud Pasha at Shkodër, who both became more aggressive in their attempts to secure wealth and power in the period from 1770-1790. The rivalry between Albanian notables “caused rising impoverishment and misery in both town and country”.³⁹³ Their increased wealth and power became critical for the Porte, as these pashas started to revolt against the Porte at the beginning of the nineteenth century. As Anscombe describes these developments, they “shook to its foundations Istanbul’s structure of provincial authority”³⁹⁴, and forced the Porte to take quick actions in order to repair the damage.³⁹⁵ By that time, Albanian peasants were under the pressure to pay taxes to the Sultan, which was an extremely difficult task for people surviving in an environment where even “in the best of times, the conditions of life found in regions inhabited primarily by Albanians were tough”.³⁹⁶ The Porte’s inaction in combating the banditry the Balkans had been exposed to since the end of the eighteenth century, caused profound destruction of commerce and “changes in the urban and rural economy”.³⁹⁷ It can be argued that physical distance contributed to the Ottoman’s inability to adequately address the issue of lawlessness and security in Albanian mountains, let alone larger issues such as order and prosperity of the entire area.³⁹⁸ Thus, I argue that during the period of occupation, there were many times when order and stability were challenged. The period of Skenderbeg in the fifteenth century, the time of Ali Pasha’s rule at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and the *rilindja* period at the end of nineteenth and the beginning of the

³⁹³ Anscombe, 106.

³⁹⁴ Ibid.

³⁹⁵ The Ottoman army ended both revolts in the South and North but did not save Albanian lands from economic insecurity and poverty.

³⁹⁶ Anscombe, 92.

³⁹⁷ Ibid., 106.

³⁹⁸ The Porte often turned a blind eye or supported the stronger side in the ongoing fights between Albanian notables and was quick to change alliances if the balance of power shifted, or if their own interests changed. See for instance *ibid.*, 104.

twentieth century, are some clear examples that show the paradox of the Ottoman rule in Albania: Not only did the Porte fail to restore political stability in the Albanian speaking lands, Albanians, while serving the Porte, at times also challenged its rule.

4.7 The Ottoman's political aim to halt Albanian nationalism and creation of an 'Albanian nation'

The Albanians were struggling to be recognized as a different ethnicity not only from Great Powers and their neighbors: The Porte did everything to halt Albanian's secession from the Ottoman territories, which at the end of the nineteenth century become eminent. On 1 July 1878, Albanian chieftains representing four *vilayets* of Kosovo, Janina, Shkodër and Manastir convened the "League for the Defense of Rights of the Albanian Nation"³⁹⁹, known as the Prizren League. The Prizren League was able to secure support from the Ottomans, as it aimed to unite all Albanian territories under the sovereignty of the Sultan ruling and thus, asked for a Turkish governor general to rule Albanian speaking territories.⁴⁰⁰ Originally, all requests of the League leaders were in line with the Porte. However, leaders of the Prizren League had differing opinions regarding whether they should continue to accept the rule of the Sultan in the Albanian-speaking lands. The conservative faction under the leadership of Abdyl Frashëri (1839-1892) desired autonomy from the Porte. Nevertheless, despite lack of unity between Albanians⁴⁰¹, the Prizren League carried out Albanian military actions against Serbia and Montenegro for nearly three years. In the end, the Sultan refused to grant the League's requests, and the League was brutally crushed by Ottomans in 1881, but not until after realizing its aim of secession from the Porte.⁴⁰² The Prizren League entered Albania's epic songs⁴⁰³ as a

³⁹⁹ David Binder, "Greater albania?", *Washington Times*, 17 February 1999, accessed 17 May 2012, <http://0-proquest-umi-.com-.alpha2-.latrobe-.edu-.au/pqdlink-?did=39024982-&Fmt=3-&clientId=20828-&RQT=309-&VName=PQD>; Jelavich, in *A History of East Central Europe*, 224.

⁴⁰⁰ Binder, 17 February 1999, <http://0-proquest-umi-.com-.alpha2-.latrobe-.edu-.au/pqdlink-?did=39024982-&Fmt=3-&clientId=20828-&RQT=309-&VName=PQD>.

⁴⁰¹ Jelavich, in *A History of East Central Europe*, 224.

⁴⁰² Ibid.

⁴⁰³ Rilindja writer's songs, and poems are included in Albanian schoolbook texts, while they became part of the Albanian pop folklore. See Gëzim Rredhi, *Epika historike kushtuar Lidhjes Shqiptare të Prizrenit [Historical Epics dedicated to The Albanian Prizren League]*, vol. II (Gjirokaster: Universiteti 'Eqerem Çabej'), 133-8.

representation of Albania's diplomatic, political and military resistance. This also marked the start of the consolidation of Albanian nationalism, raising the question of an Albanian nation-state. Therefore, as Morgan has identified, "the seeds of Albanian political nationalism had been sown".⁴⁰⁴

On 4 July 1908, the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), one of the main factions of the Young Turk forces, openly challenged the Sultan and demanded the restitution of the 1876 constitution; the establishment of a parliamentary system which was to be generated as a result of free elections, and the change of the state structure in order to guarantee more ethnic unity "irrespective of nationality or religion".⁴⁰⁵ On 24 July 1908 the Sultan, Abdul Hamid capitulated and announced the restoration of a new constitution. As Pearson discusses, Albanian leaders who represented Albanian speaking lands during the Parliamentary session in December 1908 sided against the Sultan and supported the Young Turks, who promised democratic parliamentary reforms which would deliver "religious freedom, free education, freedom of the press, freedom of speech and assembly".⁴⁰⁶ However, the only reform realized was the freedom of the press.⁴⁰⁷ According to Psilos, disappointed by the Young Turks and conscious of the risk their neighbors professed, Albanians started to unify their anti-Turkish movement, which in 1909, sparked on different fronts.⁴⁰⁸ The reaction of the Porte was immediate. In April 1910 General Turgut Pasha led a new military campaign against the Albanians, aiming to restore order, collect overdue taxes, and disarm the Albanian tribes to stop them from generating more trouble. The Ottoman anti-Albanian campaign reached its peak in the summer of 1910 when martial law was proclaimed, Albanian political leaders such as Feim Bey Zavalani and Bekir Suleiman Effendi were killed, and many others forced into exile. The Ottoman campaign that aimed to "denationalise the south" and "destroy northern

⁴⁰⁴ Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 11.

⁴⁰⁵ Psilos, 29.

⁴⁰⁶ Pearson, *Albania and King Zog: Independence, Republic and Monarchy, 1908-1939*, 2.

⁴⁰⁷ Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 11; Pearson, *Albania and King Zog: Independence, Republic and Monarchy, 1908-1939*, 2.

⁴⁰⁸ The Albanian resistance during 1909-1910 was not only militarily oriented. In November 1908, Manastir congress demanded the recognition of the Albanian language; Tepelena convention that was held on the 4th of February 1909, demanded protection from the Hellenic expansionist program of Epirus, and the Albanian autonomy; Dibër congress on 23 July 1909, requested the Albanian latin alphabet, an education policy and a fair appointment of civil administrators that had a minimum knowledge of the Albanian culture, *doke e zakone*; Elbasan congress on 2 September 1909, reinforced the demand for an Albanian language and culture affiliation that underpinned a direct recognition of an Albanian entity. See Psilos, 31-7.

Albania” came to an end in October 1910, leaving Albania in total “devastation and anarchy”.⁴⁰⁹ It is important to note that while Albania had been crushed by the Ottoman campaign, the country had not been united by this defeat. Glenney Misha points out the Albanian tribal fragmentations; divisions between *gegs* and *tosks* in culture and language, and their lack of an independent church, was further “exacerbated by the divide-and-rule policy of the late Ottoman sultans and the Young Turks”.⁴¹⁰

However, from this point onwards, the Albanian uprising started to consolidate and intensify. As discussed by Pearson, on 23 June 1911, from the assembly of Greçë in Montenegro, the leaders of the Albanian uprising wrote to the Turkish Cabinet; demanding “territorial and administrative autonomy for all areas inhabited by Albanians, before they would consider a cease-fire”.⁴¹¹ On 3 July 1911, the Sultan signed a decree of amnesty but the Albanian insurgents refused to return home.⁴¹² The Albanian *Malissori* chieftains, Bajram Curri, Hasan Prishtina, Riza Gjakova, Idriz Seferi and Isa Boletini united approximately 30,000 Albanian troops for another year. On 9 August 1912, the insurgents of northern Albania sent a memorandum to the Sultan with fourteen demands, similar to that of Greçë.⁴¹³ Other Albanian leaders increased pressure from the South and captured the towns of Durrës, Krujë and Peshkopi in the *vilayet*⁴¹⁴ of Shkodër, and Fier and Përmet in the *vilayet* of Janina. Pearson

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid., 37.

⁴¹⁰ This thesis will later discuss how Albanian speaking lands lacked unity since middle ages due to cultural differences between geg and tosk communities; their religion shifted from Roman Catholics to Orthodox Byzantines, to then finally accept the new faith introduced by Ottomans: Islam; The Ottoman policies at the beginning of the twenty-first century halted the use of the Albanian language: the main ‘national identity’ bonding element. See Misha, 415.

⁴¹¹ Demands such as the recognition of the Albanian nationality, free Albanian language, administrative and political self-governance, police agents and gendarmes within Albanian territories should be exclusively Albanians, taxes collected should be used for Albanian needs, ‘economic and cultural advancement of the Albanian people’; a general amnesty should be granted for all Albanians, ‘Moslems and Christians, who have been sentenced for political reasons’. See for instance Pearson, *Albania and King Zog: Independence, Republic and Monarchy, 1908-1939*, 18.

⁴¹² Ibid., 19.

⁴¹³ Ibid., 26.

⁴¹⁴ Under the Ottoman rule, the Albanian-speaking lands were divided in four provinces (in Turkish vilayets): Kosovo, Scutari, Monastir and Janina.

argues that this increasing pressure forced the Sultan to cede to some Albanian demands, although he still refused to grant autonomy to Albania.⁴¹⁵

Albanian nationalism, which was transformed in armed resistance was now becoming a serious challenge for both the Porte and Balkan nationalism, who according to Pearson, attempted to hijack the Albanian resistance. An example was the Albanian uprising of North Albania and Kosovo that in autumn 1912, was instigated by “a Serbian terrorist organisation”—the Black Hand Society. Its leader Dragutin Dimitrijevic encouraged Isa Boletini and his Kosovar Albanian followers in their revolt against the Turks; promising them help.⁴¹⁶ Some Albanians realised the danger of separation from the Turks, but by then it was too late:

Far from fulfilling their promises to help the Albanians to liberty, the Serbian and Montenegrin armies fell upon them. The Albanians were trapped and unable to obtain ammunition from either side; the Serbs and Montenegrins massacred them wholesale.⁴¹⁷

This massacre led to a perception among Albanians that the Ottomans had failed to protect “the interest of their still subject Albanian Muslims”.⁴¹⁸ It also furthered the anxiety created by the Balkan League agreement⁴¹⁹ which the Albanian leaders interpreted to be not only anti Turkish, but also anti-Albanian. As Pearson points out:

...none of the other Balkan States wished to see an independent Albania, but rather envisaged the partition of Albania between them. Thus, they hastened to precipitate war with Turkey, the purpose of which was the annexation of Albanian-inhabited territories that were under Turkish rule.”⁴²⁰

⁴¹⁵ Pearson, *Albania and King Zog: Independence, Republic and Monarchy, 1908-1939*, 26.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid., 27.

⁴¹⁷ Boletini and Albanians were deceived as Serbs tricked Albanians; trying to separate Turks from Albanians, while using the later to drive the Turks from Kosovo. See *ibid.*, 28.

⁴¹⁸ Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 11.

⁴¹⁹ Under the auspicious of Russia in spring 1912 Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece signed an agreement to create ‘The Balkan League’, which aimed to fight the Ottoman oppressors and drive Macedonian lands out of Turkish dominion.

⁴²⁰ Pearson, *Albania and King Zog: Independence, Republic and Monarchy, 1908-1939*, 27.

Albanian nationalism was confused and scared to detach itself from the Porte. Sensing a Turkish withdrawal⁴²¹ and knowing the aim of the Balkan League, without any support from the Great Powers, Albanians were left with little choice. They were forced “to fight for the Turks against their Balkan neighbors”.⁴²²

The first Balkan War broke out on 8 October 1912, and the danger for the Albanian controlled lands was imminent. The following month, on 28 November 1912, Ismail Qemali declared Albanian independence, which formally ended the Ottoman occupation of Albanian territories. This meant that “469 years to the day after the return of Skenderbeg into his capital at Krujë, and for the first time since 1468 their [Albanian] country was free from Turkish rule”.⁴²³ While exhausted Turkish troops gradually started to retire from Albanian *vilayets* to mark the end of the Ottoman era in Albania, anxiety among Albanian leaders increased, as Albania’s neighbours were already making moves to fill the vacuum left by the Ottomans. As Jelavich points out:

Certainly, Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro and Serbia showed not the slightest hesitation or moral qualm in planning the partition of Albanian lands.⁴²⁴

Furthermore, Albania found itself in the middle of competing powers. For Skendi, Austro-Hungary and Italy were competing for more influence in the northwest and Adriatic⁴²⁵, while Edith Durham in 1919, mentions that Austria/Hungary and Russia were deeply opposed to an Albanian nation-state and would sacrifice the formation of an Albanian state in favour of their allies’ interests in the Balkans.⁴²⁶

⁴²¹ Ibid., 2.

⁴²² Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 11.

⁴²³ Pearson, *Albania and King Zog: Independence, Republic and Monarchy, 1908-1939*, 34.

⁴²⁴ Jelavich, in *A History of East Central Europe*, 320.

⁴²⁵ Skendi, 238-56.

⁴²⁶ Mary Edith Durham, "Albania and Powers", *Contemporary Review*, no. 119, July/December 1919, 41.

4.8 Albanian language and the written word within the Ottoman Empire

The enforced language of the Empire— “Osmanlica”, was used for administrative purposes. It was incomprehensible to the majority of Turks⁴²⁷, and even more to the Albanians who were required to learn and use this foreign language, very different from their own. Trained teachers and religious clerics taught the Turkish language in state schools and *metjebes* in order to offer an education that was based on Islam. The aim of the State was to impose Islam as a holistic theory and practice through Turkish language. Indeed, the Turkish language introduced knowledge, skills, Turkish culture and religion into Albania.

While the official language for all Ottoman conquered lands was Turkish, the Greeks and Serbs were permitted to use their own written and spoken language. However, this was not the case for Albanians. As Albanians were considered either Turks or Orthodox *millet*, the official language in all spheres of the Albanian speaking lands was Turkish and Greek. This rule extended to all schools and religious rituals. The Albanian language was only permitted to be spoken. The Ottomans “did not allow native Albanian schools, nor reading and writing of Albanian”⁴²⁸ until 1880, a time when Albanian nationalism, and with it the demand for the use of the Albanian language started to increase. Until the mid-nineteenth century, The Porte did not have a policy with regards to education in Albania, and policies of the Ottoman Empire prevented Albanian speakers from developing their independent language system.⁴²⁹ Nevertheless, the Albanian spoken language, used in Albanian folklore, songs and epics survived across generations to provide what Smith considers the basis for the creation of a nation.

The rise of nationalism after the Prizren League was immediate, and in 1879, the Society of the Printing of Albanian Writings was founded in Constantinople. The main goal of this society “was to establish a[n Albanian] standard language which would lead to the publication of books, journals, and newspapers...”⁴³⁰ From 14 to 22 November 1908, under the presidency of the son of Abdyl Frashëri, Mit’hat Bey Frashëri, the Congress of Monastir

⁴²⁷ Sugar, 271.

⁴²⁸ Janet Byron, *Selection among alternates in language standartization: The case of Albanian*, Netherlands: Mouton &Co, 1976, 39.

⁴²⁹ Zickel and Iwaskiw, 71.

⁴³⁰ Jelavich, in *A History of East Central Europe*, 225.

(Bitola) not only worked on a standardisation of the Albanian language, its alphabet and orthography, but also appointed the committee of a national union that aimed for “an autonomous Albania within the Turkish empire, which was to include the four *vilayets* of Shkodër, Kosovë, Monastir and Janina”.⁴³¹ Despite some Albanian Muslim leaders of the North who, inspired by the Young Turks, preferred the scripts of the Koran, the Bitola Congress decided to use the Latin alphabet to transliterate the Albanian language.

The role of language in nation building processes is well known.⁴³² Wright discusses language as a vehicle of unification analysing the French case. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, French people adopted a Vulgar Latin and Roman Gaul type of oral language. The expansion of the Kingdom also introduced the German, Dutch, Catalan and Italian languages, however, the decision to introduce French as the official language in 1539, created a linguistic homogeneity, and also reinforced the French national identity.⁴³³ As Wright puts it, “when a culture production is language-bound it serves to reinforce the homogeneity of the group and mark difference”.⁴³⁴

It has often been argued that until the mid-nineteenth century, Albanian speaking people could not unite on an ethnic, religious or any other type of platform. The Albanian language— “very distinct from the languages of its direct (Slav and Greek) neighbours—was the only element that could bridge the differences between religious and regional identities”.⁴³⁵ Therefore, despite differences in syntax, lexicon, phonology and morphology between *geg* and *tosk* dialects⁴³⁶, the Albanian language was the main pillar of the ‘bridge’ that united Albanians. The translation of the bible by Kostandin Kristoforidhi (1827-1895), in a hybrid of Albanian language that represented both *geg* and *tosk* dialects was an indication of the possibility for Albanians to unite using a collective language. As Misha discusses, the Albanians “were united

⁴³¹ Pearson, *Albania and King Zog: Independence, Republic and Monarchy, 1908-1939*, 3.

⁴³² Sue Wright, *Community and Communication: The role of language in nation state building and European integration, Multilingual Matters LTD*, Clevedon, Buffalo, Toronto and Sydney: Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data, 2000, 25.

⁴³³ *Ibid.*, 35-6.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁴³⁵ Ger Duijzings, "Religion and the politics of 'Albanianism': Naim Frasheri's bektashi writings", in *Albanian Identities: Myth and History* ed. Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers and Bernd Jurgen Fischer, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002, 61.

⁴³⁶ Byron, 43.

only by the disaster threatened by the slow collapse of the Ottoman Empire and by their language – Albanian”.⁴³⁷ Thus, the Albanian language became an essential vehicle to unite Albanian identity.

In line with this claim, this study argues that the Albanian speaking community was united by a ‘language bond’ that was unique and different from the Ottoman language, a fact the Porte feared. As a result of this, on 23 July 1909, the Young Turks organised the congress of Dibër with two objectives: to gather Albanian support instead of separatism, and to force writing the Albanian language using the Arabic alphabet. Despite their inferior position compared to the Porte, Albanians “gained complete control of the proceedings”; reversing both requests to their favour. The Dibër congress agreed, “...the Albanian language should be taught freely”⁴³⁸ in a Latin alphabet. However, The Porte did not give up and on 19 February 1910, Young Turks organised another congress in Monastir, pressuring Albanian *hoxhas* to reverse the decision to use the Latin alphabet and replace it with the Arabic alphabet, in line with “the religious law and the interests of Islam”.⁴³⁹ The support of *mullahs*⁴⁴⁰, who were trained in law and theology using the Arabic characters, caused resentment in schools around Albania. Nevertheless, it should be noted that not all Albanian *hoxhas* supported the Arabic alphabet. An example was the Moslem *hoxha*, Hafiz Ali, who on the same day that the *mullahs* opposed the Latin alphabet, recited a prayer and blessed a crowd of 15,000 people at Korçë; agreeing with protesters that the Albanian letters in Latin “should be retained and that the question of the alphabet had no connection with religion”.⁴⁴¹

The second congress of Monastir (21-23 March 1910) established endorsement of the Latin alphabet as easier to use, as all Catholic schools were teaching in Latin. After a letter from the Supreme Moslem authority of Albania on 22 March 1910, demanding the use of the Arabic alphabet, the Turkish Ministry of Education tried to prevent the implementation of the Latin alphabet.⁴⁴² As stated by a Grand Vezir in March 1910: “The government must do

⁴³⁷ Misha, 151.

⁴³⁸ Pearson, *Albania and King Zog: Independence, Republic and Monarchy, 1908-1939*, 7.

⁴³⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁴⁴⁰ A *mullah* is a Muslim individual who is a religious teacher or leader; the word is also used as a title of respect.

⁴⁴¹ Pearson, *Albania and King Zog: Independence, Republic and Monarchy, 1908-1939*, 9.

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*, 10.

everything, and will do everything, to prevent the adoption of the Latin alphabet”⁴⁴³ in Albania. This is a clear sign of the importance the Ottomans placed on the suppression of the Albanian language. The Albanian language was the strongest element to unite all Albanians, despite religious differences.⁴⁴⁴

4.9 Albanian language trapped between the objectives of the State and Orthodox schools

The Albanian language was trapped by political aims of the Porte and Patriarchate. While the Ottoman schools through the Turkish language taught Islam, the Orthodox schools in Albania used the Greek language as a vehicle “of Hellenization”.⁴⁴⁵ The establishment of secular Albanian schools were opposed by both the Ottoman government and the Patriarchate.⁴⁴⁶ The Ottomans feared the autonomy of the Albanian people, whereas the Patriarchate, in response to the issue with the Bulgarian Exarchate⁴⁴⁷, feared the same separation within the Albanian Orthodox Church.⁴⁴⁸ These attacks on the use of the Albanian language confirms how central the language was considered to be for the unification of Albanians. At the end of the nineteenth century, the sharp rise of Albanian nationalism enabled the establishment of Albanian schools in the *pashalik* of *Janina* and thus, an opportunity for perpetuation of the Albanian language arose. Due to this pressure, the first Albanian school for boys—*Mësonjëtorja* opened after long negotiations with the State on 7 March 1887 at Korçë, followed by a school for girls four years later. However, Albanian schools were immediately attacked by both the State and the Patriarchate. The Greek Orthodox Church “excommunicated” students who attended the new schools. The Ottoman government went one step further in trying to eliminate Albanian

⁴⁴³ Stavro Skendi, *The Albanian National Awakening, 1878-1912*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967, 115, in Jelavich, *A History of East Central Europe*, 226.

⁴⁴⁴ Duijzings, "Religion and the politics of 'Albanianism': Naim Frasheri's bektashi writings", in *Albanian Identities: Myth and History*, 61.

⁴⁴⁵ Jelavich, in *A History of East Central Europe*, 226.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁷ The creation of Bulgarian Exarchate in the mid-nineteenth century was a result of the Bulgarian Orthodox struggling with the influence of the Orthodox Greeks in the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Therefore, the Rum Orthodox *millet* was divided at the end of the nineteenth century, to now include a Bulgarian *millet*.

⁴⁴⁸ Jelavich, in *A History of East Central Europe*, 226.

education by deciding in 1902, to ban all books written in Albanian, and disallowing any form of communication in the Albanian language.⁴⁴⁹ Any attempt to learn the Albanian language was completely suppressed by the State. However, the more the Ottomans applied pressure to suppress the Albanian language, the more Albanians defied the State and learned their language secretly in *bektashi teqes* in the Centre and the South, or churches in the North. As part of the campaign against the Albanian language, both Ottomans and Greek persecuted Albanian teachers. Albanian Awakening, *rilindja*, leaders such as Papa Kristo Negovani – a priest who taught Albanian in his church – and Pandeli Sotiri, who although he graduated in Greece, contributed to the propagation of the Albanian language, were both killed by the Orthodox Church as they defied both the Porte and the Greek Patriarchate. Other Albanian language teachers suffered the same fate: Petro Nini Luarasi, Gjerasim Qiriazi, Baba Duda Karbunara, Hamdi Ohri, Siad Hoxha, Balil Tahiri and Sotir Ollani were killed or at best sent to exile by the State and the *Rum* church.⁴⁵⁰

The situation in North Albania was quite different. As state schools in the North were almost non-existent, Catholic Albanians were studying in Austrian and Italian schools which, at the time, were more popular than state schools. In contrast to the Muslim and Orthodox schools, the curriculum in Catholic schools was delivered in the Albanian language.⁴⁵¹ The Italian schools appeared to be more professional and better equipped supported by both the Italian government and the Vatican. However, the Austrians soon started to compete with the Italian schools, which were spreading from the North to the Centre of Albania. As became apparent over time, both Habsburg and Italian schools had political and religious aims, which were similar to those of the Ottomans and Greeks. According to Blumi, the two Catholic nations, Italy and Austria, used education as a tool to strengthen their influence in Albania, and thus, advance their main aim of counteracting Slavic influences in the region.⁴⁵²

The State recognised the importance of the Albanian language and attempted to destroy it. By 1909, the Young Turks became alarmed at the nationalistic spirit of the Albanians and began systematic persecution. They suspended the constitutional guarantees, shut down

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid., 227.

⁴⁵⁰ Isa Blumi, "The role of education in the formation of Albanian identity and its myths", in *Albanian Identities: Myth and History* ed. Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers and Bernd Jurgen Fischer, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002, 55.

⁴⁵¹ Jelavich, in *A History of East Central Europe*, 226.

⁴⁵² Ibid., 227.

Albanian schools and clubs, and suppressed newspapers and magazines. Many Albanian leaders fled the country or were imprisoned.⁴⁵³ On 2 September 1909, despite consistent attempts by the Young Turks to prevent it, the Albanian leaders organised the Elbasan Congress to discuss the education system. The Congress adopted Monastir's findings that embraced writing of the Albanian language in Latin characters and teaching it in all Albanian schools; identifying an immediate need to train Albanian teachers. Based on the last recommendation, on 1 December 1909, a training college – the Elbasan College – opened. Luigj Gurakuqi was appointed Principal and the rest of the teachers and children were Muslims and Christians.⁴⁵⁴ However, preparation of Albanian teachers started prior to the establishment of Elbasan College, when Kostandin Kristoforidhi secretly trained future teachers at Elbasan and Voskopojë. While the Albanian language survived the assimilation attempt of the Ottoman rulers, the Ottoman religion, Islam, was widespread in Albania.

4.10 The Ottoman-Islamic polity: Conversions to Islam

Since the eleventh century, sedentary Turks started to replace nomadic Seljuks—a trend that continued until the nineteenth century.⁴⁵⁵ Therefore, tribal chieftains, the highest level of a formal Turkish society, were slowly converting to “rulers of non-nomadic states”.⁴⁵⁶ The Ottoman-Islamic polity was built on the Turkish-nomadic-pastoralism culture to that of ‘*jihad* against Christians’, in an attempt to establish elements of Islamic culture in every aspect of life such as agriculture, education, arts, crafts, religion, commerce, which in short, would contribute to the entertainment, peace and security for the House of Osman.⁴⁵⁷ The Islamic religion element became a strong pillar for the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottomans believed in Prophet Muhammad and preached a monotheist religion that included elements of Jewish, Christian, traditional Arabic and some additional Turkish

⁴⁵³ Pearson, *Albania and King Zog: Independence, Republic and Monarchy, 1908-1939*, 3.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid., 8.

⁴⁵⁵ Vryonis, 261.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid.p. 259.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.p. 263.

customs.⁴⁵⁸ The Ottoman society, according to Misha, was divided in two classes: *reaya*⁴⁵⁹ and *askeri*⁴⁶⁰ and those monotheists who acknowledged Islam as fundamental and were happy to live in a Muslim state under the Ottoman rule were considered as *zimmi* (protected people). For Ottomans, the Islamic element played an important role in the Balkans, as Muslim people, regardless of their ethnic background, enjoyed the same privileges within the Empire. In the case of Albania where the Albanian language was prohibited by the Porte, Albanians were forced to become Turks, or be assimilated in Greeks.

It is often argued that Albanians started to convert to Islam, as it was easier for them to live as Muslims rather than Christians within the Ottoman Empire. There was certainly great economic, political and psychological pressure, to convert. Under Ottoman legislation, life was hard for Christian Albanians, as they did not enjoy the same rights as their Muslim compatriots. In short, Doja argues, due to “a cultural situation severely affected by the brutal and harrowing intrusion of ideological, political and foreign domination”⁴⁶¹, Albanians did not have much of a choice.

The State imposed policies of Sunni Islam that were based on the *sharia* law, which privileged Muslims and, disadvantaged Christians. For example, as Misha discusses, if a Muslim physically injured a Christian, it was enough for the former to pay a ‘blood tax’ to the *kadi*⁴⁶² in order to avoid Court hearing.⁴⁶³ Not only this was not possible for Christians, they could not serve in the high ranks of military, or in bureaucracy and diplomacy (which were highly paid jobs), nor were they rewarded by the Sultan with more *çifliks*, rather they were forced to pay a big *haraç*⁴⁶⁴ to the Sultan. Christians were also required periodically to provide one healthy male child to be converted to Islam and trained either for the Ottoman

⁴⁵⁸ Sugar, 4.

⁴⁵⁹ *Reaya* encompassed approximately 90 per cent of the Empire’s ordinary-subjects, such as merchants, artisans and peasants of any faith, who were subject to paying taxes to the Sultan.

⁴⁶⁰ *Askeri* were ‘soldiers’ of the system and were divided in three groups: *Ilmiye* (people of the word), *kalemiye* (people of the pen) and *seyfiye* (people of the sword). See for instance, Graf, 38-9.

⁴⁶¹ Doja, 435.

⁴⁶² A judge who presides over matters in accordance with Islamic law, but also an official of the Ottoman administration.

⁴⁶³ Misha, 75.

⁴⁶⁴ a head tax in lieu of military service in order to support them.

administration or the elite military corps of Janissaries, known as *devşirme*.⁴⁶⁵ Under *devşirme* policy, the Sultan selected children from its *vasal* provinces and brought them to Istanbul through this unique Ottoman invention system.⁴⁶⁶ Many young boys from Albanian Christian families (including Skenderbeg) became great fighters of the Sultan's elite guard—the Janissary (*jeniçeri*) corps, peopled by soldiers of non-Turkish origin; others served as bureaucrats in the high ranks of Porte. This system not only caused emotional but also economic hardship to Albanian families; losing healthy young males who might have grown to contribute to their families and community. As Sugar emphasises:

the disadvantages in human, ethnological, and economic terms were overwhelming and, in balance, far more important than beneficial aspects of the *devşirme* system... It is also the most prevalent example of forced conversion in the years predating the seventeenth century.⁴⁶⁷

The *devşirme* system was invented by the Sultan to serve his own ends, and it generated hate and resentment in Christian Albanians, especially in the North. Skenderbeg's example who reconverted to Christianity upon his return to Albania, was mythicised and functioned as a unifying legend for Albanians detesting the Turkish State. Ultimately, Albanian non-Muslims were subject to heavier taxes, *devşirme*, lack of educational opportunities and socio-economic status. It is difficult to misjudge the pressure on them to convert to Islam.

It has also been argued that mass conversion of Albanians increased in the seventeenth century, a time when the Russo-Ottoman wars began to generate more economic difficulties for the Porte. Therefore, in the mid eighteenth century, the State started to collect more money from all non-Muslim subjects; increasing levy taxes, "while those converted to Islam had their taxes lowered and were given grants of land".⁴⁶⁸ The Christian Albanians lacked these opportunities, and were expected to work menial jobs, while the Albanian Muslims had prospects to serve in senior administrative positions, as according to Vicker and Pettifer, they were considered allies of the Porte that "protected them from the Slavonic and the Greek

⁴⁶⁵ Vickers and Pettifer, 97.

⁴⁶⁶ *devşirme* was known as the tribute of children levied. See for instance Sugar, 31.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid., 58-9.

⁴⁶⁸ Vickers and Pettifer, 97.

encroachment”.⁴⁶⁹ For this reason, these scholars argue that Kosovars accepted Islam faster “perhaps to resist the pressure of their close proximity, the Serbs, who in 1830, achieved their own autonomous state.”⁴⁷⁰ Moreover, Anscombe discusses, at the beginning of the nineteenth century in Southeast Albania the threat of a total assimilation by the ‘Hellenisation’ idea was increasing, after the success of Greek independence, and the brutal suppression of the Albanian revolts of Ali Pashë Tepelena in the South and Kara Mahmud Pasha in North.⁴⁷¹ Therefore, it seems that Albanian-speaking populations did not have much choice, but rather were forced to side with the lesser of two evils—protecting their lands from a total annexation by their neighbours. On the other hand, the Ottomans were happy to achieve their long-term goal of planting Islam in Albanian lands.

Albanians of both North and the South were converting to Islam in substantial numbers in a process that was difficult to be predict when and where it happened. The conversion could have happened at any time, but Sugar believes that the conversion of Albanians is “...a seventeenth century phenomenon”⁴⁷²; hence, he thinks, earlier conversions must have been voluntary. It is also known that Islam could not penetrate parts of the Albanian mountains such as the case of Mirditë and other small towns in the North where the mountainous terrain made access for the state difficult. Inhabitants of these remote parts of Albania continued to live as Christians and were less affected by conversions.

4.11 The ‘soft’ policy of conversions—Albania’s Bektashism

The issue of massive conversion of Albanians is highly debated and scholars have listed forced and voluntary as two ways of conversions.⁴⁷³ Sugar agrees with Vryonis on the four major reasons for massive conversion⁴⁷⁴ of Albanians, namely “economic and legal advantages, the

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁷¹ Anscombe argues that Albanian revolts of Kara Mahmud Pasha in north and Ali Pasha in south Albania directly affected the position of the state but also the Albanian, Greek and Serbian affairs. See Anscombe, 87-114.

⁴⁷² Sugar, 52.

⁴⁷³ See for instance *ibid.*; Vryonis.

⁴⁷⁴ Doja, 430.

influence of *medreses* and other Muslim institutions, fear, and the adaptability of folk religion”.⁴⁷⁵ While the first three can be considered as forced conversion, Sugar considers the last reason as more important than others. In fact, the new Bektashism can be considered as a ‘soft’ system of conversion carried out by the Bektashi dervish brotherhood order and supported by *medreses* and *tekkes*⁴⁷⁶. Along with Sunni, Bektashi served as a complementary religious system to achieve the aim of the Sultan—diffusion of Islam, and thus, the assimilation of Albanians into Turkish culture and society.

Sunni Islam was very rigid⁴⁷⁷ compared to Bektashism—a more tolerant ‘kind’ of Islam that, Hall thinks, in Albania was introduced by *jeniçeri* in the fifteenth century.⁴⁷⁸ It is widely agreed that Bektashism originated in Iran and that its theoretical foundations are a mix of doctrines and practices such as “Shiism and Sufism but also preserving pre-Islamic and non-Islamic beliefs and customs originating in Christianity and antique religions as well as ancient Turkic elements”.⁴⁷⁹ Therefore, this moderate Bektashism⁴⁸⁰ drew on a long tradition of Sufism including elements of Christianity.⁴⁸¹ Although both Bektashism and Sunni were based in Islam, the tolerant Bektashism was more attractive and thus, was more accepted by Christian Albanians.

Since the fifteenth century, the State supported the mission of the Bektashi dervish order, which was supposed to be faster than Sunni in converting Christian Albanians to Islam. Dervishes travelled to remote Albanian villages, where they dealt with daily domestic issues and engaged in a ‘door to door’ conversation. At the end of the sixteenth century, the Bektashi dervish brotherhood expanded into central and southern Albania, where large numbers of

⁴⁷⁵ Sugar, 52.

⁴⁷⁶ A Bektashi shrine, or a monastic building.

⁴⁷⁷ Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 9.

⁴⁷⁸ Derek Hall, *Albania and the Albanians*, London: Pinter Reference, 1994, 43.

⁴⁷⁹ Albert Doja, "A Political History of Bektashism in Albania", *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 7, no. 1, 2006, 85; John K. Birge, *The Bektashi order of dervishes*, London: Luzac Oriental, 1937; reprint, 1994.

⁴⁸⁰ Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 8.

⁴⁸¹ Sugar, 53.

tekkes and *tyrbes*⁴⁸² were established. Inside *tekkes*, the highest leaders—the dervishi *babas* were propagating a kind of more inclusive Islamic folk religion that was based on their code—the *terikat*.⁴⁸³ For Albanians it was easier to adapt to this folk religion compared to the strict rules of the Sunni Islam and Christianity. Bektashism was not only more tolerant than Sunni Islam, but also had similarities with Christian Orthodox and Catholic rituals. For example, it was believed that a *mekam*⁴⁸⁴ had miraculous powers at a point that people were praying and seeking help upon the name of buried *baba*. This was similar to pilgrimage sacred places for both Christians and Muslims such as Lourdes and Mekka. As a result, this kind of inclusive religion was simpler and more attractive to Albanians, considering that prior to the Ottoman invasion Albanians practiced both Catholic and Orthodox religions.

However, the State changed its position towards the Bektashi brotherhood at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the *jeniçeri* openly challenged the power of Sultan Mahmud II, who decided in return to reform the elite troops following a Western-French style. For Kressing, the Sultan's decision to suppress Janissaries in 1826 initiated a profound retaliation against Bektashi and forced them to move to the margins of the Empire.⁴⁸⁵ From this moment onwards, the new cast of Sunni Ottomans persecuted both Janissaries and Bektashi. This was a time when Albanians, especially in the South, had largely embraced Bektashism, and as a result could not escape the Sultan's retaliation campaign that started after the defeat of the controversial Albanian Ali Pasha in 1822. After his successful campaign against the Russians, the Sultan rewarded Ali Pasha with the *vilayet* of Janina, which comprised the Northern part of today's Greece. Ali Pasha converted to Bektashism and used his power to facilitate the unobstructed growth of the Bektashi order, which in South-Albania, became influential under his rule.⁴⁸⁶ The revenge campaign of the Sublime Porte continued to blame the Albanian Bektashi for engineering the Albanian uprising that, by the middle of the nineteenth century, according to Norris, a specialist on Albanian Sufism, had become well-

⁴⁸² *Türbe* is the Turkish word for 'tomb', or similar to a mausoleum.

⁴⁸³ Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 9.

⁴⁸⁴ The tomb of a *babba* who was the founder and buried in *tekke*.

⁴⁸⁵ Frank Kressing, "A Preliminary Account of Research Regarding the Albanian Bektashis: Myths and Unresolved Questions", in *Albania, A Country in Transition: Aspects of Changing Identities in a South-East European Country*, ed. F. Kressing and K. Kaser, Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2002, 66-7.

⁴⁸⁶ Florian Bieber, "Muslim identity in the Balkans before the establishment of nation states", *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, vol. 28, no. 1, 2000, 18.

known and was identified with an emerging Albanian identity.⁴⁸⁷ Along with rising nationalism, Bektashi was becoming very popular in Albania. After the Prizren League (1878-81) it was considered a symbol of resistance against oppressors. Norris describes the effects of the Albanian Bektashi in the late Ottoman Empire as follows:

the Sufism of Albania, equally popular amongst the masses and in its intellectual appeal to the poets...was compelling and was grafted into local nationalistic aspirations, as in the case in the poetry of the poet, Naim Frashëri, and in the compositions of many poets in Kosovo⁴⁸⁸

Naim Frashëri (1846-1900), one of the main figures of the Albanian Bektashism, played a crucial role in the process of Awakening, known as the *rilindja* period—a nationalistic movement that nurtured the idea of a unified Albania. Hence, Albanian Bektashism needs to be understood in the context of rising nationalism. The romanticism of Naim Frashëri's writing also had nationalistic undertones. In his book *Histori e Skenderbeut* [*History of Skenderbeg*], Frashëri mythicised Skenderbeg as an Albanian hero, downplaying his triple religious life. Skenderbeg was also portrayed as an innocent Christian child, who was forced by Turks to learn and practice the Muslim religion. Frashëri describes the Ottoman Empire as “a big beast” that came from Asia and with “cruelty in eyes” and “a satanic heart”, “killed, severed and impoverished” in a way that “grass wouldn't grow” wherever the beast stepped in the “flourishing” Albanian soil.⁴⁸⁹ On the other hand, in line with his nationalistic ideas, Frashëri propagated the Bektashi ‘religion’. In 1896, he published the *Fletore e Bektashinjet* [*Bektashi notebook*], a theological novel that identified “practical principles of Bektashism and the organizational rules governing its functioning”.⁴⁹⁰ In this attempt, he promoted the Bektashi religion, which he considered a better vehicle than other religions to unite Albanians; describing it as a “sort of religious-cum-nationalist tract”.⁴⁹¹ Therefore, Bektashism and nationalism were both embodied in Frashëri's writings. However, it was not his priority to

⁴⁸⁷ Harry Thirwall Norris, *Islam in the Balkans: Religion and Society between Europe and the Arab World*, London: Hurst & Company, 1993, 240-1.

⁴⁸⁸ Harry Thirwall Norris, *Popular Sufism in Eastern Europe: Sufi brotherhoods and the dialogue with Christianity and 'Heterodoxy'*, New York and Canada: Routledge, 2006, 7.

⁴⁸⁹ Frashëri, 99-100.

⁴⁹⁰ Abazi and Doja, 860.

⁴⁹¹ Cited in Logoreci, 44.

replace the Albanian religious spectrum with Bektashism, but rather to “propagate religious tolerance”⁴⁹², or better, craft a unique Albanian religion that was based on elements of Islam and Christianity. This is the way his brother Sami Frashëri is appealing to Albanians in his book:

Do not turn to religions and beliefs. Muslims, Catholics and Orthodox - they are all Albanians wherever they are, and they are all brothers. They must all unite under the sacred flag of Albania.⁴⁹³

Therefore, the concept of this ‘Albanian particularism’, which was not based on religious creed, but rather on the ‘ethno-linguistic’ concept of Albania is overlooked by scholars. Some Bektashi leaders⁴⁹⁴ and scholars claim that Bektashism played an important role not only in influencing Albanian nationalism⁴⁹⁵, but also in constructing the Albanian nation.⁴⁹⁶ Others such as Abazi and Doja dispute this claim; considering rather the dynamic role of nationalism in the rise of Bektashism in Albania.⁴⁹⁷ In paraphrasing Clayer, Abazi and Doja argue that Bektashi activity in Albania started to increase after the League of Prizren in 1878, a time that Bektashi came to be at the centre of nationalist propaganda, to then reach its peak in 1907-08, when many *tekkes* became places of refuge for Albanian “armed nationalist bandits”.⁴⁹⁸ In 1908, once the short alliance with the Young Turks was over, many Albanian Bektashi leaders, *babas* and their *tekkes*, embraced Albanian nationalistic ideas in their entirety and sided with the platform of an independent Albania. Since then, the role of Bektashism in

⁴⁹² Duijzings, "Religion and the politics of 'Albanianism': Naim Frashëri's bektashi writings", in *Albanian Identities: Myth and History*, 68.

⁴⁹³ Frashëri. Cited in Licursi, 86.

⁴⁹⁴ Ali Turabiu, *Historia e pergjithshme e Bektashinjvet [General history of the Bektashis]* Tirana: 1929; Baba Rexhebi, *Misticizma Islame dhe Bektashizma [Islamic mysticism and Bektashism]*. New York: Waldon Press, 1970.

⁴⁹⁵ John Norton, "The Bektashi in the Balkans", in *Religious Quest and National Identity in the Balkans*, ed. C. Hawkesworth, M. Heppell, and H.T. Norris, New York: Palgrave, 2001, 168-200; Kressing, in *Albania, A Country in Transition: Aspects of Changing Identities in a South-East European Country*, 65-91.

⁴⁹⁶ Duijzings, *Religion and the Politics of Identity in Kosovo*, 157-75.

⁴⁹⁷ Abazi and Doja, 862.

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid., 874.

Albania has increased, with the exception of the communist period. Therefore, the August 2017 participation of the Albanian President, Ilir Meta, in the annual five days Bektashi rituals at Tomorri mountain, where the tomb of Baba Tomorri is situated, did not come as a surprise. In his speech Meta echoed Bektashi religion and reciting Vasa's poem, 'The Albanian faith is Albanianism', he stated that "Bektashi faith and Albania are the same body".⁴⁹⁹ Although Meta's aim might not have been that of placing Bektashism above other religions, it is noted that Bektashi is one of 'ingredients' of Albanian identity formation. Nevertheless, going back to the impact of religion on nationalism that scholars such as Weber, Hastings, Smith, Kapferer and Juergensmeyer all support, analyses of Bektashism in Albania ascertain also the opposite: *rilindja* nationalist movement influenced Bektashi fraction, turning it in a filo-nationalistic movement.

4.12 Conclusion

This chapter discusses how the Ottoman rule affected Albanian-speaking lands from their arrival, in 1385, until the declaration of the Albanian Independence in 1912. The chapter establishes that the impact of the Ottoman rule and its legacy in the Albanians-speaking lands in areas such as social organization, infrastructure, written language, the system of education and religion is uncontested. The Ottoman culture added an extra layer to the Albanian culture, (as did the Roman and the Byzantine cultures).

The Porte organised the Albanian society in *millets*—a religious affiliation but failed (as it did in the rest of the Empire) to recognise Albanians as a different ethnicity. Since the sixteenth century, the Ottomans introduced the *timar* system, which brought about more poverty and inequality. In the mid nineteenth century, *tanzimat* reforms replaced the *timar* system, but did not change the desperate situation of the Albanian peasants and where the Porte focused solely on collecting taxes. Little was given back to the Albanian people. The infrastructure investments were exclusively military and religiously driven following Sultan's aim to build in Albanian speaking lands a permanent structure and assimilate all Albanians in Islamic-Turks. As a result, Albanian speaking lands were transformed demographically, environmentally and socially. Peasants had to compete with each other to secure more land—

⁴⁹⁹ "Pelegri nazhi në Malin e Tomorrit, Meta mes besimtarëve bektashinj [Pilgrimage at Tomorri mountain, Meta between Bektashi believers]", author's translation, *Top Channel*, 22 August 2017, accessed 20 September 2018, <http://top-channel.tv/lajme/artikull.php?id=362072>.

their only hope to pay taxes, and thus, survive. Different uprisings of the Albanian speaking people are demonstrations that the Porte failed to bring full political stability to Albanian lands. Therefore, the Ottomans had little interest in the existing social structures in Albanian speaking lands and enforced their own system, which served Sultan's political ends of building in Albania a society that was permanently based on religious structure—Islam.

The chapter discussed also how the Albanian language and its writing system as the main vehicle kept the idea of an Albanian identity intact. The Albanian language united all Albanians, despite religious differences. Knowing this importance, unlike other Balkan states, both the State and the Orthodox Patriarchate suppressed the Albanian language. However, the Albanian language survived the suppression by both the Ottomans and the *Rum* Patriarchate and acted as 'glue' that united Albanians together.

Also addressed in this chapter were the religious controversies surrounding Albanian national identity. Since the Middle Ages, Albanian speaking populations have aligned their religion based on the power ruling Albanian lands. The Ottoman occupation period between the fourteenth and the twentieth centuries was no exception. During this period, Albanians converted to Islam as a result of what scholars' call forced and voluntary actions. The Ottoman policies disadvantaged Christian Albanians, while creating more opportunities for Muslims. While the Ottoman Sunni Islam was more distant from the Albanian Christian religion, the new 'folk religion'—Bektashi, had closer ties to both Islam, and Christianity, and thus, played a major role in conversion. Therefore, the case of Albania shows that religion and nationalism were interrelated, but it is hard to believe *Bektashi*, and indeed other religions, affected nationalism, and not the other way around.

CHAPTER 5. IMAGINING ALBANIAN IDENTITY

5.1 Turkey and Greater Albania: between myth and veracity

5.1.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided in two parts. The first part of the chapter discusses the theme of ‘Greater Albania’, focusing on its causes and how it emerged as a concept. During the eventual collapse of the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the nineteenth century, partition of Turkish domains by the Great Powers created small and unhappy nation-states in the Balkans. At this time, the Albanian nation-state was inexistent, and Albanians were considered Turks. The collapse of the Ottoman Empire created conditions for a re-alignment of the Balkan region, and thus, the quest for a nation state, or what is often called from the Balkan nationalism: ‘Greater Albania’ that has a direct link to the Porte. Albanian identity perception in the work of Kadare, Qosja and other Albanian scholars, politicians and media will follow.

5.1.2 Re-emergence of ‘Greater Albania’ in the twenty-first century

The end of the Cold War also marked the beginning of disintegration of the Yugoslavian federation. This period coincides with the end of the communist regime in Albania, a time that some students from Kosovo crossed Yugoslavian borders to study in Albanian Universities due to repressive Serbian rule of Slobodan Milošević. Despite their low economic position, Albanians were meeting with other Albanians from Macedonia, Kosovo and Montenegro that were more advanced economically. As Pettifer points out, some critics have analysed this issue in a simplistic way, to the point that the re-union of Albanians is equated with the ‘re-birth’ of Albanian nationalism. This is now seen as the beginning of a new project – ‘The Greater Albania’, with the aim to “extend the boundaries of the current Albanian state”.⁵⁰⁰ Judah noted that many Western observers believe that Greater Albanian nationalism is now replacing Greater Serbian nationalism as the biggest threat to stability in the Balkan Peninsula.⁵⁰¹ Nationalism is a common occurrence on the Balkan Peninsula; however, the projects of

⁵⁰⁰ Pettifer, 18.

⁵⁰¹ Judah, 7.

Greater Serbia (*Nacertanie*), Greater Croatia, and Greater Greece (*Megali-Idea*)—all older than ‘Greater Albania’—have ceased, at least for the time being.⁵⁰² Why then is ‘Greater Albania’ still alive?

Since the independence of Kosovo in 2008, according to Judah, Slav Macedonians have always feared that, in the long-term, the “ethnic Albanian goal is secession and union with a future independent Kosovo or even a Greater Albania”.⁵⁰³ Therefore, he believes that in Kosovo, Macedonia and to some extent in Southern Serbia and Montenegro, there is an active “Albanian question”.⁵⁰⁴ For Albania’s neighbours, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Greece, the anxiety over a ‘Greater Albania’ is mounting.⁵⁰⁵ Pettifer, on the other hand, describes ‘Greater Albania’ issue as a myth that has been created by the European Union to obscure an attempt to revive Serbian dominance in the region. However, according to Pettifer, the EU overall is losing any leverage they might have had, and in the Balkans the EU is essentially seen as pro-Serb.⁵⁰⁶ For other scholars, as Judah argues “there is considerably less to Greater Albanian nationalism than meets the eye”.⁵⁰⁷ Here it is crucial to understand how the concept of Greater Albania originated.

5.1.3 The Ottoman-Albanian territories ready for the taking—Albanian nationalism in ascent

In line with stereotypes, Kadare thinks Albanians feel humiliated⁵⁰⁸ by the European Great Powers’ decision to re-draw the Albanian map—a sentiment that originated after the Treaty of San Stefano in March 1878. As previously discussed, The Porte while opposing Albanian autonomy and independence, was forced to cede its Balkan territory to the emerging states of

⁵⁰² Bogdani and Loughlin, 233.

⁵⁰³ Judah, 12.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid., 16.

⁵⁰⁵ Bogdani and Loughlin, 231.

⁵⁰⁶ Pettifer, 20.

⁵⁰⁷ Judah, 8.

⁵⁰⁸ Ismail Kadare, *Poshtërimi në Ballkan [Humiliation in the Balkans]*, author’s translation, Tirana: Onufri, 2004.

Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro and Greece. This shift directly affected the Albanian-speaking territories, at the time considered as a Turkish domain. Six months later, the Treaty of Berlin attempted to resolve the Balkan question by re-drawing the Balkan map. However, the Berlin Treaty completely ignored the Albanian question, as it did not exist for Bismarck.⁵⁰⁹

It is argued that the project of a 'Greater Albania' originated at the Prizren League in 1878. If one accepts the Prizren League as a reaction to the March 1878 Treaty of San Stefano, the result would merely be that the Prizren League was founded and manipulated by the Ottomans. In reality, the Prizren League initially had Ottoman support and was politically used to halt Serbian advancement in Albanian-speaking territories; however, once the Porte realized the ambition of the Albanian plan, the Porte crushed the League. Despite the political miscalculation of requesting autonomy or independence from the Ottomans, the fact remains that the Prizren League produced a petition as an Albanian entity, which included the four Albanian-speaking *vilayets* of Manastir, Kosova, Shkodra and Janina. Thus, the seed of a mutual 'Greater Albania' was planted during the final stages of the Ottoman Empire.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Albanian nationalism experienced a sharp rise that brought about social unrest to four Turkish *vilayets*. Despite the decline of the Ottoman Empire, Albanians felt humiliated as their culture, language and their lands faced extinction. Paraphrasing the Albanian linguist Arshi Pipa, Schwandner-Sievers points out the importance of the Albanian indigenous culture, the folklore and its unique language, which "became the basis of constructing a distinct national identity and pride, and a distinct territorial definition".⁵¹⁰

The Ottoman Empire was still strong enough to oppose the Albanian uprising at the beginning of the twentieth century. However, the Porte was powerless to protect the four *vilayets* of Albanian-speaking lands from their partition. As discussed by Psilos, the Ottoman's destructive military campaign in North and South Albania came to an end in October 1910, leaving Albania in total "devastation and anarchy",⁵¹¹ which further aggravated the situation through promises by the Young Turks.⁵¹² Turkish devastations and divide-and-rule policy implemented by the Sultan Abdülhamid II, while catalysing more reaction to the Albanian

⁵⁰⁹ Hall, 3.

⁵¹⁰ Schwandner-Sievers, 52.

⁵¹¹ Psilos, 37.

⁵¹² Misha, 415.

uprisings, brought about more complications in protecting four *vilayets* within an Albanian entity. On the other hand, Albanian frustrations increased as they were not invited to join the Orthodox union of The Balkan League⁵¹³ in December 1912. Thus, Albanian nationalism found itself in direct opposition to all forces in the region: Turks, Serbs, Montenegrins and Greeks. The only hope that remained was a declaration of independence and the hope to be recognised by the Great Powers.

5.1.4 The London Conference – the confirmation of a “little” Albania

The London Conference (also known as the Ambassadors’ ‘meetings’), chaired by the British foreign minister Edward Grey, was officially opened on 17 December 1912, and continued for more than 6 months. Although it was proposed for the conference to be held in Paris, because of the links between France and Russia, Austria argued for it to take place in a neutral location to avoid bias in decision making. While the London Conference aimed to resolve territorial disputes between the Turks and the Balkan League members, the Albanian status and its territorial boundaries became the main topic of the conference. On 30 May 1913, the Conference made the important decision to recognise the Albanian state as an individual entity; Albania’s autonomy from the Ottomans, however, was only officially recognised at the fifty-fourth meeting of the Conference of London on 29 July 1913.⁵¹⁴ Despite those decisions, the Conference also decided that the “boundaries of Albania were to be fixed by the great powers”.⁵¹⁵ The aim of the Conference was to bring peace to Europe, regardless of the cost to any single state. The criteria of re-drawing the ex-Ottoman territories were based on rewarding winners at the expense of the Ottoman losers. However, the Conference struggled to provide solutions when military advancements overlapped territories of every single Balkan state. Although the focus was then shifted on the ethno-linguistic elements, according to Grey, reaching a peace agreement was the main goal. As he states, “we could not destroy

⁵¹³ The League aimed to oppose Turks and extend their territory at the expense of Albanian-speaking territories.

⁵¹⁴ Robert Elsie, *The London Conference and the Albanian Question (1912-1914). The Dispatches of Sir Edward Grey*, Bejtullah Destani and Robert Elsie ed. (2016).

⁵¹⁵ "The Treaty of London 1913", 6 October 2011, accessed 26 May 2014, <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/boshtml/bos145.htm>.

achievements of the London Conference for some Albanian towns such as Gjakova...”.⁵¹⁶ Thus, Grey admits that the town of Gjakova was an ‘Albanian town’, and while this, again, explains the lack of awareness for the Albanian-speaking territories, it also shows unwise decisions to leave this and other Albanian-speaking towns out of the Albanian map; foreshadowing future dangers.

The London Conference considered the Russian and Austro-Hungarian proposals. The Russian proposal lobbied for Serbian, Montenegrin, Bulgarian and Greek interests at the expense of Albanian-speaking territories. Although the Russian proposal map included as part of Montenegro Ulqini, Plava and Guzija, cities with a majority of Albanian-speaking populations, Russian energy was primarily focused on the Serbian need of securing sea access. Thus, the Russian proposal included the plain of Kosova and North Albania down to Durrës in the Serbian territories. The Russian strategy was clear: at worst, the port of Shëngjin was to be secured for Serbia. The Russian proposal also excluded the Albanian-speaking territories of today’s West Macedonia from Albania but did not oppose the Greek claim to include parts of today’s Albania such as Korçë, but also Gjirokastër, Sarandë and the south East of the Vjosa River including Vlorë. Unlike the Russians, the Austro-Hungarians strongly lobbied for Shkodër to remain part of Albania. Their proposal-map of Albania included territories of Kosovo and some parts of today’s Western Macedonia, while opposing Greece’s claims for Korçë, Gjirokastër, Sarandë and Vlorë. Denying Serbia access to the Adriatic Sea was not only focused on impeding Serbia’s economic expansion but would have also confined Russian expansion in the Balkans.

All representatives of recognised Balkan states were invited to the London Conference to present their claims, with one exception: Albanians. Upon advice by Austria, Ismail Qemali did not want to leave Vlorë due to the fear of a possible uprising or government coup. Pro-Ottoman elements, unhappy with the Independence proclamation and the first Albanian government, were still very active. However, he managed to send an Albanian delegation composed of a Muslim, Mehmet Konica, a Catholic, Filip Noga, and Rasim Dino, who represented the Chameria (in Albanian *Çamëria*) region. Under pressure from Austria-Hungary, Grey allocated only 13 minutes to hear the Albanian case. The Albanian chair of delegates, Konica, basically claimed that the Albanian territory should include all parts of

⁵¹⁶ Edward Grey, *Memoires*, Paris: Payot, 1927, 248.

Albania shown in the Austro-Hungarian proposal, but also Ulqini, Plava and Guzije in Montenegro, and the Chameria region including the costal north part of Epirus, down to Preveza. For obvious reasons, i.e. because there were no Albanian military advances into other Balkan states, the Albanian representatives were forced to base their claim on ethno-linguistic arguments, i.e. that the majority of the population in all four *vilayets* was comprised of Albanians.

Despite their own interests and competition, the Great Powers had no clear criteria for designing the borders; therefore, they used the Albanian speaking territories to satisfy Albania's neighbours.⁵¹⁷ In reality, none of the two proposals submitted to the London Conference was fully implemented. Hence, the Chameria region was given to Greece, but not Korçë, Sarandë, Gjirokastër, Himarë and Vlorë; Kosovo with a population that was 90 percent Albanian was attached to Serbia; Plava, Guzia and Ulqini were handed to Montenegro, and the East part of Ohrid lake (today's Western part of FYROM) was attached to the new Serbian dominated territory, which in the aftermath of WWI became part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Thus, the Conference is responsible for redrawing the Balkan map; a map which, for Albanians, has remained largely unchanged since then, with the exemption of Kosovo that was separated from Serbia in 1999.

5.1.5 The unification into the 'Natural Albania'

The struggle of unifying Albanian speaking territories continues in the twenty-first century. Kosovo is not connected to Albania, however, the project of unification with the 'mother-land' is supported by the Kosovar political Party *Lëvizja Vetëvendosje* [Self-determination Movement], which was founded in 2004. This party fundamentally supports the idea of people's self-determination; opposing foreign involvement in internal affairs of Kosovo. The *Vetëvendosje* statute declares that Kosovar people must have "the right to unite with

⁵¹⁷ Koço Danaj, "Shqipëria natyrale do të bëhet [The natural Albania will be done] ", author's translation, *Shqiperianatyrale.com*, 2 Shkurt 2012. Interview of Bashkim Metalia, published on The Albanian, Londer, 1 shkurt 2012, accessed 6 July 2015, http://shqiperianatyrale.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=177:koco-danaj-shqiperia-natyrale-do-te-behet&catid=34:analiza&Itemid=29

Albania”.⁵¹⁸ Although this mission unleashes the Albanian aspiration for a “Greater Albania”, its implementation seems impossible without involvement of the current major international actors, as Kosovo is not yet recognised by five EU members: Greece, Spain, Romania, Slovakia and Cyprus. This also means that Kosovo is unable to realise its aspiration of becoming a member of the UN, and thus gain the ability for self-determination. However, in the last Kosovar elections on 11 June 2017, *Lëvizja Vetëvendosje* was the first preference for Kosovars; achieving more votes than any other party: the leading Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) and the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK).⁵¹⁹

In March 2011, the *Aleanca Kuq e Zi* [Red and Black Alliance] Party was founded in Albania. Supporting ‘Greater Albania’, this party claims protection of Albanian rights in “Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro Chameria and the Presevo Valley”.⁵²⁰ However, the party was resoundingly defeated in the 2013 Albanian elections, receiving only 0.59 percent (10196) of votes.⁵²¹ Since then, the party has kept a low profile. It can be argued that the defeat of *Aleanca Kuq e Zi*, the only political party to promote “Greater Albania” in Albania, shows the hesitancy of Albanians who live in Albania to unite in a Greater Albanian nation-state. However, reluctance of Albanians to unite in a Greater Albania, remains a contentious question.

In 2010 Koço Danaj, an Albanian University Professor founded a second Albanian movement, ‘The Platform of the Natural Albania’. According to Danaj, the Platform has only one goal: the creation of the Albanian nation-state, or what he calls “The Natural Albania”.⁵²² Danaj claims the Platform is nothing more than what was declared at the Vlorë Parliament on

⁵¹⁸ "Statuti i Levizjes Vetëvendosje [Statute of the self-determination movement]", author's translation, 10 October 2015: 2, http://www.vetevendosje.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Statuti_i_Levizjes_VETEVENDOSJE6.pdf.

⁵¹⁹ Fatos Bytyci, "Kosovo centre-right coalition on course to win parliamentary vote", *Reuters*, 11 June 2017 accessed 28 May 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-kosovo-elections/kosovo-centre-right-coalition-on-course-to-win-parliamentary-vote-idUSKBN1910ZO>.

⁵²⁰ "Rreth nesh [About us]", author's translation from the website, *Aleanca Kuq e Zi [Red and Black alliance]*, 12 October 2015, accessed 12 October 2015, <http://www.aleancakuqezi.al/rreth-nesh/>.

⁵²¹ "Rezultatet zyrtare, votat per cdo parti [Official results, votes for each party]", author's translation, *Panorama on line*, 6 August 2013, accessed 10 October 2015, <http://www.panorama.com.al/rezultatet-zyrtare-votat-per-cdo-parti/>.

⁵²² Danaj, 2 Shkurt 2012. Interview of Bashkim Metalia, published on *The Albanian*, Londer, 1 shkurt 2012, http://shqiperianatyrale.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=177:koco-danaj-shqiperia-natyrale-do-te-behet&catid=34:analiza&Itemid=29

28 November 1912: an appeal for the ‘Natural Albania’, basically a request to implement a judicial act. Danaj argues that this act was ignored by the London Conference, which instead made a “colonialist” and “criminal” decision by dividing the Albanian-speaking territories between five different nation states.⁵²³ Therefore, according to the Platform, history needs to be revisited, the injustice needs to be addressed and the London Conference decision needs to be reversed in such a way that the Albanian territories from Preshevo Valley to Preveza, from Durrës to Skopje again join “The Natural Albania”.⁵²⁴ Danaj argues that the London Conference decision can be reversed and Albanians can be united under the same nation-state umbrella in a similar way Germans reunified. Furthermore, Danaj claims, the decision to dissolve the Yugoslavian federation, revoked the previous decision.⁵²⁵ However, the case of Albanian unification is more complicated as it affects not one but five Western Balkan nation-states.

Although, it can be argued that the decision to divide Albanian-speaking territories may be used as a legal argument, realistically, it is difficult for Albania to challenge the decision made by the Great Powers. Firstly, the composition of today’s Great Powers’ and the political environment are different. Of the Great Powers of 1913, only Russia can be still considered a global power. Others, such as Germany, the United Kingdom and France, are economically better placed than Austria, Hungary and Italy, and thus might be defined as ‘Great Powers’ in the twenty-first century. However, along with the transformed landscapes of Europe, governments of these countries may be reluctant to change political decisions made in 1913. In addition, challenging the London Conference decision in a court of law, seems impossible, as such courts does not exist.

Even the unification of Kosovo and Albania is a challenging project. Martii Ahtisaari’s 2007 binding proposal to resolve the status of Kosovo still makes it impossible for Kosovo to seek a union with “any State or part of any State”.⁵²⁶ According to Marcus Tanner, even the removal of Kosovo from Serbia cannot undo the damage done in 1913, and the only way to resolve ‘Greater Albania’ is the integration of the whole region into Europe, which will require

⁵²³ Ibid.

⁵²⁴ Ibid.

⁵²⁵ Ibid.

⁵²⁶ *Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement*, (United Nations Security Council, document number: S/2007/168/Add.1, 26 March 2007), accessed 23 March 2012, (http://www.unosek.org/docref/Comprehensive_proposal-english.pdf, .

their borders will become semi-redundant. “Then, not before, the ghost of Greater Albania will be laid to rest”.⁵²⁷

5.1.6 A ‘Greater Albania’ under Turkish leadership?

A Turkish scholar, Cuneyt Yenigun, thinks that due to challenges the unification of Albanians under the same nation-state umbrella cannot happen for another two decades.⁵²⁸ In order to surpass this Yenigun offers his solution for immediate unification of Albania with Kosovo and Macedonia. He proposes a type of cooperation called “Albkomac”⁵²⁹; similar to that of Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg (Benelux) or the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).⁵³⁰ According to Yenigun the GCC model of cooperation in fields such as economy, trade, customs, legislation, agriculture, and joint military forces, is better for “Albkomac” as collaborating with each other due to “cultural, religion and historical background”⁵³¹ is more sustainable. Although the Albanian model compared to the GCC is lacking in capital, Yenigun argues that “Albkomac” could be established under the leadership of Turkey. He reasons that Turkey as the second fastest growing country in the world would be able to nurture this unification based on the historical, cultural and religious links with Albania.⁵³²

Although Turkey has strong cultural and historical links with the Balkans, the concept of religious links between Albania and Turkey is a simplified one. As shown in chapter four, although Albanians converted in large numbers to Islam, religion in Albania is a controversial topic. At a time when Albania is relying heavily on its “European identity”, this project might give mixed messages to its strategic allies, the US and the EU, and thus endanger the continued

⁵²⁷ Tanner, 27 March 2015, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/the-ghost-of-greater-albania-won-t-go-away>.

⁵²⁸ Cuneyt Yenigun, "GCC Model: Conflict Management for the ‘Greater Albania’", *SDU Faculty of Arts and Sciences Journal of Social Sciences: Special Issue on Balkans*, 176. Yenigun argues that due to the forecasted birth rates of today’s Albanians being higher in Macedonia, after two decades, the Albanian factor in Macedonia, and the region, will increase.

⁵²⁹ Ibid., 186.

⁵³⁰ GCC is composed by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Oman.

⁵³¹ Yenigun, 184.

⁵³² Ibid.

alliance. On the other hand, the large Albanian community in Turkey, which has been estimated to be of a similar size as the population of both Albania and Kosovo⁵³³, may play an important role here. This community will always act as an established bridge that is built on historical, cultural and traditional links and as a result, may always have ambitions to influence the Turkish government and side with Albania, regardless of the Albanian foreign policy swings.

5.1.7 The Albanian unification into a ‘Greater Europe’

For Danaj, unification in a Greater Albania is the only option as this is supported by the people. According to him, supporters of ‘The Natural Albania’ are firstly Albanians: “82 percent in Kosovo, 64 percent in Albania and 89 percent in Macedonia”.⁵³⁴ Not only is this data contentious, the quantitative analysis seems to be presented in a simplistic and superficial way, as indicated in the defeat of *Aleanca Kuq e Zi*. Danaj argues that Albanian politicians accept the importance of unification but are divided between those representing their own *vilayet* and others who are still scared to speak out.⁵³⁵ In reality, Albanian and Kosovar politicians cannot afford to disappoint the Euro-Atlantic partners, therefore the argument remains the same: the Albanian unification will only happen under the EU banner.

In fact, the elite of Tirana does not seem to be interested in redesigning Albania’s national borders to create the so-called ‘Greater Albania’. On 16 December 2011 former Albanian Prime Minister Sali Berisha stated that “the best interest of Albanians is to protect the existing borders; hence Albania and Kosovo will be united inside the EU, as we cannot risk our territories”.⁵³⁶ The current Albanian Prime Minister, Edi Rama, holds a similar opinion about ‘Greater Albania’. However, his statement in April 2015 that Albania and Kosovo will

⁵³³ "Albanians in Turkey celebrate their cultural heritage", *Today's Zaman*, accessed 15 October 2015, http://mobile.todayszaman.com/national_albanians-in-turkey-celebrate-their-cultural-heritage_254383.html.

⁵³⁴ Viktor Damjanovic and John Chapman, "Two Years In, Kosovo Albanians More Sober on Independence", *Gallup*, 16 February 2010, accessed 20 September 2018, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/125978/two-years-kosovo-albanianssober-independence.aspx>.

⁵³⁵ Danaj, 2 Shkurt 2012. Interview of Bashkim Metalia, published on The Albanian, Londra, 1 shkurt 2012, http://shqiperianatyrale.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=177:koco-danaj-shqiperianatyrale-do-te-behet&catid=34:analiza&Itemid=29

⁵³⁶ "Berisha kunder bashkimit Shqiperi – Kosove [Berisha against the unification of Albania with Kosovo] ", author’s translation, *24 Ore*, 16 December 2011, accessed 3 August 2012, <http://24-ore.com/index.php/kronika/qeveritare/8475-berisha-kunder-bashkimit-shqiperi-kosove.html>.

unite in “a classical way”⁵³⁷ sparked much criticism from European leaders and Albania’s neighbours Serbia and Greece. Immediately the Serbian Prime Minister, Aleksandar Vučić, and Macedonian and Greek leaders contested Rama’s statement. The statement was then corrected by Rama—reassuring the critics that the unification of Albania and Kosovo would only happen once both Albania and Kosovo have become European Union members. Hence, Judah thinks that “no mainstream Albanian political party, whether in Kosovo, Albania or Macedonia, publicly espouses the idea”⁵³⁸ of a Greater Albania.

The discussion in Albania is not about Albania’s desire to expand its boundaries, but rather, the historical humiliation is still alive for Albanians. Albanian humiliation is expressed in a form of victimisation, which perhaps is based on the fact that Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Greece are still in charge of those Albanian-speaking territories given to them by the London Conference. On the other hand, Serbs, Macedonians, Bulgarian and Greeks are overreacting to the misleading concept of the Greater Albania, possibly indicating their fears of an Albanian rise in power in the region.⁵³⁹ Nevertheless, while it seems difficult to determine whether ‘Greater Albania’ is a myth or a (possible) future reality, it is also dangerous to disseminate such an idea at a time when Balkan countries need to unite and leave behind centuries of hate and wars. Nevertheless, on the verge of collapse, the Porte was not only unable to protect Albanian lands, it also opposed Albanian independence. This adds on Albanian humiliation, who blame the Ottomans for their fate. It is interesting to explore how Albanians perceive their own national identity in relation to the Ottoman heritage.

⁵³⁷ "Nje deklarate e forte e Edi Rames: Shqiperia e Kosova do te bashkohen ne menyre klasike, edhe pa BE-ne. Reagon Vucic [A strong statement by Edi Rama: Albania and Kosovo will unite in a classical way, even out of EU. Reacts Vučić]", author’s translation, *Gazeta Tema*, 7 April 2015, accessed 1 October 2015, <http://www.gazetatema.net/web/2015/04/07/nje-deklarate-e-for-te-e-ed-i-ram-es-shqiperia-e-kosova-mund-te-bashkohen-pavaresisht-be-se-reagon-vucic/>.

⁵³⁸ Judah, 9.

⁵³⁹ "Third Balkan War in the making: Serbs, Greeks, Bulgarians and Macedonians to unite against the ‘Greater Albania’?", *Telegraf*, 14 May 2015, accessed 28 May 2018, <http://www.telegraf.rs/english/1566600-third-balkan-war-in-the-making-serbs-greeks-bulgarians-and-macedonians-to-unite-against-the-greater-albania>.

5.2 Albanian identity and the Ottoman culture in the work of Ismail Kadare

5.2.1 Introduction

In analysing Albanian identity, one cannot ignore the extensive work of the Albanian prominent writer, Ismail Kadare, which in 2009, was compiled for the Albanian reader in a form of twenty volumes. Kadare has tried with his fiction and non-fiction books to illuminate the historical past and the future of Albania. Therefore, his thesis is crucial and needs to be explored. This second part of the chapter discusses Albanian identity in relation to the Ottoman heritage in the work of Ismail Kadare, Rexhep Qosja and other Albanian scholars, politicians and the media. It will explore some elements of the contested concept of Albanian identity through a short analysis of the thesis put forward by Ismail Kadare, who claims that Albanian identity is European. While helping the reader to understand Albanian identity, Kadare's thesis is steeped in controversy. As a result, Kadare's thesis is strongly opposed by some Albanian scholars such as the Kosovar academic, Rexhep Qosja who argues that Albanian identity also reflects elements of Turkish culture, and thus, Eastern civilization. This part will conclude the endless debate triggered by Kadare-Qosja disagreements, which have engaged in their analyses scholars, Albanian politicians and the media.

5.2.2 Kadare— “the Albanian-Aeschylus”

So much of what we know and understand regarding Albanian identity is due to extensive narratives of Ismail Kadare. This is particularly true at the level of the emotional, physical and psychological trauma of the Albanian nation, which often gets lost in larger narratives of the Ottoman period. According to Carey, Kadare, who creates the entire map of Albanian culture, its history, passion, folklore, politics and disasters, “is a universal writer in a tradition of storytelling that goes back to Homer”.⁵⁴⁰ Morgan, whose work has closely studied Kadare's writings, reminds us that Kadare's aim is to connect the period between the Illyrian and the modern Albanian cultures, in the same way Aeschylus did.⁵⁴¹ For Kadare, Aeschylus is the

⁵⁴⁰ Ismail Kadare, *Mosmarrëveshja: Mbi raportet e Shqipërisë me vetveten [Disagreement: On relations of Albania with itself]*, author's translation, Tirana: Onufri, 2011. Back cover.

⁵⁴¹ Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 292.

character “who forged the transitional path from the oral legacy of the Homeric Greek to the written forms of modern literature”.⁵⁴² Therefore, Kadare, or what Morgan describes as the “Albanian-Aeschylus”⁵⁴³, offers his contribution to defining Albanian identity. He is convinced his duty to his motherland lies in conveying its ancient folklore and epic songs (as Aeschylus did with Greek literature) into a structured literary. No other Albanian writer has written more than Kadare on Albanian identity and its links to the Ottoman heritage and therefore, analyses through his work is paramount.

Kadare has been persistent in his effort to uncover the ancestral roots of Albanian identity. In his seminal essays *Aeschylus, the great loser* and *The Palace of Dreams*, Kadare has asked questions about his origins and the authentic core of the Albanian existence, as he did in *The Shadow* going back to the period of Christian Albania in the Middle Ages, before the Ottoman conquest.⁵⁴⁴ For Kadare, there are two main reasons for the corruption of the integrity of Albania’s European culture: The Ottoman occupation and the communist regime. Therefore, Kadare’s aim is to reconnect Albania’s pre-Ottoman era with that of the Post-Cold War period.

5.2.3 Albanian identity perception through Kadare’s thesis

Inspired by Greek mythology, Kadare argues that Albania’s culture belongs to its geographical ancestors—the Illyrians, who, together with the Greeks are the most ancient people to have lived in the Balkan Peninsula, or what he considers “the cradle of civilization”.⁵⁴⁵ Based on archaeological facts and historical studies, Kadare envisages the Greco-Illyrian civilization as the oldest in the Balkan Peninsula. In his essay *Aeschylus*, Kadare advances his “imaginative evocation” of similarities in “the original Greek and Illyrian civilization of Homeric

⁵⁴² Ibid., 285.

⁵⁴³ See for instance *ibid.*, 292. Morgan emphasises that “Albania’s original twin, Greece, survived to become a modern linguistic and culture entity whereas Albania did not. Albania did not have its Aeschylus”, 290. Morgan also identifies the “two fundamental questions of Kadare’s own literary life, belonging and judging, of ethnicity and right, are thus formulated by way of the figure of Aeschylus”, 291.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid., 298.

⁵⁴⁵ Ismail Kadare, *Identiteti evropian i shqiptarëve [The European identity of the Albanians]*, author’s translation, Tirana: Onufri, 2006, 59.

antiquity”.⁵⁴⁶ Kadare claims that Illyrian-Albanian culture existed in the Balkans before the Slav migration, as “Albanian Christianity was older than that of Serbia”.⁵⁴⁷ While Illyrian history is used as a powerful foundation myth to pave the formation of the new Albanian nation, the Ottomans are considered as “hegemonic occupational powers”.⁵⁴⁸ For Kadare, as a result of the clash of two civilisations, the Oriental-Ottoman Empire and Occidental-Europe, the Balkan Peninsula was removed from the body of “the mother”.⁵⁴⁹ However, Kadare is convinced that Albanian identity was not affected by the Ottoman conquerors, as he emphasises, “nations cannot be changed by occupations, or conversions”.⁵⁵⁰ While in the earlier *Aeschylus* Kadare discusses Albania’s European credentials, in his 2006 essay *Identiteti evropian i shqiptarëve* [*The European identity of the Albanians*], he aims to craft the intellectual and spiritual foundations in order to facilitate “a new and more profound reattachment of Albania to its European heritage”.⁵⁵¹ In fact, throughout his writings, Kadare maintains his thesis that Albania is part of Europe. In his essay *The European identity of the Albanians*, he supports this claim arguing that geography, race, the Albanian national hero Skenderbeg, whose name was mythicized by Albanians and Europeans alike, the similarities of the Albanian *kanun* with European epics and the early Albanian literature which was written in Albanian and also in Latin languages, are all indications of the European identity of Albanians. His argument begins with the geography, which according to Kadare, “is hard to argue with”.⁵⁵² He points out that Albania is on the periphery of Europe to the East; at least, on the map, three more countries are located further East: “Macedonia, Greece and Bulgaria, not to mention what is called ‘European Turkey’”.⁵⁵³ Therefore, the line of separation between Occident and Orient, which according to Kadare does not cross Albania, is a validation of

⁵⁴⁶ Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 299.

⁵⁴⁷ Kadare, *Identiteti evropian i shqiptarëve* [*The European identity of the Albanians*], 44.

⁵⁴⁸ Morgan, "Strange commerce of memory and forgetting: Albania, Kosovo and Europe in Ismail Kadare’s *File on H...*", 3.

⁵⁴⁹ Kadare, *Identiteti evropian i shqiptarëve* [*The European identity of the Albanians*], 59.

⁵⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁵⁵¹ Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 299.

⁵⁵² Kadare, *Identiteti evropian i shqiptarëve* [*The European identity of the Albanians*], 20-1.

⁵⁵³ *Ibid.*, 20-1.

Albanian European-ness.⁵⁵⁴ In order to prove his argument, Kadare argues that three Albanian ancient cities: “Durrës, Shkodër and Berat have nearly the same age of Rome”.⁵⁵⁵ In short, Kadare is convinced that geographically and physically Albania is part of Europe.

Kadare’s second justification is based on race. His argument is that the Albanian population, as the entire European continent, is white and its ancestors are “at best Illyrians, or at worst Thrace-Illyrians”.⁵⁵⁶ Kadare’s genetic differentiation of the human population of Europe proves that he is not interested in issues of race, but rather posits himself ‘on a mission’ to enlighten Europe that the Albanian race was ‘mistaken’ for Turks, and thus, non-European. Kadare’s analysis based on race/skin colour is a simplistic approach that excludes Albanian minorities and multiethnic Europeans, and thus, can be counterproductive to shifting Albanian identity closer to that of Europe.

The third argument advanced by Kadare is the fact that the Albanian national hero Skenderbeg, the mention of whose name in Albanian lands was prohibited until the end of the Ottoman occupation, “became firstly a European myth”⁵⁵⁷, and then, an Albanian myth. Kadare is convinced that Skenderbeg does not rest in his tomb at the castle of Lezhë as his “dead body was never found since the first day”.⁵⁵⁸ While it is speculation that Ottoman officers opened the tomb and stole Skenderbeg’s bones, the disappearance of Skenderbeg’s dead body is a major theme in Albanian epic songs and occupies a large part of the Albanian narrative—the Albanian myth that protected not only Albanian lands but also Europe from the Ottoman barbarians, to the point that the mystical disappearance of Skenderbeg’s body was considered by Kadare as a resurrection: “the same as Jesus”.⁵⁵⁹

Kadare believes that another link, and reason for Albanians to be proud of their European ‘roots’ is the fact that the Albanian *kanun* and epic poems share similarities with European epics. The controversial “blood feud” as part of the Albanian *kanun*, which in the

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid., 21.

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid., 22.

⁵⁵⁸ Ismail Kadare, “Relacioni sekret [Secret relation]”, author’s translation, in *Bisedë për brilantet në pasditen e dhjetorit [Conversation for brilliants on a December afternoon]*, Tirana: Onufri, 2013, 123-4.

⁵⁵⁹ Kadare, *Mosmarrëveshja: Mbi raportet e Shqipërisë me vetveten [Disagreement: On relations of Albania with itself]*, 54.

twenty-first century, is still present in Northern Albania, creates challenges for local Albanians and for the government.⁵⁶⁰ The reputation of *kanun* as the best issue resolution policy, due to weak state has been paradoxically the rule in Northern Albania.⁵⁶¹ However, Kadare is interested in the historical narrative of the Albanian *kanun* and *kënga e kreshnikëve* [epic songs], which he reveals, are all part of the European epics, from Diogenes, one of the creators of the European culture, to the “Saxo Grammaticus, which in 1200, dedicated around forty pages to the history of the blood feud” of the prince Hamlet.⁵⁶² Therefore, according to Kadare, preservation of the Albanian *kanun* is further proof of the connection with the European tradition.

Ultimately, the Albanian language, according to Kadare, has similarities with other European languages. Historical linguists have agreed that the Albanian language is different from the Greek and Slavic languages, hence according to Kadare, the closest option is to think it originates from “ancient Illyrian”.⁵⁶³ Kadare has a high regard for the Albanian language—the main constituent that played a crucial role in keeping the imaginary of the Albanian nation alive: he positions the language above the state.⁵⁶⁴ For him the Porte knew the power of the Albanian language and that was the reason to why it was targeted:

there are a thousand Greek schools in Albania, the same as Turkish. There are three hundred Slavic schools, Vlach, Bulgarian, why not Albanian? Why is there no Albanian?⁵⁶⁵

Kadare also thinks language was more important than religion in the formation of Albanian identity. He argues that, for the Ottomans, religion was “less dangerous than language...the

⁵⁶⁰ Peter Foster, “Behind the murky world of Albanian blood feuds”, *The Telegraph*, 16 April 2016, accessed 16 November 2017, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/04/16/behind-the-murky-world-of-albanian-blood-feuds/>.

⁵⁶¹ “Drejtori i Tokave: Problemin zgjidheni me Kanun [Land’s director: You must resolve the issue with kanun]”, author’s translation, *Top Channel*, 8 March 2017, accessed 15 March 2017, <http://m.top-channel.tv/lajme/artikull.php?id=350023&kryesore>.

⁵⁶² Kadare, *Identiteti evropian i shqiptarëve [The European identity of the Albanians]*, 22-3.

⁵⁶³ Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 29.

⁵⁶⁴ Kadare, *Mosmarrëveshja: Mbi raportet e Shqipërisë me vetveten [Disagreement: On relations of Albania with itself]*, 69.

⁵⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

language was going to still be one; the same as it was people's identity".⁵⁶⁶ Not only does Kadare equate the Albanian language with Albanian identity, he is convinced that correlation of Albanian and European identity is also demonstrated by the fact that Albanian writers such as Pjetër Budi, Frank Bardhi, Gjon Gazulli and Pjetër Bogdani published their books mostly in Europe's Latin language.

Kadare urges Albania to join Europe, this 'beautiful creature', that for Kadare represents a star. Thus, in one of his last novels, *Bisedë për brilantët në pasditen e dhjetorit* [*Conversation about brilliants on a December afternoon*], Europe is described as "a strange star, very dense, a sort of a colossal diamond...a brilliant"⁵⁶⁷ that is more important than anything else. While Kadare deliberately distinguishes Europe as a "diamond", on the other hand, Europe has also been contemplated as "cold and useless such as death" and helpless to protect the Balkans—its "cradle of civilization".⁵⁶⁸ However, for Kadare, this enormous diamond is illuminating Albania's way to join Europe. While for him, the 'mother' Europe has been non-existent and late for many years⁵⁶⁹, the loss and rediscovery of the mother continent, it does not make Albanians less European than others. On the contrary, it marks them more.⁵⁷⁰ Thus, the Albanian nation with a 'European-Latin' language and cultural similarities to those of Europe needs to re-join the European Union. Kadare is as obsessive in his quest to attach Albania to Europe, as he is anxious to distance Albania from its Ottoman past.

5.2.4 Kadare's 'others'

At a time when the Albanian nation-building process is underway, Kadare "remains fuelled by the same fears" that this process can also "capitulate again to internal as well as external forces of destabilization".⁵⁷¹ In short, Kadare's emotive language is addressed externally to the West,

⁵⁶⁶ Kadare, *Identiteti evropian i shqiptarëve* [*The European identity of the Albanians*], 25.

⁵⁶⁷ Ismail Kadare, *Bisedë për brilantët në pasditen e dhjetorit* [*Conversation about brilliants on a December afternoon*], author's translation, Tirana: Onufri, 2013, 111-2.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid., 112.

⁵⁶⁹ Ibid., 111.

⁵⁷⁰ Kadare, *Identiteti evropian i shqiptarëve* [*The European identity of the Albanians*], 59.

⁵⁷¹ Morgan, "Strange commerce of memory and forgetting: Albania, Kosovo and Europe in Ismail Kadare's *File on H...*", 14.

Orient, and Albania's neighbours, but also to the Albanians themselves – “the four others of the Albanian nation”⁵⁷² that Jing Ke has found scrutinizing the work of Kadare. However, Ke's analysis of Kadare's shift from considering the West as “the hostile other” to becoming “the dear Mother”⁵⁷³ of the Albanian nation is simplistic. While Kadare never denies the West's indifference on the Albanian fate, his analyses need to be read in the context of the time and the environment he wrote. Kadare's three ‘others’ are unchanged: the Oriental Turk, Serbian nationalistic ideology, and those Albanians who since the fourteenth century have been working against Albania's interests, have been his constant adversaries.

For Kadare, the main opponent for Albanian identity remain the Ottoman-Turks. He is a master of crafting fiction-narratives without a specific chronological time. In one of his last essays, ‘Secret relation’, Kadare's creative characters speak an emotive language that is directed to different audiences. His invented character, ‘Tuz *effendi*’ (a high Ottoman figure who may be a representation of Sultan Mehmeti II) is coming to visit Albanian *pashaliks* after the death of Skenderbeg. Kadare's Tuz considers the European continent as “threatening, without soul”.⁵⁷⁴ While some Albanian people speculate about the purpose of his visit, others claim that Tuz *effendi* is preparing a big attack against Europe. Tuz himself cannot stop thinking about Skenderbeg, who became a myth for Albanians.⁵⁷⁵ Skenderbeg's disappearance deeply troubles him. One local-‘other’ Albanian, speaking to Tuz *effendi* states:

Our Osman state soon will swallow Europe. I once saw a python swallowing a gazelle. It was terrible, but beautiful. This is what is going to happen; the swallowing [of Europe] will start just here; the Balkans.⁵⁷⁶

This fiction narrative aims to reach different audiences in the past, present and future. While it articulates the Albanian resistance to halt the destructive effects of the Islamic Turks

⁵⁷² Ke Jing, *The four others in I. Kadare's works : a study of the Albanian national identity*, Unpublished PhD (ThinkIR: The University of Louisville's Institutional Repository, Electronic Theses and Dissertations: 2013), 48.

⁵⁷³ Ibid., 226.

⁵⁷⁴ Kadare, “Relacioni sekret [Secret relation]”, in *Bisedë për brilantet në pasditen e dhjetorit [Conversation for brilliants on a December afternoon]*, 125.

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid., 118.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid., 134.

that arguably might have come to occupy Europe, it also compares the Turks with a snake that swallows a beautiful gazelle. On the other hand, Kadare's message is clear: These 'other' Albanians are meeting and supporting Tuz *effendi*. This fiction-element can also be relevant to current and future times; aiming to warn Albanians in the twenty-first century. Bellos has realised difficulties with translating Kadare who manipulates chronological times of his narratives; providing "the backbone and the whole point of his often quite peculiar sentence structures, which simultaneously assert and deny the monodirectional flow of time".⁵⁷⁷

The second 'other'; Serbian nationalistic ideology, is no less dangerous for Kadare. Kadare implies in his thesis that "Albanian Christendom was older than the Slav"⁵⁷⁸, thus, Albania's ancestors – the Illyrians inhabited the Balkans before the Serbs. In fact, in contradiction to Serbian claims that consider Kosovo as the "cradle of Serbia", Kadare believes that Albanians were settled in Kosovo many centuries before Slavs.⁵⁷⁹ However, for Kadare, the main issue lies with the Ottoman-Turks, who continuously jeopardised conflicts between Albanians and their Serb and Greek neighbours; trying to convince them that it was Turkey that would protect them "from this unfaithful" Orthodox world.⁵⁸⁰ While the Greeks were obsessed with the Albanian Latin alphabet, for Kadare, Serbs attacked Albanian identity in a more aggressive way⁵⁸¹; exploiting Albanian conversions to Islam and using it as a vehicle in order to destroy it.⁵⁸² After Albania's recognition as an independent entity, Kosovo was left alone to handle the Yugoslav racist policies against Kosovar-Albanians. According to Kadare, the Serbian policy was very clear: to break the link between Kosovo and the Albanian nation. In order to achieve this, the Serbs turned to the "old Turkish policy: Mosques are enough; you do not need schools".⁵⁸³ According to Kadare, despite their disagreements, Serbia and Turkey implemented a secret plan to empty Kosovo. Kadare refers to the project initiated in 1937 by

⁵⁷⁷ Bellos, 19.

⁵⁷⁸ Kadare, *Identiteti evropian i shqiptarëve* [*The European identity of the Albanians*], 44.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid., 44-5.

⁵⁸⁰ Kadare, *Mosmarrëveshja: Mbi raportet e Shqipërisë me vetveten* [*Disagreement: On relations of Albania with itself*], 71.

⁵⁸¹ Kadare, *Identiteti evropian i shqiptarëve* [*The European identity of the Albanians*], 36.

⁵⁸² Ibid., 40.

⁵⁸³ Ibid., 41.

the academic Vasa Cubrillovic [Čubrilović], known as “Iseljavanje Arnauta”⁵⁸⁴ [The expulsion of the Albanians], which, according to Kadare, “shows its explicit aim in its very title”.⁵⁸⁵ In fact, in 1938 Turkey agreed with Serbia to empty Kosovo; accepting 40,000 Albanian families to be transferred to Turkey.⁵⁸⁶ Therefore, for Kadare, Serbian and Ottomans effects became similar: harming Albanian identity. Kadare is concerned with negative effects of the Porte, as during the occupation of Albanian speaking territories, the State not only benefited from Albanian lands and its soldiers, but after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, a large number of Albanians never returned to their country. Kadare then embarks on uncomfortable discussions that consider these Albanians as being assimilated, to the point that their “women continued to deliver Turks”.⁵⁸⁷ Serbs on the other hand, he claims, could have enjoyed Kosovo’s plain land without the unwanted Albanian population.⁵⁸⁸ The Kadare analysis of policy links between Turkish and Serbian governments shows once more the effects of Turkey with regards to Albanian identity, while Serbian atrocities came to an end after NATO’s Euro-Atlantic intervention in 1999.

Ultimately, Kadare’s last ‘other’ are all those Albanians who damage the Albanian cause. Kadare is convinced that ‘new *Albanologists*’ who envisaged the Albanian existence as merits of two protectors, that is the Ottoman and the Communist State, also helped the Serbian cause.⁵⁸⁹ He classifies Albanians in three main categories: those who “did not exchange anything” with the Ottoman Turks, others that “threw the cross” (but they did not forget Albania, nor did they accept Islam) and those who “sold everything for their own interest”.⁵⁹⁰ Kadare’s main focus again is to highlight Albania’s destruction at the hands of her own:

⁵⁸⁴ Philip J. Cohen, "Ending the war and securing peace in former Yugoslavia", in *Genocide after emotion: The postemotional Balkan War*, ed. Stjepan Mestrovic, New York: Routledge, 2013, 44.

⁵⁸⁵ Kadare, *Mosmarrëveshja: Mbi raportet e Shqipërisë me vetveten [Disagreement: On relations of Albania with itself]*, 33.

⁵⁸⁶ Blerina Rexha, "Greater Albania – The next step for Kosovo?" (The University of Sydney, 2015), 89.

⁵⁸⁷ Kadare, *Mosmarrëveshja: Mbi raportet e Shqipërisë me vetveten [Disagreement: On relations of Albania with itself]*, 35.

⁵⁸⁸ Kadare, *Identiteti evropian i shqiptarëve [The European identity of the Albanians]*, 42-3.

⁵⁸⁹ Kadare, *Mosmarrëveshja: Mbi raportet e Shqipërisë me vetveten [Disagreement: On relations of Albania with itself]*, 206.

⁵⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 67-8.

give up the cross to get prestige. Keep the cross; give up the Albanian language... Keep the gun; give up the cross. And the main thing: to be a Turk...so unfaithful, you will be punished.⁵⁹¹

For Kadare, one of them was Enver Hoxha who in 1947 wrote his “only historical prose”; mythicizing Haxhi Qamili (an Albanian-Ottoman officer) and making it easier for Yugoslav propaganda to damage Albanian identity. Although Hoxha threw away both the cross and the crescent moon, according to Kadare, due to his isolationist policies, he allowed Europe to forget Albania for some decades.⁵⁹² However, Hoxha was not the only Albanian leader to have damaged Albanian identity. For Kadare, the long line of leaders who have shown sympathy to or sided with the Turks begins with the Ottoman occupation and is still alive in the twenty-first century, as demonstrated by Albanian political leaders hiding the statue of Skenderbeg when meeting with their Turkish counterparts.⁵⁹³ On the other hand, the statue was proudly presented when meeting with other European leaders. Kadare interprets this as nothing less than a demonstration of Albania’s ambiguity towards abandoning the Eastern way, or at best, this is a confirmation of the influence of Turkey. Kadare’s concern is that these Albanians may impede the Albanian march to join Europe and allow Turkey to pull Albania back into its sphere of influence as the Ottomans did in the past.

5.2.5 Kadare’s Post-Ottoman era: The role of religion in nation building

Kadare’s thesis is clear: Albanian Christian religion was ‘contaminated’ by the Ottomans, as “a new faith, added to our ancestors, Muslim faith and its mosques”.⁵⁹⁴ Kadare asserts that the *rilindja* period was pivotal in laying the foundation of today’s Albanian national identity: during the *rilindja* period, from the scrimmage of three Albanian faiths, Catholic, Muslim and Orthodox, “the miracle happened” as three faiths showed respect and loyalty to

⁵⁹¹ Ibid., 67.

⁵⁹² Kadare, *Identiteti evropian i shqiptarëve [The European identity of the Albanians]*, 38.

⁵⁹³ Kadare, *Mosmarrëveshja: Mbi raportet e Shqipërisë me vetveten [Disagreement: On relations of Albania with itself]*, 41.

⁵⁹⁴ Kadare, *Identiteti evropian i shqiptarëve [The European identity of the Albanians]*, 25.

‘*Albanianism*’.⁵⁹⁵ As he emphasises, the harsh medieval formula, “where is sword, lays religion”⁵⁹⁶, was replaced with the soft approach: “The Albanian faith is *Albanianism*”.⁵⁹⁷ The sentence “where is sword, lays religion” has a cultural meaning in Albanian language, which relates to the fact that religion is not to be trusted—it rather generates wars through the symbolic use of swords.

Thus, following Albanian independence, religious differences did not affect Albanian identity, as *Albanianism* was above religion. Kadare discusses the example of the Albanian-Muslim King Zogu, who attempted to create a new “European Muslim”⁵⁹⁸, through legislation, which regulated the relation of Albania’s three religions and the state.⁵⁹⁹ Although Zogu was a Muslim himself, the legislation contained policies such as prohibiting men from wearing the white Turkish fez and women from wearing the veil; other laws regulated physical posture for prayer: standing, rather than sitting on one’s knees – as this would clash with the old Albanian *kanun*, which protected Albania’s male pride. Religion could not force an Albanian man to sit on his knees.⁶⁰⁰ In short, *Albanianism* and *kanun* remained above religion.

5.2.6 Kadare-Qosja debate: Albanian Christian and Islamic civilizations

Kadare’s Albanian identity thesis is strongly opposed by Rexhep Qosja – a long-standing intellectual figure in Kosovo and another ‘giant’ of contemporary Albanian literature, a historian and critic also very active in politics and social science. The debate between the two erupted in 2006, with the publication of Kadare’s essay, *Identiteti Evropian i Shqiptarëve* (The European identity of the Albanians), and became fiery when Qosja responded in the same year with his essays *Idetë raciste të Ismail Kadaresë* (The racist ideas of Ismail Kadare), *Ideologjia e Shpërbërjes* (Disbanding Ideology) and *Realiteti Shpërfillur* (Neglected Reality), all

⁵⁹⁵ Kadare, *Mosmarrëveshja: Mbi raportet e Shqipërisë me vetveten* [Disagreement: On relations of Albania with itself], 68.

⁵⁹⁶ This is a sentence that is believed Skenderbeg said to his son before his death.

⁵⁹⁷ Kadare, *Identiteti evropian i shqiptarëve* [The European identity of the Albanians], 33.

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid., 36.

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid., 35.

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid.

published by Toena in 2006. The two-way argument between Kadare and Qosja is central to this research as it goes to the heart of Albanian identity establishment, and thus will be explored.

While for Kadare, Albanian identity has remained unchanged and clearly belongs to the European-Christian civilization, Qosja believes that it is a mixture of two civilizations: Christian and Islamic. However, for Qosja, “Islamic civilization” in Albania is more widespread than the “Christian civilization”.⁶⁰¹ Qosja centres his claim on Albania’s culinary culture; folk dress; songs and dances; death and birth ceremonies and their rules; gender culture; morals and laws; pop art that have Turkish and Arabic similarities; religious, illuminist, pedagogical and moral literature written in Arabic; architecture of Albanian cities; bridges, mosques, *tekkes* and *tyrbes* built during the Ottoman occupation, which, according to him, are all part of the “Islamic civilization”. While for Kadare the Ottomans represented Islam, backwardness, intolerance and barbarism, Qosja disagrees, arguing that the Ottoman Empire was also “tolerant” such as in the case of religion.

The Albanian religious dichotomy creates strong divisions between two schools of thought. Qosja thinks that Kadare’s thesis put forward in the essay, *The European Identity*, reveals “the cultural disagreement between Europe and Muslim-East, while...it shows superiority of European identity towards...Muslim identity!”.⁶⁰² Qosja argues that equating Albanian identity with that of Christian Europe, which according to him, was not less “barbarian” than the Ottomans, as shown during the period of Christian crusades, is a racist assumption and ignores the fact that the Albanian Muslim community is the majority group in Albania and Kosovo.⁶⁰³ Hence, while for Qosja, Islam is part of the Albanian national identity, Kadare simply posits Islam as incarnated with the Ottoman-Turks, and thus, the main ‘other’ for Albanian identity. Kadare thinks that during their protests in 1981 and 1989-1990, Kosovar students fought for freedom, not for Islam, whereas Qosja believes the students fought not for Christianity either, but for a simple request: to see Kosovo becoming a Republic, and unite with “what was then called, the mother state – Albania”. Qosja went as far as revealing his

⁶⁰¹ Rexhep Qosja, "Premisa të gabuara [Wrong premises]", author’s translation, *Takimi i Madh [The Great Meeting]*, 19 April 2006. Page created by AlbaNur for Dr. Rexhep Qosja, accessed 5 May 2015, http://www.macedonianguide.com/rexhep_qosja/rexhep_qosja.html.

⁶⁰² Ibid.

⁶⁰³ Rexhep Qosja, "Idetë raciste të Ismail Kadaresë [The racist ideas of Ismail Kadare]", author’s translation, *Shqip*, 3 May 2006, accessed 12 August 2011.

position against “mythicising Mother Teresa” in Albania, who for him, is a religious figure and, therefore, the “name, portrait and her statue must be present at religious, humanitarian or health institutions, but not at Tirana airport, political, state institutions and city plazas” . Qosja thinks that Albanian politicians (including Kadare who is not a politician) use a religious figure “in a multi-religious country” to achieve their political ends. It is not hard to grasp Kadare’s alignment for Christian Europe, or Qosja’s writings with regards to “the Albanian Muslim heritage”. In relation to Islam and Albanian identity, both positions, Kadare’s and Qosja’s, have been politically instrumental for the Albanian nation-building process of the post-Cold War period.⁶⁰⁴

While Qosja tries to paint a realistic picture of Albania’s current religion, Kadare is going back in history to discover the ‘unchanged’ Albanian-Christian identity. Qosja argues that Albanians have different religious identities such as “Catholic, Orthodox, Muslim, Protestant, Atheist”, however, they are all united in what he calls “the Albanian national identity”.⁶⁰⁵ Kadare instead, ignoring the overall religious composition of Albania, thinks that the “cards are clear” for Christian-Albania to join Europe. This is not the case for Qosja’s Albania with its mixed religious identities, or ‘more’ Muslim identity, which, following his logic, is not yet ready to join the Christian Europe.⁶⁰⁶

Kadare argues with Qosja that identity is not something fleeting that can alter quickly, whereas for Qosja, national identity can be transformed and changed, absorbing new elements, as it did in Albania’s case. Kadare thinks that Albanian identity cannot be “half”, which in the Albanian language means “*torollak* [fool]” but must be entirely Occidental—the same as European identity. Kadare refers to Kosovar identity as an example that, according to him, did not change under the Serbian rule, nor did Albanian identity under the Ottomans. Qosja, on the other hand, considers Kadare’s thesis racist⁶⁰⁷; arguing with some of those factors that Kadare brings forward to prove the European identity of Albania. For example, Qosja continues to oppose Kadare, who considers the Albanian population to genetically have the ‘white colour of the skin’; the same as Europeans. As a result, he calls Kadare’s thesis dangerous,

⁶⁰⁴ Perparim Xhaferi, “The Political Contribution of Albanian Writers in Defining Albanian Identity: the Debate between Ismail Kadare and Rexhep Qosja”, *European Journal of Language and Literature*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2017.

⁶⁰⁵ Qosja, “Premisa të gabuara [Wrong premises]”, 19 April 2006. Page created by AlbaNur for Dr. Rexhep Qosja, http://www.macedonianguide.com/rexhep_qosja/rexhep_qosja.html.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁷ Qosja, “Idetë raciste të Ismail Kadaresë [The racist ideas of Ismail Kadare]”, 3 May 2006.

differentiating Albanians from Asians and Africans, at a time when Europe is in the process of unifying, and adapting cultures and languages, and is not created on the basis of race or skin colour. As discussed in chapter three, Europe has shifted from the concept of race for some time now, and European countries in their ‘ethnic’ composition are including people with different coloured skin who share the rights of white Europeans. Hence, Qosja deems Kadare an ‘Orientalist’ and ‘*Muslimanist*’, in the same way that Edward Said uncovers enemies of the Orient.

While Kadare blames the Ottomans as primarily responsible for wreaking destruction on Albania, both Kadare and Qosja are united in their criticism of the Great Powers for their lack of interest in dividing Albanian-speaking lands in 1913; of Europe for its negligence regarding the Albanian case, and in their criticism of those Albanians who work against the national interest. Moreover, both hold Albanian *rilindja* writers in high regard. Thus, Kadare and Qosja contemplate the same ‘others’ in relation to Albanian identity, with one exception: The Ottoman-Turks and their religion.

5.2.7 The Albanian ‘sanguine temper’, two distinctive writing styles, or different interpretations?

It is important to remember that Qosja and Kadare—one *geg* and the other *tosk*—are writing in very different styles, attacking each other in a way that the Albanian historian and academic, Kristo Frashëri calls the Albanian “sanguine temper”⁶⁰⁸—another Albanian identity element. For Frashëri, Kadare is a great writer and novelist, while Qosja tries to academically probe the Albanian national identity question. However, despite the fact they are both Albanian ‘giants’ in the field of literature and possess extensive knowledge, according to Frashëri, they both argue in “historical, sociological, philosophical and ethnological fields”, fields of which they both lack knowledge.⁶⁰⁹

They also grew up in very different environments, which shaped their ideas. Kosovo was annexed into Yugoslavia, and its economy under Tito enjoyed relative progress compared

⁶⁰⁸ Kristo Frashëri, "Identiteti i shqiptarëve dhe të metat e debatit Qose-Kadare [Albanian identity and shortcomings of Qosja-Kadare debate]", author's translation, *Alba Soul*, 19 June 2015, accessed 25 October 2018, <http://www.albasoul.com/vjeter/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=1970>.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid.

to that of the remote-centralised-communist Albania. Therefore, Kadare's and Qosja's paths were divided from the beginning. For a Kosovar such as Qosja, the Serbian-Orthodox enemy was extremely visible, and existed outside the Albanian community. Along with the Albanian language, the Kosovar-Muslim religion acted as an important bond in opposing the Serbian orthodox religion ideology, used by Serbian nationalism against Kosovar-Albanians. For Kadare, instead, Albanian enemies—the Islamic-Ottomans, Russian and Chinese imperialists, were easy prey. In short, for Kadare, religion played only a limited role in safeguarding Albanian identity. Although things have changed in the last two decades, Kadare is openly trying to revitalise the importance of Albanian identity and its Christian belonging.

5.2.8 Albanian politicians and scholars differ between Kadare and Qosja, West and East, Orient and Occident

Since the end of the Cold War, bi-partisan political support for Kadare's thesis has become more apparent in Albania. The post-Cold War discourse of the Albanian elite is a chorus echoing the West and its values, and Kadare is considered the spiritual leader. Albanian governments of the post-Cold War have all been convinced that it is only by returning Albania to the 'European family' that the historical humiliation will be eradicated. The majority of Albanian politicians support Kadare's thesis, which consider Albanian identity part of European identity. At the peak of the debate, when Qosja criticised Kadare in his essay, *The racist ideas of Ismail Kadare*, the former head of the Albanian Parliament, Jozefina Topalli, was quick to state that "Albanians have European identity".⁶¹⁰ Former Albanian President Bamir Topi did the same, stating: "Albania must return to Europe... to which it belongs both historically and geographically...".⁶¹¹ Topi's predecessor, Alfred Moisiu went even further in one of his speeches, stating that "every Muslim Albanian carries 15 centuries of Christianity in their soul".⁶¹² In his statement, Moisiu ignored the post-Ottoman period—three decades of

⁶¹⁰ "Topalli mbështet Kadarenë: Kemi Identitet Evropian [Topalli's support for Kadare: We have European Identity] ", 31 May 2006, <http://www.shekulli.com.al/shekulli/?s=%E2%80%98Topalli+mbeshtet+Kadarene%3A+Kemi+Identitet+Evropian%E2%80%99>.

⁶¹¹ Topi, 7 February 2008, <http://www.aiis-albania.org/>.

⁶¹² Alfred Moisiu, "Toleranca ndërfetare në traditën e popullit shqiptar [The tolerance of Albanian Inter-religious tradition]", lecture at Oxford Forum, author's translation, *Koha Jone*, 10 November 2005, accessed 11 November 2011, <http://www.kohajone.com/lexo.php?id=42679>.

a dysfunctional Albanian state between 1912 and 1944, half a century of communist atheism, and more than two and a half decades of a wild transition anarchy and corruption culture—a new ‘religion’ that is neither Christian nor Islamic, but seems to be part of the Albanian fabric of the twenty-first century, which arguably is part of the Ottoman legacy. Therefore, these statements demonstrate a political willingness to follow the ‘Euro-Atlantic’ path as the only way the Albanian state-building process ‘must go’. However, individual statements by Albanian leaders are politically motivated and not supported by policies of the Albanian government.

The Kadare-Qosja debate has divided most Albanian scholars who either side with Kadare or proclaim to be against his thesis. Frashëri suggests that both Kadare and Qosja focus too much on religious identity issues and thus miss the real debate about Albanian identity. For him, Kadare’s thesis needs correction, whereas all analyses of Qosja are wrong; Albanian identity should be understood outside of religious bias; other elements such as Albanian language and culture can better explain it. In their attempt to better explicate Albanian and European identity, Frashëri thinks, both Kadare and Qosja are confusing “identity” with “civilization”. For Frashëri identity is a property of ‘nation’ and cannot be changed, whereas civilization is very dynamic and continually absorbs new elements. It can be argued that Frashëri’s ‘unchanged identity’ sides with Kadare’s thesis, and on the other hand, opposes Qosja who equalises the “religious civilisation”, which for Frashëri does not exist.⁶¹³ Although for him, Islam and Christianity are guided by their ‘static’ policies, little changes are made to reflect continuous developments. However, Frashëri notes that “religion has no power over civilization”, but rather follows civilisation developments. Hence, Islam and Christianity cannot be identified with either Eastern or Western civilisations, as “religion is different from civilisation”.⁶¹⁴

Other Albanian scholars are divided in their analyses. Ibrahim supports Qosja for his realistic assessment of the Albanian demographic composition and also sides with him in criticising Kadare for idealism. Ibrahim expresses his concern over the cultural and spiritual re-orientation of Albanians who live in territories of ex-Yugoslavia, for shifting their loyalties

⁶¹³ Frashëri, 19 June 2015, <http://www.albasoul.com/vjeter/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=1970>.

⁶¹⁴ Ibid.

from Tirana towards Pristina.⁶¹⁵ Other scholars, in the same way as Qosja, analyse the new orientation of the Kosovar-Albanian society that seems to focus on religious rights and creating a new Kosovar identity.⁶¹⁶ However, the new Kosovar identity issue requires more research, and as mentioned, it is not the focus of this thesis. Although Shala, upholds Kadare's thesis of the Western-European-Christian origins of Albania⁶¹⁷, in *Qose-Kadare and the dynamic identity*, Shala fails, in the same way that Kadare does, to recognise the dynamism of Albanian identity and the fact that, historically, it has been transformed to reflect elements of both East and West. One of Kadare's historical rivals, Agolli, supports Qosja's arguments about Albanian identity. He highlights the dynamism of the concept of identity, in stressing that Albanian identity, language, cultural and social habits have changed, and many more changes can be expected in the future.⁶¹⁸ However, Agolli neglects Albanian religious identity, focusing more on the dynamics of continuous social, cultural and political change. Another Albanian writer and critic, Nano, in his analyses, does not side with either Qosja or Kadare. While for Nano, Kadare exaggerates in thinking that Balkan nations added to the Ottoman culture "desire to become more European", Qosja perceives Albanian identity to be a mix of Oriental and Occidental components.⁶¹⁹ Furthermore, for Nano, Qosja unjustly equates barbarian events of Eastern-Ottomans with those of Western-Europeans. According to Nano, Albania's 'Eastern civilisation' is not "autochthon and authentic" and, thus, Albania has no other choice but to follow its own culture, which, is similar to that of Europe since its birth⁶²⁰; a concept that is not far, if not the same as the thesis of Kadare. Plasari, another Albanian scholar, is instead criticising both Kadare and Qosja — Kadare for 'nonsense' in claiming that the Albanian

⁶¹⁵ Zekerija Ibrahim, "Bregovici dhe Tatlisasi [The Bregovic and Tatlisasi]", author's translation, *Shekulli*, 20 April 2006, accessed 3 November 2010, <http://www.shekulli.com.al/index.php?page=shownews&newsID=94100>.

⁶¹⁶ Dukagjin Gorani, *Orientalist Ethnonationalism: From Irredentism to Independentism Discourse analysis of the Albanian ethnonationalist narrative about the National Rebirth (1870-1930) and Kosovo Independence (1980-2000)* (School of Journalism, Cardiff University, unpublished PhD thesis, December 2011), 289; Mehmeti.

⁶¹⁷ Xhavit Shala, "Qose-Kadare and the dynamic identity", *Shqip*, 9 May 2006.

⁶¹⁸ Dritëro Agolli, "Intervistë për debatin e identitetit kombëtar Shqiptar [An interview over the debate of the Albanian identity]", author's translation, 16 May 2006, accessed 11 November 2011, <http://gazeta-shqip.com/lajme/>.

⁶¹⁹ Mustafa Nano, "Kultura Perëndimore dhe Qytetërimi Lindor i Shqiptarëve [The Western Culture and Albania's Oriental Civilization]", 22 May 2006, accessed 17 July 2015, <http://albanur.eu/showthread.php?t=282>.

⁶²⁰ Ibid.

Christian Church is older than the Orthodox one, and Qosja who is “mixing-up Istanbul with Jerusalem”.⁶²¹ Plasari is referring to Qosja’s claim with regards to freedom of religion that Christians can go for their religious rituals even to Turkey, if they wish to. The issue of Muslims traveling and participating in their religious rituals to Jerusalem might be irrelevant, and the focus of the Kadare-Qosja debate gets out of context here. However, Plasari thinks that the debate between Kadare and Qosja is beneficial for the Albanian nation but also tells us there is much to be resolved concerning the question of Albanian national and religious identity.

Visar Zhiti, an Albanian artist who was arrested during the Albanian Cultural Revolution in 1979 and released in 1987, highlights the importance of plurality as part of national identity and states that both Kadare and Qosja represent Albanian identity.⁶²² Indeed, this is an important issue for Albania and merits further scholarly research rather than subjective analysis such as Kadare’s and Qosja’s. Zhiti also points out that a personality such as Mother Teresa should not be part of the debate, as she does not have the recognition she deserves in Albania. Unfortunately, Albanians are far from understanding the humanitarian significance of a figure of the calibre of Mother Teresa, and what she represents for Albania and the entire world, regardless of her religion. Nevertheless, the Albanian ‘clash of civilisations’ debate between Kadare and Qosja is a clear indication of how contested the Albanian national identity is. Ultimately, recent comments by Nano that Skenderbeg was more Christian than Albanian, and that his mother was Serbian⁶²³, sparked outrage from Albanian scholars, historians, and even ordinary Albanians whose comments on social media reached the point of death threats. While Skenderbeg seems to be untouchable for Albanians, ordinary people need to participate in this debate and have a voice. This is an indication that there is a need for a thorough analysis of Albanian identity considering the actual experience of Albanians; statements by politicians cannot fully represent the facets of this identity.

⁶²¹ Aurel Plasari, "An interview with Aurel Plasari, ‘Debati për identitetin? Kadare ka nonsens, Qosja ngatërron Stambollin me Jeruzalemin’ [Arguing about identity? Kadare has no-sense, Qose is mixing up Istanbul with Jerusalem]", author’s translation, *Shekulli*, 2012, accessed 26 August 2012, <http://shekulli.com.al/web/p.php?id=2847&kat=104>.

⁶²² Visar Zhiti, "Kadare dhe Qose së bashku krijojnë identitetin tonë [Kadare and Qose together create our identity]", author’s translation, *Albanur*, accessed 23 February 2011, <http://albanur.eu/showthread.php?t=277>

⁶²³ Mustafa Nano, "Skënderbeu ka qenë më shumë i krishterë se shqiptar, nënën e kishte sllave [Skenderbeg was more Christian than Albanian and his mother was Sllav]", author’s translation, *Telegrafi.com*, 14 July 2017, accessed 18 July 2017, <http://telegrafi.com/skenderbeu-ka-qene-shume-krishtere-se-shqiptar-nenen-e-kishte-sllave/>.

5.2.9 Albanian *rhizomatic* identity in the twenty-first century.

In the twenty-first century Albanians are struggling to express their identity. In religious terms their identity is represented by four religions, all claiming to be Albanian. An Albanian scholar, Yzeiri focuses on differences between Muslims and Christians; using the *rhizomatic*⁶²⁴ concept, which was coined in the second half of the twentieth century by Deleuze and Guattari. Constructing his analyses on these scholars, Yzeiri is convinced that Albanians have a *rhizomatic* identity.⁶²⁵ Deleuze and Guattari realised that the analogy of imagining the nation as a tree or plant that lives vertically and is composed by roots, the trunk and its branches is challenged by postcolonial nations that have adsorbed other elements in their identity. Hence, Yzeiri thinks the *rhizomatic* model, which spreads horizontally without root connection, is better suited to explain Albanian identity.⁶²⁶ According to Yzeiri, the main reason for this claim is religion: Albanians claim European roots, which in religious terms are known to be Judeo-Christian or Greco-Roman. Unlike Kadare who thinks that Albanian roots and its origins were not affected by Ottomans, Yzeiri believes these roots have been modified by the Ottomans in a way that even *rilindja* leaders could not convince Albanians to return to their origins. As a result, Yzeiri emphasises, the ‘*Albanianism*’ model that Pashko Vasa suggested is the confirmation of the *rhizomatic* identity of Albania. Vasa and indeed other *rilindja* writers stressed the idea of having a unified Albanian identity, while the issue of religion was purportedly downplayed. While Yzeiri has no doubt that Albanian ‘religious identity roots’ were affected and modified by Ottoman rulers, the question is whether Albanians are willing to again re-modify their religious roots and return back to the Christian-European identity? An affirmative answer to this question will, without any doubt, create tension between Erdogan’s Turkey and Albania.

⁶²⁴ According to the Oxford Dictionary the term is used in a figurative way and has appeared in philosophy but originates from botany and defines “resembling an interconnected, subterranean network of roots. Hence: non-hierarchical, interconnected”.

⁶²⁵ Ilir Yzeiri, "Identiteti rizomatik i shqiptarëve [The rhizomatic identity of Albanians]", author’s translation, *Gazeta Shqip*, 18 Maj 2015, accessed from a personal communication with the author on 10 March 2018.

⁶²⁶ Ibid.

5.2.10 Albanian identity in the making

Albanian identity is contested by Albanians themselves. As we have seen through endless debates between Kadare and Qosja, but also other Albanian scholars, politicians and the media, an agreement is missing. The main two opposing factions are those of Kadare and Qosja who have become catalysing forces of this debate. Energies spent in these debates, and the elevated tone used by participants, shows how difficult it is for Albanians to agree on what constitutes their own identity. While Kadare's 'others'—the West, Orient, Albania's neighbours and Albanians themselves are not motionless, the Ottoman-Turks have always been unchanged: aggressors, ruthless and ready to assimilate, or 'swallow' Albanian identity. If Kadare is correct here, the loyalty of Albanians to the Porte during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries makes little to no sense. On the other hand, Qosja is building his claims regarding religious tolerance of the Ottoman Empire on voluntary conversions. However, forced conversions also took place, along with lack of infrastructure development, political instability, and more importantly, the Ottoman policy of stopping Albanians from developing their own language and Latin alphabet—all indications of political aims of the Porte. Qosja correctly claims that Albanian identity is more aligned to "Islamic civilization" as Albania's culinary culture; folk dress; songs and dances; death and birth ceremonies and their rules; gender culture; morals and laws; pop art that have Turkish and Arabic similarities; religious, illuminist, pedagogical and moral literature written in Arabic; bridges, mosques, *tekkes* and *tyrbes* built during the Ottoman occupation. While there is no doubt Albanians embraced imported culture elements such as culinary, folk, songs and dances, celebrations, morals and pop art with Turkish and Arabic similarities, they struggled to learn and practice the Arabic literature, alphabet, and never detached from their Albanian language. Building of mosques, *tekkes* and *tyrbes* has little link with Albanian willingness, but rather shows Sultan's political aim to build a permanent structure in order to achieve his ends: make Albanian lands an extension of the Empire and assimilate all *Arnahut*-Albanians⁶²⁷ in Turks in order to then get physically closer to the West. Another thing to consider is that, during the communist period, the Ottoman heritage, Turkish and Arabic culture elements were more preserved through Albanians living in ex-Yugoslavia. Reasons are known: while Hoxha's regime abandoned, after 1967, from Albania's life any religion activity, Albanians of Yugoslavia continued to safeguard anything that protected their

⁶²⁷ *Arnahut* is the way the Ottomans and most Turks call Albanians.

uniqueness, and practicing Islam was perceived as defending Albanian identity. However, in the twenty-first century, as Yzeiri mentions, Albanian ‘religious identity roots’ has been changed for all Albanians and this fact needs to be contemplated when defining Albanian identity. Therefore, both Qosja and Kadare have failed to correctly define Albanian identity. Kadare’s Albanian identity that have resisted both the Ottoman atrocities and communist pressures is more comprehensible for Albanians who lived under the regime of Hoxha. However, for Albanians of Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Macedonia Kadare’s hate for Ottoman-Turks and Islam is challenging. This is one of the reasons that a detailed study of cultural differences within Albanians will complement Albanian identity analyses.

Qosja has the right to oppose Kadare’s racist ideas and believe that Albanian identity reflects elements of both the Western and Eastern civilisations. Frashëri, who tried to stop the debate between the two, is engaging instead in philosophical analyses of definition of ‘identity’, which according to him is property of ‘nation’ and thus cannot change and evolve unlike civilization, which is dynamic and can absorb new elements. The Albanian national identity has changed and evolved and while Frashëri’s unchanged identity is aligned with Kadare’s unchanged Albanian identity, the change of civilization opposes Kadare’s thesis of Albania’s belonging to the Western civilization, which for Kadare remains unchanged. Other Albanian politicians, scholars and media are superficially ‘scratching’ Albanian identity puzzle; focusing often on ‘sanguine temper’ of Kadare and Qosja. Albanian identity debate does not represent Kadare and Qosja, but is rather represented by them, and the continuation of these analyses will only bring to the light benefits for Albanians and the international community to better comprehend Albanian identity.

5.2.11 Conclusion

The first part of the chapter analysed the complexities of the ‘Greater Albania’ issue, the origins of this claim and its causes. The subsequent involvement of the Great Powers led to the redistribution of territory and redesigned borders of nation-states in the Balkans. Although the decision made by the Great Powers did not fully accommodate all requests of emerging Balkan states, it is safe to state that the impact was greatest on Albania. The redistribution of territory decided at the London Conference in 1913 led to the incorporation of territories with a majority of Albanian-speaking population into Montenegro, Serbia and Greece—a situation which remains unchanged in the twenty-first century. The feasibility of reversing the decision of the

Great Powers and the re-establishment of an Albanian nation-state in the twenty-first century, despite its attraction for Albanians, seems unlikely and would again create instability in the Balkans. The project of a 'Greater Albania' does not have a strong political support in Albania, but rather is fuelled by Albanian and Balkan nationalism. The Albanian government is reluctant to speak about the "Greater Albania" question and claims that this is not on the agenda, at least not until EU membership has been gained, which would allow for a unification under the auspices of the European project. Albanians feel humiliated by this decision of the Great Powers to divide Albanian-speaking lands, but also the Ottoman-Turks who not only failed to protect Albanian lands from their partition, they also opposed the independence of Albania.

Secondly, the chapter analysed a number of controversies and challenges surrounding the self-perception of Albanian identity. It introduced the two main theories about Albanian identity. The first one is set out by the Albanian famous writer, Kadare who sees Albanian identity as historically determined and Western. Kadare claims that Albania belongs to the European family, and the Ottoman barbarians removed Albania from Europe. In opposition to Kadare's theory, the Kosovar scholar, Qosja has formulated his own theory, which emphasis the hybridity developed through the Ottoman occupation and thus, considers Albanian identity to be more oriented towards the East than the West. Such contradicting theories demonstrate the unresolved nature of the question of the Albanian national identity. Their debate circles around the role of religion and the Ottoman heritage in shaping Albanian identity. The Albanian society, scholars, politicians and the media are all divided by these two theories. This indetermination also finds its expression in the political arena. While at an individual level, some politicians agree with Kadare, in the twenty-first century, the Albanian government's policy to distance the Albanians and thus Albanian identity from that of the Ottoman-Turks is missing. It will now be beneficial to explore bilateral relations between Albanian government and the Republic of Turkey in the post-Ottoman era.

CHAPTER 6. FROM RULERS TO THE MAIN SUPPORTERS: THE POLITICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND ALBANIA IN THE POST-OTTOMAN ERA

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will explore bilateral relations between Albania and Turkey in the context of the economic, energy security, military, geopolitical spheres and religion in the post-Ottoman period. The chapter will examine whether Turkish support for Albania is intentional. Notwithstanding the fluidity of the relationship between the two countries, I seek to explore the Turkish motivation for investing in this relationship, and possible Albanian gains from strengthening their bilateral relations with Turkey over those with other Western Balkan neighbours. The chapter aims to discuss the research question of this thesis, namely, whether Albanians are escaping the Ottoman heritage, and how is the influence of Turkey pressuring Albania to abandon the Euro-Atlantic route and rather looking eastward for support.

6.2 The Post-Ottoman Era: A Fresh Start in Bilateral Relations between Albania and Turkey?

Scholarly research on post-Ottoman relations between Albania and Turkey is limited.⁶²⁸ The Albanian first post-communist military attaché in Ankara who served for the period from 1990-2000, Hajro Limaj, published in 2012 his diary in Albanian.⁶²⁹ This excellent source of data-

⁶²⁸ Tase, "Turkey and Albania establish a dynamic agenda of bilateral relations", 2 May 2014, <http://foreignpolicynews.org/2014/05/02/turkey-albania-establish-dynamic-agenda-bilateral-relations/>; Tase, "Albania And Turkey: Two Nations With Common Vision To Strengthen Bilateral Cooperation, 1990-2000", 25 January 2014, <http://foreignpolicynews.org/2014/01/25/albania-turkey-two-nations-common-vision-strengthen-bilateral-cooperation-1990-2000/>; Peter Tase, "Turkey and Albania, strategic partnership in a globalized world", *Today's Zaman on line*, 2 August 2013, accessed 5 November 2015, http://www.todayszaman.com/op-ed_turkey-and-albania-strategic-partnership-in-a-globalized-world-by-peter-m-tase-_322611.html; Beshku, February 2015, https://www.academia.edu/17005495/_The_Albanian_relationship_with_Greece_and_Turkey._Perceptions_and_Realities_in_the_framework_of_the_Foreign_Policy_Partnership_?auto=download; Sülkü; Pajaziti, 27-29 May 2011, International Symposium, Skopje, Macedonia-Prishtinë, Kosovo. Ankara Center For Thought And Research and International Balkan University; Katarina Andelković, "Turkey playing on the card of Islam in Albania?", *Western European Balkans*, 4 October 2017, accessed 11 May 2018, <https://europeanwesternbalkans.com/2017/10/04/turkey-playing-card-islam-albania/>.

⁶²⁹ Hajro M. Limaj, *Midis Ankarasë dhe Tiranës: 1990-2000. Nga ditari i një atasheu ushtarak [Between Ankara and Tirana: 1990-2000. From the diary of a military attaché]*, author's translation, Tirana: Emal, 2012.

analyses regarding bilateral relations between the post-Ottoman Albania and Turkey will be used for this study and examined for the first time in English.

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire necessitated a new struggle for Albania to protect its territorial integrity. This situation continued during the two Balkan Wars and into World War One when Greek, Serbian, Montenegrin, Italian, French, Bulgarian and Austrian troops penetrated Albanian lands.⁶³⁰ This was a time when Turkey was dealing with its own internal and external struggles to maintain its territorial integrity and trying to replace the Ottoman Caliphate with a modern, Republican state. The name that has become synonymous with the end of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of the Republic of Turkey—Kemal Atatürk—has been described “for all intents and purposes, the moral and intellectual epitome of the Young Turk[s] movement.”⁶³¹ Atatürk and other Turkish Republican leaders started to reject the Ottoman past as a backward and ‘non-Western’ society. This shift accommodated Albania’s needs, and thereby starting a new chapter in the relations between Turkey and Albania.⁶³²

Cultural similarities, commonalities in dealing with oppressors, and the desire to create an independent state brought about new ties between Turkey and Albania at the end of WWI.⁶³³ Despite Turkey’s domestic and international challenges, Atatürk assumed a friendly position towards Albania. He believed in a republican and modern Turkey, and he hoped for Albania to become a free and prosperous country.⁶³⁴ For example in 1920, Atatürk sent several scholars of Albanian origin back to Albania to help the establishment of the Albanian state.⁶³⁵ On 1 March 1921, addressing the National Assembly of Turkey, Atatürk explained “sanctuary” links between Turks and “brother” Albanians stating that “we [Turks] are going to help as much as

⁶³⁰ Jelavich, in *A History of East Central Europe*, 297.

⁶³¹ Ryan Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate: the Great War and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1922*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2016, 5.

⁶³² Perparim Xhaferi, "The Post-Ottoman Era: A Fresh Start for Bilateral Relations between Albania and Turkey?", *Australia and New Zealand Journal of European Studies*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2017, 45.

⁶³³ Limaj, 32-3.

⁶³⁴ Ibid., 33.

⁶³⁵ One of them, colonel Selaudin Shkoza, a man with Prizren heritage, was appointed as the defence minister in the Albanian government in 1920. Shkoza’s appointment started to lay foundations for new diplomatic relations between Turkey and Albania. See for instance *ibid.*, 31.

we can” and provide whatever this brother nation-state needs.⁶³⁶ Therefore, on 15 December 1923, nearly a month after the Declaration of the Republic of Turkey on 29 October 1923, a ‘Memorandum of Friendship Agreement’ between the two states paved the way for another five years of increased diplomatic relations. This was now a post-colonial agreement between the Republic of Turkey and the Albanian government, led by the Muslim leader of Mati tribe, Ahmet Zogu.

However, Zogu’s decision, in 1928, to turn Albania into a monarchy annoyed the Republican Atatürk who, despite his sympathy for Albania, terminated diplomatic relations by recalling the Turkish ambassador Tahir Lütfi from Tirana.⁶³⁷ In response, Zogu closed the Albanian embassy in Ankara, leaving the fate of many Albanians living in Turkey in the hands of the Italian Consulate in Ankara.⁶³⁸ The conflict lasted three years, until the second Conference of the Balkans on 20 October 1931. Later, on 14 May 1933, the new Albanian ambassador, Xhevat Leskoviku, met with Atatürk, who in response sent Ruşen Eşref as Turkish ambassador to Tirana on 15 April 1934.⁶³⁹ Upon his arrival in Albania, Eşref met King Zog, who then echoed Atatürk’s previous words in describing Turkey as the “big brother” of Albania.⁶⁴⁰ Despite Atatürk and Zogu having different beliefs—one a convinced republican and the other in favour of a monarchy—it seems what united them was more important. While Zogu’s Albania needed to secure Turkish support, Atatürk’s Turkey could not find a better friend than Muslim Albanians to help Turkey come back in to the Western Balkans. The excellent diplomatic relations between Albania and Turkey were again disrupted in April 1939, when fascist Italy occupied Albania. However, the Turkish government re-opened the Turkish Consulate in Tirana at the end of the Italian occupation in 1942; similarly, Nazi Germany’s occupation that seemed to restore “the formal independence of Albania and, to an extent, respected the country’s sovereignty”.⁶⁴¹

⁶³⁶ Ibid., 29.

⁶³⁷ For the republican Atatürk, the shift to an Albanian monarchy was an enormous step backward.

⁶³⁸ Limaj, 34.

⁶³⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁴¹ Robert Elsie, "1945 Final Report of the German Wehrmacht in Albania", *Texts and documents of Albanian history*, Robert Elsie Website, http://www.albanianhistory.net/1945_German-Wehrmacht/index.html.

The withdrawal of Nazi Germany from Albania in the winter of 1944 and the rise to power of the Albanian Communist Party in the early forties⁶⁴² were momentous events, with the latter leading the complete severing of diplomatic relations between Turkey and Albania. On 16 July 1945, the Turkish Ambassador, Muzaffer Kamil Bayur, departed Albania.⁶⁴³ Despite this, on 14 December 1955, Turkey voted for Albania to become a full member of the United Nations (UN).⁶⁴⁴ Turkey's vote helped Albania to achieve an important goal, and thus was welcomed by Albanian authorities. As a result, Albanian-Turkish diplomatic relations resumed, culminating in the official re-establishment of diplomatic relations on 13 June 1958⁶⁴⁵ and the re-opening of the Turkish embassy in Tirana on 27 June 1959. Following the Turkish coup, the next year, diplomatic relations remained formally in place, but without significant interaction. Albania returned Turkey's favour on 18 December 1965 by siding with Turkey against the recognition of Cyprus in an important vote in the UN. Despite the fact that their vote was unsuccessful, and Cyprus was granted recognition (with the General Assembly resolution 2077 being approved),⁶⁴⁶ this vote not only boosted relations between the two countries, but also showed that Albania had no intention of abandoning its Turkish alliance.

Relations between Albania and USSR were cut completely in 1961, and due to the difficult relations with its neighbours, Greece and Yugoslavia, Albania came to value Turkey as a strategic ally.⁶⁴⁷ However, Turkey became a NATO member in 1952, and thus was classified as a 'Western country' by the Albanian communist regime during the Cold War era.

⁶⁴² The Albanian Communist Party, *Partia Komuniste Shqiptare* (PKSH), was founded in 1941, with the participation of Enver Hoxha; assisted by Yugoslav Communist Party delegates. After withdrawal of Nazi Germany from Albania in the winter of 1944, the PKSH came to power, persecuting the political alternative, Balli Kombëtar, as well as intellectual, political and religious figures. See Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*.

⁶⁴³ Political relations between the two countries remained static for a decade, until Albanian leaders requested to move diplomatic relations forward.

⁶⁴⁴ "60 vjet Shqiperi ne OKB [Albania and the United Nations: 60 Years of Partnership]", author's translation, *Albanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, 2015: 4, accessed 12 May 2018, [http://www.punetegashtme.gov.al/files/userfiles/press_brochure_minfor_\(2\).pdf](http://www.punetegashtme.gov.al/files/userfiles/press_brochure_minfor_(2).pdf).

⁶⁴⁵ Robert Elsie, *Historical Dictionary of Albania*, 2, Lanham, Toronto, Plymouth, UK: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2010, 455.

⁶⁴⁶ "Cyprus: New hope after 45 years on the Security Council agenda", *Security Council Report: Special Research Report*, no. 3, 4 September 2008, 10.

⁶⁴⁷ Limaj, 36.

As a result, Albania and Turkey had “few noticeable direct political contacts”.⁶⁴⁸ As discussed, the Albanian-Turkish relationship has ebbed and flowed over the past century. However, even during the communist period there were no open hostilities between the two countries. On the contrary, the Turkish support for Albania in 1955 and the Albanian vote on the Cyprus issue in 1965 revealed that both Albania and Turkey agreed on crucial issues in the international arena.

The political discussion so far in this chapter has overlooked the significant cultural exchanges between Turks and Albanians who may not have been aware of what was occurring at a political level. Before the arrival of Hoxha’s regime, Turks and Albanians were relatively-free to trade and visit each-others country. Although Hoxha’s regime made restrictions for individual citizens to enter and exit Albania, the two countries maintained cultural exchanges in forms of organised folk-dance competitions, academic, sporting, agricultural, tourism and commercial interactions.⁶⁴⁹ While the average Albanian citizen faced restrictions on movement, with tight controls on exit and entry into the country, these organised groups were supported by the Albanian regime. However, all members of these groups were strictly-scrutinised and controlled by the regime, as were any figures who enjoyed external contacts or travel, such as writers and cultural figures.⁶⁵⁰ Therefore, relations between Albania and Turkey at the grass roots level (ie. interactions between individuals) faced particular challenges, which have remained largely uncharted, but are beyond the scope of the present thesis.

On the political level, interaction between the two countries was maintained. During his visit to Albania in 1968, the chairman of the Turkish National Assembly, Ferruh Bozbeyli, discussed ways to further improve “Ankara’s ties with the communist leadership of Tirana”⁶⁵¹, at a time when, politically and economically, China was becoming important to Albania. After 1968, for another decade, the entire Albanian economy, its health system, the industry, defence

⁶⁴⁸ Elsie, *Historical Dictionary of Albania*, 455.

⁶⁴⁹ Vickers and Pettifer, 221.

⁶⁵⁰ Peter Morgan mentions that although Albanian writers had better pay and conditions, they were kept under closer scrutiny by the communist regime. Even the work of the well-known Albanian writer, Ismail Kadare, was censored by Hoxha’s regime. Therefore, it was a constant struggle for Kadare to survive one of the most tyrannic regimes that considered the work of writers and artists as “extremely seriously”. See for instance Morgan, *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*, 1-2; 23.

⁶⁵¹ Tase, "Albania And Turkey: Two Nations With Common Vision To Strengthen Bilateral Cooperation, 1990-2000", 25 January 2014, <http://foreignpolicynews.org/2014/01/25/albania-turkey-two-nations-common-vision-strengthen-bilateral-cooperation-1990-2000/>.

and foreign policy relied on the support of Mao's China, and as a result, ties with the rest of the world were slashed. Despite Turkey's attitude towards Maoist China, even during this period, the political relations between Albania and Turkey were kept very cordial. By the time of the formal break with China in 1978, Albania had become isolated, with an economy on the verge of collapse. Once more, in difficult circumstances for Albania, trade with Turkey resumed. In December 1980, a Turkish delegation visited Tirana, and the visit was returned by an Albanian delegation led by Nedin Hoxha, a minister and cousin of Enver Hoxha almost exactly a year later.⁶⁵² In 1988, after a historic meeting of the Albanian foreign minister Reis Malile with the foreign ministers of Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey and Romania in Belgrade⁶⁵³, Hoxha's successor—the Albanian Chairman of the Presidium of the People's Assembly, Ramiz Alia—welcomed the Turkish foreign minister Mesut Yilmaz to Tirana.⁶⁵⁴ The visit was returned in 1990 by an Albanian delegation. Despite the political position of Hoxha, Turkey has helped Albania during the Cold War every time a request was made for help. The end of Hoxha's regime in Albania ushered a new era of continuous and uninterrupted relations between Turkey and Albania. At the end of the Cold War, Albania's economic needs were enormous, and Turkish authorities did not wait to help their 'little sister', Albania.

6.3 The post-communist decade: the establishment of the bilateral relations

In April 1991, Sali Berisha was elected Albanian President, after the Albanian Democratic Party (PD) won the first democratic elections. One of the main challenges for the new fragile Albanian "democracy" was a nearly-collapsed economy. According to Tase, Turkey stepped in when Albania's need was at its greatest, taking advantage of Albania's weakness in order to potentially exploit the old imperial subject and subsequent Eastern Mediterranean ally:

⁶⁵² Elsie, *Historical Dictionary of Albania*, 455.

⁶⁵³ David Binder, "Rivalry Aside, 6 Balkan Lands Meet and Agree", *The New York Times*, 6 March 1988, accessed 14 April 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/1988/03/06/world/rivalry-aside-6-balkan-lands-meet-and-agree.html>.

⁶⁵⁴ Tase, "Albania And Turkey: Two Nations With Common Vision To Strengthen Bilateral Cooperation, 1990-2000", 25 January 2014, <http://foreignpolicynews.org/2014/01/25/albania-turkey-two-nations-common-vision-strengthen-bilateral-cooperation-1990-2000/>.

Turkish Foreign Policy in the Balkans was significantly influenced by Turkish President Halil Turgut Özal who took tremendous advantage of Albania's weak economy and its state of extreme poverty.⁶⁵⁵

Others interpret these circumstances differently. While for Tase Özal's Turkey took advantage and thus used Albanian poverty to offer Turkish opportunistic help, according to Limaj, Turkey acted in generosity to help Albania through sincere help.⁶⁵⁶ If we look more closely at the situation we can establish that in 1991, through their President Özal, Turkey donated approximately USD14 million to Albania through *Eksim Bank*⁶⁵⁷—the first country to offer a post-communist donation of this scale to Albania. A number of visits from both Turkish and Albanian leaders in years to come brought about an increase in economic, political and defence support to Albania. Money donated to the Albanian government was followed by Turkish investments to restore mosques and religious buildings, ambulances and equipment for hospitals, motor vehicles for the Albanian police forces, along with scholarships for Albanian 'civilian and military' students to study in Turkey.⁶⁵⁸ In 1992, the Turkish government also granted "USD29 million in the form of food, technology and towards Albania's economic revitalization efforts".⁶⁵⁹

Turkish authorities re-commenced their visits to now the 'democratic' Albania in November 1991 with the significant visit of the Turkish General Doğan Güreş. Six months later, in June 1992, the Turkish Prime Minister (PM) Süleyman Demirel visited Albania and signed an agreement of bilateral friendship and cooperation with Albanian government.⁶⁶⁰ Demirel was elected as the Turkish PM in 1965, at the time when Albania voted in favour of

⁶⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁶ Limaj, 36.

⁶⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁸ Vickers and Pettifer, 221.

⁶⁵⁹ Tase, "Albania And Turkey: Two Nations With Common Vision To Strengthen Bilateral Cooperation, 1990-2000", 25 January 2014, <http://foreignpolicynews.org/2014/01/25/albania-turkey-two-nations-common-vision-strengthen-bilateral-cooperation-1990-2000/>.

⁶⁶⁰ Limaj, 36.

Turkey in the UN on the Cyprus issue.⁶⁶¹ As a figure known for his pro-Albanian sympathies, Demirel reassured Albanian leaders in 1992 that “Turkey was committed to provide USD50 million in humanitarian and logistical assistance to Albania”.⁶⁶² This humanitarian assistance promised to Albania in difficult times further reinforced the perception of Albanians that Turkey was the best supporter of Albania in the region.

The bilateral relations between Turkey and Albania intensified after the first ministerial meeting held in Ankara on 24 July 1992, which was followed by the visit of the Turkish President Özal in Albania on 18-21 February 1993. Özal, who addressed the Albanian National Assembly, agreed to sign “a fifteen-year economic agreement with Albania that would cover a wide area of cooperation from infrastructure projects to military assistance and growth of the tourism industry”.⁶⁶³ Two months later, in April 1993, the Albanian President, Sali Berisha returned the visit, followed by the Albanian PM Aleksander Meksi at the end of the same year. During meetings between the two presidents, sensitive issues were discussed. Özal tried to convince Berisha to recognize the new independent state of Macedonia (FYROM), as the only way to improve relations between the two countries, with a goal to make the Balkan region a more peaceful place. On the other hand, Berisha raised concerns regarding tensions with Albania’s neighbours, Greece and Serbia, and asked for total economic and defence support from Turkey.⁶⁶⁴ The term “total” used by Berisha is clear: at the end of the Cold War, Albanian authorities, once more, aimed to fully rely on Turkey. On the other hand, Albania’s position created perfect conditions for Turkish authorities to advance their influence strategy over Albania. As a result of the Turkish pressure, in December 1992, under the leadership of Berisha, Albanian delegates decided Albania would become a member of the Organisation of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC), without consulting the Albanian parliament.⁶⁶⁵ This shift triggered a fierce debate between Albanians who then questioned whether Albania’s identity

⁶⁶¹ "Cyprus: New hope after 45 years on the Security Council agenda", 10.

⁶⁶² Tase, "Albania And Turkey: Two Nations With Common Vision To Strengthen Bilateral Cooperation, 1990-2000", 25 January 2014, <http://foreignpolicynews.org/2014/01/25/albania-turkey-two-nations-common-vision-strengthen-bilateral-cooperation-1990-2000/>.

⁶⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁵ Vickers and Pettifer, 105.

was shifting towards Islam and the East.⁶⁶⁶ At this time, Albania secured economic assistance in the form of donations from Turkey, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, to restore old and build new mosques and Islamic schools.⁶⁶⁷ While for Albania—the poorest communist country in the Balkans—this aid was critical, for Turkey, this was a step in the right direction, bolstering Turkey’s support for Muslim Albania, and thus re-establishing the official presence in the Balkan region.

The collapse of the Albanian government in 1997 (due to failed pyramidal investment schemes) alongside the worsening situation in Kosovo, brought about another opportunity for Turkey to support ‘brother’ Albanians. For Albanians the wounds of the period between 1997 and 1999 will need a long time to heal.⁶⁶⁸ Pyramid schemes caused political crises and a quasi-civil war⁶⁶⁹ leading to around 2000 deaths in Albania.⁶⁷⁰ The Albanian government lost its legitimacy, creating again another opportunity for the Serbian and Greek nationalistic-irredentism. During this revolt the state even lost control of some parts of Albania, and according to Limaj, there were, once more, international plans to divide Albania, with both Serbian and Greek nationalisms resurrected.⁶⁷¹ Turkey stepped in to protect the territorial integrity of Albania during the political turmoil in 1997 and following the advice by the Turkish General Karadaj, on 29 March 1997, the Turkish PM Tansu Çiller stated:

⁶⁶⁶ Antonia Young, "Religion and society in present-day Albania", *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, vol. 14, no. 1, 1999, 11. Vickers and Pettifer, 105.

⁶⁶⁷ Bogdani and Loughlin, 82.

⁶⁶⁸ Chris Jarvis, "The Rise and Fall of the Pyramid Schemes in Albania", *International Monetary Fund*, 1999: 30, accessed 17 May 2018, <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/1999/wp9998.pdf>.

⁶⁶⁹ In 1997, the Albanian government lost control and some areas of Albania. In the absence of government authority, armed gangs took control of entire areas. For example, the city of Vlorë was controlled by two gangs that were related to the Albanian main political opponents: Gaxhai’s gang that was supported by Democratic Party and Zani’s gang, that served the Socialist Party. See for instance "Vlora 20 vjet me parë: Si e priti Zani Caushi me armë Prodin [Vlora 20 years ago: How armed Zani Caushi received Prodi]", author’s translation, *Panorama on line*, 26 January 2017, accessed 23 February 2017, <http://www.panorama.com.al/fotolajm-vlora-20-vjet-me-pare-si-e-priti-zani-caushi-me-arme-prodin/>.

⁶⁷⁰ Jarvis, 1999, <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/1999/wp9998.pdf>, 31.

⁶⁷¹ Albania’s historical neighbours, Serbia and Greece had their own agendas in 1997, a time when the Albanian state lost control of the Albanian territory, after the quasi civil war. The “ghost” of Vorio-Epirus was resurrected when the Greek flag was flown in protests in Sarandë, Delvinë and Gjirokastër in south Albania; whereas the north and the rest of the counter was under the Serbian rule. See for instance Limaj, 106-8.

Turkey will protect the territorial integrity of Albania and cannot stay passive in the face of events that threaten to divide Albania.⁶⁷²

The second president of Albania, Rexhep Meidani welcomed the two-day visit of the Turkish President Demirel in April 1998. This visit was not a simple meeting between the two presidents as Demirel was accompanied by many high ministerial figures, leaders of different Turkish institutions and members of the business community, with the visit receiving wide coverage from the Turkish media.⁶⁷³ The stated aim of this visit was again to assist Albania in difficult times. President Demirel stood before the Albanian parliament and claimed that “65 million Turks are close to the Albanian people”, anytime they need help.⁶⁷⁴ Demirel’s strong words were in line with Atatürk’s historic sentiments, and Özal and reaffirmed Turkish support for Albanians, calling also for an immediate stop of Serbian atrocities in Kosovo.⁶⁷⁵ After warning the international community that Turkey could not “allow the terrible tragedy of Bosnia [to] happen again”, in his speech to the Albanian parliament, president Demirel argued that it was necessary to:

immediately halt the bloodshed in Kosovo; restore the fundamental human rights and grant full freedom to Albanians in Kosovo; start a dialogue between all parties immediately and ensure people who were forcefully chased and driven out of Kosovo return to their respective lands.⁶⁷⁶

On the other side of the Albanian border, Kosovar Albanians were facing ethnic violence and ultimately ethnic cleansing as a result of the activities of Slobodan Milošević and his supporters. Therefore, Demirel’s visit was historically highly significant in re-confirming Turkish support for the Albanian people during the most difficult period since the end of the communist regime. Turkish support was noted by the Albanian President Rexhep Meidani,

⁶⁷² Ibid., 108-9.

⁶⁷³ Tase, "Albania And Turkey: Two Nations With Common Vision To Strengthen Bilateral Cooperation, 1990-2000", 25 January 2014, <http://foreignpolicynews.org/2014/01/25/albania-turkey-two-nations-common-vision-strengthen-bilateral-cooperation-1990-2000/>.

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁶ Ibid.

who emphasized the importance of Albanian-Turkish relations, adding that “Turkey particularly in the decade of the 90s, has extended a hand of hospitality like no other nation to Albania”, as did the Albanian Assembly Speaker, Skender Gjinushi, who re-affirmed that the “Albanian Assembly and all political parties, despite their program differences, [...] all want to strengthen bilateral ties with [the] Turkish government”.⁶⁷⁷ Demirel’s visit was completed with the signing of a bilateral agreement on social policy and labour reforms, reviews of the migration policy, employment monitoring and analysis, media and research on the impact of social policies in Albanian communities.⁶⁷⁸ These agreements ensured that at the end of the twentieth century, relations between Turkey and Albania finished on a high, and suggested a promising start to the twenty-first century.

6.4 Continuity of the Turkish-Albanian political relations in the twenty-first century

Early in the new century two major events took place for Albania: The Kosovar parliament declared independence from Serbia in 2008, and Albania became a NATO member in 2009. In both cases, Turkey was in the front line, recognising the Republic of Kosovo from day one and lobbying for Albania to become a NATO member. Turkish support for Kosovar-Albanians was not welcomed by Albania’s neighbours Serbia and Greece. Greece, in line with Serbia, considers Kosovo part of Serbia; cut off by NATO in 1999. The situation is different when it comes to the security issue. Greece is a NATO member, but what united both Serbia and Greece against Albania was the ghost of the ‘Greater Albania’.⁶⁷⁹ As a result, for Albanian authorities,

⁶⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁸ The Albanian Telegraphic Agency signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Anadolu Ajans (AA) Turkish news agency. In addition, the Albanian national TV channel signed an agreement with the Turkish TV channel ARD, which included a series of programs, training and logistics that Albania would receive from the ARD.

⁶⁷⁹ The paranoia of a ‘Greater Albania’ seems to have not come to an end. While for First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivica Dačić, the danger of Albanian expansionism seems to be everywhere – “in the drone flying over the now [infamous Albania-Serbia football match](#); at Albanian Prime Minister [Edi Rama’s residence](#), where a light display projected the map of Greater Albania for New Year’s; and in the West’s silence”; the Greek defence minister, on the other hand, condemned and punished seven Greek soldiers of the Albanian origin who had formed the Albanian double eagle symbol with their hands. See for instance “Two years of SYRIZA ruling Greece - The Albanian eagle in the Greek army!”, 26 January 2017, <http://www.sbs.com.au/yourlanguage/greek/en/content/two-years-syriza-ruling-greece-albanian-eagle-greek-army>; Odeta Kushi and Sidita Kushi, "The Paranoia over “Greater Albania” Returns", *New Eastern Europe*, 21

Turkey's foreign policy become even more closely aligned with the Albanian foreign policy. Visits from politicians and higher officials from both governments intensified the tradition of maintaining periodic meetings. The visit of the Albanian President, Alfred Moisiu, in May 2003, was returned a week later by the Turkish PM Erdoğan who returned again to Albania as President in 2013 and 2015. The next Albanian President, Bamir Topi, and the Albanian PM Sali Berisha visited Turkey in April 2012, followed in October of the same year, by the Albanian foreign minister, Edmond Panariti who held talks with the then Turkish foreign minister Ahmet Davutoğlu. Since his election as Prime Minister, on 23 June 2013, Edi Rama highlighted the need for Albania's "strategic relations with Turkey", which were to be given an immediate and "special priority".⁶⁸⁰ This decision moulded a new momentum for bilateral relations and Turkish foreign minister Davutoğlu, visited Albania two months later, on 4-5 October 2013. During his visit, Davutoğlu aimed to establish high-level strategic cooperation mechanisms, and create sustainable political, economic and trade relations between the two countries. The Albanian Defence Minister, Mimi Kodheli and the foreign minister Ditmir Bushati returned the visit to Turkey on 18-19 April 2014. While Kodheli signed a secret treaty⁶⁸¹ with her Turkish counterpart, Bushati's first visit as the Albanian foreign minister to Turkey aimed to further extend bilateral cooperation, bringing these relations to a new level in the twenty-first century. According to Davutoğlu, Albania and Turkey are endeavouring to work together to achieve common goals through the 'High Level Cooperation Council' that was immediately established.⁶⁸² This Council was established as a bilateral body of two

January 2015, accessed 3 August 2015, <http://www.neweasterneurope.eu/articles-and-commentary/1459-the-paranoia-over-greater-albania-returns>.

⁶⁸⁰ Tase, "Albania And Turkey: Two Nations With Common Vision To Strengthen Bilateral Cooperation, 1990-2000", 25 January 2014, <http://foreignpolicynews.org/2014/01/25/albania-turkey-two-nations-common-vision-strengthen-bilateral-cooperation-1990-2000/>.

⁶⁸¹ According to this agreement, Turkey donated another considerable amount to rebuild the Airport of Kuçovë, military equipment and training. See for instance, Herion Mesi, "Turqia, marrëveshje të fshehtë me Shqipërinë për modernizimin e FA-ve [Secret agreement between Turkey and Albania to modernise military forces]", author's translation, *Gazeta Shqip*, 17 Shkurt 2014, accessed 10 May 2018, <http://gazeta-shqip.com/lajme/2014/02/17/turqia-marreveshje-te-fshehte-shqiperine-per-modernizimin-e-fa-ve/>.

⁶⁸² Tase, "Turkey and Albania establish a dynamic agenda of bilateral relations", 2 May 2014, <http://foreignpolicynews.org/2014/05/02/turkey-albania-establish-dynamic-agenda-bilateral-relations/>.

foreign ministries that would maintain close relationships between the two governments in order to discuss pending items of the mutually beneficial agenda.⁶⁸³

Davutoğlu's statement about "common goals" for Albania and Turkey needs to be explored as motivations for Albanian-Turkish political relations are still contested. One might easily raise some pertinent questions: Has Turkey's motivation been solely humanitarian with no hidden agenda? Is Albania being forced to rely on Turkey in tough times? What are the advantages of Turkish intervention? According to the Albanian foreign affairs ministry Albania has signed 74 bilateral agreements with Turkey between 1992 and 2013; more than with any other country, except Italy and Germany.⁶⁸⁴ It is significant to note that 29 of these agreements (or 39 per cent) concern military and defence matters. The majority of these agreements—71—were signed in the twenty-first century, indicating a sharp increase in defence and military agreements, but also an intensification of Turkish diplomatic relations with Albania. The influence of Turkey seems to be a mysterious agenda in Albania, but on the other hand, the Albanian government is welcoming new agreements, rather than distancing itself from Erdoğan's Turkey in the twenty-first century.

Historically, Albanian post-Ottoman leaders and politicians from all sides of politics have welcomed relations with Turkey, as they perceive Turkey to be an economic, political and security guarantor. Cultural ties are another reason that consolidates this relationship. The population of Turkish citizens with Albanian heritage is estimated to be five million according to the former Albanian Ambassador in Turkey, Genci Muçaj.⁶⁸⁵ This is a significant number, comparable to the number of Albanians living in Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia combined. Although the majority of them are assimilated and are not a large source of financial remittances for Albania, the cultural bridge between the two countries is consolidated through

⁶⁸³ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁴ While the majority of bilateral agreements between Albania and Germany and Albania-EU are focused on finance and technical matters, in 1992 and 1997 Albania signed two agreements to collaborate on military and defence matters with both Italy and Greece. See for instance "Marrëveshjet dypalëshe me të gjitha vendet [Bilateral relations with all countries]", author's translation, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania*, accessed 12 May 2018, http://www.puneteshashtme.gov.al/files/userfiles/Marreveshjet_Dypaleshe_me_te_gjitha_vendet.pdf.

⁶⁸⁵ "Ambasadori i Shqipërisë në Turqi: Feja e shqiptarit është shqiptaria, në Turqi janë pesë milionë shqiptarë [The Albanian Ambassador in Turkey: The Albanian religion is Albanianism, in Turkey live five million Albanians]", 2 August 2015, <http://m.telegrafi.com/lajme/ambasadori-i-shqiperise-ne-turqi-feja-e-shqiptarit-eshte-shqiptaria-ne-turqi-jane-pese-milione-shqiptare-2-67961.html>.

their existence and the basis laid for the development of further areas of mutual interest described by Muçaj as “bilateral relations, economic and cultural diplomacy”.⁶⁸⁶

While the aim of both Turkish and Albanian governments in the twenty-first century has being to bring these two countries closer, it is unclear whether the majority of Albanian people supports the idea of increased proximity with Turkey and the MiddleEast. There have been indications that some Albanian citizens are not happy with the increased Turkish influence. An example is the open discussion in April 2018 between the Albanian foreign minister Ditmir Bushati and the Albanian diaspora in the United States where he was asked to explain why the Albanian government is flirting with Turkey, while awaiting to become a European member state.⁶⁸⁷ Another example was the vandalization of Hasan Pasha’s memorial at the city of Shkodër on 16 July 2016⁶⁸⁸, where the Turkish flag was removed, after Turkish commentator Talha Uğurluel called Skenderbeg a “bandit” who came down from the mountains attacking women and children, in the same way that terrorist Kurds attack Turkey today.⁶⁸⁹ On another occasion, the removal of all Turkish flags placed at Prishtinë streets during Independence Day celebrations of Kosovo on 17 February 2017⁶⁹⁰, is an indication that not all Albanians approve the Kosovar and Albanian government decisions to look to Turkey for increased international support. However, it is less clear whether these are isolated acts of a small number of people, or part of a growing popular sentiment.

⁶⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁷ Alon Ben-Meir and Arbana Xharra, “Albania Must Choose Between the EU and Turkey”, *Alon Ben-Meir online website*, 2 May 2018, accessed 3 May 2018, <http://alonben-meir.com/writing/albania-must-choose-eu-turkey/>.

⁶⁸⁸ “Shkodër, dëmtohet memoriali i Riza Pashës. Hiqet flamuri turk [Shkodër, damage of the Riza Pasha memorial. Turkish flag disappeared]”, author’s translation, *Top Channel*, 7 July 2016, accessed 11 May 2018, <http://m.top-channel.tv/lajme/artikull.php?id=330659&homepage>.

⁶⁸⁹ “Historiani turk fyen Skënderbeun, reagime të forta kundër tij [Turkish Historian offends Skenderbeg, strong reactions against him]”, author’s translation, *Top Channel*, 5 July 2016, accessed 8 July 2016, <http://m.top-channel.tv/lajme/artikull.php?id=330492&homepage>.

⁶⁹⁰ “Hiqet flamuri turk në Prizren. Reagon Ministria e Jashtme e Kosovës [Turkish flag removed in Prizren. Reacts Kosovar foreign Affairs Ministry]”, author’s translation, *Koha Jone*, 17 February 2017, accessed 12 May 2018, <http://www.kohajone.com/2017/02/17/hiqet-flamuri-turk-ne-prizren-reagon-ministria-e-jashtme-e-kosoves/>.

6.5 Turkey's twenty-first century 'zero problems with neighbours' foreign policy

Despite its claims of being a 'secular' and 'democratic' state, Mango describes Turkey as a "non-Western country" that is attempting to organise "its society on Western lines".⁶⁹¹ Turkish society is no more homogenous than Albanian society. Taspinar describes Turkish society as "...deeply polarized over its Muslim, secular, and national identities".⁶⁹² The Turkish people have been divided for a long time into two main political factions: those who are sympathetic to secular republicans known as "Kemalists", and others who side with the "Islamic neo-Ottomanists".⁶⁹³ However, both sides of Turkish politics support the Turkish foreign policy in the Balkans, especially relations with Albanian people.

Taspinar claims that Turkey's foreign policy in the twenty-first century is trapped between "secular Kemalists" and "Islamic neo-Ottomanists".⁶⁹⁴ Hence, according to Taspinar, Ankara will be careful to "balance its neo-Ottoman and Kemalist instincts".⁶⁹⁵ Taspinar, Petrović and Reljić believe that Turkey is shifting its foreign policy focus to the Western Balkans as "relations between Turkey and the Western Balkans have never been more intensive since the foundation of the Turkish republic".⁶⁹⁶ Davutoğlu's speech on 16 October 2009 at the "Ottoman legacy and Balkan Muslim Communities" conference in Sarajevo "is described as a shift in Turkish foreign policy in the Balkans".⁶⁹⁷ By 2009, Turkish political initiatives in the Western Balkans went far beyond the "bandwagon" approach with the US policies in the Balkans.⁶⁹⁸ For Petrović and Reljić, Turkey "has leverage and increasingly capacities in the Western Balkans" which must be accepted and recognized by the EU.⁶⁹⁹ For others such as

⁶⁹¹ Mango, 253.

⁶⁹² Taspinar, 2.

⁶⁹³ Ibid., 28.

⁶⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁶ Žarko Petrović and Dušan Reljić, "Turkish Interests and Involvement in the Western Balkans: A Score-Card", *Insight Turkey*, vol. 13, no. 3, 2011, 169.

⁶⁹⁷ Ibid., 162.

⁶⁹⁸ Ibid., 160.

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid., 159.

Erickson, there is no doubt that Turkey is working to become the main power of the region, and it is merely a question of when it will happen.⁷⁰⁰

Turkey uses its influence in the Balkans as an example of its geopolitical importance and Ankara wants to demonstrate that a permanent peace in the Balkans is unattainable without Turkey's help⁷⁰¹

In his speech at the end of the Turkish elections in July 2011, Erdoğan claimed that AKP's victory aimed to serve not only the Turkish people, but maintained further that "The Middle East, the Caucasus, and the Balkans have won as much as Turkey".⁷⁰² A year before, Turkey's former foreign minister Davutoğlu revealed the country's twenty-first century foreign policy. Its slogan "zero problems with neighbours" encapsulated the policy, known as the "Davutoğlu doctrine".⁷⁰³ In this foreign policy Davutoğlu states that:

Turkey has multiple goals over the next decade: First, it aims to achieve all EU membership conditions and become an influential EU member state by 2023. Second, it will continue to strive for regional integration, in the form of security and economic cooperation. Third, it will seek to play an influential role in regional conflict resolution. Fourth, it will vigorously participate in all global arenas. Fifth, it will play a determining role in international organizations and become one of the top 10 largest economies in the world.⁷⁰⁴

This quote is a strong evidence of Turkey's desire to step forward onto the global stage. Davutoğlu's tone and the strength of his language shows Turkey's aim to play an influential role in regional conflict resolution. While it is not clear whether Turkey's 'influential' role is referring to the Balkans, the second and third goals of Turkish foreign policy are a direct involvement with regards to security, economic cooperation and conflict resolution in the

⁷⁰⁰ Erickson, 42.

⁷⁰¹ Türbedar, 154.

⁷⁰² Svante E. Cornell, "Erdogan's speech at Turkish electorate", June 2011, in "Changes in Turkey: What Drives Turkish Foreign Policy?", *Middle East Forum*, 1 January 2012: 13, accessed 12 May 2018, <https://www.meforum.org/articles/2011/what-drives-turkish-foreign-policy>.

⁷⁰³ Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Zero-Problems Foreign Policy", *Foreign Policy*, 20 May 2010, accessed 11 November 2015, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2010/05/20/turkeys-zero-problems-foreign-policy/>.

⁷⁰⁴ Ibid.

region. However, “Turkey’s region” needs to be clearly identified. Is it the geographical territory of the old Ottoman Empire in the Middle East, Asia and Balkans, which comprises modern nation-states that have in their composition people of the Muslim religion? According to Davutoğlu, “Turkey’s actions are motivated by a great sense of responsibility, entrusted to it by its rich historical and geographic heritage, and by a profound consciousness of the importance of global stability and peace”.⁷⁰⁵ However, historical facts of the Ottoman engagement in the Balkans are different. As discussed in this thesis, from their first involvement in the region, the Ottomans who conquered and ruled Albanian speaking lands and the entire Balkan Peninsula for centuries were not interested in investing and developing the region, but rather in benefitting from it as a military and an imperial conquest. Although the situation in the twenty-first century is different, the re-emergence of Turkey in Albania is again challenging the Western Balkans. It seems that in 2018, Davutoğlu’s previous dogmas regarding the revival of the Ottoman glory in the Western Balkans is not just media speculation, but, according to Parllaku, has been transformed into a neo-Ottoman Platform based on “religious nationalism”.⁷⁰⁶ It has been observed that politically, the Albanian and Kosovar governments have quietly bowed to Turkish pressure.⁷⁰⁷

In the last few decades, Turkish foreign policy has shown variations and has been what Cornell describes as a “less predictable force than it used to be and one whose policies will occasionally clash with those of the West”.⁷⁰⁸ In reality, Turkey and the West “cooperate when their interests align rather than as a result of shared values”.⁷⁰⁹ The absence of common values between the West and Turkey makes Turkish foreign policy unpredictable and unique, but it also poses a further challenge for the Albanian and Kosovar governments to align with Turkey. However, as discussed, Albanian needs seem to be endless, and this creates the perfect environment for Turkey to intervene.

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁶ Azem Parllaku, "Shqipëria “rreshqitje e butë” poshtë sqetullës së Turqisë [Albania “soft slide” under the thumb of Turkey]", author’s translation, *Focus News*, 1 December 2016, accessed 10 May 2018, <http://fjalajone.com/shqiperia-rreshqitje-e-bute-poshte-sqetulles-se-turqise/>.

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁸ Cornell, "Changes in Turkey: What Drives Turkish Foreign Policy?", 23.

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid.

6.6 The rise of the Turkish-Albanian post-Cold War economic relations

An increase of economic relations with Turkey is another area of hope for the weak Albanian economy. The economic situation in Turkey started to improve after the mid-1980 acceleration policies of the Prime Minister, then President, Özal. As a result, both agricultural and industrial production rose by 38 to 41 per cent respectively between 1980 and 1998⁷¹⁰; proving Özal's economic reforms to be successful. According to the Turkish Prime Minister, Ahmet Davutoğlu, Turkey's economic future is brilliant, and his government's ambitious plan is to become "one of the top 10 largest economies in the world"⁷¹¹ by 2023. Although the Turkish economy has enjoyed growth over the past decades, in 2016, it showed signs of declining "from 17th to 19th place in the rankings of the biggest economies" in the world.⁷¹² In the first month of 2016, Turkish exports to Western partners, Germany, Great Britain, Italy and the USA, declined by 14.4 per cent, whereas exports to Saudi Arabia and Egypt rose by 30.5 and 15.1 per cent respectively.⁷¹³ The Turkish government is working hard to finalise free trade agreements with Iran, and improve its relations with Israel, which will bolster Turkey's ambition to become a regional leader. Shifts by the Turkish government from the West to its 'comfort zone'—the Middle East are not unknown; rather they show fluctuations in Turkey's foreign policy and its international reputation, which according to the former Canadian defence *attaché to Turkey, Chris Kilford, is "in free-fall"*.⁷¹⁴

However, Turkey is a much bigger, richer and more powerful country than Albania and, therefore, an important strategic partner for Albania. Turkey's population of approximately 80 million is 27 times bigger than the number of Albanians who still live in Albania; the Turkish Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has passed 850 billion US dollars, which is circa 60 times higher than the Albanian GDP. More importantly, Albanian import from Turkey is crucial for

⁷¹⁰ Erickson, 28.

⁷¹¹ Davutoğlu, 20 May 2010, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2010/05/20/turkeys-zero-problems-foreign-policy/>.

⁷¹² Murat Aksoy, "Turkish economy declines from 17th to 19th place in ranking of biggest economies", 01 January 2015, accessed 5 February 2016, http://mobile.todayszaman.com/op-ed_turkish-economy-declines-from-17th-to-19th-place-in-ranking-of-biggest-economies_368579.html.

⁷¹³ "Turkey's exports drop 14.4 pct in first month of 2016", *Hürriyet Daily News*, 1 February 2016, accessed 5 February 2016, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/Default.aspx?pageID=238&nID=94596&NewsCatID=344>.

⁷¹⁴ Chris Kilford, "Turkey's international reputation in free-fall", *Today's Zaman*, 1 February 2016, accessed 5 February 2016, http://mobile.todayszaman.com/op-ed_turkeys-international-reputation-in-free-fall_411147.html.

the Albanian economy. According to the European Commission, at the end of 2017, Albania's export to Turkey had an insignificant value of 0.8 percent of total Albanian exports, whereas the import from Turkey is in second place (after the European Union 28 countries) with 8.1 percent.⁷¹⁵ The import-export relationship between the two countries places Turkey in a more favourable economic situation than Albania, and thus, increases the Turkish leverage in bilateral relations with Albania.

Albania is central to the new Turkish engagement policy in the Balkans. According to Turkey's commercial attaché for Albania, Muharrem Can, in 2013, Turkish businesses invested "1.5 billion [US] dollars, or about 10.5% of the Albanian GDP", whereas Albania's Turkish Ambassador Hidayet Bayraktar stated in 2015 that the Turkish foreign direct investments (FDI) in Albania increased to two billion Euros.⁷¹⁶ The Turkish foreign ministry website states that "Turkey is the second major trade partner of Albania" with a value of investments "over 1 billion Euros".⁷¹⁷ However, on 19 June 2017, in an interview for the Albanian *Top Channel*, Erdoğan proudly announced that Turkey had already invested three billion euros in Albania, stating: "I don't know how many investments have arrived from the EU, but ours will not stop."⁷¹⁸ The economic connections between the two countries are rapidly strengthening.

In the first quarter of 2018, nearly 270 licenced Turkish companies operated in Albania. In September 2018, Turkish workers residing in Albania remain 32 percent of the total foreign workers—the first place, followed by Chinese workers.⁷¹⁹ Leading Turkish companies have invested and operate in crucial sectors of the Albanian economy.⁷²⁰ Large Turkish companies such as ENKA, Gintaş, Armada, Metal Yapı, Aldemir, and Servomatik are involved in

⁷¹⁵ "European Union, Trade in goods with Albania", *European Commission: Directorate - General for Trade*, 2018, accessed 4 September 2018, http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc_113342.pdf.

⁷¹⁶ Genc Mlloja, "Relations between Turkey and Albania are at an excellent level. An interview with the Turkish Ambassador to Albania, Hidayet Bayraktar", *Albanian Daily News*, 29 October 2015, accessed 12 May 2018, <http://www.albaniannews.com/index.php?idm=3244&mod=2>.

⁷¹⁷ "Relations between Turkey and Albania", *Republic of Turkey: Ministry of foreign affairs*, accessed 28 January 2016, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-albania.en.mfa>

⁷¹⁸ "Erdoğan: 'I wish Edi Rama good luck with his projects'", *Top Channel*, 19 June 2017, accessed 3 May 2018, <http://top-channel.tv/english/erdogan-i-wish-edi-rama-good-luck-with-his-projects/>.

⁷¹⁹ "Punonjësit e huaj në Shqipëri, Turqit mbajnë vendin e parë, kinezët të dytin [Foreign workers in Albania, Turks in the first place, Chinese second]", author's translation, *Tema on line*, 1 September 2018, accessed 2 September 2018, <http://www.gazetatema.net/2018/09/01/punonjesit-e-huaj-ne-shqiperi-turqit-mbajne-vendin-e-pare-kinezet-te-dytin/>.

⁷²⁰ Mlloja, 29 October 2015, <http://www.albaniannews.com/index.php?idm=3244&mod=2>.

construction and the building industry in Albania. Others such as Çalık Holding, Türk Telekom, Makro-Tel and Hes Kablo are involved in telecommunications. The only Albanian national telephone company, Albtelecom, along with Eagle Mobile, are owned by BKT, a Turkish company. Similarly, the Turkish Çalık Group owns Albania's second biggest bank – *Banka Kombëtare Tregtare* [The National-Commercial Bank].⁷²¹ Şekerbank-BKT is present in banking and telecommunications. Kürüm has invested in the iron and steel industry, managing a steel factory, the only functional part of the previous backbone of the Albanian mineral industry—the Elbasan metallurgic factory.

Turkish investments are also very present in other sectors of the Albanian economy such as health with Universal Hospital Group; mining with Ber-Oner and Dedeman; manufacturing and consumer goods retail with Yilmaz Cable, Merinos, Everest, Pino and RM Kocak. Education is another sector influenced by Turkish organisations: Turkish Gülistan and Istanbul Foundations have invested heavily in all stages of education from primary schools to tertiary education. Turkish companies manage four medium-sized hydropower plants, the largest port of Albania—Durrës goods terminal, and important parts of the Albanian infrastructure, such as the construction of the North-South freeway *Rruga e Kombit*, which connects Albania with Kosovo. To support these companies, the number of Turkish citizens who reside in Albania on work permits is bigger than Italian and Greek citizens.⁷²²

While the Albanian media has described Turkish economic involvement as “the second invasion”⁷²³ of Albania, Can argues that the Turkish government does not seek to economically dominate the region. According to Can, the increase in import-export with Albania is a result of the Turkish economy growing rapidly in the region.⁷²⁴ Can's diplomatic statement does not negate the increase of Turkish influence over Albania. In reality, the Turkish Ambassador, Bayraktar, was “not satisfied with these [economic] figures, when comparing the excellent

⁷²¹ “‘The Banker’ reaffirms BKT as the best bank in Albania for 2013”, *Çalık Holding*, accessed 1 February 2016, <http://www.calik.com/en/PressReleases2013/2013/12/02/the-banker-reaffirms-bkt-as-the-best-bank-in-albania-for-2013?id=5b6f9308-f81d-460b-86a8-b753c755346b>.

⁷²² “Turqit ‘pushtimi i dytë’ i Shqipërisë nga biznesi [Turks ‘the second invasion’ of Albania from the business]”, author's translation, *Mapo*, 25 Shkurt 2013, accessed 11 November 2015, <http://www.mapo.al/2013/02/turqit-pushtimi-i-dyte-i-shqiperise-nga-biznesi>.

⁷²³ Ibid.; Azdren Shala, “Pushtimi i ri Turk [Turkish neo-invasion]”, author's translation, *Gazeta Tema*, 15 February 2018, accessed 12 May 2018, <http://www.gazetatema.net/2018/02/15/pushtimi-i-ri-turk/>.

⁷²⁴ “Turqit ‘pushtimi i dytë’ i Shqipërisë nga biznesi [Turks ‘the second invasion’ of Albania from the business]”, 25 Shkurt 2013, <http://www.mapo.al/2013/02/turqit-pushtimi-i-dyte-i-shqiperise-nga-biznesi>.

level of our [Turkish and Albanian] political relations”.⁷²⁵ This was also confirmed by the new Turkish Ambassador, Murat Ahmet Yörük, who in February 2018, stated that Turkish investments in Albania although having reached 2.7 billion Euros, needs to increase.⁷²⁶ Strengthening bilateral economic ties in the future will help the Albanian economy, whilst bringing Turkey closer to the Western Balkans.

However, it has been argued that Erdoğan is using Turkish businesses as leverage to heavily invest in religious institutions.⁷²⁷ The Turkish government is facilitating economic and cultural ties with Albania through its Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) and the Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Center in Albania. Following requests from the Albanian government, TIKA is investing to restore “mosques, bazars and historical houses” in Albania.⁷²⁸ As has been described, a significant proportion of that contribution has been dedicated to cultural and religious restoration, with an aim to increase the support for Albanian Muslims.⁷²⁹ For example the Grand Mosque ‘*Namazgja*’, which is the largest mosque in Albania, cost around 30 million euros and was fully financed by Turkey’s Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet).⁷³⁰ However, meeting the Albanian diaspora in the USA, Bushati denied Turkey’s influence on Albania; and claimed that the Grand Mosque was built to satisfy needs of Albanian Muslims.⁷³¹ This shows that Turkey is indeed seeking to gain influence in Albania through religion, while the Albanian government, when questioned, is denying Turkish interference in Albania’s cultural and religious matters. The Albanian government is covering the reality of at least another dozen mosques in Albania, which are fully financed and

⁷²⁵ Mlloja, 29 October 2015, <http://www.albaniannews.com/index.php?idm=3244&mod=2>.

⁷²⁶ "Ambasadori turk: Nga historia e kaluar mes Shqipërisë dhe Turqisë të marrim më të mirën [The Turkish Ambassador: Let’s extract the best from the history between Albania and Turkey]", author’s translation, *Ora News*, 16 February 2018, accessed 17 March 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lQ_yRU4qN5Q.

⁷²⁷ Ben-Meir and Xharra, 2 May 2018, <http://alonben-meir.com/writing/albania-must-choose-eu-turkey/>.

⁷²⁸ Mlloja, 29 October 2015, <http://www.albaniannews.com/index.php?idm=3244&mod=2>.

⁷²⁹ "Turkey’s religious diplomacy. Mosqued objectives. Turkey is sponsoring Islam abroad to extend its prestige and power", *The Economist*, 21 January 2016, accessed 3 May 2018, <https://www.economist.com/news/europe/21688926-turkey-sponsoring-islam-abroad-extend-its-prestige-and-power-mosqued-objectives>.

⁷³⁰ Ben-Meir and Xharra, 2 May 2018, <http://alonben-meir.com/writing/albania-must-choose-eu-turkey/>.

⁷³¹ Ibid.

inaugurated by Erdoğan.⁷³² This is not economic help for Albanians, but rather a continuation of the Ottoman policy; investing on Islam as a permanent-long-term-strategy for Albania.⁷³³

6.7 Turkey: a NATO ally and Albania's guarantor

The defence sector has been seen the strongest cooperation between Turkey and Albania. The post-Cold War era has been a period of reformation in the Turkish armed forces. This brought about a modern and capable Turkish army, operating within NATO since 1990 in missions in places such as Bosnia, Somalia, Kosovo and Afghanistan.⁷³⁴ Erickson believes that factors such as 'terrorism' and 'Islamic fundamentalism' are both 'potential triggers' for the rise of Turkish power.⁷³⁵

Under the NATO mandate, Albania had a unit of soldiers operating in Afghanistan, "serving within the Turkish command deployed in Kabul".⁷³⁶ Although Albania became a NATO member in 2009, since the end of the Cold War, Albania has depended heavily on Turkish "assistance in training and supply of cutting edge defence technology, as well as the reconstruction of Albania's military bases and their maintenance".⁷³⁷ According to Limaj, a new era of military partnership between the two countries started on 19 November 1992, with the signing of a partnership agreement to educate and train the Albanian forces.⁷³⁸ For the former Turkish Defence Minister, Nevzat Ayaz, the "agreement focused on broadening bilateral cooperation in the areas of military education and technology."⁷³⁹ As part of this agreement, Turkish military personnel of "infantry, land, naval and Air Force bases have trained Albanian Armed Forces"; providing technological equipment and helping to "rebuild

⁷³² Ibid.

⁷³³ Shala, 15 February 2018, <http://www.gazetatema.net/2018/02/15/pushtimi-i-ri-turk/>.

⁷³⁴ Erickson, 32.

⁷³⁵ Ibid., 42.

⁷³⁶ Tase, "Turkey and Albania establish a dynamic agenda of bilateral relations", 2 May 2014, <http://foreignpolicynews.org/2014/05/02/turkey-albania-establish-dynamic-agenda-bilateral-relations/>.

⁷³⁷ Ibid.

⁷³⁸ Limaj, 38.

⁷³⁹ Ibid.

its military infrastructure”.⁷⁴⁰ There has been an increasing number of high-level military visits between Albania and Turkey since then. For example, between 19 January and 20 November 1992, the Albanian Army General Kristaq Karoli, Defence Minister Safet Zhulali and General Ilia Vasho visited Turkey. The Turkish General Doğan Güreş and the Defence minister Nevzat Ayaz returned their visit in the same year. During his visit to Albania, the Turkish defence minister, Ayaz stated that it is Turkey’s ‘obligation’ to help its little ‘sister’, Albania. The Albanian defence minister Safet Zhulali visited Turkish military bases and factories; sharing sensitive information when no other defence minister from a country that was not a NATO member had done before.⁷⁴¹ A month later, after the Albanian delegation returned from Turkey on 28 August 1992, “the Turkish Gearing Class destroyer, TCG Mareşal Fevzi Çakmak,” visited the Albanian port of Durrës.⁷⁴² Both of these episodes can be interpreted as an indication of the high level of trust between the two countries, but they also demonstrate Albania’s and Turkey’s need to demonstrate Turkey’s power in the Western Balkans. The collaboration between Albania and Turkey in economic and defence matters seems not only to bolster political relations between the two countries, but also to reassure the Albanian government. More recent evidence of this military demonstration and strong ties between the two countries includes high Albanian military officials proudly welcoming the visit to Durrës of the Turkish submarine “TCG Sakarya” on 10 November 2014⁷⁴³ and “TCG I. INONU ‘S 360’” on 30 March 2017.⁷⁴⁴

Analysing some official statistics, Limaj claims that Turkey has spent more than any other country in training all levels of the Albanian military forces thus far.⁷⁴⁵ Turkey has

⁷⁴⁰ Tase, "Turkey and Albania establish a dynamic agenda of bilateral relations", 2 May 2014, <http://foreignpolicynews.org/2014/05/02/turkey-albania-establish-dynamic-agenda-bilateral-relations/>.

⁷⁴¹ Tase, "Albania And Turkey: Two Nations With Common Vision To Strengthen Bilateral Cooperation, 1990-2000", 25 January 2014, <http://foreignpolicynews.org/2014/01/25/albania-turkey-two-nations-common-vision-strengthen-bilateral-cooperation-1990-2000/>.

⁷⁴² Ibid.

⁷⁴³ "Turkish submarine 'TCG Sakarya' visits the port of Durrës", *Albanian Armed Forces*, 10 November 2014, accessed 11 May 2018, <http://www.aaf.mil.al/english/index.php/te-fundit/2513-turkish-submarine-tcg-sakarya-visits-the-port-of-durres>.

⁷⁴⁴ "Nëndetsja turke 'TCG I. INONU 'S 360', vizitë portuale 4-ditore në Durrës [Turkish submarine 'TCG I. INONU 'S 360', 4 days visit to Durres' port]", author's translation, *Durres Port Authority*, 30 March 2017, accessed 21 April 2017, www.apdurres.com.al.

⁷⁴⁵ Limaj, 39.

equipped the Albanian Guard of the Republic, trained the Albanian special troops, reconstructed the Albanian military base at Pashaliman, the Marine Academy of Vlorë and the Air Force Academy of Kuçovë; it has also modernised the munitions factories at Poliçan and Gramsh. Between 1992 and 2000, more than 1000 Albanian students and military officials were educated at the Turkish academies, and Turkish military officials trained 3491 Albanian troops in Albania.⁷⁴⁶ In the last two decades, “many Albanian military students [graduated or are] studying in the Turkish War Academies”, and “from 1998 onwards, over 100 Albanian students graduated from the National Police Academy”.⁷⁴⁷ It has been argued that as a result of this involvement, Turkey has an intimate and detailed knowledge of Albanian security matters.

While these indicators show Turkey as a trustworthy strategic partner for the Albanian government, considering the history of relations between the two countries, Albania’s trust in Turkey on security matters seems puzzling. However, at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, Turkey was considered by some Albanian leaders as the only hope to protect Albania from being partitioned by its neighbours—the same way Albanian leaders felt at the end of the twentieth century. It seems that Albania’s need for Turkish military muscle at the beginning of the twenty-first century is similar to that of the previous century. On the other hand, as Sugar mentions, “the Ottoman political legacy must be considered the greatest problem faced by peoples who, once again, had become masters of their own destiny”.⁷⁴⁸

6.8 Geopolitics and energy security drivers in the Albanian-Turkish relations

In the twenty-first century, Albania is hoping to strengthen its geopolitical position in the region with two main projects: The Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) and the Pan-European Corridor VIII— *Via Egnatia*, which has remained a cultural and archaeological site of what

⁷⁴⁶ Ibid., 41.

⁷⁴⁷ Mlloja, 29 October 2015, <http://www.albaniannews.com/index.php?idm=3244&mod=2>.

⁷⁴⁸ Sugar, 228.

was once considered as “the biggest nexus between East and West”.⁷⁴⁹ While the Corridor VIII is still waiting to be classified as a priority by the EU, TAP project is currently going through its implementation stage.

In February 2013, after ten years of negotiation and assessments⁷⁵⁰, TAP was selected as the best project to bring Caspian natural gas from the Shah Deniz gas field to Italy and from there to Europe. The pipeline will be connected to the Turkish Trans Anatolian Pipeline (TANAP) at the Greek-Turkish border. TANAP will then connect to the South Caucasus Pipeline Expansion (SCPX) that runs across Georgia and Azerbaijan. TAP will be 870 km long and will cross Greece, Albania and the Adriatic Sea to deliver the gas to Santa Foca (Italy).

The aim of TAP is to diversify Europe’s energy sources, which at the moment are heavily dependent on Russia. TAP’s significance was amplified after Russia annexed Crimea on 18 March 2014. After this event, the conflict between a number of EU countries and Russia deepened, and consequently, American and European sanctions were placed on Russia. All countries involved in this project: Azerbaijan, Georgia, Italy, Turkey, Greece and Albania hope to advance their relations with the EU, as TAP will place them in a favourable position compared to other regional neighbours. It remains to be seen whether bilateral relations between the not-yet EU members—Turkey and Albania—may bear fruit as a result of energy and security matters.

Nevertheless, TAP offers an economic win-win situation for all countries the gas pipeline runs through. Turkey, Greece and Albania—all NATO members- are countries that will generate income for their economies. For Albania, TAP is currently the biggest international investment⁷⁵¹, placing Albania, Turkey and Greece at the centre of energy security policies within the EU. TAP may also improve trilateral relations between Turkey, Greece and Albania after centuries of extremely troubled relations.⁷⁵²

⁷⁴⁹ Bulut and Idriz, 9.

⁷⁵⁰ "TAP project milestones", *Trans Adriatic Pipeline*, accessed 27 January 2018, <http://www.tap-ag.com/the-pipeline/project-timeline/tap-project-milestones>.

⁷⁵¹ "Building the pipeline in Albania", *Trans Adriatic Pipeline*, accessed 27 January 2016, <http://www.tap-ag.com/the-pipeline/building-the-pipeline/in-albania>.

⁷⁵² Olga Demetriou, *Capricious Borders: Minority, Population, and Counter-Conduct Between Greece and Turkey*, United States: Berghahnbooks, 2013, 2.

Nevertheless, the latest shifts of Turkey's foreign policy designed to develop a closer relationship with Moscow⁷⁵³, allow Russia to deliver its gas to Turkey through the 'Turkish Stream' pipeline situated only 10 km from TAP.⁷⁵⁴ This project will challenge TAP—the first pipeline that delivers gas to Europe that does not originate from Russia. Turkey will be a key player here as both TANAP and Turkish Stream are running through its territory, and Albania can only hope that TAP will be the preferred pipeline for European countries.

On the other hand, while Putin is getting closer to Erdoğan, the anxiety of Kosovar Albanians is increasing, as they see the US and Turkey as their protectors against Serbian plans to regain Kosovo. They believe that Putin will return Kosovo to Serbia.⁷⁵⁵ Therefore, Turkey's 'regional integration' role in the Western Balkans is confusing. While Albanians welcome Turkey to soften Russian ambitions in the Western Balkans, on the other hand, they still hope Turkey to be the barrier for historical encroachment against Albanians in the region.

6.9 Islamic revival during Albania's post-Cold War period

After WWII, Albanians followed two forms of Islam: Sunni and Bektashi. Hoxha's Cultural Revolution in 1967 affirmed Albania to be an atheist state, but the religious concepts survived and started to flourish after the restoration of religious freedom by the Albanian parliament in December 1990. Between 1991 and 1996, Young writes that "120 new sects and faiths" were formally registered as entities into a legal register under the Albanian State Secretariat of Religious created in 1991.⁷⁵⁶ Albania's official religions, Sunni Islam, and Orthodox and

⁷⁵³ Putin recently rectified the agreement to deliver gas through Turkish stream. See for instance "Putin dhe Erdogan armiq të betuar? Marrëveshja e madhe e bashkëpunimit [Putin and Erdogan sworn enemies? The big friendship agreement]", author's translation, *Panorama online*, 8 February 2017, accessed 12 May 2018, <http://www.panorama.com.al/putin-dhe-erdogan-armiq-te-betuar-marreveshja-e-madhe-e-bashkepunimit/>.

⁷⁵⁴ Daniela Munteanu and Ciro Sarno, "Nord Stream 2 and Russia-Turkey Pipeline: Implications for European Energy Security" (University of Bologna, March 2016), 10.

⁷⁵⁵ It seems that the election of Donald Trump as the President of the United States has encouraged Serbia to action on three different fronts at the beginning of 2017: former Kosovar Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj was arrested in France under a Serbian Interpol order for war crimes while being dismissed twice by the Hague's court; a train with posters "Kosovo is Serbia" written in 21 different languages attempted to enter Kosovo and was stopped at the last minute, and the illegal wall built by Serbians in Mitrovica, which was pulled down after peaceful negotiations between Serbian and Albanian authorities in February 2017. See for instance "Kosovo fears for US ties under Trump", *Deutsche Welle*, 2017, accessed 7 February 2017, <http://www.dw.com/en/kosovo-fears-for-us-ties-under-trump/a-37186938>.

⁷⁵⁶ Young, 11.

Catholic Christianity, along with the “traditional community”⁷⁵⁷ of Bektashism, began to re-emerge. While there are significant divisions between Catholicism and Orthodoxy, the two religions are united by the cross. Similarly, Sunni and Bektashi Muslims are united by the crescent moon, and thus, Islam. Clayer finds it “striking” that administratively, Bektashi and Sunni-Islamic institutions are separated, while on the other hand, their “Islamicization” can be interpreted as the “affirmation of a Muslim identity”.⁷⁵⁸

As a result of a disastrous economic situation inherited from the Communist regime in the early years after the Cold War, atheism and religious concepts were superseded by people’s needs for basic commodities such as food, shelter, and employment. In 1992, both Europe and the USA were reluctant to invest in Albania, and as a result, the slogan: “Toward Europe or Islam” became part of Albanian media and politics.⁷⁵⁹ On the other hand, Islam became a powerful tool for the Albanian government when Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Libya and Turkey started to funnel money to re-build Islam in Albania.⁷⁶⁰ In contrast to other ex-communist countries in eastern Europe, the post-Cold War era in Albania triggered a bigger challenge with regards to religious orientation not only for the Albanian government, but also for the entire Albanian society. Although the Albanian government is secular, it seems that lack of a clear platform has created issues for Albanian politicians in the last two and a half decades. Vickers and Pettifer observe that:

the intellectual disorientation being caused by the religions struggle in terms of the traditional national identity is considerable, and has been an important factor in the difficulties the government has faced⁷⁶¹

In fact, after a long participation as a full member of the OIC, the Albanian head of Parliament and the current President, Ilir Meta, refused to participate in the OIC’s ninth Parliamentary Assembly held on 18-19 February 2014 in Tehran. His predecessor, Josefina

⁷⁵⁷ Nathalie Clayer, “The Bektashi Institutions in Southeastern Europe: Alternative Muslim Official Structures and their Limits”, *Die Welt des Islam*, no. 52, 2012, 203.

⁷⁵⁸ Ibid., 202.

⁷⁵⁹ Vickers and Pettifer, 105.

⁷⁶⁰ Deliso, 30-1.

⁷⁶¹ Vickers and Pettifer, 117.

Topalli, on the other hand, had been part of the Albanian delegation to the OIC's seventh Parliamentary Assembly in Indonesia.⁷⁶² Meta downplayed his absence, blaming his government's budget, but it is commonly accepted that Albania's Euro-Atlantic commitments are the major driver; preventing the participation of the Albanian delegation in further OIC forums.⁷⁶³ Albanian authorities also blamed the short notice given by the organising country, Turkey, for the country's inability to participate in an urgent OIC meeting in December 2017, which had the objective to counteract the decision of the President Donald Trump, to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. However, the Albanian pro-Turkish and OIC vote not only shows clear signs of hesitancy or more appropriately ambiguities, but it rather explains that it is hard for the Albanian government to disassociate itself from Turkey and OIC.

6.10 The continuation of Turkish-Islamic policy in Albania

Although in the twenty-first century, there is little tension between the Turkish government's way of supporting Islam and the Albanian multi-religious approach, the effect of Islam in Albania is provocative, and scholars are divided in two camps. One camp agrees that the 'Islamization' of Albanian-speaking people enriched the Albanian culture; creating 'a new identity'⁷⁶⁴ that was more dynamic than the previous Christian religion. Others, such as Kadare, think that the Ottoman Empire and Islam negatively influenced Albanian culture and identity. Religious matters have been instrumental in bringing Albania closer to Turkey after the Cold War. Since 1992 the number of Turkish primary and secondary, religious and secular schools in Albania started to emerge. In 1994, a secondary school for four hundred students was built in South Albania, with a curriculum to be delivered in both Turkish and English.⁷⁶⁵ As Krauthamer mentions, not only the Turkish government but also a "Turkish-based Islamic movement committed to interfaith dialogue, globalization, and making money is changing the

⁷⁶² Fatjona Mejдини, "Shqipëria refuzon Organizatën Islamike, jo pjesë e aktivitetit në Teheran [Albania Refuses the Islamic Organisation, no part of its activity in Teheran]", author's translation, *Shqip*, 17 February 2014, accessed 14 February 2015, <http://gazeta-shqip.com/lajme/2014/02/17/shqiperia-refuzon-organizaten-islamike-jo-pjese-e-aktivitetit-ne-teheran/>.

⁷⁶³ Ibid. "Shqipëria refuzon Organizatën Islamike...".

⁷⁶⁴ Shehu, 407.

⁷⁶⁵ Vickers and Pettifer, 107.

face of the country's school system".⁷⁶⁶ Vickers and Pettifer believe that at a cultural level, relations are still close for many Albanians and "a major growth of Islamic influence in Turkey would certainly have effects in Albania".⁷⁶⁷ According to Vickers and Pettifer, these cultural similarities mainly explain the traditional white Albanian fez, which seems to be "a glimpse back to the Ottoman world in the centre of a small European city".⁷⁶⁸ Thus, Turkey's government's religious politics towards Albania, in the last decades deserve more attention.

Religion may play a role in the future of bilateral relations between Turkey and Albania, as it did when the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan pressured the former Albanian Prime Minister Sali Berisha to vote pro Palestine at the UN General Assembly resolution 67/19 on 29 November 2012. The Albanian media, *Top Channel*, in paraphrasing the Turkish *Hürriyet*, described the Albanian vote as "conditioned by Erdoğan".⁷⁶⁹ Erdoğan used his political power to support The Palestinians over Israel, castigating the Albanian leader for following the same line. Albania's abstention vote shows once more difficulty of the Albanian position and the pull between West or East, acknowledging the complications of Turkish influence over Albania.

The Turkish government is trying to express its sympathy for other 'Muslim brother' states. Well known for his defence of the International Muslim community, Erdoğan is warning the West to avoid Islamophobia, which, according to him "has become a serious problem".⁷⁷⁰ After the terrorist attack on the French journal *Charlie Hebdo* on 9 January, 2015, Erdoğan agreed with the Turkish Parliamentary speaker Cemil Çiçek, who thinks that the international community must "stand together against Islamophobic incidents which would create clashes among religions, civilizations and sects".⁷⁷¹ While the Turkish government, including its

⁷⁶⁶ Ky Krauthamer, "In Albania, Madrasas Even the Secular Love", accessed 20 February 2015, <http://www.tol.org/client/article/23425-albania-islam-turkey-education.html>.

⁷⁶⁷ Vickers and Pettifer, 108.

⁷⁶⁸ Ibid., 116-7.

⁷⁶⁹ "Berisha: US role in Israel-Palestine, decisive", *Top Channel*, 3 December 2012, accessed 15 February 2015, <http://top-channel.tv/english/artikull.php?id=7722>.

⁷⁷⁰ "Turkish President Erdoğan urges Muslim countries to warn West against Islamophobia", *Hürriyet Daily News*, 21 January 2015, accessed 15 February 2015, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-president-erdogan-urges-muslim-countries-to-warn-west-against-islamophobia-.aspx?PageID=238&NID=77233&NewsCatID=338>.

⁷⁷¹ Ibid.

president, are using Turkish influence to protect Muslim rights and fight stereotypes against Islam, some think there is now a slow drift towards Islam. For others, the Turkish government's reactions can also be interpreted as an "increasingly punitive and xenophobic" approach embraced by President Erdoğan of recent, doing more harm to the fight against Islamophobia.⁷⁷²

The question whether Islam is rising in Turkey is not the purpose of this paper. Nevertheless, the controversial "religious democracy" of bringing back the headscarf for 9-10-year-old girls, and also the idea of building a mosque for every University in Turkey cannot go unnoticed.⁷⁷³ These are indications of Turkey's religious policy shifts. On this controversial topic Kemal secularists are concerned with "creeping Islamization" as a hidden agenda by the AKP aiming "to Islamize Turkish society".⁷⁷⁴ The concern with developments of Turkish Islam that could influence the Albanian position towards religion, at a time when the Albanian government and religious communities are promoting Albanian religious harmony⁷⁷⁵ remains.

6.11 Conclusion

This chapter analysed increasing bilateral relations between Turkey and Albania with regard to economy, foreign policy, energy and security matters since the creation of both nation-states. These bilateral relations have been very friendly, although intermittent during the communist period. A poor Albania at the end of the Cold War provided a 'golden' opportunity for Turkey to develop closer ties. Albania, on the other hand, needs Turkey's military power in the region.

⁷⁷² Arif Tekdal, "Erdoğan's harsh, xenophobic rhetoric damages fight against Islamophobia", *Sunday's Zaman*, 17 January 2015, accessed 15 February 2015, http://www.todayszaman.com/national_erdogans-harsh-xenophobic-rhetoric-damages-fight-against-islamophobia_369946.html.

⁷⁷³ Florenc Stafa, "Turqi, çdo universitet do të ketë xhami [Turkey, every university will have a mosque]", author's translation, *Shekulli*, 23 November 2014, accessed 21 February 2015, <http://www.shekulli.com.al/p.php?id=60939>.

⁷⁷⁴ Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, Santa Monica, Arlington, Pittsburg: Rand Corporation, 2008., Summary, xii.

⁷⁷⁵ Nick Squires, "Pope Francis hails Albania as model of religious harmony in attack on religious extremism", *The Telegraph*, 21 Sep 2014, accessed 16 February 2015, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/albania/11111600/Pope-Francis-says-Albania-is-a-model-of-religious-harmony-during-first-visit-to-Muslim-majority-nation.html>.

In the twenty-first century, political relations between Albania and Turkey have reached a new importance. Although Turkey is Albania's strategic partner, trade between the two countries has not yet reached its full potential. While exports to Turkey are insignificant, Albanian economy depends on imports from Turkey that are rising. Things are different when it comes to defence and security matters. The Albanian government favours Turkey compared to other neighbours in the Western Balkans. The excellent political relations between the two countries will improve even further after the implementation of energy and infrastructure projects such as TAP. It remains to be seen how these developments will affect the Euro-Atlantic vision of both countries.

Turkey has indeed helped the weaker Albania in difficult times when Albania desperately needed Turkish support. After the Cold War, along with donations in areas such as the economy, religion, health, education and security, Turkey stepped forward to reassure protection of Albanian territorial integrity in 1997, and in 1999, actively participated in NATO's war against the regime of Milošević. However, despite the generosity, Turkish support also aims to achieve closer links to the Western Balkans. This has implications for Albanian foreign policy. Erdoğan's latest policies are pushing Turkey onto a different path from that of the West, at a time when the EU is dealing with a number of crises: Brexit, Russia's occupation of the Ukraine, refugees arriving in large numbers from African and Middle-Eastern countries, the Catalonia crisis, and the rise of extreme right and left-wing parties, threatening Europe's internal unity. Along with these crises, the lack of a clear perspective from EU regarding the membership of Western Balkan countries, and more importantly, the reluctance of the EU and the USA to increase their presence in the region, create a fertile environment for Erdoğan to revive the narrative of the Ottoman Empire in the Western Balkans. Islam is always a strong element used by Erdoğan's Turkey in Albania. Erdoğan's statement during his visit in Prizren in 2013 that "Turkey is Kosovo and Kosovo is Turkey" very well encapsulates his future plans for Albanians and the Western Balkans.⁷⁷⁶

⁷⁷⁶ "PM Erdogan: Turkey is Kosovo and Kosovo is Turkey", *World Bulletin*, 24 October 2013, accessed 24 August 2018, <http://www.worldbulletin.net/haber/121375/pm-erdogan-turkey-is-kosovo-and-kosovo-is-turkey>.

CHAPTER 7. ESCAPING THE OTTOMAN HERITAGE UNDER THE TURKISH INFLUENCE IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY?

7.1 Introduction

So far, we have outlined the main factors determining and defining Albanian ethno-national identity, in which the period of Ottoman occupation played such a major role. Without such detailed analysis it would not be possible to adequately address the central research question, namely in what ways Albanians and the Albanian state are dealing with the Ottoman heritage in the new global environment? Is Albania moving away from its Ottoman past, or does Turkish influence continue to play a role in the twenty-first century, specifically in aligning Albania strategically back towards its traditional Eastern imperial centre and newly powerful player in the Eastern Mediterranean, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Turkey?

The aim of the current chapter is to address the questions whether Albania is trying to escape from the Ottoman heritage, or whether the rejection of Turkish influence is merely a claim, made to achieve political ends. Is Albania seeking to escape its Ottoman heritage, re-orient itself towards the West and "restore" its pre-Ottoman "European identity", reviving its pre-Ottoman roots and reclaiming a Western-Christian aspect? Or, if the former case is true, and Albania is still deeply linked to Turkey, will the nation continue to quietly accommodate the pressures, requirements, and outright requests of the Turkish state? My findings and conclusions to these questions are organized under the headings of regional and energy security areas, politics, and traditional understandings of historical, cultural, religious and linguistic identity factors.

7.2 Escaping the Ottoman heritage under the pressure of Turkish influence

Modern Turkey is facing its own challenges in the twenty-first century. As discussed in the second chapter, Turkey is politically divided between the two broad-based affiliations, the governing and the opposition alliances. The ruling alliance is led by Erdoğan's Justice and Development Party (AKP) in alliance with the far-right Nationalist Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*, MHP). On the other hand, the fragmented opposition group was led by the

centre-left wing of secular Kemalists or the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, CHP) up until the last June 2018 elections, a time when CHP officials considered the agreement with the *Iyi Parti* (Iyi Party), and the Sunni far-right-conservative—*Saadet Partisi* (Saadet Party) outdated.⁷⁷⁷ The pro-Kurdish Peoples Democratic Party (HDP), a political Party that represented 11.7 percent of Turkish voters in the last elections, was not part of any alliance.⁷⁷⁸ In 2016, the Turkish military attempted another coup, which according to the Turkish government, was organised by Gülen's movement. Fethullah Gülen who spent the first part of his life as an Imam is influential in the Turkish civil society, a reputation that started to rise in 80-90's, while he was promoting in his Islamic organisations people who were educated in his movement schools; making them feel a personal debt to the divisive preacher.⁷⁷⁹ Since 1999, Gülen who was under investigation for overthrowing the Turkish government, is living in his self-imposed exile in Pennsylvania, from where he is still running his religious popular movement called *Hizmet* (in Turkish Service). In 2000, he was convicted in absentia by the Turkish tribunal, but the common Islamic agenda aligned him with Erdoğan's values, after the AKP won Turkish elections in 2002.⁷⁸⁰ Gülen had the tools to serve Erdoğan and up until 2011, they were allies, to then become enemies of each other. Since 2013, Erdoğan is blaming the scapegoat⁷⁸¹—Gülen for troubling Turkey through planning and organising the 2016 Turkish coup.⁷⁸²

We have seen in the previous chapter that in 2018, Turkish economy and its currency are far from achieving what Davutoğlu projected Turkey to be in 2023. In the international arena, the foreign policy of Erdoğan's Turkey is a mixture of requests to ally with Europe and the West, while shifting eastern-ward to Middle East and Russia. However, the increasing

⁷⁷⁷ "Turkish opposition parties say election alliance no longer necessary", 5 July 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-politics-opposition/turkish-opposition-parties-say-election-alliance-no-longer-necessary-idUSKBN1JU1X4>.

⁷⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁹ "From ally to scapegoat: Fethullah Gulen, the man behind the myth", *Deutsche Welle*, 6 April 2018, accessed 16 September 2018, <https://www.dw.com/en/from-ally-to-scapegoat-fethullah-gulen-the-man-behind-the-myth/a-37055485>.

⁷⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁸¹ Ibid.

⁷⁸² Beaumont, 16 July 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/16/fethullah-gulen-who-is-the-man-blamed-by-turkeys-president-for-coup-attempt>.

military power of Turkey in the twenty-first century is notable. Erdoğan's decision to purchase armaments from Russia is jeopardising Turkey's relations with NATO; making unpredictability one of the main features of the Turkish foreign policy in the twenty-first century. Despite these challenges, as outlined in chapter six, Erdoğan's Turkey is attempting to become a regional power, and thus, revive the past Ottoman 'glory' in the Western Balkans, where Muslim populations such as Albanians became crucial players.

Turkish power, proximity and Eastern Mediterranean influence impacts on Albanian domestic and international affairs, and offers Turkey the potential specifically to return to the Western Balkans as a major partner. So far, in chapter six, we have established that the "new" Turkey is intentionally influencing Albania and its nation identity in areas such as regional and energy security, politics, economy, religion and culture. Chapter five outlined debates that thesis of the Albanian writer, Ismail Kadare has created. In his thesis, Kadare claims that Albanian identity is European as Albania is geographically and spiritually 'attached' to Europe. Kadare goes back in history to establish similarities between Albanian and European identity, which according to him, was interrupted by the Ottoman-Turks at the end of the fourteenth century. He argues that before the Ottoman arrival Albanians were mostly Christian-Europeans. Thus, for Kadare, Albania belongs to Europe, and it was the Ottoman 'barbarians' that separated Albania from its European heritage and identity. Isolated and individual political voices in politics, scholarship and the media have been heard in support of Kadare's argument that the Ottoman heritage does not reflect "true" Albanian identity, and that the residues and remnants of the Ottoman heritage must therefore be repudiated. Other powerful voices led by another Albanian scholar, Rexhep Qosja strongly oppose European identity of Albanians, whom, he believes, are more Easterners than Westerners and more Muslims than Christians. We also have discussed in chapter five that some Albanian politicians, scholars, media and individuals view modern Turkey as the best role model for Albanians in the region. In their reticence, even silence, on these issues, both current Albanian and Kosovar governments give the impression that they too are oriented toward Turkey rather than the European Union.

In conclusion of the chapter five we have claimed that in the twenty-first century, the Albanian government's policies that distance Albanians and thus Albanian identity from that of the Ottoman-Turks are missing. We will ultimately examine whether both the Albanian and Kosovar governments have the political will to escape the Ottoman heritage? Governments are indeed elected by people, so the first point of this analysis is the perception that Albanians have for Turkey in the twenty-first century.

7.3 Blaming the Ottomans and aligning with Turks in the twenty-first century

The Albanian-Turkish relationship is multi-dimensional and complex in historical, cultural, political and other terms.⁷⁸³ As we have seen in chapter five, not all Albanians have negative views about the Ottoman era. Along with Qosja, another Albanian scholar, Pajaziti has demonstrated that the negative perception of the Ottomans represents Albanian elitist views, whereas in reality, Albanian people living in Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia have generally positive sentiments towards Turkey.⁷⁸⁴ A study in this field conducted by GENAR in 2008-2009, and summarised by Pajaziti, suggests that Albanians of Macedonia are closely tied to the Ottoman-Turkish culture and language. According to Pajaziti's figures analyses, the Albanians of Macedonia speak more Turkish than the Albanians of Kosovo and Albania, and 41.2 percent of Albanian-Macedonians interviewed called Turkey "fatherland" compared to 0.6 percent of Kosovars and zero percent of Albanians. According to Pajaziti, the majority, 60.6 percent of Albanians and 53.8 percent of Kosovar Albanians think Turkey is a friendly country, but Kosovar-Albanians seem to be closer "to the Turkish cultural code".⁷⁸⁵ Moreover almost a third of Albanians considered Istanbul as the most beautiful city in the Balkans to spend their vacations—better than Tirana or Athens.⁷⁸⁶ Debates on social media show a clear division between those Albanians who perceive themselves as having an Albanian-Western-European identity and others who are more sympathetic with Turkish-Oriental identity. If Turkey were a major source of influence, power and employment, we could have expected that the majority of Albanian emigrants head to Turkey. This is not, however, the case as, since 1991, the main destinations for Albanian migrants are rather two European countries: Italy and Greece. While this may in part be due to geographic proximity, the perceived cultural ties with Turkey are clearly not strong enough to attract large numbers of Albanian migrants. However, according to Mejdini, in the last ten years, Turkey remains the top touristic destination for Albanians.⁷⁸⁷ It

⁷⁸³ Pajaziti, 27-29 May 2011, International Symposium, Skopje, Macedonia-Prishtinë, Kosovo. Ankara Center For Thought And Research and International Balkan University, 2.

⁷⁸⁴ Ibid., 9.

⁷⁸⁵ Ibid., 12.

⁷⁸⁶ Ibid., 10.

⁷⁸⁷ Fatjona Mejdini, "Turqia mbetet në krye të destinacioneve të preferuara të shqiptarëve për pushime [Turkey remains the favourite top turistic destination for Albanians]", author's translation, 3 July 2017, accessed 27

is safe to claim that at the popular level, modern Turkey is considered as a close-culturally-related country for many Albanians, but not a major player in terms of employment or offering a 'better future.'⁷⁸⁸

Communication, sport and culture exchange with Turkey are also areas of interest for Albanians. The best examples are Turkish TV series, which, according to Pajaziti, 95.1 percent of Albanians in Macedonia watch between one to four hours per day. Although Kosovar and Albanian viewer numbers are lower (61.2 and 38.7 percent respectively)⁷⁸⁹, the empathy for Turkish culture is nonetheless evident. Turkish television series are aiming to portray a new Turkish society that can be identified as a role model for Balkan countries. According to Lami, Turkish influence in the Western Balkans, and especially in Albania, reveals geopolitical, geo-economic and geo-cultural doctrines.⁷⁹⁰ While Albanians enthusiastically watch Turkish TV programs and thus absorb Turkish culture, on the other hand, significant Albanian media pundits and public intellectuals identify Ottoman characters with negative traits of promiscuity, polygamy, and other Turkish cultural characteristics.⁷⁹¹ This is the point where the opinions of Albanians differ. Unlike the Ottoman Empire, modern Turkey is considered by everyday Albanians to be a country with a compatible friendly culture.

7.4 Restoring five centuries of historical humiliation

Albanians blame the Ottoman Empire, not modern Turkey, for halting Albania's historical development. The Albanian *rilindja* writers started the process of distancing Albanian identity

August 2018, <https://www.reporter.al/turqia-mbetet-ne-krye-te-destinacioneve-te-preferuara-te-shqiptareve-per-pushime/>.

⁷⁸⁸ Adem Balaban, "The Impacts of Turkish TV Serials Broadcasted in Albania on Albanian and Turkish Relations", *European Journal of Social Sciences, Education and Research*, vol. 5, no. 1, September-December 2015, 493-4.

⁷⁸⁹ Pajaziti, 27-29 May 2011, International Symposium, Skopje, Macedonia-Prishtinë, Kosovo. Ankara Center For Thought And Research and International Balkan University, 10.

⁷⁹⁰ Blendi Lami, "Geo-culture as a Turkish foreign policy tool for influence in Albania", *International Journal of Academic Research and Reflection*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2017, 36.

⁷⁹¹ Sulstarova, 354.

from Ottoman culture.⁷⁹² In today's Albanian history schoolbooks, *rilindja* writers are identified as fighting for the Albanian cause with everything they had at their disposal, 'me pushkë dhe me penë' [through guns and pens]. This begins with an early *rilindja* illuminist: Naum Veqilharxhi who wrote the first Albanian language school book (*Abetare*) in 1846. He warned that "nations need a written language as the only way of surviving".⁷⁹³ Other *rilindja* leaders who had a significant impact in Albanian identity formation were the Frashëri brothers. Sami Frashëri, (1850 – 1904) (known in Turkey as Şemseddin) Sami, was a writer, linguist and playwright who played a major role not only in the creation of the Albanian alphabet in 1886, but he was also instrumental in founding the Turkish alphabet.⁷⁹⁴ In 1879 Sami Frashëri founded a cultural and educational organisation called the "Printing of Albanian Writings" in Constantinople.⁷⁹⁵ He wrote the grammar of the Albanian language in 1890, but also illuminated the future of Albania; revealing, in line with Veqilharxhi, that Albania one day must be an independent nation.⁷⁹⁶ His older brother, Naim (1846 – 1900) labelled the Ottomans as "a big beast" that came from Asia and with "cruelty in their eyes" and "a satanic heart", "killed, severed and impoverished" in a way that "grass wouldn't grow" wherever the beast stepped on the Albanian soil which had previously "flourished".⁷⁹⁷ Their oldest brother Abdyl (1839-1892) was also known as one of the first political ideologues of the Albanian Awakening who played a crucial role in the League of Prizren. Abdul was captured by Turkish troops and sentenced to jail for his anti-Turkish propaganda.⁷⁹⁸ Therefore, Albanian *rilindja* leaders forged the Albanian anti-Turkish sentiment, a concept that is present in today's Albanian history textbooks in Primary and Secondary schools. For example, *The History of the Albanian People* published by the Albanian Science Academy describes Ottoman Sultans as invaders of the

⁷⁹² Carrie Ann Morgan, "Language Ideologies in TirOna" (Unpublished thesis: Master of Arts, Graduate School of the Ohio State University, 2015), 1.

⁷⁹³ "Veqilharxhi, babai i Alfabetit dhe Abetares Shqiptare [Veqilharxhi, the father of the Albanian alphabet and the Abetare]", author's translation, *Panorama on line*, 21 October 2011, accessed 10 May 2018, <http://www.panorama.com.al/veqilharxhi-babai-i-alfabetit-dhe-abetares-shqiptare/>.

⁷⁹⁴ Gawrych, 523.

⁷⁹⁵ Zickel and Iwaskiw, 19.

⁷⁹⁶ Gawrych, 523.

⁷⁹⁷ Frashëri, 99-100.

⁷⁹⁸ Elsie, *Historical Dictionary of Albania*, 147.

Albanian lands; bringing ruin and destruction and taking the Albanian royal children hostage.⁷⁹⁹

This fact has not gone unnoticed by Turkish authorities who refuse to describe the Ottoman occupation of Albania with the term “invasion”. Turkish authorities are extremely careful about how they describe the Ottoman occupation. According to the Turkish narrative, the Ottomans came to Albania to administer and protect it instead. Recent requests from Turkish authorities to the Albanian and Kosovar governments to alter the presentation of Ottoman history in Albanian schoolbooks, and to portray Ottomans as “friendly administrators”⁸⁰⁰ or, preferably, “protectors” who brought about political stability on the Albanian speaking lands highlight this belief, and show that this is a complex issue, which continues to cause trouble in bilateral relations between Turkey and Albania.

During his visit to Tirana in October 2009, Turkey’s foreign minister Ahmet Davutoğlu observed that Balkan countries and Turkey share “a common history, destiny and future”.⁸⁰¹ This sparked debate in the Albanian media, and the Albanian government authorities were hesitant to admit whether Davutoğlu and Turkish authorities had also requested amendments of Albanian history schoolbooks.⁸⁰² In 2011, the Turkish Prime Minister, the Minister of Education and the Turkish Embassy in Prishtina officially requested Kosovar authorities to review all history texts that are related to the Ottoman ruling of Kosovo and remove words such as “‘barbaric’, ‘wild’, ‘invasion’, ‘violence’, ‘murder’, ‘blood tribute’ and ‘slavery’”.⁸⁰³ As a result, a commission led by Kosovo’s Ministry of Education reviewed all history textbooks. The commission found that the text books used loaded language that portrayed the Ottomans as “severe conquerors” and thus, they removed ninety percent of these words and

⁷⁹⁹ Pajaziti, 27-29 May 2011, International Symposium, Skopje, Macedonia-Prishtinë, Kosovo. Ankara Center For Thought And Research and International Balkan University, 6.

⁸⁰⁰ A Rrozhani, "Qeveria e Shqiperise ka firmosur per ndryshimin e historise : Osmanet jo pushtues por 'administratore miqesore' [Albanian government signed for changing the history: Ottomans not as invaders, but 'friendly administrators']", 24 Ore, August 26, 2011, accessed 6 October 2011, <http://24-ore.com/index.php/kronika/7464-qeveria-e-shqiperise-ka-firmosur-per-ndryshimin-e-historise-osmanet-jo-pushtues-por-administratore-miqesore.html>; Blerina Rexha, "Should Kosovo Change its History Textbooks?", Albanian and Kosovar Identity Conference, The University of Sydney, 20 Janar 2012.

⁸⁰¹ Blerina Rexha, "The Influence of Pan-Slavic Ideologies on Kosovar Schooltexts: Implications for Diplomatic Relations with Turkey", *Australia and New Zeland Journal of European Studies*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2017, 30.

⁸⁰² Ibid.

⁸⁰³ Ibid., 31.

phrases.⁸⁰⁴ This ignited a real debate. The Kosovar-Albanian historian, Frashër Demaj, expressed his disappointment with both Albanian and Kosovar governments that according to him, are interfering with historians and specialists in the field.⁸⁰⁵ Demaj openly refused to recognise decisions made by the commission that, he thinks, interfere in scholarly issues and ignore the copyright policies.⁸⁰⁶ In March 2013, Ismail Kadare led a petition signed by 100 Albanian intellectuals⁸⁰⁷, which was sent to the Albanian and Kosovar Presidents Bujar Nishani and Ahtifete Jahjaga. In this petition, Albanian intellectuals required that amendments of the Albanian history be analysed and implemented according to methodological principals of historical science and not the interests of the Turkish government.⁸⁰⁸ The petition reminded the government authorities that the Ottomans “occupied” Albanian speaking lands not in a “friendly” way, but rather by force; disconnecting Albania from Europe and causing indelible drama and tragedy to the historical memory of the Albanian nation. As it continues:

The Turkish occupation for five-centuries was violent, and within this period there were continued acts of violence, killings and exterminations, whilst Albanians were the most persecuted people of the Empire...Let’s remember the fact that unlike other languages of the Empire, the Albanian language was forcibly prohibited. This fact alone reveals the genocide of the Ottoman Empire against Albanians, their culture and identity...We cannot hide historical truths...The changing of history by Turkish experts represents cultural aggression, striking at the backbone of the nation; unacceptable insults for Albanians with consequences for their future and identity.⁸⁰⁹

⁸⁰⁴ Ibid., 38.

⁸⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁶ "Turqia interesohet për trajtimin e Perandorisë Osmane në Kosovë [Turkey interested to protect the Ottoman Empire in Kosovo]", author's translation, *Koha Net*, 11 March 2013, accessed 13 March 2013, <http://koha.net/?page=1,13,138186>,.

⁸⁰⁷ Violeta Murati, "100 intelektualë dhe Kadare kundër: Jo politikë turke në historinë tonë! [100 intellectuals and Kadare against: No Turkish politics in our history!]", author's translation, *Standard*, 28 Mars 2013, accessed 10 May 2018, <http://www.standard.al/2013/03/28/100-intelektuale-dhe-kadare-kunder-jo-politike-turke-ne-historine-tone/>.

⁸⁰⁸ "Intelektualët, peticion kundër rishikimit të historisë nga autoritetet turke [Scholars, petition against the review of history by Turkish authorities]", author's translation, *Gazeta Shqip*, 27 Mars 2013, accessed 13 May 2018, <http://gazeta-shqip.com/lajme/2013/03/27/intelektualet-peticion-kunder-rishikimit-te-historise-nga-autoritetet-turke/>.

⁸⁰⁹ Ibid.

However, this petition does not represent views of the Albanian and Kosovar governments, but rather independent voices of Albanian writers, academics and artists who live in Albania and abroad. In the twenty-first century, the Turkish government is using its political influence against Albanian and Kosovar government authorities and constraining them to re-interpret the history in a way they want to. Others such as the Turkish scholar, Türbedar, maintain that Turkey has not done enough to halt prejudices that associate Turks with the Ottomans. For example, Türbedar believes that Albanians are rewriting their history and portraying Turks as enemies of Albanians, despite culture similarities and their love for Turkish television series.⁸¹⁰ Türbedar stresses that even the Albanian Academy of Sciences portrays the Ottomans as “fanatic, backward and intolerant rulers, who oppressed Albanians with heavy taxes, political discrimination and the absence of the most elementary human rights, and would even resort to the massacre of the Albanian population”⁸¹¹; all issues discussed in this thesis. While Türbedar is convinced of the Albanian-Western Orientation, in the twenty-first century, this topic remains a thorn in bilateral relations between Turkey and Albania. Certainly, on its way towards Euro-Atlantic orientation, the Albanian government is not aiming to distance Albania from their best friend in the region, Turkey. Nonetheless, it is easier to blame their ancestors, the Ottomans.

7.5 Political interference in Albania’s domestic affairs

The effects of the Ottoman cultural and historical legacy in Albania are still controversial and are also reflected at the political level in the twenty-first century. In a recent interview for *Top Channel*, in June 2017, Erdoğan stated that “we [Turks and Albanians] have been strong together for five centuries”⁸¹²; avoiding words such as ‘occupation’ and ‘invasion’. The next day, the Kosovar-Albanian journalist and politician Arbana Xharra wrote a letter to the Turkish Ambassador in Prishtina; to dispute the statement issued by the Turkish President. She stated

⁸¹⁰ Türbedar, 150.

⁸¹¹ Ibid.

⁸¹² Sokol Balla, "Erdoğan: Gyleni rrezikon Shqipërinë. Shqetësim për sherrin Rama-Meta [Erdoğan: Gullen places Albania at risk. Concerns regarding disagreements between Rama-Meta]", author's translation, *Top Channel*, 19 June 2017. An interview with the Turkish President Erdoğan, accessed 10 May 2018, <http://top-channel.tv/video/erdogan-gyleni-rrezikon-shqiperine-shqetesim-per-sherrin-rama-meta/>.

that the reason for Erdoğan's comment is to "convince us that we were not occupied [by the Ottoman-Turks], but rather we were lovers".⁸¹³ As Xharra continues:

We do not share the same culture. However, we do share the history of being part of the Ottoman Empire. You must take on your shoulders occupation and crimes against the Albanian language, culture and humanity, which you exercised for five centuries in Albanian speaking lands... we learn from facts and history, except that of Turkey and neo-Ottomanism that you are trying to impose.⁸¹⁴

In a similar way, Shala, thinks that the physical occupation of Albanian lands by the Ottoman Empire is replaced in the twenty-first century by a spiritual, moral and cultural invasion of Turkey—a model that offers an alternative to Europe—the neo-Ottomanism, which is based in the superiority of the "Islamic moral".⁸¹⁵

Erdoğan's Turkey has sent repeated political requests to close all those Turkish schools in Albania, which according to Erdoğan has been financed by the Turkish religious leader in exile, Gülen, who he accuses of trying to break down the Albanian culture and religious pluralism. Erdoğan's controversial request also included the closure of the Turgut Özal College, the elementary school that he himself inaugurated on 17 February 2005, a time that AKP and the movement of Gülen were allies.⁸¹⁶ It is argued that Turkish authorities are persecuting those organisations and individuals who uncovered the corruption of Erdoğan's cabinet in December 2013⁸¹⁷, and therefore, the same request that in 2014 was rejected by some African countries, was renewed to Albania.⁸¹⁸ In an article published on 14 May 2015, *Zaman* noticed that the request of Erdoğan to close Turkish schools in Albania disappointed

⁸¹³ "'S'paskemi qenë të pushtuar, por dashnorë', përgjigjja e gazetares shqiptare për Erdogan [You were not oppressors, but rather we were lovers, the answer of the Albanian media for Erdogan]", author's translation, *Panorama on line*, 20 Jun 2017, accessed 10 March 2018, <http://www.panorama.com.al/spaskemi-qene-te-pushtuar-por-dashnore-pergjigjja-e-gazetares-shqiptare-per-erdogan/>.

⁸¹⁴ Ibid.

⁸¹⁵ Shala, 15 February 2018, <http://www.gazetatema.net/2018/02/15/pushtimi-i-ri-turk/>.

⁸¹⁶ "From ally to scapegoat: Fethullah Gulen, the man behind the myth", 6 April 2018, <https://www.dw.com/en/from-ally-to-scapegoat-fethullah-gulen-the-man-behind-the-myth/a-37055485>.

⁸¹⁷ Abdulkareem Ahmed, "Turkey's Erdogan And The Albania's Snub", *The Guardian*, 24 May 2015 accessed 9 March 2018, <https://guardian.ng/opinion/turkeys-erdogan-and-the-albanias-snub/>.

⁸¹⁸ Ibid.

some Albanian politicians.⁸¹⁹ The same article cited the Albanian Socialist deputy, Ben Blushi, who stated that “Albania is not a Turkish colony” and then “our father is not Erdoğan, but Ismail Qemali”. According to the Albanian former finance and economy minister, Arben Malaj, the request to close Turkish schools, although seems to offer more Turkish investments, is done with an aim to transfer Turkish domestic issues to Albania, and despite the importance of investments in Albania, these requests are politically driven and contain danger for Albanian democracy. *Zaman* also cites an Albanian media analyst, Mero Baze, who thinks that Turkey as the Oriental partner of Albania, will need more Albania; its Western partner.⁸²⁰ However, all these attempts of Xharra, Blushi, Baze, and indeed Kadare, are individual opinions. The Albanian government never supported, nor denied these authoritative voices, but rather is keeping a neutral position on this issue, or better said, is working hard to not jeopardise the bilateral relations with Turkey—its strategical ally in the region. Not only Albania’s ambiguous position on these issues can have ramifications with its Euro-Atlantic partners, it may also encourage Erdoğan to go a step further; increasing the Turkish pressure on Albania’s decision to join the Europe and the West.

In his attempt to renew his request to close schools ‘financed’ by Gülen in Albania, Erdoğan and the Turkish Ambassador in Albania, ‘suggested’ Albanian parents to send their children to the ‘safe’ Turkish schools; managed by the Maarif Foundation that is financed by the Turkish government. It is the Maarif Foundation that in a secret deal with the Albanian government bought in August 2018 the first Albanian private University—the New York University of Albania and all its sister institutions.⁸²¹ Although existing Turkish schools in Albania have a good reputation in preparing quality students, on the other hand, using its influence, the Turkish government is interfering in domestic affairs of Albania on issues such as education of future generations that for a small and poor country such as Albania is crucial. What is more important, is the fact that Albanian government is allowing Turkey to do so.

⁸¹⁹ "Zaman: ‘Kërkesa e Erdogan për të mbyllur shkollat turke inatos politikanët shqiptarë’ [Zaman: ‘Erdogan's request to close Turkish schools upset Albanian politicians’]", author’s translation, *Lapsi lajme*, 14 May, 2015, accessed 17 November 2015, <http://www.lapsi.al/lajme/2015/05/14/zaman-%E2%80%9C9Ck%C3%ABrkesa-e-erdogan-p%C3%ABr-t%C3%AB-mbyllur-shkollat-turke-inatos-politikan%C3%ABt-shqiptar%C3%AB>.

⁸²⁰ Ibid.

⁸²¹ Dzihat Aliju, "Turkey takes over Albania's first private university", *Anadolu Agency*, 16 August 2018, accessed 18 August 2018, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/turkey-takes-over-albanias-first-private-university/1233554>.

After the end of the Cold War, bilateral relations between Turkey and Albania have increased and Turkish government has tried to influence, if not manipulate, decisions made by the Albanian government in the international arena. An example of this was in forcing Berisha's government to join the OIC in 1992⁸²², a decision that sparked a real debate in Albania.⁸²³ In addition, Erdoğan pressured the same Berisha to vote pro Palestine at the UN General Assembly resolution 67/19 in November 2012. The Albanian abstention vote was described by the Albanian media as "conditioned by Erdoğan".⁸²⁴ Despite these two episodes, Vickers and Pettifer think there is lack of a great political influence of Turkey over Albania.⁸²⁵ However, the Albanian government in 2017 offered a different view; siding with Palestine, and thus, voting at the UN resolution against the US decision to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel—a project sponsored by Turkey.⁸²⁶ The reaction of the Albanian President Ilir Meta was immediate. He wrote a letter of regret to US President Trump; promising he will require explanation and clarification from the Albanian government for this disappointing vote.⁸²⁷ In his letter, Meta reassured Trump that this vote does not reflect the will of the Albanian nation. In concert with Meta, opposition political parties such as the Democratic Party (PD) and the Socialist Movement for Integration (LSI) and different leaders from both sides of Albanian politics disagreed with this vote, which not only questions Albania's strategic Partnership with USA, but on the other hand, shows once more the influence of Erdoğan over the Albanian government. In fact, both PD and LSI acted similarly when they were in power; joining the OIC and voting pro-Palestine, thus, waning under the pressure of Turkey.

Under the present conditions, then, it seems that Albania is unlikely to abandon the links to Turkey and the East. These periodical returns to Turkey, will have ramifications for the Albanian government in the twenty-first century, as clearly mentioned by Phillips, an expert

⁸²² Vickers and Pettifer, 105.

⁸²³ Young, 11.

⁸²⁴ "Berisha: US role in Israel-Palestine, decisive", 3 December 2012, <http://top-channel.tv/english/artikull.php?id=7722>.

⁸²⁵ Vickers and Pettifer, 108.

⁸²⁶ "Basha: Vota kundër SHBA, gabim. Shqipëria abstenoj në 2012 [Vote against the USA, wrong. Albania abstained in 2012]", author's translation, *Top Channel*, 22 December 2012, accessed 12 May 2018, <http://top-channel.tv/2017/12/22/basha-vota-kunder-shba-gabim-shqiperia-abstenoi-ne-2012/>.

⁸²⁷ "Meta letter to Trump: Regret for Albania's vote in the UN", *Albanian Daily News*, 22 December 2017, accessed 13 May 2018, <http://www.albaniannews.com/index.php?idm=17453&mod=2>.

in Albanian foreign policy. Interviewed by the Voice of America in April 2018, he highlighted the aim of Turkey to use Albania in order to impose its neo-Ottoman platform in the Western Balkans.⁸²⁸ Phillips asked Albanian government authorities to clarify whether they are choosing to side with West or with the East, as the current level of support for Erdoğan's Turkey orients Albania strongly toward the Islamic East.⁸²⁹ The silence of the Albanian government on this issue speaks more than words and shows how resilient the Ottoman heritage is in Albania.

7.6 Regional security

As discussed in chapter four, territorial ambitions of both Serbia and Greece at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century were, according to Limaj, again repeated in 1997. For this reason, Albanians did not trust their neighbours, Serbia and Greece any more than Turkey. This trust continued after the Cold War, as Turkey has been allowed to train the Albanian Army, police forces and the Guard of Republic. However, defining Turkey as more friendly than other Western Balkan states is controversial and problematic. Perhaps one explanation for this is the fact that the Ottoman occupation officially ended at the beginning of the twentieth century, a time when Albanian speaking territories were divided by the Great Powers, and Albania's neighbours advanced their ambitious-military-plans to carve parts of Albania, a struggle that continued during two Balkan Wars and WWI. Thus, we see that the precariousness of security for the Albanian speaking lands is the driver for this trust and makes it indispensable for Albanians. In the twenty-first century, Albanians have not placed their security fears to rest, despite NATO, EU and Turkish involvement in Albania and Kosovo.

However, in the twenty-first century, Turkish military engagement in the region needs careful attention. In September 2017, Erdoğan announced a deal to purchase surface-to-air missile systems—S-400s from Russia— “in the clearest sign of his pivot toward Russia and

⁸²⁸ "Ekspteri amerikan: Rama të mos kërcëjë nëpër dasmat e Ankarasë, lidhja me Erdogan nuk i shërben Shqipërisë [The American expert: Rama should not dance in Ancara's weddings, Albania does not benefit from the relationship with Erdogan]", author's translation, *Panorama*, 28 April 2018. David Phillips interviewed by The Voice of America, accessed 30 April 2018, <http://www.panorama.com.al/eksperti-amerikan-rama-te-mos-kerceje-neper-dasmat-e-ankarase-lidhja-me-erdogan-nuk-i-sherben-shqiperise/>.

⁸²⁹ Ibid.

away from NATO and the West".⁸³⁰ This is not the first time that Turkey has attempted to buy arms from countries that are not NATO members. Earlier plans to buy missiles from China, were abandoned under pressure from the United States.⁸³¹ According to Gall and Higgins, the last move of Erdoğan displays a:

preference for the Russian model, with its sense of restoring a lost empire, returning Turkey to a more independent place in the world and rejecting Western democracy.⁸³²

Russia also sold weapons to Greece, another NATO member and to Cyprus, however, Turkey is a 'regional power' and this deal may change the balance of power in the region. Along with Russia and some NATO countries such as Germany and United States, Turkey is also competing in the Balkans.⁸³³ After the Cold War, it is often argued that the disengagement of NATO and EU in Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia will be quickly replaced by Russia, a military superpower that want to dominate the region. Turkey's advancement in the Balkans as pro-Russian and anti-European, may shift the geo-political agendas of Western Balkan countries; challenging self-perception identities of countries with large Muslim populations such as Albania, Kosovo, Bosnia and Macedonia.

Turkey's latest foreign and military policy shifts create more concerns for Albanians. The main concern is that of losing the best military ally—Turkey who is now getting closer to Russia and perhaps, Serbia. There are also fears in Kosovo, as it waits to be recognised by both Serbia and Russia. In the twenty-first century, Serbia is getting new armaments from Russia⁸³⁴, while Serbian media is claiming that Kosovo is receiving armaments and training from Turkey.⁸³⁵

⁸³⁰ Carlotta Gall and Andrew Higgins, "Turkey Signs Russian Missile Deal, Pivoting From NATO", *The New York Times*, 12 September 2017, accessed 23 October 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/12/world/europe/turkey-russia-missile-deal.html>.

⁸³¹ Ibid.

⁸³² Ibid.

⁸³³ Jasmin Ademovic, "Great Power Competition in the Balkans Heating Up", *Geopolitical Monitor*, 7 November 2016, accessed 13 March 2018, <https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/great-power-competition-in-the-balkans-heating-up/>.

⁸³⁴ On 5 February, the Serbian defence minister declared that Serbia ordered 30 tanks, and as many armored vehicles from Russia, six MIG 29s fire jets and was still negotiating for another eight. "Serbia set to get Russian fighter jets", *Boston Globe*, 13 February 2017, accessed 12 March 2018, <https://www.bostonglobe.com/news/world/2017/02/12/serbia-set-get-russian-fighter-jets/htPAH1KOI5IKO55R95k6cK/story.html>.

⁸³⁵ In February 2017, Serbian media points out Erdoğan's intention to provide Kosovo free armoured vehicles, tanks, F-16 Falcon fire jets, and also training how to use them. See for instance "Goditje tjetër e medieve serbe:

Albanians of Macedonia are not less concerned about Turkey's latest shifts, after Russia has openly accused the West for supporting a pro-Albanian agenda in FYROM, which for Russia means nurturing the Greater Albania concept.⁸³⁶ Ultimately, Albanians don't want to see Turkey's military presence diminished in the region, but they fear Russo-Turkish alliance. However, it is unclear whether Albanian politicians are worried about the collaboration between Turkey and Russia as allegations about Russian money and interference in 2017 Albanian elections remain current in political debates of Albania.⁸³⁷ On the other hand, Erdoğan's Turkey is exercising the new alliance with Russia to thwart the West, the EU, and of course, maintaining its pressure on Albania; aiming to halt its Euro-Atlantic march.

7.7 Energy and economic security

Energy security will be another 'tool' at hands of Erdoğan to exercise its influence over Albania. The latest agreements between Erdoğan and Putin regarding energy security⁸³⁸, allow Russia to deliver its gas to Turkey through the 'Turkish Stream' pipeline.⁸³⁹ Although this project will compete with TAP—the first pipeline that delivers gas to Europe that does not originate from Russia, Turkey will be a key player here as both TANAP and Turkish Stream are running through its territory. While Europe becomes more dependent on Turkey regarding both pipelines, Albania can only hope that TAP will be the preferred pipeline for European countries. Turkey, on the other hand, holds the key to gas delivery through Albania, a country

Turqia armatos shqiptarët për luftë, Erdogan i jep Thaçit aeroplanë! [Another blow from Serbian media: Turkey is arming Albanians for war, Erdogan gives Thaçi military airplanes!]", author's translation, *Telegrafi.com*, 10 February 2017, accessed 17 February 2018, <http://telegrafi.com/goditje-tjeter-e-medieve-serbe-turqia-armatos-shqiptaret-per-lufte-erdogan-jep-thacit-aeroplane/>.

⁸³⁶ Daniel McLaughlin, "Russia accuses West of pushing pro-Albanian agenda in Macedonia", *Irish Times*, 2 March 2017, accessed 15 April 2017, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/world/us/russia-accuses-west-of-pushing-pro-albanian-agenda-in-macedonia-1.2995811>.

⁸³⁷ "Albania opposition denies links to Russian election meddling", *Daily Mail*, 8 March 2018, accessed 23 March 2018, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-5473737/Albania-opposition-denies-links-Russian-election-meddling.html#ixzz5ByFzSmYX>

⁸³⁸ Putin recently rectified the agreement to deliver gas through Turkish stream. See for instance "Putin dhe Erdogan armiq të betuar? Marrëveshja e madhe e bashkëpunimit [Putin and Erdogan sworn enemies? The big friendship agreement]", 8 February 2017, <http://www.panorama.com.al/putin-dhe-erdogan-armiq-te-betuar-marreshja-e-madhe-e-bashkepunimit/>.

⁸³⁹ Munteanu and Sarno, 10.

that does not have a domestic gas distribution system, and thus, is hoping its economy and population will benefit from these pipelines.

Although the European Union is Albania's main trade partner, the Albanian government cannot afford to ignore economic relations with Turkey. Turkey has already invested 3 billion Euros in Albania, which is nearly one fourth of the Albanian GDP. As seen in chapter six, the level of imports from Turkey is considerable for the Albanian economy. Albania's economy would struggle without the import from Turkey. Turkey has made generous economic donations to Albania between 1991-1997; both crucial points when the Albanian economy faced potential collapse. Albania's trade relationship with Turkey are growing and a further alignment will bring more support to the Albanian economy. Only recently the Albanian government decided to build a second civil airport—the Vlorë Airport which will exceed the size of the only other airport in Albania—the Mother Teresa airport in Tirana. The 2.7 billion USD project was recently promoted by the Turkish Ambassador who stated that Turkey is the second biggest investor in Albania, and economic help is more important than words in changing the perception of Turkey in Albania.⁸⁴⁰ The Albanian authorities cannot ignore these vital projects. Inevitably, increasing involvement of Turkey in the Albanian economy will have political implications for Albania. If, in the twenty-first century, any help from Turkey comes to Albania with a price tag, this might merely be the case of Albanian government authorities siding more with Turkey in order to secure the so needed economic and energy support from Turkey.

7.8 Culture resistance in preserving Turkish loanwords

Although at the end of the nineteenth century *rilindja* writers started the process of purging of Turkish words from the Albanian language, the presence of these words in spoken and written Albanian continues to be another controversial topic. It can be argued that the tendency of escaping from the Ottoman heritage in Albania started at the turn of the twentieth century⁸⁴¹, a

⁸⁴⁰ "Aeroporti i Vlorës, ambasadori turk: Në Shqipëri, 2.7 miliardë dollarë investime [Vlorë airport, the Turkish ambassador: in Albania, 2.7 billion dollar investments]", author's translation, *Top Channel*, 30 January 2018, accessed 12 May 2018, <http://top-channel.tv/2018/01/30/aeroporti-i-vlores-ambasadori-turk-ne-shqiperi-2-7-miliarde-dollarë-investime/>.

⁸⁴¹ "Veqilharxhi, babai i Alfabetit dhe Abetares Shqiptare [Veqilharxhi, the father of the Albanian alphabet and the Abetares]", 21 October 2011, <http://www.panorama.com.al/veqilharxhi-babai-i-alfabetit-dhe-abetares-shqiptare/>.

time when the Albanian *rilindja* leaders realised that religious divisions would be problematic for the establishment of national identity, and thus, “drew on language as a source of national unity”.⁸⁴² Therefore, as discussed, the Albanian language has been one of the strongest elements representing the unification of Albanians. However, as with any other language, the Albanian language has not been immune from the phenomenon of borrowing words from other languages. The Albanian language analyses require more attention regarding the Turkish-main source of loanwords. Dizdari found that in the current time, the Albanian language contains 4406⁸⁴³ Turkish words, and most of these words entered the Albanian spoken and written language during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁸⁴⁴ There are various reasons to explain why these words became part of the Albanian spoken and written language. Turkish loanwords entered the Albanian language through the Ottoman bureaucracy, military and religious services, the philosophic and religious education, economic links with trade centres in Turkey and other areas of the Empire and short and long-term immigration of Albanian speaking people that happened for economic, education and political reasons.⁸⁴⁵ The Ottoman bureaucracy forced Albanians⁸⁴⁶ to learn Turkish as the only language of administration, education, religious and trade activities in the Albanian-speaking lands. Privileged Albanians who benefitted from concessions of the Porte used more and more “*Osmanlica*” as the official language, whilst many Albanian intellectuals who were educated in Turkey absorbed elements of Turkish language, which were then inevitably added to the Albanian language and culture. Another factor that brought about more Turkish words in the Albanian-speaking language was the role of *bejtexhinj* writings that started at the end of the seventeenth and ended at the beginning of the nineteenth century. This long period of *bejtexhinj* writings is believed to have been constituted in two parts: The first period ended at the end of the eighteenth century, and

⁸⁴² Morgan, 1.

⁸⁴³ Tahir N. Dizdari, *Fjalor i orientalizmeve në gjuhën Shqipe [Dictionary of orientalism phrases in the Albanian language]*, Tiranë: AIITC, 2005, 4. In Adem Balaban and Bünyamin Çağlayan's "Common Cultural Turkish Words in Albanian and Greek Languages." *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, vol. 4, no. 2: 264.

⁸⁴⁴ Adriatik Derjaj, "Mendimi i brendshëm dhe i jashtëm në gjuhë: Mbështetur në frazeologjizmat orientale [Internal and external thoughts regarding language: Based on Oriental phraseologies]" (Tirana University, 2012), 89.

⁸⁴⁵ Emil Lefe, *Persizmat në kuadrin e orientalizmeve të Fjalorit të gjuhës së sotme shqipe [Persian within Oriental components in the current Albanian dictionary]*, author's translation, Perla, 1999, 39-46. In Adriatik Derjaj, "Mendimi i Brendshëm...", 95.

⁸⁴⁶ Derjaj, 88.

in a form of ‘Oriental poems’, emphasised beauties of nature, human spirit, and some social phenomena such as love, gender and morals; criticizing Albanian poverty, whereas the second period criticised the Ottoman oppressors, while having more religious content.⁸⁴⁷ Writings of some *bejtexhinj* authors such as Nezim Frakulla, Sulejman Naibi, Dalip and Shahin Frashëri, Zyko Kamberi, Zenel Bastari and Tahir Gjakova spread through hand written copies and oral tradition to then penetrate the Albanian spoken language and establish their “Orientalisms”.⁸⁴⁸ There are conflicting opinions regarding the role of *bejtexhinj* in Albania. Although these writings were an infusion of moralities and philosophy, they were full of ‘Turkish-Orientalisms’— elements that according to Kadare, damaged the development of written Albanian. Others such as Derjaj, think that *bejtexhinj* activism saved the Albanian folk language.⁸⁴⁹ The high influence of the Turkish language also affected (in a different way) *rilindja* writers.⁸⁵⁰ An example is Naim Frashëri’s poem “Qerbelaja” where religious and moral motives are similar to those of *bejtexhinj* poems; painted by the influence of the Turkish culture at the time. However, the difference from the *bejtexhinj* period is that *rilindja* created its own linguistic style based on traditions and Albanian oral spoken language that had survived in centuries, rather than overusing Turkish words to express the Albanian culture and tradition.⁸⁵¹ Therefore, *rilindja* writers distanced themselves from the Turkish language used by *bejtexhinj* writers. In fact, Naim Frashëri criticised all those writers who “mixed” and “disfigured” the “beautiful-Albanian” language with that of Turkish.⁸⁵² In short, at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, Albanian *rilindja* leaders accentuated in Albanian language myths, traditions and culture; all elements that following Smith are necessary to form a nation and its identity.⁸⁵³

⁸⁴⁷ Ibid., 90.

⁸⁴⁸ Ibid., 91.

⁸⁴⁹ Ibid., 93.

⁸⁵⁰ Ibid., 95.

⁸⁵¹ Ibid.

⁸⁵² Gjovalin Shkurtaj, *Pesha e fjalës shqipe [The wieght of the Albanian word]*, author’s translation, Tiranë: Shtëpia Botuese Ufo Press, 2009, 51-74. In Derjaj, Adriatik. "Mendimi i brendshëm dhe i jashtëm në gjuhë: mbështetur në frazeologjizmat orientale", 95.

⁸⁵³ Smith, "A Europe of Nations. Or the Nation of Europe?", 130.

The process of clearing Turkish loanwords from the Albanian language intensified at the beginning of the twentieth century. According to Derjaj, in 1908, the Albanian language dictionary created by the Albanian ‘*Bashkimi*’ association contained one Turkish word for every eight Albanian words, whereas in 1954, an Albanian dictionary (*Fjalori gjuhës shqipe*), reduced Turkish words by half, or one in sixteen. By 1980, when the Albanian contemporary dictionary (*Fjalorin e gjuhës së sotme Shqipe*) was published, the number of Turkish loanwords was reduced again to one in every twenty-three words, constituting a total number of 1800 words.⁸⁵⁴ However, although some Turkish words are removed by the Albanian dictionary, confusion surrounds this topic as many Turkish words remain part of the Albanian lexicon. This is an excellent example of how changes to language take time to come into use in the vernacular, despite being adopted at a higher, bureaucratic level.

Proper research from Albanian sociolinguistic scholars exploring real effects of Turkish loanwords is limited.⁸⁵⁵ While some scholars argue that borrowing loanwords from another language is enriching, others argue that borrowing only causes damage to a language, and therefore, loanwords should be removed.⁸⁵⁶ Whatever the scholarly arguments might be, in Albania, there “is no doubt that the language purification process ... from the Turkish borrowings in particular has been a long and complicated process”.⁸⁵⁷ In fact, some Turkish-based words have remained in spoken Albanian even though they have a synonym, which is part of the Albanian standard language.⁸⁵⁸ The controversy of completely banning Turkish words from the Albanian language has not ended.

Along with Turkish loanwords borrowed by Albanian speakers to interconnect with the Ottoman bureaucracy, other elements of the Turkish lexicon and morphology are also present in the Albanian spoken language. An example is the use of the suffix – *çe* in words such as

⁸⁵⁴ Derjaj, 95.

⁸⁵⁵ See for instance Gjorgji Bufla, "Interlinguistic phenomena in Albanian Turkisms", *Rivista Internazionale di Tecnica della Traduzione (International Journal of Translation)*, no. 15, 2013; Shkurtaj; Meri Gjoleka, "The Albanian language in the face of globalization Challenges: The issue of borrowings", *European Scientific Journal*, vol. 11, no. 25, September 2015; Derjaj; Jani Thomai, *Leksikologjia e gjuhës shqipe [the lexicology of the Albanian language]*, author's translation, Tiranë: Toena, 2002.

⁸⁵⁶ Gjoleka, 152.

⁸⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁸ Thomai, 219.

vendçe “in the manner of the local natives; calmly; very hard” or *kosovarçe* “in the manner of natives from Kosovo”.⁸⁵⁹ Bufli discusses how Albanians added their own prefix such as “*madh*” (big) or “*keq*” (bad), to then create new Albanian adjectives such as *gazepmadh*, *qametmadh* and *adetkeq*; words that all originate from Turkish words such as *gazap* (anger, hate, exasperation), *kiyamet* (catastrophe, disorder, tumult) and *adet* (traditional custom, tradition).⁸⁶⁰ However, I argue that words such as *gazep*, *qamet* and *adet* are replaced in Albanian language with words such as *problem*, *fatkeqësi* and *qokë* (in *geg*) or *shkuarje* (in *tosk*), and therefore the usage of Turkish words can be avoided, if Albanians want to do so. The process of using Turkish words by Albanian speakers is not a neat and tidy philological phenomenon, but rather evidence of a long and complicated cultural exchange between Turks and Albanians. Similarly, Balaban and Çağlayan think that the process of borrowing words carries marks of cultural layers.⁸⁶¹ Bufli mentions that, according to Gusmani, “borrowing” of morphemes is not simply a process of imitation, but rather requires “active behaviour on the part of the speaker”⁸⁶². Therefore, the process of cleansing the Albanian dictionary of Turkish words, which started during the Albanian *rilindja* period in the mid-nineteenth century⁸⁶³ (and is perhaps still underway)⁸⁶⁴, is not a simple exclusion of Turkish loanwords. Thus, purifying the Albanian language from Turkish loanwords may also mean ‘cleaning’ the Albanian culture from ‘Oriental elements’ left in Albania as a result of the Ottoman legacy. However, this is not a simple academic process. For example, as we have discussed, there is a great love in Albania for Turkish TV programmes and their serial movies which are bringing back more Turkish words and cultural elements to Albania—developments that while showing the Turkish influence over Albanian identity, are not welcomed by Kadare and his supporters. While Albanians seem reluctant to replace all Turkish remaining words with those of the Albanian

⁸⁵⁹ Bufli, 30.

⁸⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁶¹ Adem Balaban and Bünyamin Çağlayan, "Common Cultural Turkish words in Albanian and Greek languages", *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, vol. 4, no. 2, April 2014, 264.

⁸⁶² Bufli, 30.

⁸⁶³ "Veqilharxhi, babai i Alfabetit dhe Abetares Shqiptare [Veqilharxhi, the father of the Albanian alphabet and the Abetare]", 21 October 2011, <http://www.panorama.com.al/veqilharxhi-babai-i-alfabetit-dhe-abetares-shqiptare/>.

⁸⁶⁴ Marsela Kajana and Juliana Godeni, "Turkish loanwords in Albanian language", *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences*, no. 136, 2014, 97.

language, the case of Islam is more challenging for Albanian identity.

7.9 Islam—the main ally of Erdoğan in Albania

In the twenty-first century, Erdoğan and the Turkish government are trying to ‘play the religious card’ and fill the gap created by the communist regime.⁸⁶⁵ An example is the money donated by the Turkish government to build the biggest Mosque in Europe at the central Skenderbeg square in Tirana—the Ethem Beu Mosque, which before its closure in February 2018, had a capacity of no more than 60 people to now enable four and a half thousand people to pray at the same time once its finished.⁸⁶⁶ Next to this Mosque, in 2017, during the celebration of *Kurban Bajram*, at the Skenderbeg square, the monument of Skenderbeg was fenced by large screen panels provided by the Albanian Islamic Community. The disappointment culminated with comments of the Albanian Imam Armand Aliu on the media; stating that Albanian Muslims should not be proud of Skenderbeg who ruthlessly fought Islam⁸⁶⁷, and therefore Albanians should choose between their national hero and religious pluralism. This sparked a debate in Albanian society and social media; going as far as a call to arrest the Imam for placing Albanian identity second to Islam. Nevertheless, this episode and the fact that Albanian Bektashism has developed its own way beyond Sunni Islam indicates that, in the short-term, Albanians have no intention of abandoning Islam.

While ‘religious harmony’ is an added value to the Albanian national identity, preserving Islam by a majority of the Albanian population makes it easier for Turkey to influence Albanian identity, and thus, get closer to the Western Balkans and indeed Albania’s Muslims. As discussed in this thesis, religion has played a positive role in building the Albanian national identity and this fact has been noticed by Turkish authorities, who in the twenty-first century are emphasising their support to their brother ‘Muslims’ in Western Balkans. Although Albanians place their Albanian national identity before religion, until Islam will continue to

⁸⁶⁵ Anđelković, 4 October 2017, <https://europeanwesternbalkans.com/2017/10/04/turkey-playing-card-islam-albania/>.

⁸⁶⁶ "Turkey to build Balkans' largest mosque in Tirana", *Hürriyet Daily News*, 24 October 2014, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-to-build-balkans-largest-mosque-in-tirana-73512>.

⁸⁶⁷ Anđelković, 4 October 2017, <https://europeanwesternbalkans.com/2017/10/04/turkey-playing-card-islam-albania/>.

remain the majority religion in Albania, it will be easier for Erdoğan's Turkey to interfere, if not manipulate Albanian identity. In the meantime, Islam will continue to represent the majority of Albanians in religious terms.

7.10 Erdoğan's political pressure through political deals with Russia and Serbia

The Albanian Euro-Atlantic Orientation is overarching for Albanian politics in the twenty-first century. Albania's strategic partnership with Europe and the US is unquestionable. However, Turkey is also a strategic partner for Albania. Erdoğan has continuously threatened the European Union to scrap the refugee agreement signed in March 2016, and it seems that Turkey has tried to "say goodbye"⁸⁶⁸ to Europe since then. Not only is Turkey's optimism to join Europe coming to an end, Erdoğan is now threatening the EU. In July 2017, he stated that Turkey can do without the EU⁸⁶⁹—a statement that in October 2017 was strengthened even more, mentioning that Turkey does not need Europe anymore, but rather it will soon be the other way around. According to him, "Europe has died in Bosnia and buried in Syria".⁸⁷⁰ The more the Turkish government distances its position from the EU, the more complicated the Albanian position becomes with regard to relations with both Europe and Turkey.

Erdoğan's Turkey decision to get closer to Putin's Russia in the twenty-first century, generate challenges, if not threats for the EU, Balkan's and Albania's region and energy security. The tip of the iceberg was seen in 2015, when Russia decided to deviate the South Stream natural gas pipeline from Bulgaria to now deliver gas to Turkey.⁸⁷¹ Since then, despite different opinions regarding the Syrian regime, Istanbul and Moscow have become closer.

⁸⁶⁸ Daren Butler, "Recep Tayyip Erdogan threatens to say 'goodbye' to the EU unless they move Turkey's accession forward", *Independent*, 3 May 2017, accessed 2 May 2018, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/recep-tayyip-erdogan-turkey-joining-eu-european-union-member-bloc-accession-talks-ankara-a7714691.html>.

⁸⁶⁹ "Erdogan: Turqia bën edhe pa BE-në [Erdogan: Turkey can do without EU] ", 12 July 2017, <http://m.top-channel.tv/lajme/artikull.php?id=359400&homepage>.

⁸⁷⁰ "Tensionet/Erdogan kërcënon sërish, tregon se çfarë e pret Europën [Tensions/Erdogan threatens again, explaining what will happen to Europe]", author's translation, *Panorama on line*, 24 October 2017, accessed 24 October 2017, <http://www.panorama.com.al/tensionet-erdogan-kercenon-serish-tregon-se-çfare-e-pret-evropen/>.

⁸⁷¹ Stanley Reed and Sebnem Arsu, "Russia Presses Ahead With Plan for Gas Pipeline to Turkey", *The New York Times*, 21 January 2015, accessed 11 May 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/22/business/international/russia-presses-ahead-with-plan-for-gas-pipeline-to-turkey.html>.

Turkey is also strengthening ties with Russia's main partner in the Balkans, Serbia. On 10 and 11 October 2017, Erdoğan visited Serbia with a large delegation of 180 businessmen. Twelve new trade agreements signed showed a win-win situation for Serbia and Turkey, but also hinted that Turkey is becoming more closely aligned with the Western Balkans in a way that Bechev defines as "a neo-Ottoman quest".⁸⁷² This move of Erdoğan is in line with his decision to strengthen ties with Russia. Serbian Minister of Commerce, Rasim Lajic, believes that while this is positive for Serbia, it also represents a shift of Turkey's foreign policy regarding relations with Kosovo and Albania.⁸⁷³ According to Lajic, relations between Turkey and Albania are not the same as two years ago and the shift is due to the last Turkish coup in 2015. Lajic's optimism stating that "now Erdoğan is with us" was complemented by Serbian foreign minister Ivica Dačić who entertained Erdoğan; singing a Turkish-Balkan-known-old-song that relates to the Ottoman era: the "*Osman Aga*".⁸⁷⁴

These recent shifts in Turkish foreign policy constitute a challenge, especially for Kosovar Albanians who are eagerly hoping for Serbia to recognise the Republic of Kosovo. Under pressure from Erdoğan, on 28 March 2018, the Kosovar intelligence in coordination with Turkish intelligence arrested six Turkish citizens—five of them were teachers—who were residing and working in Kosovo. The Turkish government claimed that all of them were members of the Gülistan Educational Institution in Gjakova and Prizren, and arrested them over their alleged links to the Gülen movement.⁸⁷⁵ They were all immediately deported to Turkey in a secret operation that was praised by Erdoğan. Under the US pressure, Kosovar President Hashim Thaci, the Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj and the Head of Parliament Kadri Veseli, all stated they had no information about this secret operation and denied the deportation of six Turkish citizens. Nevertheless, this is a clear sign that the political influence

⁸⁷² Dimitar Bechev, "Erdoğan in the Balkans: A neo-Ottoman quest?", *AlJazeera*, 11 October 2017, accessed 15 January 2018, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/erdogan-balkans-neo-ottoman-quest-171011094904064.html>.

⁸⁷³ "Në Serbi: Erdogani tani është me ne, u prish me Kosovën dhe Shqipërinë [In Serbia: Erdogan is now with us, the relationship with Kosovo and Albania is damaged]", author's translation, *Gazeta Metro*, 12 October 2017, accessed 10 May 2018, <http://gazetametro.net/ne-serbi-erdogani-tani-eshte-me-ne-u-prish-me-kosoven-dhe-shqiperine/>.

⁸⁷⁴ "Daçiç argëton Erdoganin me këngën e Osman Agës [Dacic entertains Erdogan with the song of Osman aga]", author's translation, *Top Channel*, 11 October 2017, accessed 23 October 2017, <http://top-channel.tv/2017/10/11/dacic-argeton-erdoganin-me-kengen-e-osman-ages-video/>.

⁸⁷⁵ "Kosovo under Turkish gov't pressure detains 5 Turkish educators over alleged links to Gülen movement", *Stocholm center for freedom*, 29 March 2018, accessed 1 May 2018, <https://stockholmcf.org/kosovo-under-turkish-govt-pressure-detains-5-turkish-educators-over-alleged-links-to-gulen-movement/>.

of Turkey in Kosovo is as strong as leading military actions within the territory of Kosovo.

The next day, the Turkish Ambassador in Albania reinforced his position that Albanian authorities must do the same and collaborate with Turkish intelligence to deport all Turkish citizens accused by the Turkish government. Previously, Greek authorities had halted the deportation of Turkish soldiers, amidst doubts that deported Turkish citizens would face unfair trials in Turkey. However, it seems the Kosovar authorities are siding with Turkish authorities rather than with European values that respect human rights of all individuals. One of Kadare's greatest fears is that the Albanian political elites may decide to ally themselves with Turkey, as this case of the Kosovar government clearly shows. In line with Kadare and his supporters, Yzeiri also thinks that both political elites of Kosovo and Albania are not pushing enough to restore European-Albanian-identity, but rather they downplay the Turkish cultural and religious influences; allowing, for example, Turkish TV programmes and activities of "...black mosques where jihad is preached..."⁸⁷⁶ to be free in Albania and Kosovo. As a result, Yzeiri thinks, both elites of Albania and Kosovo are showing their way to Istanbul.⁸⁷⁷ Motivations for this are clear: in the last decades they have seen Turkey as a 'big brother' not only to finalise the unfinished business of recognising the Republic of Kosovo, but also to protect rights of all Albanians in the region. Therefore, security implications are paramount and will determine the future foreign policies and political shifts of both Kosovar and Albanian governments. Unless the USA and EU will seriously engage politically and militarily in the Western Balkans, the fate of Albanians will depend on Turkey's foreign policy and commitments of protecting Albanians in the region. On the other hand, getting closer to Moscow and Belgrade, Ankara is only increasing pressure over Tirana and Prishtina; promising them the renaissance of Albanians within the new pan-Islamic Empire run by its new Sultan, Erdoğan.⁸⁷⁸ In the twenty-first century, economic, security, energy and political challenges, combined with divisions between Albanians regarding their culture, religion and identity are all tools at hands of Erdoğan's Turkey to halt Albanians abandoning the East, but also their march through the Western rocky road. Therefore, the ultimate finding of this thesis is that, in the twenty-first

⁸⁷⁶ Ilir Yzeiri, "Identiteti ynë në rrezik [Our identity is in danger]", author's translation, *Top Channel*, 17 November 2015, accessed 29 November 2015, <http://top-channel.tv/mobile/artikull.php?id=313199>.

⁸⁷⁷ Ilir Yzeiri, "Albanofobia e Berishës dhe islamofobia e Erdoganit [Berisha's Albanophobia and Erdogan's Islamophobia]", author's translation, *Gazeta Shqip*, 28 Shkurt 2013, accessed 12 May 2018, <http://gazeta-shqip.com/lajme/2013/02/28/albanofobia-e-berishes-dhe-islamofobia-e-erdoganit/>.

⁸⁷⁸ Shala, 15 February 2018, <http://www.gazetatema.net/2018/02/15/pushtimi-i-ri-turk/>.

century, both Albanian and Kosovar governments are lacking the will, policies and a structured approach in order to escape the Ottoman heritage, while aligning with the modern Turkey.

7.11 Summary of key findings

This chapter addresses the research question, which probes *how Albania is bidding farewell to its Ottoman heritage and whether and to what extent Turkish influence is influencing Albanian strategic alignment with the East in the twenty-first century*. This study has found that both Albanian and Kosovar governments are blaming the Ottoman past, while on the other hand, modern Turkey is considered as Albania's best and closest friend in the region. While governments rely on the legitimacy of people, they are also instrumental to certain ways they govern and influence their own people. It is not a coincidence that the majority of the Albanian and Kosovar channel televisions, which are licenced by respective governments, continue to propagate the Turkish culture and the way of life as a role-model for Albanians. In addition, both Albanian and Kosovar governments show their weaknesses in front of Turkish requests, and thus, trying to accommodate their wishes in a puzzled platform that explains the Turkish influence and leverage, but also the willingness to continue supporting Erdoğan's Turkey in the twenty-first century. Therefore, Albanian people are confused by the ambiguous position of the Albanian and Kosovar governments to quietly ally with Turkey. For example, the decision of the Albanian government authorities to hide the statue of Skenderbeg every time a meeting with Turkish officials takes place is surely sending perplexing messages to Albanian people. Kosovar government went a step further; allowing Turkish services to operate in Kosovo without any type of permission. It seems that at a political level, both Kosovar and Albanian governments show no will to craft policies that will distance Albanians from the Ottoman legacy. Albanian culture is also resisting these changes. In the twenty-first century, the Albanian government is accepting, rather than rejecting, Erdoğan's decision to revive the Ottoman 'glory' and propagate it through religion, language, history, culture and politics in Albania. As a result, both Albanian and Kosovar governments are missing the political will to distance Albanian identity from the Ottoman heritage.

Albanian people are also relaxed in their attitude to abandon the Ottoman heritage. Culture similarities create resisting forces to escape from the Ottoman heritage and its legacy as we have seen with the case of language and religion. Albania has been an independent nation-state

for more than a century, however, Albanian language is not free from Turkish loanwords. Turkish words are often used in spoken Albanian, even when an Albanian word can be used instead. The presence of Turkish words show difficulties in distancing the Albanian language, but also its culture and religion from the Ottoman heritage. Bektashi-Islamic religion in Albania is another example of the Ottoman heritage in the twenty-first century. Culture is indeed resistant to rapid changes. This cultural continuity is supported by both governments of Albania and Kosovo. On the other hand, a small group of scholars, artists, politicians and media in Albania have been active in their quest to distance Albanian identity from the Ottoman-Turks. The spiritual leader of this group—Kadare, has no doubt about the damage the Ottoman-Turks have caused to Albanian-speaking lands. According to Kadare, Albania belongs to the European-Western-Christian civilisation and was unjustly ‘removed’ by the Ottoman-Turks who must be blamed for restraining the Albanian language to develop and making the Albanian culture murky with elements of the Turkish culture. As a result, Kadare believes that any attempt to side with Erdoğan’s Turkey must be ended. Others align their beliefs with Qosja who contemplates that Albanian identity reflects more Turkish-Oriental elements, and thereby, it is a mixture of majority-“Islamic” and minority-“Christian” civilizations.⁸⁷⁹ However, all these reactions are rather spontaneous and impulsive, whereas this topic needs to systematically and naturally be debated by all Albanians.⁸⁸⁰

In the twenty-first century, the influence from the Erdoğan’s Turkey will have ramifications for Albanian identity. Firstly, a further realignment with Turkey will controvert attempts of Albanians to portray themselves as Europeans and thus, ‘more’ Westerners than Easterners. Therefore, it will have a direct impact on the way the EU sees and conceives Albanian identity. Disagreements between Turkey and the EU are known, and the more Albanian identity will realign with the Ottoman-Turks, the more difficult, if not impossible, will be for Albanian identity to portray itself as Western-European. Kadare, and his supporters, would likely have interpreted the Albanian realignment with Turkey as an unnatural path and contrary to the direction Albanian identity should take. Secondly, this realignment will have political implications for the Albanian government. Although Albanian support for NATO and the EU is unquestionable, Turkey’s role as a regional power that support both NATO and Russia is

⁸⁷⁹ Xhaferi, "The Political Contribution of Albanian Writers in Defining Albanian Identity: the Debate between Ismail Kadare and Rexhep Qosja", 124.

⁸⁸⁰ Frashëri, 19 June 2015, <http://www.albasoul.com/vjeter/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=1970>.

crucial for the future of Albania, Kosovo, and other Western Balkan states. On the other hand, if the scenario of Turkey's reluctance to progress on democratic reforms continues, while getting closer to Russia, Albania's political challenges will only increase. This might directly affect Albania's efforts to join the EU. Furthermore, another reason for Albania to ally with Turkey will be that of the energy security. As discussed in chapter six, TAP will bring the natural gas from Azerbaijan to Europe through Turkey. The other gas pipeline, the South Stream will also run through Turkey; placing it at the centre of the energy security dilemma. Due to these issues, the possibility for Albania to say 'yes' to any Turkish requests in the twenty-first century will be high, whereas the choice of turning its shoulders to Turkey will become a greater challenge.

Finally, Albania needs Turkey's military muscles in the region; however, things are complicated after Turkey's decision to side with Russia and perhaps Serbia. The developments of Albanian identity in the future will also depend on the fate of Kosovar and Macedonian-Albanians. This is not a justification for a Greater Albania, however, the struggle of the Albanian-speaking people in the twenty-first century, has not ended. Difficulties of Albania becoming an EU member can only increase frustrations and further force Albania to look at alternative routes. Erdoğan's Turkey knows Albania's challenges and continues to use them in its favour.

This chapter addresses the research question. In analysing the Turkish legacy in Albania in terms of religion, language, history, culture and politics, it is concluded that, despite some strong individual voices of Albanian scholars, politicians and media, the Albanian government is less eager to distance Albanian identity from the Ottoman heritage. Humiliation due to five centuries of Turkish occupation and the loss of the Albanian territories at the beginning of the twentieth century seem not to be enough reasons for Albanians to escape the Ottoman heritage. The Albanian government is very ambivalent under the pressure from Erdoğan's Turkey. Albanian people are confused with Albanian and Kosovar governments' actions and their missing policies of how to deal with Turkey's influence. Therefore, the lack of structured actions is caused by the absence of the political will from Albanian government and society to abandon the Ottoman heritage. In the twenty-first century, premises for Albania to follow Turkey, and thus go East are becoming real.

8.1 Personal reflections

When I started this research in 2012, it was for personal interest. I was excited to further my own knowledge about the country where I was born. It turned out that I learned more about Albanian identity in the ‘West’ throughout this research than through all my studies and life in Albania. The research question for this thesis consumed me for the entire period of this research, and I believe, it will continue to remain with me for some time. The themes of this thesis, such as Albanian identity, the role and the influence of Turkey, ‘Greater Albania’, energy and security developments in Western Balkans never stopped being contested during the time of this research. This thesis has been an interesting journey for me. Despite the loneliness of a PhD candidate, I was privileged to discuss the Albanian identity question with various scholars in Australia and abroad. I am very thankful to these people for allowing me to discuss with them such an important topic and also to shape my thoughts regarding Albanian identity.

I was struck by two scholars I met in October 2016 during a conference on language and culture at Beder University in Tirana. This university is part of the ‘black list’ that Ergogan has asked the Albanian PM, Edi Rama to close down.⁸⁸¹ Discussing with them Albanian identity, I was surprised with their deep knowledge, but more importantly, knowing they were both Turkish citizens who were lecturing and contributing in Albania for more than twenty years, opened my eyes to better understand culture similarities. Their Albanian was perfect. I opened my presentation with a provocative question for the audience: Would I call myself ‘more Albanian’ than these two Turkish scholars who were contributing to the Albanian economy and Albanian education for more than two decades? This was another reason for me to think deeply about historical and cultural links between Albania and Turkey, which are stronger than we hear on the media. I have critically examined Albanian identity and the

⁸⁸¹ "Lista e zezë e shkollave dhe bankave turke që Ergogan i kërkon Ramës të mbyllë [The black list of schools and banks that Erdogan requested Rama to close down]", author's translation, *Tema on line*, 2 November 2016, accessed 10 September 2018, <http://www.gazetatema.net/2016/11/02/lista-e-zeze-e-shkollave-dhe-bankave-turke-qe-erdogan-i-kerkon-rames-ti-mbylle/>.

influence of Turkey at different levels. Even though I did not set out to scatter myths about Albanian identity and the role of Turkey to influence it, I found that this relationship is vastly different to common representations offered by politicians and media.

8.2 Reflections on the methodological and theoretical foundations of this thesis

This thesis wrestles with many theoretical concepts such as nations, nation-building approaches, ethnicity, nationalism, religion, civilization, power, influence and the discourse of legacy. There was a significant amount of theoretical groundwork to cover in order to realistically present the findings in a comprehensible way. While much of the theoretical groundwork is fused in discussions and analyses of all chapters, the methodological considerations require some further elucidation. Primarily, I want to offer some reflections on the way I employed these theoretical notions throughout the study.

I initially did focus on modernist nation-building theories of Gellner, Anderson and Hobsbawm. I then soon realised that although Albanian nation was indeed modern, it was created before modernity reached the Albanian speaking lands. Thus, in order to deeper probe Albanian belonging, I turned my eye to earlier nation-building theories of primordialism and perennialism. However, I realised these notions are also unable to explain Albanian identity. I then shifted my analyses to focus on Smith's 'ethno-symbolism' approach. The main element to unite Albanians was (and still is) the Albanian language, which makes the Albanian case unique, and I found that Smith's 'ethno-symbolism' was getting closer to explaining Albanian national identity compared to other approaches. However, his approach is not flawless. Smith contemplates that "ethnicity in pre-modern periods was not normally the basis of alternative polity formation, except where it combined with religion".⁸⁸² In Smith's terms, lack of strong links between Albanians and religion delayed the creation of the Albanian nation. Nonetheless, Smith agrees that more research in the field is required "to determine how far earlier forms of ethnic sentiment and later forms of nationalism were similarly imbued with religious beliefs and sentiments ... in various ethnic cultures and in successive periods of history".⁸⁸³ It was the

⁸⁸² Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, 32-41.

⁸⁸³ Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A critical survey of recent theories of nations and nationalism*, 227.

religion issue that forced me to also abandon Smith's 'ethno-symbolism' theory, and instead focus on the approach of Hastings, who after scrutinizing the main nation-building theories, suggests that all scholars in the field should historically analyse interactions between nation, ethnicity, nationalism and religion. This then became the new theoretical framework that satisfied the starting point of my research in exploring the Albanian national identity.

The theoretical groundwork required to interrogate Turkish influence over Albanian identity, which was more difficult as analyses in this field are very limited. In a way, this opened the opportunity to bring Todorova's seminal work on Balkans and the Ottoman legacy into the discussion, and then narrowing that concept down to Albania.

I would like to acknowledge that this research experience infused in me an overpowering admiration for the country I was born (Albania) after realising that such a small country has always been able to survive through difficult historical periods, stereotypes, and regional interests. It was a privilege to write about Albanian identity, which is almost completely unknown in the Australian context.

8.3 Unexpected findings

While the findings detailed above were the deliberate focus of the research questions, there is a point to which I wish to draw attention, as it came as a surprise to me: agreements between Putin's Russia and Erdoğan's Turkey in the twenty-first century. The long war-campaigns between the Ottoman and Russian Empires commenced in the second half of the sixteenth century and ended with the victory of Russians in the nineteenth century. A strong competition between these two Empires, also shaped Balkan identities. This fact was painted with religious colours by Balkan nationalism; creating a sort of historical competition between Orthodox-Christians and Muslims. This approach of religious categorisation directly affected Albanians who were considered as Muslims and thus, enemies of Orthodox neighbours. I have shown in this thesis that at the end of the Ottoman Empire, Albanians fought Turks, but were left out of the Balkan allies that were supported by Russia. Towards the end of 2015, signs of a new era in bilateral relations between Turkey and Russia started to become clear after the decision that a Russian company will build a 20 billion USD nuclear power plant in southern Turkey—a project officially initiated by both Erdoğan and Putin in April 2018. In addition, the decision of Erdoğan to buy the S-400 surface-to-air missile defence equipment from Russia in

September 2017 was another surprise for NATO allies and the EU; knowing that Turkey is one of the biggest military countries of NATO in the region. The EU is a strong economic partner of Turkey. However, Erdoğan's frustration with the EU due to the endless decision to reject Turkey's membership is evident. He is using this fact to achieve his ends in becoming a powerful authoritarian leader in the region, a new Caliph, or Sultan who is aiming to rule a new Turkish-Islamic Empire. Agreements with another authoritarian leader, Putin, can help him to use this relationship as leverage vis-à-vis to its European and NATO partners in the region, and thus, achieve his political ends.

These latest developments while contradicting historical disagreements between Russia and Turkey, are creating a better opportunity for both Turkey and Russia to extend their influence in the Western Balkans, and thus, halt the Euro-Atlantic perspective of these countries. Although it is not clear whether these new agreements with Putin are a façade for Erdoğan, the reality is that Turkey is moving away from Europe and the West. Turkey's latest shift is a bigger challenge for the Albanian diplomacy and its national identity in the twenty-first century. Albania is committed to its Euro-Atlantic path, which means Europe, United States, NATO and Western civilization, but as discussed, doesn't want to lose its regional strategic partner, Turkey that it is now getting closer to Russia. As Turkey is moving further from the West, NATO and Europe, Albania's paranoia that Turkey will be getting on the Orthodox-axis of Russia and Serbia will increase. In the twenty-first century, Turkey's role in the Western Balkans is becoming crucial and its new involvement is changing the reconfiguration of Western Balkans.

8.4 Avenues for further research

As emphasised in this thesis, Albanian identity is considered both as a cohesive entity and a contested concept. In the last century, ethnic Albanians who were forced to live in Montenegro, Kosovo, Serbia, Macedonia and Greece have developed their own identities, and it would be clearly superficial, if not disingenuous to consider Albanian identity as a unit of analyses that includes all Albanians. Perhaps, the same research question applied separately to each of those Albanian ethnic communities who live in various Balkan countries may provide different findings. It has been argued, for example, that religious orientations of Kosovars and Albanians who live in Macedonia are stronger than Albanians who live in Albania. However, proper research to scrutinise whether this is due to Hoxha's atheist legacy in Albania, and perhaps

exploring whether Kosovar and Macedonian Albanians used Islam as a vehicle to protect themselves from Slavic assimilation, is missing. Another unexplored area might be to analyse why Bektashi is largely diffused in Albania compared to other Albanians living in other Western Balkan states. Therefore, a deeper analysis of identity similarities and differences between Albanians would complement this research.

8.5 Concluding remarks

This study has offered some findings. Firstly, it is worth noting that the Albanian national identity is constructed in the context of many ideological influences, while defined as a product of interaction between domestic and international forces such as Albanian and Balkan nationalism, ethnicity, religion, language, interests of regional and Great Powers, and domestic-political competition for leadership. None of these factors can be underrated, and only a holistic analysis in historical context will fully explain the Albanian national identity. Most of the above elements are contested, along with the Ottoman influence and legacy that have impacted Albanian identity. This thesis has shown that the Ottomans affected Albanian-speaking lands; allowing a further deterioration and keeping them underdeveloped. However, it is correct to claim that the Ottoman legacy has influenced Albanian identity, rather than emphasising the negative impacts of the Ottomans in the Albanian speaking lands. During the Ottoman rule, Albanian identity inevitably absorbed elements of Turkish culture, which are mirrored in Albanian political culture, language, music, cuisine and religion, just to mention a few. Therefore, it is not a question of whether Albanian identity contains elements of Turkish culture, but rather, the question is whether Albanian identity will continue to reflect Ottoman features in the future?

Secondly, the thesis finds that the claim that Albanians are attempting to restore the humiliation caused by the Ottomans who conquered Albanian-speaking lands for more than five centuries and did not protect Albanian-speaking territories from their partition, following the collapse of the Empire is not accurate. Although little attempts to exclude from the Albanian language Turkish loanwords have started since the *rilindja* period, claiming that Albanians are ‘escaping’ from the Ottoman legacy cannot be substantiated. Culture shifts need more time to occur. A structured and methodological approach from the Albanian government is missing, and more importantly, the willingness to do so is questionable. On the other hand, Turkish government is using its influence over Albania with projects such as TİKA, Maarif Foundation

and activities of Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centres not only to provide economic help, but to promote the Turkish culture, language and Islam in Albania. The advancement of Turkish policies in Albania is portraying the 'Turkish way of life' as a role model for Albanians, who are considering Turkey a friendlier country than their direct neighbours, Serbia and Greece. As a result, Turkish policies in the twenty-first century, are aiming to bring closer to Albania and Western Balkans new Turkish cultural elements, which for example, are astutely disseminated through Turkish TV serial movies and culture centres.

Albania continues to be one of the poorest countries in the Balkans and this is a good reason to welcome any kind of help in economy, education and especially regional security. Not only are Albanians still closely linked to the Turkish culture, religion, language and history, many (including the Albanian government) believe Turkish military power will protect them from 'others' in the region. The reluctance of Albanian political elite to implement democratic reforms, and also delays of the EU in accepting Albania as a member state, are in line with the Turkish interests.

Ultimately, the Albanian government has made the Euro-Atlantic orientation its strategic priority in the twenty-first century. This trajectory is not without difficulty for Albanian speaking people who live in the region. The majority of Albanians are hoping that Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia will all become EU member states, and thus, Albanians can all unite under the EU banner. In the absence of an EU army, NATO then becomes Albania's protector, but the USA will need to craft a more active foreign policy engagement in Western Balkans in order to balance the influence of Turkey and Russia in the region. The second option will be for the Albanian government to maintain the Euro-Atlantic orientation while not abandoning Turkey and thus, the East, which is the current Albanian foreign policy in the twenty-first century. And there is a third option in case Albania decides to abandon the Euro-Atlantic way and side with Turkey. This decision will have bigger ramifications for Albanian identity in both the short and long-term. This may place Albania in a direct disagreement with the USA, which will cause considerable difficulty, as the last thing Kosovar Albanians want to do is to abandon their shield, the USA. The Republic of Kosovo could not have existed without the NATO military campaign led by the US. On the other hand, the American government has invested a significant amount of money and energy in Albanian democratic process and cannot afford to abandon their best ally in the Western Balkans. In reality, in the first two decades of the twenty-first century, the Albanian government is continuing to dream the West, while

mutatis mutandis is not abandoning their old friend, Turkey. Erdoğan's Turkey, on the other hand, is using all of its influence and legacy to halt Albania's Western road and thus, pull Albania once more, back to the Eastern civilization.

References

- "60 vjet Shqiperi ne OKB [Albania and the United Nations: 60 Years of Partnership]". Author's translation, *Albanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, 2015. Accessed 12 May 2018, [http://www.punetejashtme.gov.al/files/userfiles/press_brochure_minfor_\(2\).pdf](http://www.punetejashtme.gov.al/files/userfiles/press_brochure_minfor_(2).pdf).
- Abazi, Enika. "Kosovo Independence: An Albanian Perspective". *Seta, Policy Brief*, vol. 11, April 2008, 1-5.
- Abazi, Enika and Albert Doja. "Further Considerations on the Politics of Religious Discourse: Naim Frashëri and his Pantheism in the Course of Nineteenth-Century Albanian Nationalism". *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 49, no. 6, 2013, 859-79.
- Ademovic, Jasmin. "Great Power Competition in the Balkans Heating Up", *Geopolitical Monitor*, 7 November 2016. Accessed 13 March 2018, <https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/great-power-competition-in-the-balkans-heating-up/>.
- "Aeroporti i Vlorës, ambasadori turk: Në Shqipëri, 2.7 miliardë dollarë investime [Vlorë airport, the Turkish ambassador: in Albania, 2.7 billion dollar investments]". Author's translation, *Top Channel*, 30 January 2018. Accessed 12 May 2018, <http://top-channel.tv/2018/01/30/aeroporti-i-vlores-ambasadori-turk-ne-shqiperi-2-7-miliarde-dollare-investime/>.
- Agolli, Dritëro. "Intervistë për debatin e identitetit kombëtar Shqiptar [An interview over the debate of the Albanian identity]", author's translation, *Shqip*, 16 May 2006. Accessed 11 November 2011, <http://gazeta-shqip.com/lajme/>.
- Agoston, Gabor and Bruce Masters. *Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire*. New York: Facts on File Library of World History, 2009.
- Ahmed, Abdulkareem. "Turkey's Erdogan And The Albania's Snub", *The Guardian*, 24 May 2015. Accessed 9 March 2018, <https://guardian.ng/opinion/turkeys-erdogan-and-the-albanias-snub/>.
- Aksoy, Murat. "Turkish economy declines from 17th to 19th place in ranking of biggest economies", 01 January 2015. Accessed 5 February 2016, http://mobile.todayszaman.com/op-ed_turkish-economy-declines-from-17th-to-19th-place-in-ranking-of-biggest-economies_368579.html.
- . "Erdoğan's Atatürkian visions", *Today's Zaman on line*, 10 November 2015. Accessed 12 November 2015, http://www.todayszaman.com/op-ed_erdogans-ataturkian-visions_403887.html.
- "Albania". *Oxford Economic Country Briefings*, 29 Jul 2009: 1- 4. Accessed 12 September 2013, <http://0-proquest-umi-com-alpha2-latrobe-edu-au/pqdlink-?did=1868557581-&Fmt=3-&clientId=20828-&RQT=309-&VName=PQD>.

- "Albania opposition denies links to Russian election meddling". *Daily Mail*, 8 March 2018. Accessed 23 March 2018, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-5473737/Albania-opposition-denies-links-Russian-election-meddling.html#ixzz5ByFzSmYX>
- "Albanians in Turkey celebrate their cultural heritage". *Today's Zaman*. Accessed 15 October 2015, http://mobile.todayszaman.com/national_albanians-in-turkey-celebrate-their-cultural-heritage_254383.html.
- Aliju, Dzihat. "Turkey takes over Albania's first private university", *Anadolu Agency*, 16 August 2018. Accessed 18 August 2018, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/turkey-takes-over-albanias-first-private-university/1233554>.
- "Ambasadori i Shqipërisë në Turqi: Feja e shqiptarit është shqiptaria, në Turqi janë pesë milionë shqiptarë [The Albanian Ambassador in Turkey: The Albanian religion is Albanianism, in Turkey live five million Albanians]". Author's translation, *Telegrafi*, 2 August 2015. Accessed 17 November 2015, <http://m.telegrafi.com/lajme/ambasadori-i-shqiperise-ne-turqi-feja-e-shqiptarit-eshte-shqiptaria-ne-turqi-jane-pese-milione-shqiptare-2-67961.html>.
- "Ambasadori turk: Nga historia e kaluar mes Shqipërisë dhe Turqisë të marrim më të mirën [The Turkish Ambassador: Let's extract the best from the history between Albania and Turkey]". Author's translation, *Ora News*, 16 February 2018. Accessed 17 March 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lQ_yRU4qN5Q.
- Andelković, Katarina. "Turkey playing on the card of Islam in Albania?", *Western European Balkans*, 4 October 2017. Accessed 11 May 2018, <https://europeanwesternbalkans.com/2017/10/04/turkey-playing-card-islam-albania/>.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. 2nd ed. London Verso, 1991.
- Anscombe, Frederick F., ed. *The Ottoman Balkans: 1750-1830* Edited by Frederick F. Anscombe, Albanians and "Mountain Bandits". Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2006.
- Arts, Bas and Piet Verchuren. "Assessing Political Influence in Complex Decision-making: An Instrument Based on Triangulation". *International Political Science Review*, vol. 20, no. 4, 1999, 411–24.
- Balaban, Adem. "The Impacts of Turkish TV Serials Broadcasted in Albania on Albanian and Turkish Relations". *European Journal of Social Sciences, Education and Research*, vol. 5, no. 1, September-December 2015.
- Balaban, Adem and Bünyamin Çağlayan. "Common Cultural Turkish words in Albanian and Greek languages". *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, vol. 4, no. 2, April 2014, 262-70.

- Balla, Sokol. "Erdogan: Gyleni rrezikon Shqipërinë. Shqetësim për sherrin Rama-Meta [Erdogan: Gullen places Albania at risk. Concerns regarding disagreements between Rama-Meta]", author's translation, *Top Channel*, 19 June 2017. An interview with the Turkish President Erdogan. Accessed 10 May 2018, <http://top-channel.tv/video/erdogan-gyleni-rrezikon-shqiperine-shqetesim-per-sherrin-rama-meta/>.
- Banfield, Edward C. *Political Influence*. New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, Third printing 2009.
- "The Banker reaffirms BKT as the best bank in Albania for 2013". *Çalik Holding*. Accessed 1 February 2016, <http://www.calik.com/en/PressReleases2013/2013/12/02/the-banker-reaffirms-bkt-as-the-best-bank-in-albania-for-2013?id=5b6f9308-f81d-460b-86a8-b753c755346b>.
- Barkey, Karen. *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective*. Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Barleti, Marin. *The Siege of Shkodra: Albania's Courageous Stand Against Ottoman Conquest, 1478*. Originally published as "De obsidione Scodrensi, 1504". Translated and edited by David Hosaflook. Tirana: Onufri, 2012.
- "Basha: Vota kundër SHBA, gabim. Shqipëria abstenoit në 2012 [Vote against the USA, wrong. Albania abstained in 2012]". Author's translation, *Top Channel*, 22 December 2012. Accessed 12 May 2018, <http://top-channel.tv/2017/12/22/basha-vota-kunder-shba-gabim-shqiperia-abstenoi-ne-2012/>.
- Beaumont, Peter. "Fethullah Gülen: who is the man Turkey's president blames for coup attempt?", *The Guardian*, 16 July 2016. Accessed 13 March 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/16/fethullah-gulen-who-is-the-man-blamed-by-turkeys-president-for-coup-attempt>.
- Bechev, Dimitar. "Erdogan in the Balkans: A neo-Ottoman quest?", *AlJazeera*, 11 October 2017. Accessed 15 January 2018, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/erdogan-balkans-neo-ottoman-quest-171011094904064.html>.
- Bego, Ingrid. "Why are the Western Balkans in crisis? These are the three primary tensions", *The Washington Post*, 26 June 2017. Accessed 10 October 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/06/26/why-are-the-western-balkans-in-crisis-these-are-the-three-primary-tensions/?utm_term=.a52a7f984eb5.
- Bellos, David. "On Translating Ismail Kadare". *TRANSLATION REVIEW*, vol. 1, no. 76, 21 August 2012, 17-22.
- Ben-Meir, Alon and Arbana Xharra. "Albania Must Choose Between the EU and Turkey", *Alon Ben-Meir online website*, 2 May 2018. Accessed 3 May 2018, <http://alonben-meir.com/writing/albania-must-choose-eu-turkey/>.

- "Berisha kunder bashkimit Shqiperi – Kosove [Berisha against the unification of Albania with Kosovo]". Author's translation, *24 Ore*, 16 December 2011. Accessed 3 August 2012, <http://24-ore.com/index.php/kronika/qeveritare/8475-berisha-kunder-bashkimit-shqiperi-kosove.html>.
- "Berisha: US role in Israel-Palestine, decisive". *Top Channel*, 3 December 2012. Accessed 15 February 2015, <http://top-channel.tv/english/artikull.php?id=7722>.
- Beshku, Klodiana. "The Albanian relationship with Greece and Turkey: Perceptions and Realities in the framework of the Foreign Policy Partnership", *Working Paper*, February 2015. Accessed 26 July 2018, https://www.academia.edu/17005495/The_Albanian_relationship_with_Greece_and_Turkey._Perceptions_and_Realities_in_the_framework_of_the_Foreign_Policy_Partnership?auto=download.
- Biberaj, Elez. *Albania and China: A Study of an Unequal Alliance*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1986.
- . *Albania: A Socialist Maverick*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1990.
- Bieber, Florian. "Muslim identity in the Balkans before the establishment of nation states". *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, vol. 28, no. 1, 2000, 13-28.
- Bilmez, Bülent, *We, the People: Politics of National Peculiarity in Southeastern Europe*. Edited by Diana Mishkova, "Shemseddin Sami Frashëri (1850-1904): Contributing to the Construction of Albanian and Turkish Identities": Centre European University Press, 2013.
- Binder, David. "Rivalry Aside, 6 Balkan Lands Meet and Agree", *The New York Times*, 6 March 1988. Accessed 14 April 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/1988/03/06/world/rivalry-aside-6-balkan-lands-meet-and-agree.html>.
- . "Greater albania?", *Washington Times*, 17 February 1999. Accessed 17 May 2012, <http://0-proquest-umi-com-alpha2-latrobe-edu-au/pqdlink-?did=39024982-&Fmt=3-&clientId=20828-&RQT=309-&VName=PQD>.
- Birge, John K. *The Bektashi order of dervishes*. London: Luzac Oriental, 1937; reprint, 1994.
- Bléjer, Mario I., Mauro Mecagni, Ratna Sahay, Richard Hildes, Barry Johnston, Pirooska Nagy, and Roy Pepper. "Albania: from isolation towards reform". *Occasional paper (International Monetary Fund)*, 1992.
- Blumi, Isa. "The role of education in the formation of Albanian identity and its myths". In *Albanian Identities: Myth and History* edited by Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers and Bernd Jürgen Fischer, 49-59. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002.

- Bogdani, Mirela and John Loughlin. *Albania and the European Union: The Tumultuous Journey Towards Integration and Accession*. London, New York: I.B. Tauris , Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- Brown, James. "The Turkish Imbroglia: Its Kurds". *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science: Small Wars*, vol. 541, September, 1995, 116-29.
- Bufli, Gjorgji. "Interlinguistic phenomena in Albanian Turkisms". *Rivista Internazionale di Tecnica della Traduzione (International Journal of Translation)*, no. 15, 2013, 29-43.
- "Building the pipeline in Albania". *Trans Adriatic Pipeline*. Accessed 27 January 2016, <http://www.tap-ag.com/the-pipeline/building-the-pipeline/in-albania>.
- Bulut, Mehmet and Mesut Idriz. *Turkish Albanian Macedonian Relations: Past, Present and Future*. Ankara: Adam-Actor, 2012.
- Butler, Daren. "Recep Tayyip Erdogan threatens to say 'goodbye' to the EU unless they move Turkey's accession forward", *Independent*, 3 May 2017. Accessed 2 May 2018, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/recep-tayyip-erdogan-turkey-joining-eu-european-union-member-bloc-accession-talks-ankara-a7714691.html>.
- Byron, Janet. *Selection among alternates in language standartization: The case of Albanian*. Netherlands: Mouton &Co, 1976.
- Bytyci, Fatos. "Kosovo centre-right coalition on course to win parliamentary vote", *Reuters*, 11 June 2017. Accessed 28 May 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-kosovo-elections/kosovo-centre-right-coalition-on-course-to-win-parliamentary-vote-idUSKBN1910ZO>.
- Caliceti, Giuseppe. *Italiani per esempio: L'Italia vista dai bambini immigrati [Italians for example: the Italy viewed from immigrant's children]*. Milano, Bergamo: Giangiacomo Feltrinelli Editore Milano, 2010.
- Cashmore, Ellis. "Ethnicity". In *Encyclopedia of Race and Ethnic Studies*. London: Routledge, 2003.
- Clayer, Nathalie. "The Bektashi Institutions in Southeastern Europe: Alternative Muslim Official Structures and their Limits". *Die Welt des Islam*, no. 52, 2012, 183-203.
- Cohen, Philip J. "Ending the war and securing peace in former Yugoslavia". In *Genocide after emotion: The postemotional Balkan War*, edited by Stjepan Mestrovic. New York: Routledge, 2013.
- Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement*. United Nations Security Council, document number: S/2007/168/Add.1, 26 March 2007.
- Connor, Walker. "When is a Nation". *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 13, no. 1, 1990, 92-103.
- . *Ethno Nationalism: The Quest of Understanding*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994.

- Corbin, Juliet and Anselm Strauss. *Basics of qualitative research*. Vol. 15. Newbury Park, CA Sage, 1990.
- Cornell, Stephen and Douglas Hartmann. *Ethnicity and Race: Making Identities in a Changing World, Sociology for a New Century*, 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, California: Pine Forge Press, an Imprint of Sage Publication, 2007.
- Cornell, Svante E. "Erdogan's speech at Turkish electorate June 2011 in 'Changes in Turkey: What Drives Turkish Foreign Policy?'" , *Middle East Forum*, 1 January 2012. Accessed 12 May 2018, <https://www.meforum.org/articles/2011/what-drives-turkish-foreign-policy>.
- . "Changes in Turkey: What Drives Turkish Foreign Policy?". *MIDDLE EAST QUARTERLY*, Winter 2012, published in *Hürriyet* 13 June 2011, 13-24.
- Cox, Robert W., Harold K. Jacobson, and Gerard Curzon. *The anatomy of influence : decision making in international organization*. New Haven Yale University Press, 1973.
- Crone, Patricia. *Pre-industrial Societies: Anatomy of the Pre-modern World*. Oxford: One World Publication, 2003.
- "Cyprus: New hope after 45 years on the Security Council agenda". *Security Council Report: Special Research Report*, no. 3, 4 September 2008, 1-24.
- "Daçiç argëton Erdoganin me këngën e Osman Agës [Dacic entertains Erdogan with the song of Osman aga]". Author's translation, *Top Channel*, 11 October 2017. Accessed 23 October 2017, <http://top-channel.tv/2017/10/11/dacic-argeton-erdoganin-me-kengen-e-osman-ages-video/>.
- Dahl, Robert A. *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City*, second edition. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.
- Damjanovic, Viktor and John Chapman. "Two Years In, Kosovo Albanians More Sober on Independence", *Gallup*, 16 February 2010. Accessed 20 September 2018, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/125978/two-years-kosovo-albanianssober-independence.aspx>.
- Danaj, Koço. "Shqipëria natyrale do të bëhet [The natural Albania will be done]", author's translation, *Shqiperianatyrale.com*, 2 Shkurt 2012. Interview of Bashkim Metalia, published on *The Albanian*, Londer, 1 shkurt 2012. Accessed 6 July 2015, http://shqiperianatyrale.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=177:koco-danaj-shqipëria-natyrale-do-te-behet&catid=34:analiza&Itemid=29
- Davutoğlu, Ahmet. "Turkey's Zero-Problems Foreign Policy", *Foreign Policy*, 20 May 2010. Accessed 11 November 2015, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2010/05/20/turkeys-zero-problems-foreign-policy/>.

- Deliso, Christopher. *The Coming Balkan Caliphate: The Threat of Radical Islam to Europe and the West*. Westport, Connecticut and London: Praeger Security International, 2007.
- Demetriou, Olga. *Capricious Borders: Minority, Population, and Counter-Conduct Between Greece and Turkey*. United States: Berghahnbooks, 2013.
- Denzin, Norman K. and Yvonna S. Lincoln. *Handbook of Qualitative Research* Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications, 2005.
- Derjaj, Adriatik. "Mendimi i brendshëm dhe i jashtëm në gjuhë: Mbështetur në frazeologjizmat orientale [Internal and external thoughts regarding language: Based on Oriental phraseologies]". Tirana University, 2012.
- Destani, Bejtullah and Robert Elsie, eds. *The Balkan wars: British Consular Reports from Macedonia in the Final Years of the Ottoman Empire*. London&New York: I.B.Tauris in association with the Centre for Albanian Studies, 2014.
- Dizdari, Tahir N. *Fjalor i orientalizmave në gjuhën Shqipe [Dictionary of orientalism phrases in the Albanian language]*. Tiranë: AIITC, 2005.
- Doja, Albert. "A Political History of Bektashism in Albania". *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2006, 83-107.
- . "The Politics of Religion in the Reconstruction of Identities: The Albanian Situation". *Critique of Anthropology*, vol. 20, no. 4, December 2000, 421-38.
- "Drejtori i Tokave: Problemi zgjidheni me Kanun [Land's director: You must resolve the issue with kanun]". Author's translation, *Top Channel*, 8 March 2017. Accessed 15 March 2017, <http://m.top-channel.tv/lajme/artikull.php?id=350023&kryesore>.
- Drizari, Nelo. *Scanderbeg; His Life, Correspondence, Orations, Victories, and Philosophy*. The University of Michigan and National Press, 2008.
- Duijzings, Ger. *Religion and the Politics of Identity in Kosovo*. London: Hurst, 2000.
- . "Religion and the politics of 'Albanianism': Naim Frasheri's bektashi writings". In *Albanian Identities: Myth and History* edited by Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers and Bernd Jurgens Fischer, 60-9. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002.
- Durham, Mary Edith. *High Albania*. new ed. Boston: Beacon, [1909], 1985.
- . "Albania and Powers". *Contemporary Review*, vol., no. 119, July/December 1919.
- Durkheim, Emile. *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. New York: First published in 1912. Translated by Karen E. Field. This publication: The Free Press, 1995.
- "Eksperti amerikan: Rama të mos kërcëjë nëpër dasmat e Ankarasë, lidhja me Erdogan nuk i shërben Shqipërisë [The American expert: Rama should not dance in Ankara's weddings, Albania does not benefit from the relationship with Erdogan]". Author's

- translation, *Panorama*, 28 April 2018. David Phillips interviewed by The Voice of America. Accessed 30 April 2018, <http://www.panorama.com.al/eksperti-amerikan-rama-te-mos-kerceje-neper-dasmat-e-ankarase-lidhja-me-erdogan-nuk-i-sherben-shqiperise/>.
- Eller, Jack David. *From Culture to Ethnicity to Conflict: An Anthropological Perspective on International Ethnic Conflict*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999.
- Elsie, Robert. *Historical Dictionary of Albania*. 2. Lanham, Toronto, Plymouth, UK: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2010.
- . "1945 Final Report of the German Wehrmacht in Albania", *Texts and documents of Albanian history*, Robert Elsie Website. Accessed 30 October 2018, http://www.albanianhistory.net/1945_German-Wehrmacht/index.html.
- . "The London Conference and the Albanian Question (1912-1914). The Dispatches of Sir Edward Grey". Edited by Bejtullah Destani and Robert Elsie, *Albanian Studies*, vol. 27, December 2016.
- "Erdogan: 'I wish Edi Rama good luck with his projects'". *Top Channel*, 19 June 2017. Accessed 3 May 2018, <http://top-channel.tv/english/erdogan-i-wish-edi-rama-good-luck-with-his-projects/>.
- "Erdogan: Turqia bën edhe pa BE-në [Erdogan: Turkey can do without EU]". Author's translation, *Top Channel*, 12 July 2017. Accessed 2 May 2018, <http://m.top-channel.tv/lajme/artikull.php?id=359400&homepage>.
- Erickson, Edward J. "Turkey as regional hegemon - 2014: strategic implications for the United States". *Turkish Studies*, vol. 5, no. 3, 2004, 25-45.
- Eriksen, Thomas Hylland. "Ethnicity versus Nationalism". *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 28, no. 3, August, 1991, 263-78.
- "European Union, Trade in goods with Albania". *European Commission: Directorate - General for Trade*, 2018. Accessed 4 September 2018, http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc_113342.pdf.
- Falaschi, Renzo. "Ismail Qemal Bey Vlora and the making of Albania in 1912". In *Perspectives on Albania*, edited by T. Winnifirth. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992.
- "Femra dhe Meshkuj në Shqipëri 2016 [Women and Men in Albania 2016]". *INSTAT - Albanian Republic, Statistics Institute* report, 2016.
- Fischer, Bernd Jürgen. *King Zog and the Struggle for Stability in Albania*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1984.
- Fishman, Joshua. "Social theory and ethnography: neglected perspective of language and ethnicity in Eastern Europe". In *Ethnic Diversity and Conflict in Eastern Europe*, edited by Peter Sugar, 69-99. Santa Barbara: CA: ABC-Clio, 1980.

- Foster, Peter. "Behind the murky world of Albanian blood feuds", *The Telegraph*, 16 April 2016. Accessed 16 November 2017, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/04/16/behind-the-murky-world-of-albanian-blood-feuds/>.
- Fox, Leonard. *Kanuni i Lekë Dukagjinit [The Kanun of Lekë Dukagjini]*, Albanian text collected and arranged by Shtjefën Gjeçov. New York: Gjonlekaj, 1989.
- Frashëri, Kristo. "Identiteti i shqiptarëve dhe të metat e debatit Qose-Kadare [Albanian identity and shortcomings of Qosja-Kadare debate]", author's translation, *Alba Soul*, 19 June 2015. Accessed 25 October 2018, <http://www.albasoul.com/vjeter/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=1970>.
- Frashëri, Naim. *Historia e Skënderbeut [The History of Skenderbeg]*, author's translation. Tiranë: Instituti i Historisë dhe Gjuhësisë, 1967.
- Frashëri, Sami. *Shqipëria: ç'ka qenë, ç'është dhe ç'do të bëhetë? [Albania: what it was, what it is and what it will become]*. Tirana: Mesonjetorja e pare, 1999.
- "From ally to scapegoat: Fethullah Gulen, the man behind the myth". *Deutsche Welle*, 6 April 2018. Accessed 16 September 2018, <https://www.dw.com/en/from-ally-to-scapegoat-fethullah-gulen-the-man-behind-the-myth/a-37055485>.
- Gall, Carlotta and Andrew Higgins. "Turkey Signs Russian Missile Deal, Pivoting From NATO", *The New York Times*, 12 September 2017. Accessed 23 October 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/12/world/europe/turkey-russia-missile-deal.html>.
- Garbuz, Mustafa. *The long winter: Turkish politics after the corruption scandal*. Rethink Paper 15: Institute Washington DC, May 2014.
- Gawrych, George W. "Tolerant Dimensions of Cultural Pluralism in the Ottoman Empire: The Albanian Community, 1800-1912". *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 15, no. 4, Novembre 1983, 519-36.
- Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. London: Fontana, 1973.
- Gellner, Ernest. *Nations and Nationalism*. Blackwell: Oxford, 1983.
- . *Nationalism*. London: Phoenix, 1997.
- Gingeras, Ryan. *Fall of the Sultanate: the Great War and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1922*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Gjoleka, Meri. "The Albanian language in the face of globalization Challenges: The issue of borrowings". *European Scientific Journal*, vol. 11, no. 25, September 2015, 146-64.
- "Goditje tjetër e medieve serbe: Turqia armatos shqiptarët për luftë, Erdogan i jep Thaçit aeroplanë! [Another blow from Serbian media: Turkey is arming Albanians for war,

- Erdogan gives Thaçi military airplanes!"]. Author's translation, *Telegrafi.com*, 10 February 2017. Accessed 17 February 2018, <http://telegrafi.com/goditje-tjeter-e-medieve-serbe-turqia-armatos-shqiptaret-per-lufte-erdogan-jep-thacit-aeroplane/>.
- Gorani, Dukagjin. *Orientalist Ethnonationalism: From Irredentism to Independentism Discourse analysis of the Albanian ethnonationalist narrative about the National Rebirth (1870-1930) and Kosovo Independence (1980-2000)*. School of Journalism, Cardiff University, unpublished PhD thesis, December 2011.
- Gow, James. *Defending the West*. Cambridge: Polity, 2005.
- Graf, Tobias P. *The Sultan's Renegades: Christian-European Converts to Islam and the Making of the Ottoman Elite, 1575-1610*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Grey, Edward. *Memoires*. Paris: Payot, 1927.
- Griffith, William E. *Albania and the Sino-Soviet Rift*. Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1963.
- Hall, Derek. *Albania and the Albanians*. London: Pinter Reference, 1994.
- Hall, Richard C. *The Balkan Wars 1912–1913: Prelude to the First World War*. London&New York: Routledge, 2000.
- Hamm, Harry. *Albania-China's Beachhead in Europe*. New York: Frederick A Praeger, 1963.
- Hastings, Adrian. *The Constraction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion, and Nationalism*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Heper, Metin, "Turkey 'between East and West', Working Paper AY0405-16", Institute of European Studies, University of California Berkeley, 16 May 2004.
- "Hiqet flamuri turk në Prizren. Reagon Ministria e Jashtme e Kosovës [Turkish flag removed in Prizren. Reacts Kosovar foreign Affairs Ministry]". Author's translation, *Koha Jone*, 17 February 2017. Accessed 12 May 2018, <http://www.kohajone.com/2017/02/17/hiqet-flamuri-turk-ne-prizren-reagon-ministria-e-jashtme-e-kosoves/>.
- "Historiani turk fyen Skënderbeun, reagime të forta kundër tij [Turkish Historian offends Skenderbeg, strong reactions against him]". Author's translation, *Top Channel*, 5 July 2016. Accessed 8 July 2016, <http://m.top-channel.tv/lajme/artikull.php?id=330492&homepage>.
- Hobsbawm, Eric. *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Hodgkinson, Harry. *Scanderbeg*. edited by Bejtullah Destani and Westrow Cooper. London and New York: I.B.Taurus in association with The Centre for Albanian Studies, 2004, reprinted 2017.

- . *Scanderbeg*. Edited by Bejtullah D. Destani and Westrow Cooper: Centre for Albanian Studies, 1999.
- Hunter, Foyd. *Community Power Structures*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1953.
- Huntington, Samuel P. "The clash of civilizations?". *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 72, no. 3, Summer 1993, 22-49.
- Ibrahimi, Zekerija. "Bregovici dhe Tatlisasi [The Bregovic and Tatlisasi]", author's translation, *Shekulli*, 20 April 2006. Accessed 3 November 2010, <http://www.shekulli.com.al/index.php?page=shownews&newsID=94100>.
- İnalçik, Halil. "Turkey between Europe and Middle East". *PERCEPTIONS: JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS*, vol. 3, no. 1, March - May 1998.
- "Intelktualët, petition kundër rishikimit të historisë nga autoritetet turke [Scholars, petition against the review of history by Turkish authorities]". Author's translation, *Gazeta Shqip*, 27 Mars 2013. Accessed 13 May 2018, <http://gazeta-shqip.com/lajme/2013/03/27/intelektualet-peticion-kunder-rishikimit-te-historise-nga-autoritetet-turke/>.
- Isajiw, Wsevolod W. *Definition and Dimensions of Ethnicity: a theoretical framework*. Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, Challenges of Measuring an Ethnic World: Science, politics and reality: Proceedings of the Joint Canada-United States Conference on the Measurement of Ethnicity Joint Canada-United States Conference on the Measurement of Ethnicity, 1-3 April 1992.
- Jacques, Edwin E. *The Albanians: An Ethnic History from Prehistoric Times to the Present*. Vol. 1. Jefferson, North Carolina and London: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2009.
- Jarvis, Chris. "The Rise and Fall of the Pyramid Schemes in Albania", *International Monetary Fund*, 1999. Accessed 17 May 2018, <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/1999/wp9998.pdf>.
- Jelavich, Barbara. *The Ottoman Empire, the Great Powers, and the Straits Question: 1870-1887*. Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1973.
- Jelavich, Charles and Barbara. "The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920". In *A History of East Central Europe*, edited by Peter F. Sugar and Donald W. Treadgold. Vol VIII. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1977.
- Jenkins, Richard. *Rethinking Ethnicity: Arguments and explorations*. London: SAGE publications, 2003.
- Jing, Ke. *The four others in I. Kadare's works : a study of the Albanian national identity*. Unpublished PhD. ThinkIR: The University of Louisville's Institutional Repository, Electronic Theses and Dissertations, 2013.

- Joseph S Nye, Jr. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World politics*. New York: Public Affairs, 2004.
- . "Soft Power". *Foreign Policy*, vol. Twentieth Anniversary no. 80, Autumn, 1990, 153-71.
- Judah, Tim. "Greater albania?". *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, vol. 43, no. 2, 2001, 7-18.
- Kadare, Ismail. *Kombi Shqipëtar në prag të mijëvjeçarit të tretë [The Albanian Nation at the Door of the Third Millennium]*, author's translation. Tirana: Onufri, 1998.
- . *Poshtërimi në Ballkan [Humiliation in the Balkans]*, author's translation. Tirana: Onufri, 2004.
- . *Identiteti evropian i shqiptarëve [The European identity of the Albanians]*, author's translation. Tirana: Onufri, 2006.
- . *The Siege*. Canada: Doubleday, 2010.
- . *Mosmarrëveshja: Mbi raportet e Shqipërisë me vetveten [Disagreement: On relations of Albania with itself]*, author's translation. Tirana: Onufri, 2011.
- . *Bisedë për brilantët në pasditen e dhjetorit [Conversation about brilliants on a December afternoon]*, author's translation. Tirana: Onufri, 2013.
- . "Relacioni sekret [Secret relation]", author's translation. In *Bisedë për brilantët në pasditen e dhjetorit [Conversation for brilliants on a December afternoon]*. Tirana: Onufri, 2013.
- Kajana, Marsela and Juliana Godeni. "Turkish loanwords in Albanian language". *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences*, no. 136, 2014, 94-7.
- Kapferer, Bruce. *Legends of People, Myths of State: Violence, Intolerance and Political Culture in Sri Lanka and Australia*. Washington DC and London: Smithsonian Institution, 1988.
- Karalis, Vrasidas. "Greek Christianity after 1453". In *The blackwell companion to Eastern Christianity*, edited by Ken Parry. Malden and Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.
- Kaser, Karl. "Serfdom in Eastern Europe". In *Household and Family in the Balkans: Two decades of historical family research at University of Graz*, edited by Karl Kaser. Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2012.
- Kilford, Chris. "Turkey's international reputation in free-fall", *Today's Zaman*, 1 February 2016. Accessed 5 February 2016, http://mobile.todayszaman.com/op-ed/turkeys-international-reputation-in-free-fall_411147.html.

- Klein, Maren. "Managing diversity: is Australia bucking the post-multiculturalist trend or on its way to embrace interculturalism?". *Australia and New Zealand Journal of European Studies*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2016, 64-79.
- Kola, Paulin. *The Search for Greater Albania* London: C.Hurst & Co. Ltd, 2003.
- "Kosovo fears for US ties under Trump". *Deutsche Welle*, 2017. Accessed 7 February 2017, <http://www.dw.com/en/kosovo-fears-for-us-ties-under-trump/a-37186938>.
- "Kosovo under Turkish gov't pressure detains 5 Turkish educators over alleged links to Gülen movement". *Stocholm center for freedom*, 29 March 2018. Accessed 1 May 2018, <https://stockholmcf.org/kosovo-under-turkish-govt-pressure-detains-5-turkish-educators-over-alleged-links-to-gulen-movement/>.
- Krauthamer, Ky. "In Albania, Madrasas Even the Secular Love". Last modified 19 October 2012. Accessed Date Accessed. <http://www.tol.org/client/article/23425-albania-islam-turkey-education.html>.
- Kressing, Frank. "A Preliminary Account of Research Regarding the Albanian Bektashis: Myths and Unresolved Questions". In *Albania, A Country in Transition: Aspects of Changing Identities in a South-East European Country*, edited by F. Kressing and K. Kaser, 65-91. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2002.
- Kucukgocmen, Ali. "Erdogan's AKP says to ally with nationalists for 2019 elections", *Reuters*, 22 February 2018. Accessed 6 October 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-election-regulation/erdogans-akp-says-to-ally-with-nationalists-for-2019-elections-idUSKCN1G52DP>.
- Kushi, Odeta and Sidita Kushi. "The Paranoia over 'Greater Albania' Returns", *New Eastern Europe*, 21 January 2015. Accessed 3 August 2015, <http://www.neweasterneurope.eu/articles-and-commentary/1459-the-paranoia-over-greater-albania-returns>.
- Lafe, Emil. *Persizmat në kuadrin e orientalizmave të Fjalorit të gjuhës së sotme shqipe [Persian within Oriental components in the current Albanian distionary]*, author's translation. Perla, 1999.
- Lami, Blendi. "Geo-culture as a Turkish foreign policy tool for influence in Albania". *International Journal of Academic Research and Reflection*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2017.
- Larrabee, Stephen F. "Whither Albania?". *The World Today*, vol. 34, no. 2, 1978, 61-9.
- Licursi, Emiddio Pietro. "Empire of Nations: The Consolidation of Albanian and Turkish National Identities in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1878 – 1913". 2011, Unpublished thesis. Department of History, Columbia University.
- Limaj, Hajro M. *Midis Ankarasë dhe Tiranës: 1990-2000. Nga ditari i një atasheu ushtarak [Between Ankara and Tirana: 1990-2000. From the diary of a military attaché]*, author's translation. Tirana: Emal, 2012.

- "Lista e zezë e shkollave dhe bankave turke që Ergogan i kërkon Ramës të mbyllë [The black list of schools and banks that Erdogan requested Rama to close down]". Author's translation, *Tema on line*, 2 November 2016. Accessed 10 September 2018, <http://www.gazetatema.net/2016/11/02/lista-e-zeze-e-shkollave-dhe-bankave-turke-qe-erdogan-i-kerkon-rames-ti-mbylle/>.
- Logoreci, Anton. *The Albanians : Europe's forgotten survivors*. London: Gollancz, 1977.
- Malcolm, Noel. *Kosovo: A Short History*. London: Harper Perennial/HarperCollins, 1999.
- . "Myths of Albanian National Identity". In *Albanian Identities: Myth and History*, edited by Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers and Bernd J Fischer. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002.
- Mandalinos, John. *Civilization and the Human Subject*. Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999.
- Mango, Andrew. *The Turks Today*. Great Britain: John Murray, 2004.
- "Marrëveshjet dypalëshe me të gjitha vendet [Bilateral relations with all countries]". Author's translation, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania*. Accessed 12 May 2018, http://www.punetegashtme.gov.al/files/userfiles/Marreveshjet_Dypaleshe_me_te_gjitha_vendet.pdf.
- Marshall, Catherine and Gretchen B. Rossman. *Designing qualitative research*. 5th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2011.
- Mascitelli, Bruno and Chiara De Lazzari. "Interculturalism, multiculturalism and Italianess: the case of Italy". *Australia and New Zealand Journal of European Studies*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2016, 49-63.
- McLaughlin, Daniel. "Russia accuses West of pushing pro-Albanian agenda in Macedonia", *Irish Times*, 2 March 2017. Accessed 15 April 2017, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/world/us/russia-accuses-west-of-pushing-pro-albanian-agenda-in-macedonia-1.2995811>.
- McNabb, David E. *Research approaches for political science: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. 2 ed. London and New York: Routledge, 2015.
- Mehmeti, Leandrit I. "Kosovar Identity: Challenging Albanian National Identity". *Australia and New Zealand Journal of European Studies*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2017, 16-25.
- Mejdini, Fatjona. "Turqia mbetet në krye të destinacioneve të preferuara të shqiptarëve për pushime [Turkey remains the favourite top turistic destination for Albanians]", author's translation, 3 July 2017. Accessed 27 August 2018, <https://www.reporter.al/turqia-mbetet-ne-krye-te-destinacioneve-te-preferuara-te-shqiptareve-per-pushime/>.

- . "Shqipëria refuzon Organizatën Islamike, jo pjesë e aktivitetit në Teheran [Albania Refuses the Islamic Organisation, no part of its activity in Teheran]", author's translation, *Shqip*, 17 February 2014. Accessed 14 February 2015, <http://gazeta-shqip.com/lajme/2014/02/17/shqiperia-refuzon-organizaten-islamike-jo-pjese-e-aktivitetit-ne-teheran/>.
- Mesi, Herion. "Turqia, marrëveshje të fshehtë me Shqipërinë për modernizimin e FA-ve [Secret agreement between Turkey and Albania to modernise military forces]", author's translation, *Gazeta Shqip*, 17 Shkurt 2014. Accessed 10 May 2018, <http://gazeta-shqip.com/lajme/2014/02/17/turqia-marreveshje-te-fshehte-shqiperine-per-modernizimin-e-fa-ve/>.
- "Meta letter to Trump: Regret for Albania's vote in the UN". *Albanian Daily News*, 22 December 2017. Accessed 13 May 2018, <http://www.albaniannews.com/index.php?idm=17453&mod=2>.
- Mills, C. Wright. *The Power Elite*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1956.
- Misha, Glenny. *The Balkans 1804-1999: Nationalism, War, and the Great Powers*. London: Granta Books, 1999.
- Mlloja, Genc. "Relations between Turkey and Albania are at an excellent level. An interview with the Turkish Ambassador to Albania, Hidayet Bayraktar", *Albanian Daily News*, 29 October 2015. Accessed 12 May 2018, <http://www.albaniannews.com/index.php?idm=3244&mod=2>.
- Moisiu, Alfred. "Toleranca ndërfetare në traditën e popullit shqiptar [The tolerance of Albanian Inter-religious tradition], lecture at Oxford Forum", author's translation, *Koha Jone*, 10 November 2005. Accessed 11 November 2011, <http://www.kohajone.com/lexo.php?id=42679>.
- Morgan, Carrie Ann. "Language Ideologies in TirOna". Unpublished thesis: Master of Arts, Graduate School of the Ohio State University, 2015.
- Morgan, Peter. *The Three Worlds of Ismail Kadare*. Unpublished manuscript authorised by Professor Morgan, 20 October 2018.
- . *Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990*. Oxon and NY: Modern Humanities Research Association and Routledge, 2010.
- . *'Strange commerce of memory and forgetting': Albania, Kosovo and Europe in Ismail Kadare's File on H....* Unpublished manuscript authorised by Professor Morgan, 2015.
- Munteanu, Daniela and Ciro Sarno. "Nord Stream 2 and Russia-Turkey Pipeline: Implications for European Energy Security". University of Bologna, March 2016.
- Murati, Violeta. "100 intelektualë dhe Kadare kundër: Jo politikë turke në historinë tonë! [100 intellectuals and Kadare against: No Turkish politics in our history!]", author's translation, *Standard*, 28 Mars 2013. Accessed 10 May 2018,

<http://www.standard.al/2013/03/28/100-intelektuale-dhe-kadare-kunder-jo-politike-turke-ne-historine-tone/>.

Nano, Fatos. "Nuk u Globalizua Terrorizmi, por Lufta kunder tij [No globalisation of terrorism, but the war against it]", author's translation, *Shekulli Online*, 12 September 2002. Accessed 11 September 2011,

<http://www.shekulli.com.al/shekulli/?s=Nano%3A+Nuk+u+Globalizua+Terrorizmi%2C+por+Lufta+kunder+tij>.

Nano, Mustafa. "Skënderbeu ka qenë më shumë i krishterë se shqiptar, nënën e kishte sllave [Skenderbeg was more Christian than Albanian and his mother was Sllav]", author's translation, *Telegrafi.com*, 14 July 2017. Accessed 18 July 2017,

<http://telegrafi.com/skenderbeu-ka-qene-shume-krishtere-se-shqiptar-nenen-e-kishte-sllave/>.

———. "Kultura Perëndimore dhe Qytetërimi Lindor i Shqiptarëve [The Western Culture and Albania's Oriental Civilization]", author's translation, *Shqip*, 22 May 2006.

Accessed 17 July 2015, <http://albanur.eu/showthread.php?t=282>.

"Në Serbi: Erdogani tani është me ne, u prish me Kosovën dhe Shqipërinë [In Serbia: Erdogan is now with us, the relationship with Kosovo and Albania is damaged]".

Author's translation, *Gazeta Metro*, 12 October 2017. Accessed 10 May 2018, <http://gazetametro.net/ne-serbi-erdogani-tani-eshte-me-ne-u-prish-me-kosoven-dhe-shqiperine/>.

"Nëndetsja turke 'TCG I. INONU'S 360', vizitë portuale 4-ditore në Durrës [Turkish submarine 'TCG I. INONU'S 360', 4 days visit to Durrës' port]". Author's translation, *Durrës Port Authority*, 30 March 2017. Accessed 21 April 2017,

www.apdurrës.com.al.

Niebuhr, Reinhold. *Does civilization need religion? A study in the social resources and limitations on religion in modern life*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock. Previously published by Macmillan, 1927.

"Nje deklaratë e fortë e Edi Rames: Shqipëria e Kosova do të bashkohen në mënyrë klasike, edhe pa BE-në. Reagon Vucic [A strong statement by Edi Rama: Albania and Kosovo will unite in a classical way, even out of EU. Reacts Vučić]". Author's translation, *Gazeta Tema*, 7 April 2015. Accessed 1 October 2015,

<http://www.gazetatema.net/web/2015/04/07/nje-deklaratë-e-fortë-e-edi-rames-shqipëria-e-kosova-mund-të-bashkohen-pavaresisht-be-se-reagon-vucic/>.

Norris, Harry Thirwall. *Islam in the Balkans: Religion and Society between Europe and the Arab World*. London: Hurst & Company, 1993.

———. *Popular Sufism in Eastern Europe: Sufi brotherhoods and the dialogue with Christianity and 'Heterodoxy'*. New York and Canada: Routledge, 2006.

Norton, John. "The Bektashi in the Balkans". In *Religious Quest and National Identity in the Balkans*, edited by C. Hawkesworth, M. Heppell, and H.T. Norris, 168-200. New York: Palgrave, 2001.

- Özel, Soli. "Turkey Faces West". *The Wilson Quarterly*, vol. 31, no. 1, Winter 2007, 18-25.
- Pajaziti, Ali. "Turk and Turkey perception at Albanians in the beginning of 21st century", *Past, Present and Future of Turkish-Albanian-Macedonian Relations*, 27-29 May 2011, International Symposium, Skopje, Macedonia-Prishtinë, Kosovo. Ankara Center For Thought And Research and International Balkan University.
- Parllaku, Azem. "Shqipëria 'rreshqitje e butë' poshtë sjetullës së Turqisë [Albania 'soft slide' under the thumb of Turkey]", author's translation, *Focus News*, 1 December 2016. Accessed 10 May 2018, <http://fjalajone.com/shqiperia-rreshqitje-e-bute-poshte-sjetulles-se-turqise/>.
- Patton, Michael Quinn. *Quality in qualitative research: Methodological principles and recent developments*. Chicago: Invited address to Division J of the American Educational Research Association 1985.
- Payton, Jr James R. "Ottoman Millet, Religious Nationalism, and Civil Society: Focus on Kosovo". *Religion in Eastern Europe*, vol. XXVI, no. 1, February 2006, 11-23.
- Pearson, Owen. *Albania and King Zog: Independence, Republic and Monarchy, 1908-1939*. Vol. I, III vols. *Albania in the Twentieth Century: A History*. London: The Centre for Albanian Studies in Association with I. B. Tauris, 2004.
- . *Albania in Occupation and War: From Fascism to Communism, 1940-1945*. Vol. II, III vols. *Albania in the Twentieth Century: A History*. London: The Centre for Albanian Studies in Association with I. B. Tauris, 2005.
- . *Albania as Dictatorship and Democracy, From Isolation to Kosovo War 1946-1998*. Vol. III, III vols. *Albania in the Twentieth Century: A History*. London: The Centre for Albanian Studies in Association with I. B. Tauris, 2006.
- "Pelegrinazhi në Malin e Tomorrit, Meta mes besimtarëve bektashinj [Pilgrimage at Tomorri mountain, Meta between Bektashi believers]". Author's translation, *Top Channel*, 22 August 2017. Accessed 20 September 2018, <http://top-channel.tv/lajme/artikull.php?id=362072>.
- Petersen, William. *Ethnicity Counts*. New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 2012.
- Petrović, Žarko and Dušan Reljić. "Turkish Interests and Involvement in the Western Balkans: A Score-Card". *Insight Turkey*, vol. 13, no. 3, 2011, 159-72.
- Pettifer, James. "Greater Albania". *The World Today*, vol. 57, no. 7, 2001, 18-20.
- Pierre, van den Berghe. "Race and ethnicity: a sociological perspective". *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 1, no. 4, 1978, 401-11.
- Pires, Guilherme D. and John Stanton. *Ethnic Marketing: culturally sensitive theory and practice*. New York: Routledge, 2015.

- Plasari, Aurel. "An interview with Aurel Plasari, 'Debati për identitetin? Kadare ka nonsens, Qosja ngatërron Stambollin me Jeruzalemin' [Arguing about identity? Kadare has no sense, Qose is mixing up Istanbul with Jerusalem]", author's translation, *Shekulli*, 2012. Accessed 26 August 2012, <http://shekulli.com.al/web/p.php?id=2847&kat=104>.
- "PM Erdogan: Turkey is Kosovo and Kosovo is Turkey". *World Bulletin*, 24 October 2013. Accessed 24 August 2018, <http://www.worldbulletin.net/haber/121375/pm-erdogan-turkey-is-kosovo-and-kosovo-is-turkey>.
- "Poverty in the Balkans". *European Western Balkans*, 24 January 2017. Accessed 23 March 2017, <http://europeanwesternbalkans.com>.
- Psilos, Christophoros. "Albanian Nationalism and Unionist Ottomanization 1908 to 1912". *Mediterranean Quarterly*, vol. 17, no. 3, Summer 2006, 26-42.
- "Punonjësit e huaj në Shqipëri, Turqit mbajnë vendin e parë, kinezët të dytin [Foreign workers in Albania, Turks in the first place, Chinese second]". Author's translation, *Tema on line*, 1 September 2018. Accessed 2 September 2018, <http://www.gazetatema.net/2018/09/01/punonjesit-e-huaj-ne-shqiperi-turqit-mbajne-vendin-e-pare-kinezet-te-dytin/>.
- "Putin dhe Erdogan armiq të betuar? Marrëveshja e madhe e bashkëpunimit [Putin and Erdogan sworn enemies? The big friendship agreement]". Author's translation, *Panorama online*, 8 February 2017. Accessed 12 May 2018, <http://www.panorama.com.al/putin-dhe-erdogan-armiq-te-betuar-marreveshja-e-madhe-e-bashkepunimit/>.
- Qosja, Rexhep. "Idetë raciste të Ismail Kadaresë [The racist ideas of Ismail Kadare]", author's translation, *Shqip*, 3 May 2006. Accessed 12 August 2011.
- . "Premisa të gabuara [Wrong premises]", author's translation, *Takimi i Madh [The Great Meeting]*, 19 April 2006. Page created by AlbaNur for Dr. Rexhep Qosja. Accessed 5 May 2015, http://www.macedonianguide.com/rexhep_qosja/rexhep_qosja.html.
- . *Realiteti Shperfillur [Neglected Reality]* Tirana: Toena, 2006.
- Rabasa, Angel and F. Stephen Larrabee. *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*. Santa Monica, Arlington, Pittsburg: Rand Corporation, 2008.
- Reed, Stanley and Sebnem Arsu. "Russia Presses Ahead With Plan for Gas Pipeline to Turkey", *The New York Times*, 21 January 2015. Accessed 11 May 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/22/business/international/russia-presses-ahead-with-plan-for-gas-pipeline-to-turkey.html>.
- "Relations between Turkey and Albania". *Republic of Turkey: Ministry of foreign affairs*. Accessed 28 January 2016, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-albania.en.mfa>

- Renan, Ernest. "What is a Nation". In *Becoming National: A Reader*, edited by Geoff and Suny Eley, Ronald Grigor, 41-55. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Rexha, Blerina, "Should Kosovo Change its History Textbooks?", *Albanian and Kosovar Identity* conference held by The University of Sydney, 20 Janar 2012.
- . "Greater Albania – The next step for Kosovo?". The University of Sydney, 2015.
- . "The Influence of Pan-Slavic Ideologies on Kosovar Schooltexts: Implications for Diplomatic Relations with Turkey". *Australia and New Zeland Journal of European Studies*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2017, 26-42.
- Rexhebi, Baba. *Misticizma Islame dhe Bektashizma [Islamic mysticism and Bektashism]* New York: Waldon Press, 1970.
- "Rezultatet zyrtare, votat per cdo parti [Official results, votes for each party]". Author's translation, *Panorama on line*, 6 August 2013. Accessed 10 October 2015, <http://www.panorama.com.al/rezultatet-zyrtare-votat-per-cdo-parti/>.
- Rrapaj, Jonilda and Klevis Kolasi. "The Curious Case of Albanian Nationalism: the Crooked Line from a Scattered Array of Clans to a Nation-State". *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, vol. 44, 2013, 185 - 228.
- Rredhi, Gëzim. *Epika historike kushtuar Lidhjes Shqiptare të Prizrenit [Historical Epics dedicated to The Albanian Prizren League]*. Vol. II. Aktet, Gjirokaster: Universiteti 'Eqerem Çabej'.
- "Rreth nesh [About us]". Author's translation from the website, *Aleanca Kuq e Zi [Red and Black alliance]*, 12 October 2015. Accessed 12 October 2015, <http://www.aleanckuqezhi.al/rreth-nesh/>.
- Rrozhani, Arben. "Qeveria e Shqiperise ka firmosur per ndryshimin e historise : Osmanet jo pushtues por 'administratore miqesore' [Albanian government signed for changing the history: Ottomans not as invaders, but 'friendly administrators']", *24 Ore*, August 26, 2011. Accessed 6 October 2011, <http://24-ore.com/index.php/kronika/7464-qeveria-e-shqiperise-ka-firmosur-per-ndryshimin-e-historise-osmanet-jo-pushtues-por-administratore-miqesore.html>.
- Rustow, Dankwart A. *Turkey: America's Forgotten Ally*. New York: Council for Foreign Relations, 1987.
- "‘S’paskemi qenë të pushtuar, por dashnorë’, përgjigjja e gazetares shqiptare për Erdogan [You were not oppressors, but rather we were lovers, the answer of the Albanian media for Erdogan]". Author's translation, *Panorama on line*, 20 Jun 2017. Accessed 10 March 2018, <http://www.panorama.com.al/spaskemi-qene-te-pushtuar-por-dashnore-pergjigjja-e-gazetares-shqiptare-per-erdogan/>.
- Said, Edward W. *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*. New York & London: Penguin Books, 1995.

- . "Orientalism Reconsidered". *Cultural Critique*, no. 1, autumn 1985, 89-107.
- Saukko, Paula. *Doing Research in Cultural Studies: An introduction to classical and new methodological approaches*. London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2003.
- Sayari, Sabri. "Turkish foreign policy in the post-Cold War era: The challenges of multi-regionalism". *Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 54, no. 1, 169-82.
- Schmitt, Oliver Jens. *Skanderbeg: der neue Alexander auf dem Balkan*. Pustet, 2009.
- Schoon, Eric W. "The Paradox of Legitimacy: Resilience, Successes, and the Multiple Identities of the Kurdistan Worker's Party in Turkey". *Social Problems Advance Access*, May 4, 2015, 1-20.
- Schwandner-Sievers, Stephanie. "Albanians, Albanianism and the strategic subversion of stereotypes". *Slovene Anthropological Society*, vol. 14, no. 2, 2008, 47-64.
- Schwandner-Sievers, Stephanie and Bernd Jurgen Fischer. *Albanian Identities: Myth and History*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002.
- "Serbia set to get Russian fighter jets". *Boston Globe*, 13 February 2017. Accessed 12 March 2018, <https://www.bostonglobe.com/news/world/2017/02/12/serbia-set-get-russian-fighter-jets/htPAH1KOI5IKO55R95k6cK/story.html>.
- Shala, Azdren. "Pushtimi i ri Turk [Turkish neo-invasion]", author's translation, *Gazeta Tema*, 15 February 2018. Accessed 12 May 2018, <http://www.gazetatema.net/2018/02/15/pushtimi-i-ri-turk/>.
- Shala, Xhavit. "Qose-Kadare and the dynamic identity", *Shqip*, 9 May 2006.
- Shehu, Fatmir. "The Influence of Islam on Albanian Culture". *Journal of Islam In Asia*, vol. Special Issue, 1, March 2011, 389-407.
- "Shkodër, dëmtohet memoriali i Riza Pashës. Hiqet flamuri turk [Shkodër, damage of the Riza Pasha memorial. Turkish flag disappeared]". Author's translation, *Top Channel*, 7 July 2016. Accessed 11 May 2018, <http://m.top-channel.tv/lajme/artikull.php?id=330659&homepage>.
- Shkurtaç, Gjovalin. *Pesha e fjalës shqipe [The weight of the Albanian word]*, author's translation. Tiranë: Shtëpia Botuese Ufo Press, 2009.
- "Shqipëria dhe Këshilli i Partneritetit Euroatlantik (EAPC) [Albania and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council]". Author's translation, *Albanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, 3 March 2011. Accessed 23 March 2013, http://arkiva.mfa.gov.al/index.php?option=com_multicategories&view=article&id=7555%3Ashqipëria-dhe-keshilli-i-partneritetit-euroatlantik-eapc&format=pdf&Itemid=65&lang=en.

- Skendi, Stavro. *The Albanian National Awakening, 1878-1912* Princetown, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967.
- Smith, Anthony D. "Nations and History". In *Understanding Nationalism*, edited by M Guibernau and J Hutchinson, 9-31. Cambridge: Cambridge Polity, 2001.
- Smith, Anthony D. *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Blackwell: Oxford, 1986.
- . *National Identity*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991.
- . "When is a Nation". *Geopolitics*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2002, 5-32.
- . *Nationalism and Modernism: A critical survey of recent theories of nations and nationalism*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003. First published 1998. This edition published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library.
- . "A Europe of Nations. Or the Nation of Europe?". *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 30, no. 2, May 1993, 129-35.
- "Spara All'albanese [Shoot the Albanians]". Author's translation, *Lyrics Box-Cetomedio Lyrics*. Accessed 25 August 2017, <https://www.lyricsbox.com/cetomedio-spara-all-albanese-lyrics-4bcdfrl.html>.
- Squires, Nick. "Pope Francis hails Albania as model of religious harmony in attack on religious extremism", *The Telegraph*, 21 Sep 2014. Accessed 16 February 2015, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/albania/11111600/Pope-Francis-says-Albania-is-a-model-of-religious-harmony-during-first-visit-to-Muslim-majority-nation.html>.
- Stafa, Florenc. "Turqi, çdo universitet do të ketë xhami [Turkey, every university will have a mosque]", author's translation, *Shekulli*, 23 November 2014. Accessed 21 February 2015, <http://www.shekulli.com.al/p.php?id=60939>.
- "Statuti i Levizjes Vetevendosje [Statute of the self-determination movement]". Author's translation, 10 October 2015, http://www.vetevendosje.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Statuti_i_Levizjes_VETEVENDOSJE6.pdf.
- Stenning, Alison. "Out there and in here: studying Eastern Europe in the West". *Royal Geographical Society*, vol. 37, no. 4, 13 December 2005, 378-83.
- Stocker, Sharon R. and Jack L. Davis. "The earliest history of Apolonia: Heroic reflections from beyond the acropolis". In *New Directions in Albanian Archaeology*, edited by Lorenc Bejko and Richard Hodges. Tirana: International Centre for Albanian Archeology, 2006.
- Studies, Albanian Institute for Intentional. *The European Perspective of Albania: Perceptions and Realities 2010*. Tirana, 2010.
- Sugar, Peter F. *Southeastern Europe under Ottoman Rule, 1354-1804*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977.

- Sülkü, Mehmed. "Political Relations between Turkey and Albania in the post Cold War period". Middle East Technical University, 2010.
- Sullivan, Kevin. "Those Nasty Stereotypes", *BalkanInsight*, 9 December 2013. Accessed 12 December 2014, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/blog/those-nasty-stereotypes>.
- Sulstarova, Enis. *Në pasqyrën e Oksidentit: Studime dhe artikuj [In the mirror of Occident: Studies and articles]*, author's translation. Skopje: Logos-A, 2010.
- Tanner, Marcus. "The Ghost of Greater Albania Won't go Away", *BalkanInsight*, 27 March 2015. Accessed 14 July 2015, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/the-ghost-of-greater-albania-won-t-go-away>.
- "TAP project milestones". *Trans Adriatic Pipeline*. Accessed 27 January 2018, <http://www.tap-ag.com/the-pipeline/project-timeline/tap-project-milestones>.
- Targowski, Andrew. "Towards a Composite Definition and Classification of Civilization". *Comparative Civilizations Review*, vol. 60, no. 60, 2009.
- Tase, Peter. "Turkey and Albania, strategic partnership in a globalized world", *Today's Zaman on line*, 2 August 2013. Accessed 5 November 2015, <http://www.todayszaman.com/op-ed-turkey-and-albania-strategic-partnership-in-a-globalized-world-by-peter-m-tase-322611.html>.
- . "Turkey and Albania establish a dynamic agenda of bilateral relations", *Foreign Policy News*, 2 May 2014. Accessed 12 January 2016, <http://foreignpolicynews.org/2014/05/02/turkey-albania-establish-dynamic-agenda-bilateral-relations/>.
- . "Albania And Turkey: Two Nations With Common Vision To Strengthen Bilateral Cooperation, 1990-2000", *Foreign Policy News*, 25 January 2014. Accessed 14 April 2016, <http://foreignpolicynews.org/2014/01/25/albania-turkey-two-nations-common-vision-strengthen-bilateral-cooperation-1990-2000/>.
- Taspinar, Ömer. "Turkey's Middle East Policies: Between Neo-Ottomanism and Kemalism". *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.*, vol. 10, September 2008.
- Tekdal, Arif. "Erdoğan's harsh, xenophobic rhetoric damages fight against Islamophobia", *Sunday's Zaman*, 17 January 2015. Accessed 15 February 2015, <http://www.todayszaman.com/national-erdogans-harsh-xenophobic-rhetoric-damages-fight-against-islamophobia-369946.html>.
- "Tensionet/Erdogan kërcënon sërish, tregon se çfarë e pret Europën [Tensions/Erdogan threatens again, explaining what will happen to Europe]". Author's translation, *Panorama on line*, 24 October 2017. Accessed 24 October 2017, <http://www.panorama.com.al/tensionet-erdogan-kercenon-serish-tregon-se-çfare-e-pret-evropen/>.

- "Third Balkan War in the making: Serbs, Greeks, Bulgarians and Macedonians to unite against the 'Greater Albania'?" *Telegraf*, 14 May 2015. Accessed 28 May 2018, <http://www.telegraf.rs/english/1566600-third-balkan-war-in-the-making-serbs-greeks-bulgarians-and-macedonians-to-unite-against-the-greater-albania>.
- Thomai, Jani. *Leksikologjia e gjuhës shqipe [the lexicology of the Albanian language]*, author's translation. Tiranë: Toena, 2002.
- "Timeline: A history of Turkish coups". *AlJazeera*, 4 April 2012. Accessed 23 March 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/europe/2012/04/20124472814687973.html>.
- Todorova, Maria. "The Balkans: from discovery to invention". *Slavic Review*, no. 53, 1994.
- . *Imagining the Balkans*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- "Topalli mbështet Kadarenë: Kemi Identitet Evropian [Topalli's support for Kadare: We have European Identity]". Author's translation, *Shekulli Online*, 31 May 2006. Accessed 11 January 2011, <http://www.shekulli.com.al/shekulli/?s=%E2%80%98Topalli+mbeshtet+Kadarene%3A+Kemi+Identitet+Evropian%E2%80%99>.
- Topi, Bamir. "Albania's Domestic and Foreign Policy 2008 Agenda", *AIIS*, 7 February 2008. Accessed 23 February 2011, <http://www.aiis-albania.org/>.
- "The Treaty of London 1913". 6 October 2011. Accessed 26 May 2014, <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/boshtml/bos145.htm>.
- Tretiak, Daniel. "The Founding of the Sino-Albanian Entente". *The China Quarterly*, vol. 10, 1962, 123-43.
- "Tri esetë në anglisht: Bota e Kadaresë , drama e pamundur e Shqipërisë [Three essays in English: Kadare's world, Albania's impossible drama]". Author's translation, *Mapo*, 13 March 2018. Accessed 29 August 2018, <http://www.mapo.al/tri-esete-ne-anglisht-bota-e-kadarese-drama-e-pamundur-e-shqiperise/>.
- Turabiu, Ali. *Historia e pergjithshme e Bektashinjet [General history of the Bektashis]*. Author's translation, Tirana, 1929.
- Türbedar, Erhan. "Turkey's New Activism in the Western Balkans: Ambitions and Obstacles". *Insight Turkey*, vol. 13, no. 3, 2011, 139-58.
- "Turkey coup attempt: More than 130 media outlets shut". *BBC News*, 28 July 2016. Accessed 21 September 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36910556>.
- "Turkey to build Balkans' largest mosque in Tirana". *Hürriyet Daily News*, 24 October 2014, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-to-build-balkans-largest-mosque-in-tirana-73512>.
- "Turkey's exports drop 14.4 pct in first month of 2016". *Hürriyet Daily News*, 1 February 2016. Accessed 5 February 2016,

<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/Default.aspx?pageID=238&nID=94596&NewsCatID=344>.

"Turkey's religious diplomacy. Mosqued objectives. Turkey is sponsoring Islam abroad to extend its prestige and power". *The Economist*, 21 January 2016. Accessed 3 May 2018, <https://www.economist.com/news/europe/21688926-turkey-sponsoring-islam-abroad-extend-its-prestige-and-power-mosqued-objectives>.

"Turkish opposition parties say election alliance no longer necessary". *Reuters*, 5 July 2018. Accessed 5 October 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-politics-opposition/turkish-opposition-parties-say-election-alliance-no-longer-necessary-idUSKBN1JU1X4>.

"Turkish President Erdoğan urges Muslim countries to warn West against Islamophobia". *Hürriyet Daily News*, 21 January 2015. Accessed 15 February 2015, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-president-erdogan-urges-muslim-countries-to-warn-west-against-islamophobia.aspx?pageID=238&NID=77233&NewsCatID=338>.

"Turkish submarine 'TCG Sakarya' visits the port of Durrës". *Albanian Armed Forces*, 10 November 2014. Accessed 11 May 2018, <http://www.aaf.mil.al/english/index.php/tefundit/2513-turkish-submarine-tcg-sakarya-visits-the-port-of-durres>.

Turner, Bryan S. "Introduction to Max Weber on Religions and Civilizations". *Revue internationale de philosophie*, vol. 2, no. 276, 2016, 137-40.

"Turqi, kryeparlamentari: Kushtetutë islamike, s'na nevojitet laicizmi [Turkey, The head of Parliament: Islamic constitution, we don't need laicism]". Author's translation, *Top Channel*, 26 April 2016 Accessed 19 September 2018, <http://top-channel.tv/2016/04/26/turqi-kryeparlamentari-kushtetute-islamike-sna-nevojitet-laicizmi/>.

"Turqia interesohet për trajtimin e Perandorisë Osmane në Kosovë [Turkey interested to protect the Ottoman Empire in Kosovo]". Author's translation, *Koha Net*, 11 March 2013. Accessed 13 March 2013, <http://koha.net/?page=1,13,138186>.

"Turqit 'pushtimi i dytë' i Shqipërisë nga biznesi [Turks 'the second invasion' of Albania from the business]". Author's translation, *Mapo*, 25 Shkurt 2013. Accessed 11 November 2015, <http://www.mapo.al/2013/02/turqit-pushtimi-i-dyte-i-shqiperise-nga-biznesi>.

"Two years of SYRIZA ruling Greece - The Albanian eagle in the Greek army!". *SBS Australia, Greek language podcast*, 26 January 2017. Accessed 12 February 2017, <http://www.sbs.com.au/yourlanguage/greek/en/content/two-years-syriza-ruling-greece-albanian-eagle-greek-army>.

Vasa, Pashko. "Oh Albania, poor Albania". In *Albanian Literature: a Short History*, edited by R. Elsie trans first published in English. New York: I.B. Tauris, 2005.

- "Veqilharxhi, babai i Alfabetit dhe Abetares Shqiptare [Veqilharxhi, the father of the Albanian alphabet and the Abetare]". Author's translation, *Panorama on line*, 21 October 2011. Accessed 10 May 2018, <http://www.panorama.com.al/veqilharxhi-babai-i-alfabetit-dhe-abetares-shqiptare/>.
- Vickers, Miranda. *The Albanians : A Modern History*. London I. B. Tauris, 1999.
- . *The Albanians: A Modern History*. London: I.B. Taurus, [1995] 2001.
- Vickers, Miranda and James Pettifer. *Albania: From Anarchy to a Balkan Identity* New York: New York University Press, 1997.
- "Vlora 20 vjet me parë: Si e priti Zani Caushi me armë Prodin [Vlora 20 years ago: How armed Zani Caushi received Prodi]". Author's translation, *Panorama on line*, 26 January 2017. Accessed 23 February 2017, <http://www.panorama.com.al/fotolajm-vlora-20-vjet-me-pare-si-e-priti-zani-caushi-me-arme-prodin/>.
- Vryonis, Jr Speros. "The Bysantine Legacy and Ottoman Forms". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, vol. 23, no. 24, 1969-1970, 251-308.
- Vullnetari, Julie. *Albanian Migration and Development: State of the Art Review*. Amsterdam: Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (IMES), 18 September 2007.
- . "Internal migration in Albania: A critical review". In *Legacy and Change: Albanian transformation from multidisciplinary perspectives*, edited by Robert Pichler, 47-66. Zürich and Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2014.
- Wan, Enoch and Mark Vanderwerf. "A review of the literature on 'ethnicity' and 'national identity' and related missiological studies". *Global Missiology*, http://www.globalmissiology.org/portugues/docs_pdf/featured/wan_literature_ethnicity_april_2009.pdf, April 2009.
- Wasti, Syed Tanvir. "Three Ottoman Pashas at the Congress of Berlin,1878". *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 52, no. 6, 2016, 938-52.
- Weiker, Walter F. "The Ottoman Bureaucracy: Modernization and Reform". *Administrative Science Quarterly*, vol. 13, no. 3, December 1968, 451-70.
- Winnifrith, Tom. *Perspectives on Albania*. New York: St.Martin's Press, Inc., 1992.
- Woodard, Rodger D. "Language in ancient Europe: an introduction". In *The Ancient Languages of Europe*, edited by Rodger D. Woodard, 7-8. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Wright, Sue. *Community and Communication: The role of language in nation state building and European integration*. Multilingual Matters LTD, edited by John Edwards. Clevedon, Buffalo, Toronto and Sydney: Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data, 2000.

- Xhaferi, Perparim. "The Political Contribution of Albanian Writers in Defining Albanian Identity: the Debate between Ismail Kadare and Rexhep Qosja". *European Journal of Language and Literature*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2017, 121-8.
- . "The Post-Ottoman Era: A Fresh Start for Bilateral Relations between Albania and Turkey?". *Australia and New Zealand Journal of European Studies*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2017, 42-62.
- Yapp, Malcolm Edward and Stanford Jay Shaw. "Ottoman Empire: Historical Empire, Eurasia and Africa", *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 30 May 2018. Accessed 27 July 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Ottoman-Empire>.
- Yavuz, M. Hakan. "Turkish identity and foreign policy in flux: The rise of Neo-Ottomanism". *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 7, no. 12, 1998, 19-41.
- Yenigun, Cuneyt. "GCC Model: Conflict Management for the 'Greater Albania'". *SDU Faculty of Arts and Sciences Journal of Social Sciences: Special Issue on Balkans*, vol., 175-86.
- Young, Antonia. "Religion and society in present-day Albania". *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, vol. 14, no. 1, 1999, 5-16.
- Yzeiri, Ilir. "Identiteti ynë në rrezik [Our identity is in danger]", author's translation, *Top Channel*, 17 November 2015. Accessed 29 November 2015, <http://top-channel.tv/mobile/artikull.php?id=313199>.
- . "Identiteti rizomatik i shqiptarëve [The rhizomatic identity of Albanians]", author's translation, *Gazeta Shqip*, 18 Maj 2015. Accessed from a personal communication with the author on 10 March 2018.
- . "Albanofobia e Berishës dhe islamofobia e Erdoganit [Berisha's Albanophobia and Erdogan's Islamophobia]", author's translation, *Gazeta Shqip*, 28 Shkurt 2013. Accessed 12 May 2018, <http://gazeta-shqip.com/lajme/2013/02/28/albanofobia-e-berishes-dhe-islamofobia-e-erdoganit/>.
- "Zaman: 'Kërkesa e Erdogan për të mbyllur shkollat turke inatos politikanët shqiptarë' [Zaman: 'Erdogan's request to close Turkish schools upset Albanian politicians']". Author's translation, *Lapsi lajme*, 14 May, 2015. Accessed 17 November 2015, <http://www.lapsi.al/lajme/2015/05/14/zaman-%E2%80%999Ck%C3%ABrkesa-e-erdogan-p%C3%ABr-t%C3%AB-mbyllur-shkollat-turke-inatos-politikan%C3%ABt-shqiptar%C3%AB>.
- Zhiti, Visar. "Kadare dhe Qose së bashku krijojnë identitetin tonë [Kadare and Qose together create our identity]", author's translation, *Albanur*. Accessed 23 February 2011, <http://albanur.eu/showthread.php?t=277>
- Zickel, Raymond E. and Walter R. Iwaskiw, eds. *Albania: A Country Study*. Washington, D. C.: Library of congress, 1994.