

Journal of Balkan Studies

Balkan Çalışmaları
Dergisi

Revista për
Studime Ballkanike

Списание за
Балкански Студии

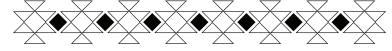
Volume • **4** / 2024

IDEFE
PUBLICATIONS

Issue • **2**



Journal of Balkan Studies



Volume 4, Issue 2 – 2024

ISSN: 2671-3675

E-ISSN: 2671-3659

Journal of Balkan Studies is an international, academic and peer-reviewed refereed journal. It is published twice a year.

Concession Holder on Behalf of Balkan Studies Foundation

Dr. Sevba Abdula

Editor in Chief

Dr. Sevba Abdula, Balkan Studies Foundation

Assistant Editors

Assoc. Prof. Zahit Atçıl, Medeniyet University

Assist. Prof. Sedad Bešlija, Sarejevo University

Editorial Board

Assist. Prof. Murat Aliu, Mother Teresa University | Assoc. Prof. Zahit Atçıl, Medeniyet

University | Assist. Prof. Sedad Bešlija, Sarejevo University | Assoc. Prof. Şener Bilali,

International Balkan University | Metin Celil, Bonn University | Assoc. Prof. Ali Erken,
Marmara University | Assoc. Prof. Mevludin Ibish, International Balkan University | Assist.

Prof. Agron Islami, Institute of History "Ali Hadri"- Prishtina | Assist. Prof. Emin Lelic,

Salisbury University | Assist. Prof. Deniz Memedi, Mother Teresa University | Assist. Prof.

Fation Shabani, Ibn Haldun University | Prof. Dr. Petar Todorov, Institute of National History

- Skopje | Assoc. Prof. Fatma Sel Turhan, Istanbul Technical University | Dr. Hana Younis,

Institute for History University of Sarajevo

Advisory Board (Surname Respectively)

Prof. Dr. Ahmet Alibašić, University of Sarajevo | Assoc. Prof. Abdurrahman Atçıl, Sabanci University

| Assoc. Prof. Tuncay Başoğlu, Center for Islamic Studies | Prof. Dr. Murteza Bedir, Istanbul University

| Prof. Dr. Kudret Bülbül, Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University | Prof. Dr. Gülfeffin Çelik, Istanbul

Medeniyet University | Prof. Dr. Ekrem Demirli, Istanbul University | Assist. Prof. Mehmet Uğur Ekinci,

SETA | Prof. Dr. Feridun Emecen, Istanbul 29 Mayıs University | Prof. Dr. İhsan Fazlıoğlu, Istanbul

Medeniyet University | Assist. Prof. İbrahim Zeyd Gerçik, Marmara University | Assoc. Prof. Zora

Hesova, Charles University | Prof. Dr. Abdülhamit Kırmızı, Bamberg University | Prof. Dr. Musa

Musai, University of Tetovo | Prof. Dr. Ali Pajaziti, South East European University | Assoc. Prof. Anton

Pancev, University of Kliment Ohridski - Sofia | Prof. Dr. Nebojsa Petrovic, University of Beograd

| Prof. Dr. Egdūnas Račius, Vytautas Magnus University | Prof. Dr. Gadaf Rexhepi, South East

European University | Prof. Dr. Lütfi Sunar, Istanbul Medeniyet University | Assoc. Prof. Yunus Uğur,

Marmara University | Prof. Dr. Gültekin Yıldız, Istanbul University

Secretariat

Semran Murtezanı, Balkan Studies Foundation

Graphic Design

Seyfullah Bayram

Proofreading

Elif Ruşiti

Publication Type

International Periodic

Publication Period

Published twice a year, January and July

Print Date

July, 2024

Printed by

Ajgraph - Skopje Citadel, 1000

Correspondence

Journal of Balkan Studies

Makedonsko Kosovska Brigada No:32 1A, Cair - Skopje, North Macedonia

www.balkanjournal.org, journalbalkan@gmail.com

table of
contents

research articles

Feminine Words for Feminine Actions: Women's
Partisan Newspapers in the Greek Civil War
Harry Raitsinis

7

Aspekte të Hartës së Parë të Shqipërisë me
Toponimastikë në Gjuhën Shqipe (1902)
Xherardo Nikjari

29

Urban and Architectural Alterations in Elbasan
from Ottoman Period to Modernity
Brunilda Basha, Zafer Sağdıç

53

(In) the Name of the Other; Albanian Migrants in
Contemporary Greek Fiction and the Role of Naming
Marios Moros

77

One Vicinity, Two Neighbors, and Two Different
Stories: A Comparison of Mortality Experiences
in Greece and Bulgaria since the 1960s
Konstantinos Zafeiris, Mariana Mourgova

91

book review

Bošnjaci pred izazovima globalnih političkih
procesa: političko stasavanje jedne nacije
Omer Merzić

115

in memorium

Робер Бадентер (1928 – 2024)
Салифоска Фатима

123

Research Articles

Feminine Words for Feminine Actions: Women's Partisan Newspapers in the Greek Civil War

Harry Raitisinis

Abstract: This article analyzes the origin and the development of the women's partisan journals that were published during the Greek Civil War (1946-1949). It constitutes an unexplored topic despite the fact that it can provide crucial insights into the women of that time. In the beginning, it describes the basic factors of the early feminist editions. Subsequently, it examines the course of those newspapers during WWI and the Interwar period in order to delineate the disruption of their progressive evolution. Afterwards, it presents the changes that affected the character of the women's publications throughout the Second World War, the Axis occupation and the first post-liberation years. Then, it focuses on the fundamental characteristics of the women's partisan newspapers, their technical aspects, their objectives, their thematic content and the journalistic coverage of the feminist issues. In parallel, it makes several comparisons with the Spanish case and it places the Hellenic example within a broader framework (pertinent European phenomena, feminist waves, etc.) to outline a clear, satisfying and comprehensive picture.

Keywords: press, clandestine, underground, women, publishing, newspapers, journals

* This article was funded by the European Commission under the author's "Marie Skłodowska-Curie" Post-doctoral Fellowship with the acronym GUNPRESS and the grant number 101018513.

✉ Dr., Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki-Greece, xarisrait@yahoo.gr

ORCID <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-0252-1849>

📄 Balkan Studies Foundation
DOI: <http://doi.org/10.51331/A044>
Journal of Balkan Studies, 4 (2), 2024
balkanjournal.org



Received: 08.03.2024
Accepted: 03.07.2024



Introduction

The Civil War is one of the most analyzed periods of contemporary Hellenic history because it constitutes a very significant trauma that concerns the domestic public sphere in different ways. There are however several issues that have not been sufficiently explored since special attention was given to the principal political factors, the central military developments, the decisions of the primary protagonists, the relentless ideological struggles, the foreign interventions, the party confrontations and the acknowledged or unacknowledged pursuits of the rival coalitions.

The role of the Greek press throughout the Civil War is one of these subjects although there are some archival collections that provide unfettered access to the basic newspapers of that period. The majority of the Greek or foreign historians, political scientists and journalists have nevertheless overlooked the relevant periodical publications which could highlight the course of the fratricidal rivalry, the bilateral propaganda, the state censorship, the related info wars, the stance of the principal journals and the communication practice of the era.

The academic research has moreover ignored the left-wing newspapers and the rest clandestine publications even though they played a basic role in the communicative and the propagandistic activity of the time which had great importance for the wider public opinion, the stimulation of guerrilla's morale and the influence of the Democratic Army. Nobody has additionally explored the journals that were published by the antigovernment women who aimed to highlight the life, the significance, the course and the evolution of the female partisan fighters.

These publications can however provide a valuable starting point and bring out very significant information about feminine action during the Civil War. They may also fill several practical gaps that were created by the natural and human destruction of women's records, the incomplete character of the historical sources and the silence of the traditional Greek historiography which ignored the feminist issues for too many

years reflecting the dividing and separating atmosphere of the recent past (Αβδελά & Ψαρρά, 1985, pp. 13-15).

This article tries therefore to use these specific journals in order to answer a series of questions: How many women's editions were published? Who issued them? For how long? What was their role? What advantages and disadvantages did they have? What were they writing about? Which claims did they have? Were there any interruptions or continuities in their action? How did they deal with the rest publications? How were they connected to the feminist currents of that epoch? What were the central axes of their activity? How were they related to the international and the European framework of that particular time?

The article also seeks to gather valuable information and avoid the trap of anachronistic reading in order to present the style of women's writing and show the historicity of the feminine movement that should have been more prominent because they have no museum character. The research on these texts might prove to be very fruitful because it could reveal several facts about the psyche, the demands, the requests, the claims, the interests and the goals that concerned the active women of a certain historical period.

As Simone de Beauvoir wrote about the female writers of the time:

Sometimes they really excel in observing the given and they become excellent reporters. They know how to portray atmospheres and faces, to highlight the thin relationships between them, to make us participate in the delicate movements of their souls. Attached to the secret character of the objects, charmed by the uniqueness of their senses, they offer their warm experience with delightful adjectives and vivid images. Their vocabulary is usually more remarkable than their syntax since they are more interested in things than the relations between them. They do not want to achieve the abstract elegance of speech but instead their words speak to the senses (Μποβουάρ, 2021, pp. 887-888).

These texts were not so assertive, according to Beauvoir, as they mainly tried to show women's place in the world. But no one could deny that the feminist newspapers have always constituted a very significant weapon for their emancipation. Those who wrote challenged the male society, escaped from their usual occupations, expressed themselves and communicated with each other. They aimed to overcome loneliness and create a joint identity. They typically spoke collectively and demanded an active role (Περυσκόπιο, 5 March 1987).

Writing, which could be a very powerful weapon, distracted females from their household tasks, eased their confinement at home, promoted their introspection and made them think about their position in society. The publication of these texts constituted a revolutionary act since it fought to bridge the gap between the private and the public sphere and alleviate the chasm that usually separated men and women. For these reasons they represent a very interesting historical subject that deserves to be examined and analyzed quite carefully.

The first feminist newspapers

The first wave of feminism, which lasted from the 19th century to 1920, focused on political and legal matters since it promoted the women's right to vote, to own property and to be protected by anti-discrimination laws. During this time, several pioneering journals were established, such as the French *La Voix des Femmes* (1848), the German *Die Frauenbewegung* (1895), the Italian *La Donna* (1868), the Spanish *Ellas* (1851) and *La Mujer* (1871), as well as the British editions *The English Woman's Journal* (1858) and *The Women's Penny Paper* (1888), that tried hard to underline the aforementioned goals and support the relevant claims.¹

The systematic questioning of women's role in Greece appeared at the same time as it coincided with the creation of three newspapers which wanted to boost the feminist discourse of the epoch. In 1867, Penelopy

1 For these feminine editions see Crawford, 2001; Easley, Gill & Rodgers, 2019; Sullerot, 1966, pp. 88-122; Dölle Endlich, Golling & Hering, 1988; Marrades, 1978, pp. 89-134; Requena Hidalgo, 2014; Mitchell, 2014.

Lazaridou founded the monthly Athenian journal *Θάλεια* (*Thalia*) that aimed to encourage gender equality. In 1845, Efrosyni Samartzidou published three or four issues of *Κυψέλη* (*Kipseli*) in Constantinople. In 1870, Emilia Ktena-Leontias produced a corresponding edition in the capital of the ottoman empire, with the title *Ευριδίκη* (*Eurydice*), since she wanted to enhance feminine political and social advancement (Περισκόπιο, 5 March 1987).

These newspapers had however a fragmentary nature as they did not formulate a comprehensive feminist critique. *Η Εφημερίς των Κυριών* (*The Newspaper of the Ladies*), which was issued by Kallirroï Parren in 1887, can therefore be considered as the first important women's publication that was founded in Greece. The Greek case hence corresponded with the rest European context despite the fact that it had a lower level of industrialization, less women in the factories and a much smaller female participation in the country's economic life that played a very crucial role in the emergence and the advancement of feminism (Σκλαβενίτη, 1988, p.13).

Η Εφημερίς των Κυριών (*The Newspaper of the Ladies*) stood at the forefront of the liberationist movement since it supported women's claims until 1917. The first feminist wave ended around 1920 but Greek women, like most European women, continued to publish new editions in order to examine their social position and underline their central demands. They created the following papers: *Δελτίο του Λυκείου Ελληνίδων* (*Bulletin of Women's Lyceum*) within 1920; *Εύα Νικήτρια* (*Eve Winner*) and *Ελληνίς* (*Greek Woman*) in 1921; *Ο Αγώνας της Γυναίκας* (*Woman's Struggle*) within 1922; *Σοσιαλιστική Ζωή* (*The Socialist Life*) in 1928; *Εφημερίς των Γυναικών* (*Women's Newspaper*) within 1929; *Φεμινιστική* (*Feminist*) and *Εφημερίς των Ελληνίδων* (*Greek Women's Newspaper*) in 1930 (Κυριακίδου, 2001, pp. 67-96 & Ελεφάντης, 1979, pp. 363-364).

The feminine journals that were created after WWI changed, in some way, their nature because they acquired a more collective character which differed from the writings of the previous years. Women were

now fighting through unions to overcome the discriminations, gain the legal right to vote and obtain better job prospects. In the first decade, especially, (1920-1930) they prioritized these matters because they considered them to be of primary importance for the wellbeing, the gradual advancement and the substantial evolution of their gender.

But in the second decade of the Interwar period, after 1930, two divergent tendencies arose that revealed the main differences within the feminist movement, divided it even more and separated it between two basic political alliances. The radical women supported the so-called progressive or procommunist forces while the rest endorsed the traditional civic formations. Therefore they created a Manichaeian approach that halted any cooperation or joint action of the Greek women who had to choose ideological sides to navigate through an era of rapid democratic decrease.

The decline of liberalism, the evolution of socialism, the rise of fascism and the looming threat of war left two main choices for Greek feminists: either to limit their political involvement and try to keep their status or to adjust their struggle to the causes of democracy and socialism striving to advance the preceding feminist movement. Some leading figures started to abandon women's organizations in order to join the Communist Party of Greece (K.K.E.) that changed its skeptical stance towards domestic feminism since it had to promote the policy of popular fronts following the international communist line (Αβδελά και Ψαρρά, 1985, pp. 17-34, 43-54, 66-67, 93-96).

These developments were nevertheless interrupted by the harsh dictatorship of Ioannis Metaxas which restricted the feminist movement and shut down some women's newspapers because they would not embrace the new social order. On August 5, 1936, just one day after the establishment of the regime, the Hellenic Police disbanded, for instance, the Association for Women's Rights, sealed its premises, confiscated its records and seized all the old issues of *Αγώνας της Γυναίκας* (*Woman's Struggle*) that could be found in the offices (Φαράκος, 1980, p. 162).

Several leftist women turned to illegality since they wanted to avoid arrests, imprisonments and exiles, escape torture, reinforce the resistance and fight against the dictatorship that hastened to suppress the domestic clandestine publications because they constituted a significant risk. These women did not issue any feminine newspapers but they probably assisted the 22 illegal journals that were established throughout those four years (Παπαθανασίου, 2011, pp. 6-14).

Women's war and postwar newspapers

This situation changed during the Second World War and the Axis Occupation of Greece (April 1941-October 1944) when Greek women established about 18 newspapers to combine the resistance with the feminist issues. The National Liberation Front (E.A.M.), which was the largest anti-fascist organization of that time, issued four publications: *Γυναικεία Δράση* (*Female Action*) within 1942, *Φωνή της Γυναίκας* (*Woman's Voice*) within 1943, *Ρουμελιώτισσα* (*Woman from Roumeli*) and *Συναγωνίστρια* (*Female Co-fighter*) within 1944.

E.P.O.N. (United Panhellenic Organization of Youth), which issued the majority of the Hellenic clandestine publications, founded *Ελεύθερη Κρητικοπούλα* (*Free Young Woman from Creta*) in 1943, *Σουλιωτοπούλα* (*Young Woman from Souli*) and *Ελεύθερες Νέες* (*Free Young Women*) in 1944. The National Solidarity (Εθνική Αλληλεγγύη) established two feminine newspapers that had the title *Μάνα* (*Mother*) within 1943, *Μάνα των Θυμάτων* (*Mother of the Victims*) and *Μάνα του Λαού* (*Mother of the People*) within 1944.

Some feminine schools and other resistance organizations, which were much smaller, published *Φωνή της Νέας* (*The Voice of Young Woman*) in 1942, *Ελεύθερη Ελληνίδα* (*Free Greek Woman*), *Ελεύθερη Κρητικοπούλα* (*Free Young Woman from Crete*), *Εμείς* (*We*) and *Σουλιώτισσα* (*Woman from Souli*) within 1943, *Ηπειρώτισσα* (*Woman from Epirus*) and *Δελτίο του Λυκείου Ελληνίδων* (*Bulletin of Women's Lyceum*) in 1944 which was the last year of the Axis Occupation.

Unfortunately, we do not have much information on these journals as no relevant study has been conducted yet. However, we do know that

this period “democratized” and radicalized the war since it did not distinguish between combatants and civilians because everybody could take part in the resistance. Women, although they did not play a central role, marched in the liberated territories, became objects of admiration and symbols of the “new woman” (Βόγλης, 2012, pp. 311-312).

During the Occupation, they entered the political scene and the public sphere as they participated in demonstrations, transferred printed stuff and joined solidarity committees. Their involvement in the E.A.M. (National Liberation Front) organizations reached 40% in certain areas but it was only 20% in the Communist Party of Greece. Most of them had auxiliary duties (mainly nurses, guards, carriers, suppliers and paramedics) albeit there were some cases where they joined voluntarily the women’s military units and the School for Reserve Officers that were managed by E.L.A.S. (Greek People’s Liberation Army) (Βερβενιώτη, 2013, pp. 302-304).

The role of women advanced after the liberation of Greece, that was completed in October, 1944. The Greek Communist Party emphasized, for example, feminine issues due to the role they held throughout the Occupation and the political contribution they could have. “They will obtain the same political and social rights as men”, mentioned its renewed program. “A popular democracy cannot be established and preserved without their emancipation” (Κ.Κ.Ε., 1981, pp. 27-28).

The women of Epirus continued issuing *Ηπειρώτισσα* (*Woman from Epirus*) that was circulated (at least) until March 1945. The last saved issue, which was published that month, urged women to preserve their achievements during the Occupation period, to secure their accomplishments, to celebrate International Women’s Day, to claim proper food for children and their right to vote that was essential for their freedom and their disentanglement (*Ηπειρώτισσα*, 5 March 1945).

Η Μάνα του Λαού (*Mother of the People*), which was published by the National Solidarity until 1946, enhanced the aforementioned feminist rhetoric since it sought adequate nutrition for young children, suitable medical

care, clothing, support for the rural populations, release and amnesty for the procommunist political prisoners, reconstruction of the country, immediate confinement of the paramilitary organizations, cessation of the anticommunist “white terror”, reinforcement of the domestic organization and instantaneous withdrawal of the foreign powers.²

These two aforementioned newspapers were initially issued during the epoch of the Occupation. The women of the first postwar years founded additional journals to highlight the problems and the claims of their gender. The female political prisoners of the National Resistance Movement established, for example, *Φυλακισμένη Αγωνίστρια* (*Imprisoned Female Fighter*) that aimed to present the daily life of the leftist incarcerated women (*Φυλακισμένη Αγωνίστρια*, 1 May 1946).

The women who left Greece in order to avoid the “white terror” issued two newspapers because they wanted to propagate the procommunist ideology. Those who went to Bulkes of Yugoslavia established *Λαϊκή Αγωνίστρια* (*People's Female Fighter*) which aimed to underline the equality that they had achieved through communism and promote women's emancipation, human rights, anti-fascism and peace. Those who fled to Albania to join the Democratic Army and participate in the Civil War printed *Ταξιαρχίτισσα* (*Brigade Woman*) which emphasized the feminine contributions and advance their status in the postwar socialist countries of Eastern Europe.³

The previous five newspapers constituted just a small part of the 309 legal, semilegal or entirely illegal leftist publications that were issued during the postliberation years (October 1944-March 1946) and the first period of the Greek Civil War (April 1946-December 1947). These journals, whether issued in Greece or abroad, praised feminine resistance

2 For these political claims see *Μάνα του Λαού*, 10 June 1945; *Μάνα του Λαού*, 28 June 1945; *Μάνα του Λαού*, 12 July 1945; *Μάνα του Λαού*, 9 August 1945; *Μάνα του Λαού*, 30 August 1945; *Μάνα του Λαού*, 22 September 1945; *Μάνα του Λαού*, 20 November 1945; *Μάνα του Λαού*, 22 December 1945; *Μάνα του Λαού*, 1 March 1946.

3 For these newspapers that were published in the East-European countries see *Λαϊκή Αγωνίστρια*, 10 August 1946; *Λαϊκή Αγωνίστρια*, 7 December 1946; *Λαϊκή Αγωνίστρια*, March 1947; *Ταξιαρχίτισσα*, 6 September 1947.

activities, honored feminist and labor anniversaries, commended women's position under communism, and advocated for the expansion of the relevant rights in order to achieve full equality, parity and equity with men.

Women's Civil War newspapers

Greek women played a supplementary role throughout the first two years of the Civil War (April 1946-December 1947) since they were primarily working as nurses, carriers, cooks, launderers etc. Most of them did not really participate in the factual combats. From 1948 nevertheless this started to change due to the leftist forces which introduced a mandatory conscription of women in an attempt to overcome the numerical deficit of the Democratic Army. More than 30% of the combatants and 70% of the auxiliary staff consisted of women during 1949 (Βόγλης, 2012, pp. 315-316 & Βερβενιώτη, 2008, pp. 345-346).

These women issued 15 out of the 132 partisan publications that were established between 1947 and 1949. One of them (*Ταξιαρχίτισσα*) was founded in 1947 and the rest in 1948 and 1949. The number of these editions (approximately 11.3%) is rather adequate considering the position of women and the important technical difficulties. These figures appear even more revealing if we assess that they surpassed, both in figures and proportion, the feminine newspapers which were printed during the Spanish Civil War – although Greece had much less population.⁴

The Democratic Army of Greece established nine newspapers altogether: *10λεπτο της Γυναίκας* (*Woman's 10 minutes*), *Μαχήτρια της Λευτεριάς* (*Female Freedom Warrior*), *Μαχήτρια του Μάλι Μάδι* (*Female Warrior of Mali Madi*), *Θεσσαλιώτισσα* (*Woman from Thessaly*), *Παρτιζάνες του Βίτσι* (*Female Partisans of Vitsi*), *Ηλέκτρα* (*Electra*), *Παρτιζάνα* (*Female Partisan*) and a couple of guerilla publications which had the title *Αγωνίστρια* (*Female Fighter*).

4 One of the most significant women's journals in Spain, if not the only, was *Mujeres Libres* that was issued by the homonymous anarchist-inspired organization in order to promote their emancipation, their political equality, their education and economic independence. For this newspaper see Ακελσπεργ, Κάπλαν & Ουίλις, 1988, pp. 71-76. For an overview of the Republican editions that were printed during the Spanish Civil War see Diaz-Balart, 1992.

The Panhellenic Democratic Union of Greece (Π.Δ.Ε.Γ.) founded *Μαχήτρια* (*Female Warrior*) which was the most important feminine edition. The Democratic Organization of Greek Women in Egypt published *Ελληνίδα* (*Greek Woman*). Women who fled to Bulgaria created *Αγωνίστρια* (*Female Fighter*), those who lived in South Greece issued *Αγωνίστρια* (*Female Fighter*) and the Slavomacedonian women established *Nova Makedonka* (*New Macedonian Woman*) which was a bilingual journal as it utilized the Greek and the corresponding Slavic language side by side to facilitate the communication among the leftist guerillas (*Nova Makedonka*, 1 March 1948).

Most of them, unlike various Spanish cases, were formed in rural or mountainous territories in Macedonia and Thrace, Egypt, Albania or Bulgaria since the Democratic Army did not manage to seize control of any major Greek city. The majority had two or four pages and were published every week, every two weeks or every month because it was difficult to find adequate newsprint or sufficient stuff. They normally created several hundred or a few thousand copies - except for *Μαχήτρια* (*Female Warrior*) which allegedly had larger circulation. Some produced a few issues and disappeared while others, like the latter one, were printed until the end of the Civil War.⁵

These journals were written by educated Greek and occasionally Slavomacedonian women who were teachers, journalists, feminists or intellectuals, members and volunteers of the K.K.E. and the Democratic Army. Some were founded by Π.Δ.Ε.Γ. that resembled the Union of Democratic Women of the Spanish Civil War since both had very powerful connections with the respective communist parties. Nonetheless we still do not know most of them and we cannot specify their identities because they usually did not sign their articles as they used pseudonyms or the initials of their names in order to avoid possible reprisals against their relatives.

5 For *Μαχήτρια* (*Female Warrior*) see Τζουβαλάς, 2018, vol. 2, pp. 252-253 & Λαζαρίδου, 2010, pp. 209-218. For the procommunist newspapers that were established by Π.Δ.Ε.Γ. see Ματθαίου & Πολέμη, 2003, pp. 72-73.

“This newspaper will be written by women for women, men and the rest of the people”, declared the first issue of *Αγωνίστρια* (*Female Fighter*) which was published by the Democratic Women of Southern Greece. But the truth is that they were chiefly aimed at women. These publications were usually read collectively in the evenings, after other daily chores, to address the high rates of female illiteracy, fill leisure time, analyze the news and educate uneducated women - mainly those who were conscripted from the villages and those who left rural areas to escape the “white terror”, the military operations of the National Army and the rest government measures.⁶

The texts and the articles of these publications utilized a simple and understandable vocabulary because they wanted to reach all women, whether they were educated or not. Their tone was slightly milder compared to the other editions although they used several negative terms (fascists, monarchist-fascists, reactionaries etc.) to describe their opponents. They also employed an emotional language to present the feelings of women (care, love, joy etc.) - something that did not happen with men. They usually applied the third person singular to portray the actions of a female co-fighter, the third person plural to highlight the collectiveness of the Democratic Army and the first person singular to underline a testimony or appeal to the public sentiment.

The quality varied, of course, from one journal to another, as some publications, like *Μαχήτρια* (*Female Warrior*), hosted several noteworthy analyses, while others did not exceed mediocrity. This issue depended, after all, on the political, ideological, educational and social backgrounds of the writers, the availability of the relevant books, the punctual access to the daily news and the level of their technical means. It should nonetheless be noted that there were various journalists and publishers who sought to receive the necessary feedback because they strived to assess the strengths and the weaknesses of these editions and gain more social influence.

6 For the target groups and the collective reading see *Αγωνίστρια*, 12 February 1949; *10λεπτο της Γυναίκας*, 1 June 1948; *Ριζοσπάστης*, 12 February 1997; Κατσής, 2003, vol. 6, pp. 90-91; Αποστολόπουλος, 1998, pp. 85-87.

Some newspapers attempted, for instance, to develop their distribution and their circulation as they faced significant challenges in the territories that were not controlled by their forces or the communist Balkan states. Almost all editions also wanted additionally to improve their appearance, utilize better fonts and include slogans, sketches, caricatures and political cartoons, sometimes successfully and sometimes not, in order to strengthen the reading experience, create the desired climate, attract greater attention, emphasize the demands of the procommunist coalition, simplify and clarify their central messages and promote their multiple goals.

Topics, objectives and goals

The objectives of the women's partisan newspapers resembled the goals that were expressed by the respective publications of the Spanish Civil War since they aimed to boost the morale of the fighters, disseminate the orders of the General Staff, commemorate certain historical and labor anniversaries, emphasize the significance of wartime vigilance, condemn the violent crimes of the opposite alliance, denounce the targeting of civilian populations, impact public opinion and underscore the political or ideological support of the friendly foreign forces.⁷

The Hellenic editions had some additional objectives that were adapted to the particularities of the domestic situation. Some journals aimed, for example, to highlight the internal competition (Άμιλλα) among women's military formations in order to boost their performance. Others tried to proselyte girls who were conscripted or had escaped from the "white terror" and the National Army. *Οι Παρτιζάνες του Βίτσι* (*Female Partisans of Vitsi*) motivated the feminine guerillas to speak out during the military assemblies and *Μαχήτρια* (*Female Fighter*) sought to describe the

7 For the objectives of the Greek papers see *Παρτιζάνες του Βίτσι*, 24 July 1949; *Ηλέκτρα*, 25 March 1949; *Ηλέκτρα*, 9 August 1949; *Μαχήτρια*, 18 April 1949; *Μαχήτρια*, 5 May 1949; *Μαχήτρια*, 10 June 1949. For the mission of the Spanish journals see Diaz-Balart, 1992, pp. 120-122; Άκελσμπεργκ, Κάπλαν & Ουίλις, 1988, pp. 75-77.

leftist positions regarding the feminist issues and their liberation from the oppression.⁸

Η Αγωνίστρια (Female Fighter) comes to serve the struggle of the woman from Southern Greece and has the ambition to become the herald that will transmit a militant signal, whether holding a weapon in the ranks of the Democratic Army or living and combating in the enslaved cities and villages. It aims to convey the pulse of the fighting women and the warriors. It aims to assist their militant ascents, improve their martial performances and their cooperation with the male guerillas (Αγωνίστρια, 12 February 1949).

The usual demands for political rights occupied less journalistic space for three central reasons: a) these publications claimed that there was already complete political equality and equivalence between men and women within the leftist coalition b) they stated that they would extend these rights across Greece very soon because they would prevail in the Civil War c) they operated in a fluid theoretical international framework since the first (political and legal) feminist wave had essentially been terminated but the next one (sexuality, gender and social roles, discriminations in education and workplaces etc.) had not yet begun.

Η Μαχήτρια (Female Warrior) accused, for example, the opponent camp and the Radio Station of Athens that they announced an upcoming granting of voting rights to Greek women because they simply wanted to distract the United Nations. Its female compatriots of Egypt blamed the “reactionary forces” because they were attempting to maintain their gender at a derogatory position despite their substantial contribution in the last years. Nova Makedonka aimed to see all women enjoying the same social status as the women of the Democratic Army of Greece.⁹

The subjects and the topics of women’s newspapers were aligned with the aforementioned goals since they aimed to depict the wartime actions of the female fighters and highlight their required rights. In parallel, they

8 Παρτιζάνες του Βίτσι, 24 July 1949; Ηλέκτρα, 30 June 1949; Μαχήτρια, 12 December 1948.

9 Μαχήτρια, 5 April 1949; Ελληνίδα, 3 October 1949; Nova Makedonka, 1 March 1948.

praised the women who excelled in the battles against the enemy, hailed those who received medals of bravery and honored the leftist heroines who sacrificed their lives during the last ten years in order to underline several exemplary examples, promote their social and political goals, set proper standards and foster the unity among the fighting women.¹⁰

The feminine journals aimed to enhance this unity since it could seamlessly integrate new women, improve their daily lives, prevent several problems and empower their wartime actions. The Democratic Army was now their new family. The senior and older women tried to create the appropriate atmosphere and these editions published some relevant dialogues to disseminate this fact. “We will be together, you will get used to it and together we’ll build the trench, together we’ll go into battle”, underscored a pertinent text. “The sun sets in the west, elders and youngers, together we will set up the dance” (*Μαχήτρια*, 10 September 1948).

These partisan newspapers nevertheless urged the younger women to strictly follow orders, adhere to the hierarchy and maintain the discipline in order to create better results. That is why they had to execute the instructions of the female political commissioners which were supposed to understand the life and the particular needs of those girls, look after their health, oversee their behavior and advance their political education (*Μαχήτρια της Λευτεριάς*, 22 July 1949).

These publications also encouraged additionally women to obtain an open role, to meet their female counterparts in a deeper way, to join left-wing feminine organizations, to exchange knowledge, to gain various political experiences and develop close interpersonal relationships, to strengthen unity and become fulfilled individuals. In parallel, they tried to enhance their extroversion by describing the Greek participation in international women’s conferences, they presenting the developments

10 For the subjects, the fields and the topics of the Greek leftist publications see *10λεπτο της Γυναίκας*, 1 June 1948; *Μαχήτρια της Λευτεριάς*, 22 July 1949; *Παρτιζάνα*, 26 July 1949; *Θεσσαλιώτισσα*, 4 August 1949; *Παρτιζάνες του Βίτσι*, 24 July 1949; *Μαχήτρια του Μάλι Μάδι*, 20 July 1949; *Μαχήτρια*, 10 September 1948.

in the European women's movement, reposting external journalistic texts and publishing several messages of solidarity from foreign feminist organizations.¹¹

The women's newspapers of the procommunist coalition concurrently sought to strengthen the relations between the two genders of the Democratic Army. However, they also tried to set clear boundaries, specific margins and precise distances in order to minimize the sexual relationships between them and refute the accusations of the opponents that utilized the strength of the anticommunist journals to question the erotic propriety and the ethics of the female partisans.¹²

These editions also paralleled the combative skills of men and women by publishing various texts which praised the decorated women and the female officers who received military distinctions. But they did not condemn publicly their absence from the highest military ranks, the male guerillas and leftist officers who undervalued their fighting abilities and their exclusion from the Provisional Democratic Government (Π.Δ.Κ.) that was founded by the procommunist coalition to run their territories (Βόγλης, 2012, p. 327 & *Μαχήτρια*, 8 December 1948).

It should nonetheless be noted that no journal of the Democratic Army reached the extent of the Republican Spanish newspaper *Presente* (Periodico de la 31 Brigada Mixta) which mentioned: "The words are feminine. The deeds are masculine. Always be masculine that means act always. A mistake in action is worth more than a truth spoken". The chief political commissioner of the Greek guerrilla forces encouraged, on the contrary, his warriors to approach women, help them to overcome their difficulties, support them, enhance them and consolidate their self-confidence (Diaz-Balart, 1992, p. 124 & *Κομμουνιστική Επιθεώρηση*, 1 September 1947).

11 For these common journalistic efforts see *Ηλέκτρα*, 7 February 1949; *Αγωνίστρια*, 12 February 1949; *Αγωνίστρια*, 18 April 1949; *Αγωνίστρια*, 9 September 1949; *Μαχήτρια*, 10 September 1948; *Μαχήτρια*, 13 January 1949.

12 For the interpersonal relationships between the men and the women of the procommunist forces see Μαργαρίτης, 2001, vol. 2, pp. 254-255; Βόγλης, 2004, pp. 193-194. For the stance of the women's partisan newspapers towards the opponent soldiers and the officers of the National Army of Greece see *Αγωνίστρια*, January 1949.

Ο Δημοκρατικός Στρατός (The Democratic Army), that constituted the most significant military publication of the procommunist alliance, urged the male warriors to avoid treating their female co-fighters in a demeaning way because they struggled alongside them, in life and death, under the same conditions. *Η Εξόρμηση (The Expedition)*, an equally important leftist newspaper, also praised the mothers, the spouses, the siblings and the girls which wished for the immediate end of the fratricide destruction, the instantaneous cessation of the bloodshed and the saving of their children's lives (*Δημοκρατικός Στρατός*, November 1948 & *Εξόρμηση*, 1 March 1948).

This leftist rhetoric stopped after the end of the Civil War (29 August 1949) and the final defeat of the Democratic Army although there were two editions outside Greece which continued for a short period of time. *Η Αγωνίστρια (Female Fighter)*, that was issued by the Π.Δ.Ε.Γ. branch in Bulgaria, circulated at least six issues because it wanted to continue its reasoning and support the struggle of the procommunist women. *Η Ελληνίδα (Greek Woman)* released at least four more issues since it tried to promote the rights of Greek women in Egypt and engage in a crucial and substantial self-criticism that would be quite beneficial for the future.¹³

Conclusions

The women's partisan publications that were issued during the Greek Civil War did not suddenly emerge since they obviously continued the work of the newspapers which began to be published in the 19th century. These editions followed the increasing politicization of the Interwar period, suffered from the Metaxas dictatorship, participated in the harsh resistance of the Second World War, faced the persecutions of the domestic "white terror" and struggled to strengthen the leftist coalition that opposed the anticommunist postwar Hellenic governments.

13 For more see *Αγωνίστρια*, 9 September 1949; *Αγωνίστρια*, 14 November 1949; *Αγωνίστρια*, 11 December 1949; *Αγωνίστρια*, 3 March 1950; *Ελληνίδα*, 5 September 1949, *Ελληνίδα*, 12 September 1949; *Ελληνίδα*, 26 September 1949; *Ελληνίδα*, 3 October 1949. For the *Voice of Woman (Φωνή της Γυναίκας)* and the rest journals of the political refugees that were established in the socialist countries of Eastern Europe see Ματθαίου & Πολέμη, 2003.

However, the women's partisan newspapers differed from the Interwar editions which had many diversities, contradictions, conflicts and inconsistencies because they belonged to distinct groups. The journals of the Civil War, which followed the respective publications of the Occupation, used, on the contrary, a unified, obedient and disciplined journalism because they followed the Greek Communist Party and the rest leftist political formations of the anti-government coalition.

The women's partisan journals argued that there was an obvious chronological and geographical rupture as colossal changes had occurred since the Second World War. Prewar women and those who resided in the "enslaved" Greece were described as female individuals that lacked equality, legal rights and equal opportunities because they lived under an oppressive regime. The women of "free" Greece were, conversely, shown as liberated, independent and integrated persons who enjoyed full legal, social and economic rights and the same status as men.

The partisan publications did not reproduce the stereotypes which suggested that they belonged to the civilian population with the children and the elderly. They also did not see themselves as victims who could not bear arms, as weak and vulnerable people who were forcibly conscripted by the communist leadership. The feminine wartime involvement tried to deconstruct the "male qualities of the soldier" although it encouraged the Greek female guerillas to fight like men and offered them several "masculine" bravery awards (Βόγλης, 2004, pp. 306, 311, 329-332).

The women's partisan journals wanted to provide ideological guidance, strengthen the personal relationships among them, manage their emotions, promote the feminist rhetoric, present a new paradigm, demonstrate the distinct social perspective of the opponents and transform the female subjectivity. However, they did not overturn various traditional gender viewpoints as they reproduced multiple male perceptions and the male division of labor. "The female writing, although crucial, rarely deviated from the predominant line", underlined, for example, a female

historian. "It was a dedicated and loyal political action that obeyed the prevailing authority - predominantly male" (Βερβενιώτη, 2008, p. 347).

Unfortunately, it is difficult to estimate the impact and the influence of these publications since it concerns an issue that cannot be assessed easily due to the lack of more data and testimonials. It seems however that they strengthened women's unity, explained the organizational structures, supported the chain of command, reduced the female illiteracy, enhanced the political and ideological education but they did not manage to affect significantly all the subjects they addressed. The publishers and the journalists of these partisan newspapers were nonetheless very proud of them and they aimed to improve this crucial task as much as possible.

It should additionally be noted that the journalistic and the communicative activity of the female partisans constituted only a fraction of their overall propaganda efforts. They wrote multiple slogans on clean walls, they utilized loudspeakers to recruit enemy soldiers or neutral civilians, they created, printed and distributed thousands of proclamations, leaflets and tracts in order to promote the political line of the leftist coalition and achieve their aforementioned goals.

The female journalistic and propaganda activity of the Civil War was positive according to the partisan publications and the leftist perspective of that period. The French poet Paul Eluard dedicated the following short poem to *Μαχήτρια* (*Female Warrior*) because he wanted to honor the communicative work of the feminine parts: "To my Greek sisters: Sisters of mine in Greece, oh, brave women / You formed an alliance against death / Oh, my dear and immortal ones / You risk your lives so that life may exist / The day has dawned, oh, sisters of mine / When we will laugh at the word war / the word misery, because you will have won" (*Μαχήτρια*, 10 June 1949).

References

- Crawford, E. (2001). *The women's suffrage movement*, Routledge, London.
- Diaz-Balart, M. (1992). *La prensa de guerra en la zona republicana durante la Guerra Civil Espanola*, Ediciones de la Torre, Madrid.
- Dölle, G., Endlich, E., Golling, M. & Hering, S. (ed) (1988). *Die Frauenbewegung*, Archiv der Deutschen Frauenbewegung, Kassel.
- Easley, A., Gill, C. & Rodgers, B. (2019). *Women, periodicals and print culture in Britain*, Edinburgh Unive.
- Marrades, I. (1978). Feminismo, prensa y sociedad en Espana. *Revista de Sociologia*, 9, 89-134.
- Mitchell, Kat. (2014). *Italian women writers: gender and everyday life in fiction and journalism*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto.
- Requena Hidalgo, C. (2014). Una revista distinta: *Ellas*. *Arbor*, 190-767, 1-8, Access address(doi)<http://dx.doi.org/10.3989/arbor.2014.767n3002>.
- Sullerot, E. (1966). Journaux féminins et lutte ouvrière. *Revue d'Histoire du XIXe siècle* 88-122 ,1848-.
- Avdela, E. & Psarra A. (1985). *O feminismos stin Ellada tou Mesopolemou* (= *Feminism in Greece during the Inter-war*), Gnosi (= Knowledge), Athens., Αβδελά, Ε. & Ψαρρά, Α. (1985). *Ο φεμινισμός στην Ελλάδα του Μεσοπολέμου*, Γνώση, Αθήνα.
- Ackelsberg, M., Kaplan, T. & Willis, L. (1988). *Gynaikes stin Ispaniki Epanastasi* (= *Women in the Spanish Revolution*), Athens., Ακελσμπεργκ, Μ., Κάπλαν, Τ. & Γουίλις, Λ. (1988). *Γυναίκες στην Ισπανική Επανάσταση*, Αθήνα.
- Apostolopoulos B. (1998). *To chroniko mias epopoias* (= *The chronicle of an epic*), Sigxroni Epohi (= Modern Epoch), Athens., Αποστολόπουλος, Β. (1998). *Το χρονικό μιας εποποιίας*, Σύγχρονη Εποχή, Αθήνα.
- Vervenioti, T. (2013). *Gynaika tis Antistasis: i eisodos ton gynaikon stin politiki*: (= *Woman of the Re-sistance: the entrance of the women in politics*), Koukida, Athens., Βερβενιώτη, Τ. (2013). *Γυναίκα της Αντίστασης: η είσοδος των γυναικών στην πολιτική*, Κουκίδα, Αθήνα.
- Vervenioti, T. (2008). Grafes gynaikon gia ton elliniko emfylio: oi syllogikes mnimes kai i amnesia (= Writings of the women for the Greek Civil War: the collective memories and the amnesia). Antoniou, G. & Marantzidis, N. (ed). *I epochi tis sigxisis: i de-kaetia tou 1940 kai I istoriografia* (= *The epoch of the confusion: the decade of the 1940s and the historiography*), Vivliopoleio tis Estias (Bookstore of Hestia), Athens., Βερβενιώτη, Τ. (2008). Γραφές γυναικών για τον ελληνικό εμφύλιο: οι συλλογικές μνήμες και η αμνησία. Αντωνίου, Γ. & Μαραντζίδης, Ν. (ed). *Η εποχή της σύγχυσης: η δεκαετία του 1940 και η ιστοριογραφία*, Βιβλιοπωλείο της Εστίας, Αθήνα.
- Voglis, P. (2004). *I empiria tis filakis kai tis exorias* (= *The experience of prison and exile*), Alexandria, Athens., Βόγλης, Π. (2004). *Η εμπειρία της φυλακής και της εξορίας*, Αλεξάνδρεια, Αθήνα

- Voglis, P. (2012). *Gynaïkes pou polemoun san antres: theorisis toy fylou sto D.S.E.* (= *Women who fight like men: views of the gender in the D.S.E.*). Voglis, P., Charalambidis, M. & Tsi-laga, F. (ed.). *I epochi ton rixeon: I elliniki koinonia stin dekaetia toy 1940* (= *The epoch of the ruptu-res: the Greek society in the decade of the 1940s*), Epikentro (Epicenter), Athens., Βόγλης, Π. (2012). Γυναίκες που πολεμούν σαν άνδρες: θεωρήσεις του φύλου στο Δ.Σ.Ε. Βόγλης, Π., Χαραλαμπίδης, Μ. & Τσίλαγα, Φ. (ed). *Η εποχή των ρήξεων: η ελληνική κοινωνία στη δεκαετία του 1940*, Επίκεντρο, Αθήνα
- Elefantis, A. (1979). *I epag-gelia tis adynatis epanastasis* (= *The promise of the impossible revolution*), Themelio (= Foundation), Athens., Ελεφάντης, Α. (1979). *Η επαγγελία της αδύνατης επανάστασης*, Θεμέλιο, Αθήνα.
- Katsis, D. (2003). *To imerologio enos antarti tou D.S.E.* (= *The diary of a guerilla of the D.S.E.*), vol. 6, Athens., Κατσής, Δ. (2003). *Το ημερολόγιο ενός αντάρτη του Δ.Σ.Ε.*, vol. 6, Αθήνα.
- Κ.Κ.Ε. (1981). *Episima keimena* (= *Official texts*), vol. 5, Sigxroni Epohi (Modern Epoch), Athens. Κ.Κ.Ε. (1981). *Επίσημα κείμενα*, vol. 5, Σύγχρονη Εποχή, Αθήνα.
- . Kyriakidoy, M. (2001). Ο feministikos tipos stin Ellada toy Mesopoleμου (= *The Greek feminist press of the Interwar*), *Istor*, 12, 67-96., Κυριακίδου, Μ. (2001). Ο φεμινιστικός Τύπος στην Ελλάδα του Μεσοπολέμου, *Ιστωρ*, 12, 67-96
- Μ. (2010). *Polemos kai aima* (= *War and blood*), Etairia gia ti Meleti tis Ellinikis Istorias (= *Soci-ety for the Study of the Greek History*), Athens., Λαζαρίδου, Μ. (2010). *Πόλεμος και αίμα*, Εταιρεία για τη Μελέτη της Ελληνικής Ιστορίας, Αθήνα. Lazaridou,
- Margaritis, G. (2001). *Istoria toy Ellinikoy Emfyliou* (= *History of the Greek Civil War*), vol. 2, Vivliorama, Athens., Μαργαρίτης, Γ. (2001). *Ιστορία του Εμφυλίου Πολέμου*, vol. 2, Βιβλιόραμα, Αθήνα.
- Mattheou, A. & Polemi, P. (2003). *I ekdotiki peripeteia ton ellinon kommouniston* (= *The publishing adventure of the Greek communists*), Vivliorama, Athens., Ματθαίου, Α. & Πολέμη, Π. (2003). *Η εκδοτική περιπέτεια των Ελλήνων κομμουνιστών*, Βιβλιόραμα, Αθήνα.
- Beauvoir S. (2021). *To deftero fylo* (= *The second sex*), Metechmio (= Verge), Athens., Μποβουάρ, Σ. (2021). *Το δεύτερο φύλο*, Μεταίχμιο, Αθήνα.
- Parathanasiou, I. (ed) (2001). Ο paranomos tipos stis silloges ton ASKI (= *The clandestine press in the colle-ctions of A.S.K.I.*), A.S.K.I., Athens., Παπαθανασίου, Ι. (ed) (2001). Ο παράνομος Τύπος στις συλλογές των Α.Σ.Κ.Ι., Α.Σ.Κ.Ι., Αθήνα.
- Periskopio (Periscope), “Elliniko feministiko entipo” (= “Greek feminist publications”), E.R.T. Digital Archive., Περισκόπιο, «Ελληνικό φεμινιστικό έντυπο», Ψηφιακό Αρχείο Ε.Ρ.Τ., Κωδικός τεκμηρίου 0000069855, March 05, 1987, Access address <https://archive.ert.gr/69855/>.

- Sklaveniti, K. (1988). Ta gynaikia entipa (= The women's publications) 1908-1918. *Diavazo* (= *Reading*), 198, 13-22., Σκλαβενίτη, Κ. (1988). Τα γυναικεία έντυπα 1918-1908. *Διαβάζω*, 198, 13-22.
- Tzouvalas, G. (2018). *Giati o emfylios* (= *Why the Civil War*), vol. 2, Etairia gia ti meleti tis ellinikis istorias (= Society for the Study of the Greek History), Athens., Τζουβαλάς, Γ. (2018). *Γιατί ο εμφύλιος*, vol. 2, Εταιρεία για τη Μελέτη της Ελληνικής Ιστορίας, Αθήνα.
- Farakos, A. (1980). *Agnes Rousoroulou*, Athens., Φαράκος, Α. (1980). *Αγνή Ρουσοπούλου 1901-1977*, Αθήνα.

Aspekte të Hartës së Parë të Shqipërisë me Toponimastikë në Gjuhën Shqipe (1902)

Xherardo Nikjari

Abstrakt: Përgjatë shekujve hartografë, historianë dhe institucione nga vende të ndryshme evropiane dhe të botës kanë botuar shumë harta dhe atlase, ku tregohet përhapja gjeografike e shqiptarëve dhe e Shqipërisë në hapësirë. Ndonëse këto harta janë një pasuri e madhe me vlerë hartografike e sidomos historike, të cilat faktojnë etninë e lashtë autoktone të shqiptarëve në Ballkan, asnjëra syresh nuk ishte në gjuhën shqipe, por në gjuhën e hartografëve të huaj që i përpunuan. Botimi i hartës së parë të trevave shqiptare me toponimastikë në gjuhën shqipe më 1902 shënon një moment të madh historik pasi themeloi fushën e hartografisë shqiptare. Ky punim merr në shqyrtim rëndësinë historike, gjeografike, gjuhësore dhe kulturore të kësaj arritjeje të padytë. Harta që fryt i një bashkëpunimi të begatë gjatë Rilindjes Kombëtare Shqiptare midis spanjollit Don Juan Pedro de Aladro Kastrioti, i mbiquajtur nga shqiptarët Gjin Aladro Kastrioti dhe Faik bej Konicës, themeluesit edhe redaktorit të revistës rilindëse “Albania”. Punimi merr për herë të parë në analizë veçoritë hartografike dhe gjeografike të hartës së parë me toponimastikë në shqip të vitit 1902. Mes shumë të dhënave përshkrimore të kësaj vepre hartografike shquhet shtrirja e trungut etnik shqiptar në Ballkanin Perëndimor gjatë fillimviteve 1900. Për më tepër, ky punim do të përshkruajë edhe ndihmesën e pashlyeshme që dha një nga gjeografët më të shquar botërorë të asaj kohe, Élisée Reclus, në drejtimin e grupit të punës që u mor me ndërtimin e hartës së parë të Shqipërisë me toponimastikë në gjuhën shqipe.

Fjalë kyçe: Gjin Aladro Kastrioti, Faik bej Konica, Élisée Reclus, Shkodër, hartë e Shqipërisë, toponimastikë



MA, Independent researcher, Tirana-Albania, xherardonikjari@gmail.com



<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-1275-4665>



Balkan Studies Foundation
DOI: <http://doi.org/10.51331/A045>
Journal of Balkan Studies, 4 (2), 2024
balkanjournal.org



Received: 04.05.2024
Revision: 31.05.2024
Accepted: 01.07.2024



This work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (CC BY NC)

Abstract: Over the ages, cartographers, historians, and institutions from diverse European nations and beyond have produced numerous maps and atlases, illustrating the spatial distribution of Albanians and Albania. While these maps hold significant cartographic and historical value, showcasing the ancient authentic ethnicity of Albanians in the Balkans, none have been in Albanian but rather in the languages of foreign cartographers who compiled them. The publication of the first map of Albanian territories with Albanian toponymy in 1902 marks a pivotal historical moment, establishing Albanian cartography. This paper delves into the historical, geographical, linguistic, and cultural importance of this notable achievement. The map was the product of a fruitful collaboration during the Albanian National Awakening between Don Juan Pedro de Aladro Kastrioti, known to Albanians as Gjin Aladro Kastrioti, and Faik bey Konica, the founder and editor of the Albanian National Awakening magazine “Albania”. The paper examines the cartographic and geographical characteristics of the first map with Albanian toponymy from 1902. Noteworthy among the descriptive data of this cartographic work is the extent of the ethnic Albanian presence in the Western Balkans during the early 1900s. Additionally, this paper will detail the invaluable assistance provided by Élisée Reclus, one of the foremost geographers of the time, in guiding the working group involved in constructing the first map of Albania with Albanian toponymy.

Keywords: Gjin Aladro Kastrioti, Faik bej Konica, Élisée Reclus, Shkodër, map of Albania, toponymy

Hyrje

Viti 1902 përbën një datë të rëndësishme në historinë e hartografisë shqiptare, pasi që përkon me botimin e hartës së parë të trevave shqiptare me toponimastikë në shqip (Figura 1) (Konica, 1902: 104). Kjo arritje e vyer me vlerë jo vetëm historike, gjeografike, gjuhësore, kulturore, e cila barte edhe vlerë të çmuar në fushën didaktike, përbënte kulmin e një bashkëpunimi të gjerë midis spanjollin Don Juan Pedro de Aladro Kastrioti (1845-1914) me Faik bej Konicën (1875-1942) (Skëndi, 1967, pp.318-320) themeluesin edhe drejtuesin riosh të revistës “Albania”, e cila sipas biografit të parë të Konicës, Jup Kastrati, “ka qenë e përkohshmeja më e mirë e periudhës së Rilindjes Kombëtare dhe një nga më të mirat e historisë së shtypit periodik shqiptar” (Kastrati, 2022, pp.124). I pari, i njohur ndryshe në historiografinë shqiptare si Gjin Aladro Kastrioti ose Don Aladro (Konica, 1907, pp.74),¹ ishte një fisnik nga Andaluzia, ish-diplomat i shquar e njëherësh tregtar që zotëronte një kompani të madhe verërash në Spanjë, i cili, me idenë se rridhte nga heroi kombëtar shqiptar (në degë mëmësore) - Gjergj Kastrioti-Skënderbeu – hodhi pretendimin e tij për fronin e Shqipërisë në kapërcyell të shekullit XX (Clayer,

1 Ky është varianti i shqipëruar i emrit Juan me autor Faik Konicën. Ai e bindi aristoklatin spanjoll që të përdorte këtë variant në shtypin shqiptar. “...Kur i keshillova Aladros t’a shciperogje emerin e tij, “Juan de Aladro”-n e bera “Ghini i Aladros...”.

2012: 380; Lopez, 2002, pp.209-210). Edhe pse duhet theksuar se nuk ishte një kandidat zyrtar (Redaksia, 1903, pp.6).

Kjo hartë përbën një vepër të qenësishme monumentale me vlerë të pamohueshme shkencore e cila doli në dritë në vazhden e projekteve të shumta atdhedashëse që sendërtuan figura të spikatura të Rilindjes Kombëtare Shqiptare. Harta e Shqipërisë me toponimastikë në shqip e 1902-shit krahas së qeni një vepër me rëndësi të shumëfishtë, nxjerr në pah edhe rrekjet e dyshes Aladro-Konica për të çuar përpara një nga pikat më kryesore të çështjes shqiptare që ishte përlindja intelektua-lo-kulturore e popullit shqiptar (Arkivi Qendror Shtetëror i Republikës së Shqipërisë [më tej A.Q.Sh.], Fondi [më tej F.] 35, Viti [më tej V.] 1902, Dosja [më tej D.] 143, fletë [më tej fl.] 1).²

2 Sipas një proklamate të shpallur nga Don Gjin Aladro Kastrioti në janar të 1902-shit, mes të tjerash ai nënvizon rëndësinë që duhet t'u kushtohet shkollave shqipe nga veprimtarët e Lëvizjes Kombëtare Shqiptare. Ndërsa për Faik Konicën zhvillimi i kulturës dhe i lëvrimin të gjuhës amtare shqipe përbënin pikat kryesore të botëkuptimit të vet si rilindës, pse ato sipas tij do t'i jepnin hov Rilindjes Kombëtare. Shih Kastrati, 2022: 126-127.

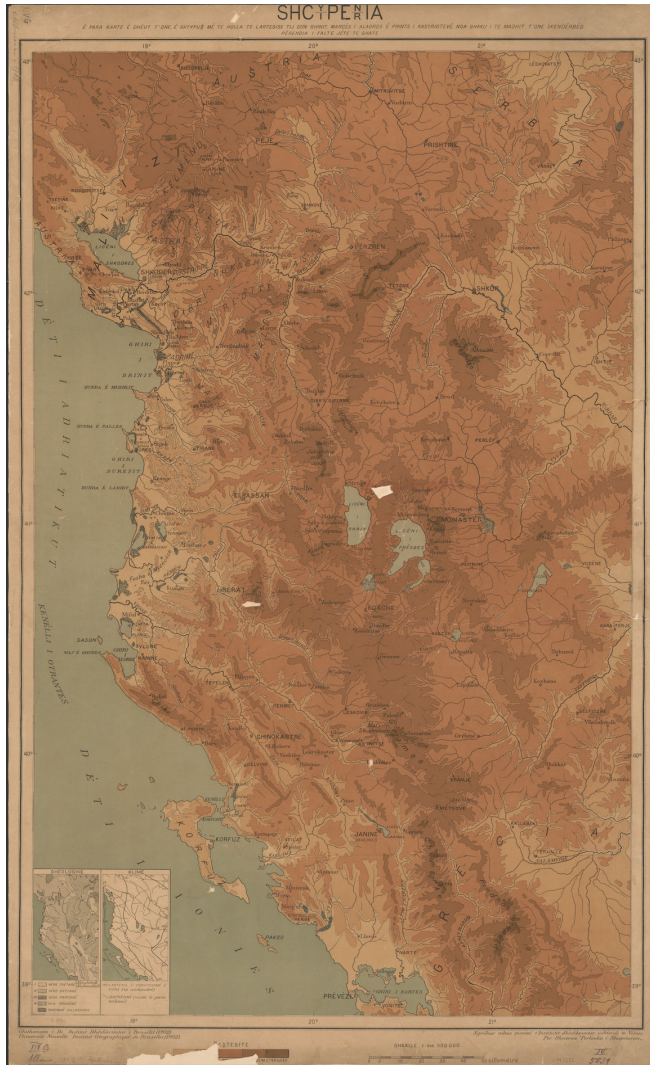


Figura 1.

Bashkëpunimi i begatë Aladro-Konica, 1901-1902

Bashkëpunimi midis Gjin Aladro Kastriotit dhe Faik Konicës zë fill në mesqershoren e 1901-shit, kur ky i fundit viziton spanjollin në Paris (Andrea, 2020: 484-486). Ai ishte vendosur në këtë qytet me daljen në pension nga karriera e tij e gjatë si diplomat në shërbimin e jashtëm të

Mbretërisë së Spanjës (Fernoel, 1903: 101). Don Aladroja ishte futur me të dyja këmbët në çështjen shqiptare më 1899 kur në kryeqytetin francez i mbiquajturi Komiteti Shqiptar i Parisit e shpall atë në mënyrë të habitshme prijëtar të Lëvizjes Kombëtare Shqiptare. Ky komitet, që subvencionohej nga spanjoli, ishte një nga shumë organizatat shqiptare që ndihmoheshin financiarisht prej tij (Ferrer, 1902: 1; Nikaj, 2016, pp.117-118).³ Meqenëse Don Aladroja zotëronte një pasuri tepër të madhe, ai vendosi të ndihmonte me të holla botimin e periodikëve a të veprave të ndryshme letrare në gjuhën shqipe dhe veprimtarë të zëshëm shqiptarë (Clayer, 2012, pp.381).

Midis bashkëpunimeve dhe marrëdhënieve të shumta, të lulëzuara që pati me shqiptarë të spikatur veçohet ai me Faik Konicën, edhe pse për një periudhë të shkurtër dy vjeçare, 1901-1902. Sipas historianit Kristo Frashëri, revista politiko-kulturore “Albania” që drejtonte Faik Konica në Bruksel në të njëzetat e tij, ishte “një monument i lëvizjes patriotike rilindëse”, që e bëri Konicën jashtë mase të njohur në qarqet shqiptare anembanë rruzullit, nga Amerika deri në Rumani (Jorgaqi, 2001 [Faik Konica: Vepra 5], pp.176).

Nisur nga cilësitë që gëzonte “Albania” në sytë e publikut intelektual-atdhetar shqiptar, Don Aladro vendos të krijojë lidhje me kryeredaktorin e saj Faik Konica për dy arsye. Së pari për ta shfrytëzuar revistën e tij si një mjet informimi ku të popullarizonte personin e vet si pretendues i fronit të një principate të ardhshme shqiptare edhe së dyti, që ishte më kryesorja, nga etja që kishte spanjoli për të ndihmuar çështjen shqiptare vetë (Österreichisches Staatsarchiv/Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Politisches Archiv XIV 12-3-1, fl, pp.30-31).⁴

3 Në gazetën e cituar të qytetit të Herezit, nga rridhte Don Aladroja, njoftohet se pas vendosjes së tij në Paris një grup shqiptar e cakton atë si kryetar të Lëvizjes Kombëtare. Mbështetur në kujtimet e meshtarit Dom Ndoc Nikaj, i cili ishte një prej bashkëpunëtorëve më jetëgjatë të Don Aladros, mund të hamendësojmë se ky grup ishte “Komiteti Shqiptar i Parigjit” që mbështetej financiarisht prej Gjin Aladro Kastriotit.

4 Në një relacion të datës 22 prill 1902, ambasadori austro-hungarez në Romë, Marius Freiherr Pasetti-Angeli von Friedenburg, i përcjell ministrit të jashtëm austro-hungarez, baronit Agenor Maria Gołuchowski, një informacion të marrë nga arbëreshi i njohur, Manilio Bennici. Sipas dokumentit që po citojmë, deduktojmë se Bennici ishte një agjent austriak. Relacioni citon një deklaratë me shkrim të bërë nga pretenduesi spanjoll, Gjin Aladro Kastrioti, ku ai artikulon

Disa nga arritjet e shënjuara të dyshes Aladro-Konica ishin: 1) themelimi i “Çmimit Skanderbeg” prej 1 000 frangash që i jepej atij shkrimtari shqiptar i cili kontribuonte më tepër në përsosjen e gjuhës së shkruar shqipe, që u fitua nga meshtari shkodran Dom Ndoc Nikaj (Arkivi i Muzeut Historik Shkodër, Fondi: Arkivi i Vjenës: 1902-1907, fl, pp69-70); 2) identifikimi i shqiptarëve të rinj atdhedashës të cilët asokohe kishin nevojë për mbështetje financiare për veprimtaritë e tyre në shërbim të vendit, njëri syresh ishte edhe piktori rilindës Theohar Gjini, që Konica i rekomandoi të trokiste në derën e Don Aladros për ndonjë ndihmë (Hudhri, 2000, pp.155-162; A.Q.Sh., F. 13, V. 1902, D. 3, fl, pp.3-4)⁵ dhe për fund, 3) botimi i të parës hartë të trevave shqiptare me toponimastikë në shqip, që shënjoi zenitin, e po ashtu edhe mbylljen politikisht të detyruar të marrëdhënies së tyre. Te kjo e fundit do të ndalemi shkurtimisht në fund të artikullit.

Rrugëtimi i botimit të hartës së parë të Shqipërisë me toponimastikë në shqip, 1898-1902

Për të njohur e për të kuptuar në mënyrë tërësore zhvillimin e idesë, të projektit dhe të finalizimit të botimit të kësaj vepre themelore hartografike shkruesi i këtyre radhëve ka shfrytëzuar dy burime kryesore historike: letërkëmbimin e rregullt të Faik bej Konicës me këshilltarin

motivin e tij për përfshirjen në çështjen shqiptare. Aty Don Aladro thotë se motivi i vërtetë i përfshirjes së tij në çështjen shqiptare nuk është përmbushja e aspiratës së tij monarkike më shumë sesa kontributi që mund të japë ai në përparimin e çështjes shqiptare. Në deklaratën që përmendet në relacion, Don Aladroja s'ndihej aq shumë si një pasardhës i Skënderbeut, për shkak se ai rridhte nga dinastia Kastrioti në degë femërore. Për fund, në këtë dokument të cituar në relacionin e ambasadorit Pasetti shkruhet se Don Aladroja “duke qenë i vetëdijshëm se kishte një pikë gjaku shqiptari në venat e tij, nuk kishte si të mos investonte mendjen dhe pasurinë e vet në çështjen shqiptare”.

- 5 Theohar Gjini njihet si një ndër piktorët më të spikatur të Rilindjes Kombëtare Shqiptare. Ai mbithirej “Piktori Mëmëdhetar” për arsye se realizonte shumë piktura me figurën e Skënderbeut. Talenti i tij, i frymëzuar nga ndjenjat nacionaliste shqiptare të kohës, tërhoqi vëmendjen e mjaft patriotëve shqiptarë si Asdreni, Sotir Peci, Nikolla Naço, Faik Konica, e tjerë. Ky i fundit, në kohën kur Theohar Gjini kishte rënë në vështirësi financiare, i sugjeron në një letër të datës 29 janar 1902 që t'i shkruaj Don Aladros për t'i kërkuar para. Në fund të letrës Konica e këshillon: “Në do, shkruaj-i dhe vetë, Aladros, thuai se të holla duhen pakë, e vetëm për dy viet.” Mbështetur në veprat e mëvonshme pikturike të Theohar Gjini mund të deduktojmë se ai iu drejtua spanjollit për ndihmë, i cili si duket i dha një dorë. Kjo pasi veprat me të cilat Theohar Gjini u mor në 1902-shin ishin dy portrete të spanjollit ku ai pozonte me kostumin popullor shqiptar dhe në një tjetër pikturë mjaft ikonike për kohën shfaqej portreti i Don Aladros përballë atij të Skënderbeut.

e ministrit të jashtëm austro-hungarez, baronin Julius Zwiedinek dhe artikujt në revistën “*Albania*” (1908-1902) që lidhen me hartën në fjalë. Qëmtimi i burimit të dytë dokumentar na ndihmon të zbardhim se çështja e të mbiquajturës “karte dheshkrimtare” (emërtim i mbështetur në përkthimin literal që Konica i bën “hartës gjeografike” nga frëngjishtja) daton shumë më herët sesa vetë bashkëpunimi Aladro-Konica (Vaugelas, 1902, pp.93).

Shtytja e Faik Konicës për realizimin e pastaj botimin e një harte të Shqipërisë në gjuhën shqipe, është e gërshetuar me një prej çështjeve kryesore që artikuloi në revistën e tij “*Albania*”, dhe kjo ishte njësimi i gjuhës shqipe, edhe për qëllime hartografike. Dijetari riosh Konica mori ngasje jo vetëm nga nevoja për botimin e një harte të Shqipërisë në shqip, por edhe që gjuha shqipe me të cilën do të shkruheshin njësitë fiziko-gjeografike të territoreve shqipfolëse të ishte një shqipe që të përbashkonte dy dialektet e mëdha të shqipes, gegërishten e toskërishten. Në një artikull të revistës “*Albania*” më 1898, ai nxjerr disa vërenjte të përpikta gjuhësore mbi njësimin e emrave të qyteteve shqiptare, prej këtu mund të deduktojmë zanafillën e projekt-idesë së një harte në gjuhën amtare të Konicës, tejet të vlefshme për fushën e albanologjisë edhe të hartografisë shqiptare. Në këtë artikull ai shkruan se në librat dhe në hartat që trajtojnë Shqipërinë emrat e qyteteve të gjinisë mashkullore si Berati apo Prizreni dalin në trajtën e tyre të pashquar (domethënë Berat dhe Prizren), ndërsa emrat e gjinisë femërore të qyteteve si Gjakova apo Janina jepen me trajtë të shquar. Faik Konica hedh idenë se për të shmangur gabimin e mësipërm emrat duhen shkruar kështu, pra sipas rastit në shqyrtim: Gjakovë dhe Janinë. Një rregull ky që ndiqet me përpikmëri nga hartografët shqiptarë edhe sot e kësaj dite (Konica, 1898, pp.100).

Njoftimi i parë për hartën në shtypin shqiptar të kohës lajmërohet nga “*Albania*” koniciane në shtator të 1900-s. Në artikullin me titull “*KARTA E SHCIPERISE*”, Faik Konica vë në dijeni lexuesit e tij se projekti i vet hartografik është gati, vetëm se i mungon financimi për ta botuar. Ndër

të tjera erudit i ri shqiptar pohon se ai e kishte diskutuar këtë çështje me drejtuesin e Institutit të Gjeografisë të Brukselit, Elisée Reclus (1830-1905) (Konica, 1900, pp.6-7). Ky gjeograf i shquar me prejardhje nga Franca ishte autor i një vepre monumentale gjeografike të titulluar “Gjeografia e Re Universale”, e cila doli në 19 vëllime dhe i kishte kushtuar Reclus-it plot 18 vite punë (1876-1894) (John Clark ve Camille Martin, 2013, pp.8, 15).

Reclus i dha Konicës një preventivë fillestare prej 1 800 frangash, që më vonë e zbret bujarisht në 1 500 franga, për një tirazh me 1 500 kopje të hartës. Sakaq, lajmërimi për projektin e kësaj harte mbyllet me thirrjen e Konicës që lexuesit e revistës së tij të kontribuonin monetarisht në botimin e kësaj vepre të rëndësishme, pasi, siç shkruan ai në artikull: “*Ky chenim eshte faré i pake, sé karta nuke do te jeté ñe lodre, po mé ñe te vertete vlére shkentsetaré...*” (Konica, 1900: 7; Konica, 1905, pp.73-74).

Në këtë moment rishfaqet Don Gjini Aladro Kastrioti, i cili tregohet plotësisht i gatshëm që të mbulonte shpenzimet e hartës. Më herët, këtë barrë kishte vendosur ta merrte përsipër shoqëria “Bashkimi” në Shkodër, nëpërmjet mbledhjes së fondeve (Andrea, 2020: 497; Jorgaqi, 2001 [Faik Konica: Vepra 4], pp.96-97).⁶

Pasi u siguruan të hollat për hartën, Reclus ngre një ekip pune për përpilimin e saj të përbërë nga dy hartografë të Institutit që drejtonte, zotërinjtë Bertrand dhe Patteson (Konica, 1902, pp.113-114).⁷ Mirëpo, studiuesi i Faik Konicës, Fotaq Andrea, hedh tezën se edhe vetë Faiku ishte pjesë e këtij grupi pune. Studiuesi Andrea jep argumente shteruese shkencore të cilat e bëjnë lexuesin ta mbështesë tezën e sipërthënë. Dy argumentet e tij më kryesore janë: erudicioni i gjerë i Konicës dhe ideja origjinale e tij për botimin e një harte të trevave shqipfolëse në gjuhën amtare (Andrea, 2016, pp.95).

6 Sipas një letre të datës 29 nëntor 1901 që Konica i dërgon Visarion Dodanit, i cili asokohe ishte një veprimtar i angazhuar shqiptar në koloninë e Bukureshtit, thuhet se Don Aladroja i kishte dhënë tashmë të hollat për hartën e Shqipërisë që pritej të botohej së shpejti. Në letër thuhet: “Princi i Aladros dha edhe disa mijëra frënga për një kartë dheshkrimtare të Shqipërisë që do të dalë në dritë në funt të Kalëndorit”.

7 Konica nuk i jep të plotë emrat e hartografëve-ndihmës të Reclus-it që ndihmuan në realizimin e hartës.

Dy hartat referenciale që grupi i punës në Bruksel shfrytëzon për ndërtimin e hartës së tyre unikalë ishin dy botime të Hartës së Shqipërisë të Institutit Gjeografik Ushtarak të Vjenës, njëra e vitit 1880 dhe tjera e vitit 1900 (Ibid, pp.99-100).

Në numrin e 4-t të revistës “*Albania*” për vitin 1902, Faik Konica shpall me galdim se kishte dalë nga shtypi “E para karte e dheut t’one...”. Lajmërimi i Konicës mbyllet me një falënderim të ngrohtë në drejtim të Gjin Aladro Kastriotit, i cili përmes filantropizmit të tij kishte mundësuar botimin e këtij projekti kaq të vlefshëm për kulturën edhe shkencën shqiptare. Konica aty shkruan:

“Do t’ishim ne faj ne mos i faleshim Z. T. Don Ghinit t’Aladros per ndihmen ce na dha me ne shpejtim, me ne ndzehtesie ce s’mundim t’a harojme. Me te holla te tij u-mbarua kio pune, e, ne mos per tiater ghe, te paken *kete miresie* (shkrimi me italik i Faik Konicës - shënim i Xherardo Nikjarit) ch’do atdhetar duhet te i a njohe” (Konica, 1902, pp.104-105).

Harta i mbërriti edhe baronit Zwiedenik (Andrea, 2020, pp.573).⁸ Rrjedhimisht, popullariteti që fitoi harta në radhët e intelektualëve shqiptarë ishte i gjerë dhe kopjet e saj mbaruan në gusht të 1912-s. Kjo e dhënë na bën të hamendësojmë se shumëfishimi i hartës me toponimastikë në shqip njohu disa tirazhe gjatë harkut të 10 vjetëve (1902-1912) për të përmbushur kësodore kërkesat e blerësve të ndryshëm (Jorgaqi, 2001 [Faik Konica: Vepra 4], pp.176).

Disa të dhëna të pëgjithshme përshkrimore të hartës së Shqipërisë me toponimastikë në shqip të vitit 1902

Shqyrtimi i parë i kësaj harte është bërë nga studiuesi Fotaq Andrea, në artikullin e tij, “Tjetër zbulim i rallë nga miniera Konica/Harta e tij shqiptare e vitit 1902” (Andrea, 201, pp. 92-102). Pasi e zbulon këtë hartë në Bibliotekën Kombëtare në Belgjikë, Bruksel, konicologu Andrea e hulumton thellë këtë hartë dhe arrin një studim serioz mbi të. Punimi i tij studimor mbi hartën “koniciane”, sikurse e quan ai këtë vepër hartografike, merret kryesisht me dy tema ku autori ka qenë jo i mangët:

8 Përmes një letre të datës 21 korrik 1902 Faik Konica i shkruan baronit Zwiedinek se i ka dërguar 12 ekzemplarë të hartës së Shqipërisë.

1) historikun e përpunimit të hartës, duke filluar qysh nga hulumtimet e para të Konicës për një hartë të Shqipërisë në gjuhën shqipe e deri tek botimi i saj më 1902;

2) dhe parashtrimin e argumenteve shkencore mbi bashkautorësinë e Faik Konicës si një nga realizuesit e kësaj harte, duke e ndërthurur njëherazi edhe me vizionin rilindës që Konica kishte për dobritë e mëdha që do të sillte botimi i një vepre të tillë hartografike.

Të dyja këto tema përpunohen më së miri edhe me shtjellimin që Fotaq Andrea i bën kontekstit historik të momentit kur harta e Shqipërisë sheh dritën e botimit më 1902. Thënë kjo, këtij punimi studimor pioner mbi hartën e 1902-shit i ka munguar deri më tani një përshkrim i hollësishëm, i bashkërenditur të elementëve fiziko-gjeografikë, topografikë, edhe hartografikë.

Deri më tani janë identifikuar dy ekzemplarë të kësaj harte kaq unikalë. Njëri ekzemplar është zbuluar nga studiuesi Fotaq Andrea në Bibliotekën Kombëtare të Belgjikës në Bruksel (Institut géographique de l'Université nouvelle de Bruxelles. "Shcypenia = Shciperia" Hartë, 1902. Bibliothèque royale de Belgique), ndërsa një ekzemplar i dytë ndodhet në Fondin Albanologjik të Bibliotekës Publike "Marin Barleti" në Shkodër (Institut géographique de l'Université nouvelle de Bruxelles. "Shcypenia = Shciperia" Hartë, 1902. Biblioteka Publike "Marin Barleti", Fondi Albanologjik). Duhet të nënvizojmë se këto dy ekzemplarë janë identikë në përmbajtje, veçse ekzemplari në Shkodër (që ka gjasë të mos jetë hartë e tirazhit të parë) nuk e ka dedikimin në adresë të Don Aladros ku falënderohet për bujarinë e tij financiare në botimin e hartës. Shkruesi i këtyre radhëve do të ndalet mëposhtë në arsyen e këtij ndryshimi të bërë.

Në përshkrimin e hartës së parë me toponimastikë në shqip do ta bëjmë duke u mbështetur tek ekzemplari që ndodhet në Bruksel. Të dhënat e përgjithshme mund t'i rendisim si vijon:

Së pari, harta e vitit 1902, që ishte fryt i bashkëpunimit Aladro-Konica është një paraqitje e përgjithshme e relievit fizik të shtrirjes gjeografike të trungut etnik shqiptar që hapej në katër vilajetet osmane të Ballkanit Perëndimor. *Së dyti*, veçoria kryesore që e bën këtë hartë kaq të jashtëzakonshme në raport

me hartat e tjera për trevat shqiptare që qarkullonin deri në atëkohë ishte përdorimi i gjuhës shqipe në toponimastikë. Konica në cilësinë e nismëtarit të hartës së parë me toponimastikë në shqip vendosi të shfrytëzonte variantin e alfabetit të shqipes me germa latine që përdorte tek “*Albania*” për hartën në fjalë. Edhe pse standardizimi i alfabetit të shqipes me bazë atë latin ndodhi në Kongresin e Manastirit më 1908 (Grup autorësh, 2007, pp. 391-393), në asokohë ky variant ishte tej mase i përhapur në qarqet intelektuale-patriotike shqiptare që merreshin me botime periodikësh, sidomos pas rrëzimit të Lidhjes Shqiptare të Prizrenit. Gjithashtu, alfabeti me të cilën u hodhën në hartë emrat e njësive të ndryshme gjeografike, krahas germave latine, përbëhej nga ato që mbiquheshin germa dyshe, që tregonin tinguj të veçantë të shqipes (Hoxha, 1986, pp.178-181). *Së treti*, në krye të hartës shpaloset titulli i saj, Shqipëria-Shqypnia, në dy krye-dialektet e shqipes i shkruirë në një të vetëm. *Së katërti*, harta e vitit 1902 gëzon përmasat 1.2 x 0.75 metra, në shkallën 000 1:500. *Së pesti*, poshtë titullit shpaloset me germa të mëdha mirënjohja e tepruar ndaj Don Gjini Aladro Kastriotit: “*E’ para karte é dheut t’one é shtypur/n mé të holla të Lartesisë Tij Don Ghinit, Marcés i Aladros é prints i Kastrioteve nga ghaku i te Madhit t’one Skenderbég, Pérendia i faltë jéte te ghate*” (Figura 2).



Figura 2.

Së gjashti, në një të dhënë tjetër të kësaj harte përfaqet përpjekja madhore e Konicës për të përshtatur në shqip termat e huaj shkencorë. Në vend të terminologjisë së sotme shkencore “hartë gjeografike”, Konica përdor fjalën “karte dhe-shkrimtare”, jo vetëm për arsye të frankofilizmit të tij, por edhe sepse donte të shmangte orientalizmat si në rastin konkret, ku fjala “hartë” rrjedh nga turqishtja “*harita*”. Po kështu, nëse vëmë re poshtë hartës, në të majtë të saj, jashtë kornizës së vet, tregohet në frëngjisht dhe shqip botuesi edhe viti i botimit: *Université Nouvelle. Institut Géographique de Bruxelles (1902)* dhe *Ghithemsim i Ri. Institut Dhëshkrimtar i Bruselit (1902)*. Po kështu, *së shtati*, vëmë re edhe një orvatje tjetër të Konicës në këtë drejtim që është neologjizma që përdor

për dy miniharta që i pagëzon me emrin “kartica” (Figura 3), nga frëngjishtja “cartouches” (Konica, 1902, pp.105). “Karticat” përmbajnë dy harta që dëftojnë të njëjtën shtrirje gjeografike të trevave etnike shqiptare sikurse harta me toponimastikë në shqip, por këto dy harta gëzojnë tipologji të ndryshme, njëra ka karakter gjeologjik dhe tjetra klimatik. Rëndësia e këtyre “karticave” është e paçmueshme pasi që ato përbëjnë dy mrekulli të tjera pionere në llojin e tyre brendapërbrenda lëmit të hartografisë shqiptare. Miniharta gjeologjike është pasqyrimi i parë i depozitimeve të trevave shqiptare. Ajo është më e hershme sesa harta gjeologjike e veriut të Shqipërisë e baronit austro-hungarez Franz Nopcsa, botuar në veprën “*Geographie und Geologie Nordalbaniens*” më 1929 (Pango ve Kosta, 2014, pp.220), që është mbajtur deri më tani si harta e parë gjeologjike shqiptare. Mirëpo, miniharta gjeologjike e vitit 1902 është e thjeshtë dhe ndonëse i mungon karakteri i mirëfilltë shkencor, ajo ka vlerë vetëm historike. Për sa i përket hartës klimatike, veçantitë që e përshkojnë atë janë më eprorë. Miniharta klimatike nuk është vetëm e para hartë klimatike e trevave shqiptare, pa marrë parasysh gjuhën e përdorur në të, por përbën një risi tejet moderne edhe për hartografinë botërore. Kjo minihartë është botuar 2 vite pas botimit të hartës së parë të mirëfilltë klimatike në botë nga gjeografi Wladimir Köppen, më 1900 (Conrad, 1941, pp.154). Shenjat e saj konvencionale tregojnë izohietet dhe izotermet që paraqesin vlerat e përvitshme të rreshjve në hapësira të caktura gjeografike të trevave shqiptare.

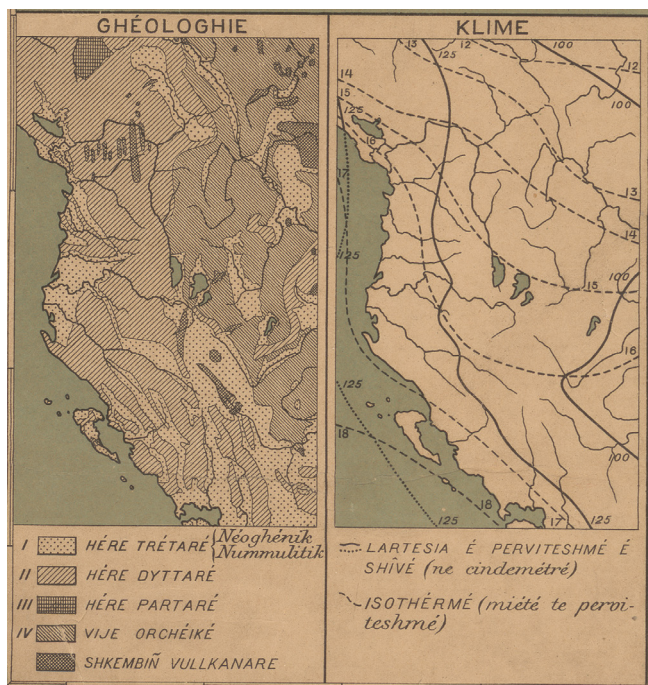


Figura 3.

Së teti, harta e parë me toponimastikë në shqip e vitit 1902 nuk është një hartë politike, por fizike, e cila na jep një paraqitje të kënaqshme të një-sive gjeografike të viseve shqipfolëse në krahun perëndimor të zotëri-meve evropiane të Perandorisë Osmane. Ndonëse harta nuk ka kufij politikë, Konica dhe gjeografët e tjerë belgë që u morën me përpunimin e hartës u kujdesën që të vendosin me germa të mëdha shtetet me të cilat kufizoheshin trevat shqiptare asokohe: Perandoria Austro-Hun-gareze në veri dhe veri-perëndim, Mali i Zi në veri, Serbia në veri dhe veri-lindje edhe Greqia në jug. *Së nënti*, toponimet në shqip të një-sive gjeografike në hartë arrijnë numrin 400, ku futen këtu qytete, fshatra, male, lumenj, liqene, dete dhe fusha. *Së dhjeti*, legjenda e hartës përmban shenjat konvencionale të 5 nivelimeve të lartësive të relievit nga 0 - 2 000 metër e sipër, por nuk përmban një shenjë konvencionale për të treguar shkallën e thellësisë së deteve apo të liqeneve, gjë e cila në rastin

e liqenit më të thellë të Shqipërisë, atij të Ohrit, me prejardhje tektonike, do të ishte një veçori thelbësore gjeografike për t'u shënuar. *Së njëmbëlljeti*, nisur nga këqyrje të tjera vëmë re se harta ka të ndërthuar bashkazi me elementët gjeografikë, fizikë dhe hartografikë edhe elementë etnografikë. Mbështetur në toponimet në gjuhën shqipe që shpalosen në këtë hartë, mund të deduktojmë shtrirjen e qyteteve a të fshatrave me shumicë shqiptare sipas studimeve të rrahura nga Faik Konica në Ballkanin perëndimor, për fillimshkullin XX, nga veriu në jug dhe nga lindja në perëndim. Toponimi më skajor verior që Konica vë në hartë është qyteza e Bellopojës, që shtrihej në rajonin e Sanxhakut, kurse toponomi më skajor në jug të viseve shqiptare shënjohej Vonica (*Vonitse* - sipas hartës) në bregun jugor të Gjirit të Artës në Greqinë e sotme. Është interesante të nënvizojmë se për Faik Konicën rajoni i Çamërisë ishte territori i fundit me element etnik shqiptar në drejtim jugor. Çamëria kufizohet në jug me rrjedhën e poshtme të lumit të Artës dhe pas një këqyrje të thjeshtë vëmë re se thujtja e gjithë hapësira në cepin e poshtëm, në të djathtë të kornizës së hartës, është memece në aspektin toponimastik. Përveçse vihen në dukje vargmalet e Pindit, në lindje të rajonit të Çamërisë. Po ashtu, një hapësirë gjeografike memece është hapësira gjeografike veri-perëndimore në cepin e majtë të hartës, lart, që përkon me territoret e shtetit të sotëm të Bosnje-Hercegovinës që asokohe ishin në protektoratin e Austro-Hungarisë dhe mandej më 1908 do të aneksoheshin prej saj (Grup autorësh, 2007, pp.397). Pika më skajore e hartës në perëndim përkon me kryeqytetin e Malit të Zi, Cetinjen (*Tsetine* - sipas hartës), i cili shquhej për një komunitet të konsoliduar shqiptar. Ndërsa në lindje, shtrirja e trevave me shumicë etnike shqiptare përfundonte në Kriva Palanka (*Pallange* - sipas hartës) të Maqedonisë së sotme të Veriut.

Së fundi, harta e 1902-shit na jep edhe disa të dhëna të bollshme rreth përhapjes gjeografike të kënetave, një pjesë e konsiderueshme e të cilave u bonifikuan në dy periudha të ndryshe historike të Shqipërisë. Periudha e para e bonifikimit të shumicës së kënetave që shpalosen në hartë, kryesisht kënetat përgjatë Ultësirës Perëndimore, ndodhi në gjysmën e

dytë të viteve '20 të shekullit XX. Kjo periudhë përkon me ngritjen e një sistemi të gjerë kanalizimi dhe irrigacioni me qëllim zgjerimin e tokave të punueshme dhe përmirësimin e kushteve të punës së bujkut në këto territore, sot ish-kënetë (Zavalani, 1998, pp.296). Periudha e fundit e përtharjes së gjerë të hapësirave të mëdha gjeografike kënetore zë vend në vitet e para të ngritjes së diktaturës komuniste në Shqipëri, më 1946. Tipikisht bëhet fjalë për tharjen e kënetës së Maliqit në jug-lindje të vendit, e cila në hartën e Shqipërisë së vitit 1902 na prezantohet me emërtimin toponimastik “Liçeni i Maliqit”, duke parakuptuar kësaj sipërfaqen e gjerë gjeografike të kënetës në ato vite (Ndoja, 2017, pp.7-8).

* * *

Bashkëpunimi Aladro-Konica u ndërpre si pasojë e lidhjeve të dendura të spanjollit me arbëreshët. Faiku vetë, si proaustriak, në këmbim të pranimit të ndihmës nga ana e Don Aladros i kishte vënë kusht spanjollit që të mos ngatërrohej me grupet italo-shqiptare që përfaqësonin tërthorazi interesat e Italisë në Shqipëri (Andrea, 2020: 533; Kocaqi, 2020, pp.36). Meqenëse Konica dhe mjaft bashkëpatriotë të tij ishin rreshtuar kraher interesave austro-hungareze (që rivalizonin ato të Italisë) në rajon, ata i kundërshtonin herë haptazi, herë larg e larg synimet italiane për hesap të Monarkisë së Danubit (Jorgaqi, 2001 [Faik Konica: Vepra 4], pp.140-141). E për këtë arsye në një nga tirazhet e hartës, Konica vendosi t'i hiqte shkrimin mirënjohës dedikuar Don Gjini Aladro Kastriotit. Ky ekzemplar ndodhet në Bibliotekën Publike të Shkodrës “Marin Barleti” (Figura 4).



Figura 4.

Për sa i përket Don Aladros, angazhimi i tij me disa qarqe italo-shqiptare u lexua gabimisht nga Austro-Hungaria si një pozicionim i prerë i spanjollit nga ana e Italisë. Sikur e kemi thënë mësipër qëllimi i tij ishte financimi i çfarëdolloj grupi që propagandonte të drejtat e shqiptarëve, dhe këtu nuk bënin përjashtim as grupet italo-shqiptare. Sidoqoftë, bashkëpunimi i shkurtër Aladro-Konica për aq sa zgjati pati rezultate të jashtëzakonshme në dobi të çështjes shqiptare. Ato arritën valencën më të lartë me botimin e hartës së parë me toponimastikë në shqip më 1902.

Përfundim

Në përfundim mund të pohojmë me pa mëdyshje se me këtë hartë themelohet fusha e hartografisë shqiptare. Ajo përmban elemente tejet moderne brenda kontekstit të hartografisë bashkëkohore të kapërcyellit të shekullit XX. Ky përfundim lidhet kryesisht me faktin se përpunimi i saj u realizua nga një prej mendjeve më të mëdha të gjeografisë botërore siç ishte gjeografi i famshëm Elisee Reclus, që përdori teknikat më të përparuara hartografike të kohës.

Gjithashtu nëpërmjet kësaj vepre themeltare për kulturën edhe shkencën shqiptare deduktojmë të dhëna të rëndësishme për dy aktorët kryesorë që e realizuan, Don Aladro Kastrioti dhe Faik Konica. Harta e 1902-shit na bën të kuptojmë përkushtimin e Don Aladros ndaj çështjes shqiptare, nëpërmjet financimit të projekteve që ishin në shërbim të kulturës dhe propagandës shqiptare. Ndërsa Konica përmes kontributit që dha në ndërtimin e hartës së parë shqipe del në pah edhe si gjeograf, edhe si hartograf. Dy attribute këto që i shtohen figurës së tij shumëplanëshe rilindëse për shkak të attributeve të tija si historian, sociolog, letrar, shkimentar, poet, përkthyes, kritik, diplomat e tjerë.

Për fund, mund të pohojmë se harta e Shqipërisë e vitit 1902 ndonëse ka lajthitje a pasaktësi jo të pakta gjeografike, ajo prapëseprapë bart vlera albanologjike, historike, gjuhësore dhe pa dyshim, shkencore.

Aspects of the First Map of Albania With Toponymy in the Albanian Language (1902)

Xherardo Nikjari

Throughout history, numerous maps and atlases have been produced by cartographers, historians, and institutions from various European nations and beyond, depicting the spatial distribution of Albanians and Albania. Despite their significant cartographic and historical value, showcasing the ancient ethnicity of Albanians in the Balkans, these maps were invariably created in the languages of foreign cartographers rather than in Albanian. The 1902 publication of the first map of Albanian territories using Albanian toponymy marks a pivotal historical moment, establishing the foundation of Albanian cartography. This study delves into the historical, geographical, linguistic, and cultural



MA, Independent researcher, Tirana-Albania, xherardonikjari@gmail.com



<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-1275-4665>



Balkan Studies Foundation
DOI: <http://doi.org/10.51331/A045>
Journal of Balkan Studies, 4 (2), 2024
balkanjournal.org



Received: 04.05.2024
Revision: 31.05.2024
Accepted: 01.07.2024



This work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (CC BY NC)

significance of this notable achievement, which was a product of a fruitful collaboration during the Albanian National Awakening between Don Juan Pedro de Aladro Kastrioti (known to Albanians as Gjin Aladro Kastrioti) and Faik bey Konica, the founder and editor of the Albanian National Awakening magazine “Albania.”

Aladro Kastrioti, a former brilliant diplomat who became involved in the Albanian question during the XIX and XX centuries, claimed descent from the Albanian national hero of the XV century, Gjergj Kastrioti-Skanderbeg, and aspired to the throne of Albania. In his efforts to raise national awareness among Albanians, he financed various cultural projects, one of which was the cartographic project that led to the creation of the 1902 map. This collaboration resulted in the creation of a significant cultural and historical artifact that not only represented a technical achievement in mapping but also served as a symbolic assertion of Albanian identity and territorial aspirations.

The paper examines the cartographic and geographical characteristics of the first map of Albania with Albanian toponymy from 1902. It is the first paper to scientifically explore the journey leading to the publication of this map and attempts to explain its characteristics in geographical, linguistic, and historical terms. Noteworthy among the descriptive data of this cartographic work is the extent of the ethnic Albanian presence in the Western Balkans during the early 1900s. The map reflects a detailed understanding of the ethnic distribution of Albanians, emphasizing their historical and cultural presence in the region.

The creation of this map was not an isolated endeavor but part of a broader movement of national and cultural renewal among Albanians. The Albanian National Awakening (Rilindja Kombëtare) was a period marked by efforts to revive and promote Albanian culture, language, and national identity. The collaboration between Aladro Kastrioti and Faik Konica symbolizes the intersection of these efforts with European intellectual and political currents. Faik Konica, a prominent Albanian intellectual and nationalist, played a crucial role in shaping the cultural

and political discourse of the time. His work in publishing and promoting Albanian literature and history was instrumental in fostering a sense of national identity among Albanians.

Additionally, this paper will detail the invaluable assistance provided by Élisée Reclus, one of the foremost geographers of the time, in guiding the working group involved in constructing the first map of Albania with Albanian toponymy. Élisée Reclus was a renowned French geographer whose contributions to the field of geography and cartography were significant. His involvement in the project added a layer of scientific rigor and credibility, ensuring that the map was not only a cultural artifact but also a reliable geographical document.

The map's publication in 1902 was a strategic move in the context of the broader political and cultural objectives of the Albanian national movement. It was designed to assert the historical and territorial aspirations of Albanians at a time when the Balkan region was undergoing significant political changes. The map served as a visual representation of Albanian claims to their homeland, challenging the narratives and maps produced by neighboring nations and foreign powers.

One of the rare features of this map is the inclusion of two minimaps, which are annexed inside the main map. The first minimap is a geological map of Albania, the first of its kind. This geological map provided valuable information about the natural resources and geological features of the region, which were of significant interest not only for scientific purposes but also for economic and strategic reasons. The inclusion of these minimaps reflects the interdisciplinary approach of the project, combining elements of geography, geology, and climatology to present a holistic view of Albania.

The second minimap is a climatic map of Albania, which was highly innovative for the cartographic field at the time. The concept of climatic mapping was relatively new, with the first climatic map in the world being published just two years earlier by the prominent German-Russian geographer Wladimir Köppen. This inclusion highlights the advanced

scientific approach taken by the creators of the map and their intention to provide a comprehensive understanding of the Albanian territories.

The collaboration between Aladro Kastrioti, Faik Konica, and Élisée Reclus in the creation of this map underscores the transnational and interdisciplinary nature of the project. It involved contributions from individuals with diverse backgrounds and expertise, reflecting the interconnectedness of European intellectual and political networks at the time. The map stands as a testament to the power of collaboration and the exchange of ideas across borders.

The descriptions of this map in this paper are based on two primary sources: the original copy of the map held in the Royal Library of Belgium and another copy in optimal condition located at the Public Library “Marin Barleti” in Shkodër, Albania. These copies provided a comprehensive basis for examining the cartographic details and the broader historical and cultural context of the map.

In analyzing the map, this paper also considers the technical and artistic aspects of its creation. The mapmakers employed advanced cartographic techniques for their time, ensuring accuracy and clarity in depicting the Albanian territories. The choice of toponymy was particularly significant, as it involved the standardization of Albanian place names, which were often distorted or replaced by foreign versions in other maps. This act of naming was a reclaiming of space and identity, asserting the Albanian connection to their land.

Moreover, the publication of the map was not merely an academic exercise but had practical implications for the Albanian national movement. It served as a tool for political advocacy, providing a visual representation of Albanian territorial claims that could be used in diplomatic negotiations and public campaigns. The map was likely intended to influence both domestic and international audiences, rallying support for the Albanian cause and countering the narratives of other Balkan nations.

This interdisciplinary approach, combining geography, geology, and climatology, reflects the comprehensive vision of the map's creators. They aimed to produce a document that was not only politically significant but also scientifically valuable. The involvement of Élisée Reclus, a prominent geographer, ensured that the map adhered to the highest standards of scientific accuracy and cartographic excellence. His guidance was instrumental in shaping the map's content and methodology, integrating the latest geographical knowledge and techniques.

The impact of this map extended beyond its immediate political and cultural context. It laid the groundwork for future cartographic and geographical studies of Albania and the Balkans. Subsequent maps and studies built upon the foundations established by this pioneering work, further advancing the field of Albanian cartography and contributing to the broader understanding of the region's geography and history.

Furthermore, for Albanians, asserting their presence on the map was not merely an academic exercise but a crucial step in the broader fight for recognition and independence. The map was a declaration of existence and a statement against the erasure and marginalization of Albanian identity.

In conclusion, the publication of the first map of Albanian territories with Albanian toponymy in 1902 represents a significant milestone in the history of Albanian cartography and the Albanian National Awakening. This paper explores the historical, geographical, linguistic, and cultural significance of this achievement, highlighting the collaborative efforts that made it possible. The involvement of figures like Aladro Kastrioti, Faik Konica, and Élisée Reclus demonstrates the transnational and interdisciplinary nature of the project, which combined scientific rigor with cultural and political aspirations. The map not only served as a valuable geographical document but also as a powerful symbol of Albanian identity, influencing the course of the Albanian national movement and contributing to the broader understanding of the region's history and geography.

Bibliografia

Burime arkivore dhe biblioteka:

- Arkivi i Muzeut Historik Shkodër*, Fondi: Arkivi i Vjenës: 1902-1907, fl. 69-70.
- Arkivi Qendror Shtetëror i Republikës së Shqipërisë* (më tej A.Q.Sh.), Fondi (më tej F.) 35, Viti (më tej V.) 1902, Dosja (më tej D.) 143, fletë (më tej fl.) 1.
- A.Q.Sh., F. 13, V. 1902, D. 3, fl. 3-4.
- Österreichisches Staatsarchiv/Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Politisches Archiv XIV 12-3-1, fl. 30-31.
- Institut géographique de l'Université nouvelle de Bruxelles. "Shcypenia = Shciperia" Hartë, 1902. Biblioteka Publike "Marin Barleti", Fondi Albanologjik.
- Institut géographique de l'Université nouvelle de Bruxelles. "Shcypenia = Shciperia" Hartë, 1902. Bibliothèque royale de Belgique.

Revista dhe periodikë:

- Conrad, V. (1941). Obituary: Wladimir Köppen. *Geographical Review*, Vol. 31 (1), 154-155.
- Fernoel (1903). Don Juan de Aladro Kastrioti: Prince d'Albanie. *L'Echo des Jeunes*, 1 tetor 1903, 100-101.
- Ferrer A. J. (1902). D. Juan P. de Aladro y Kastriota: Principe de Albania. *El Guadalete*, 25 maj 1902, 1.
- Lopez, R. J. (2002). El Jerezano Juan Pedro Aladro Kastriota: Principe de Albania. *Revista de Historia de Jerez*, 8, pp.207-218.
- Konica, F. (1898). Notes Diverses. *Albania*, 2 (6), 100.
- Konica, F. (1900). Karta e Shciperise. *Albania*, 4 (5), pp. 6-7.
- Konica, F. (1902). Karta dheshkrimtare. *Albania*, 6 (4), pp.104-105.
- Konica, F. (1902). La première carte d'Albanie. *Albania*, 6 (4), pp.113-114.
- Konica, F. (1905). Fleta e Drectorit. *Albania*, 9 (4), pp.73-74.
- Konica, F. (1907). Fleta e Drectorit. *Albania*, 11 (4), pp.73-76.
- Vaugelas (pseudonim i Faik Konicës). (1902). Karte-Harte, *Albania*, 6 (4), pp.93-94.
- Andrea, F. (2016). *Faik Konica - Përlindësi Modern*. Tiranë: Zenit Editions.
- Andrea, F. (Ed.), (2020). *Letërkëmbim 1897-1912, "Albania" dhe Vjena*. Prishtinë: Botime Artini.
- Clark J. ve Martin C. (Ed.). (2013). *Anarchy, Geography, Modernity: Selected Writings of Elisee Reclus* (trans. John Clark ve Camille Martin). Michigan: PM Press.
- Clayer, N. (2012), *Në fillimet e nacionalizmit shqiptar* (trans. Artan Puto), Tiranë: Botimet Përpjekja. (Viti origjinal i botimit, 2007).

- Grup autorësh (2007). *Historia e Popullit Shqiptar II: Rilindja Kombëtare*, vitet 30 të shek. XIX-1912. Tiranë: Botimet Toena.
- Hoxha, D. I. (1986). *Nëpër udhën e penës shqiptare*. Tiranë: Shtypshkronja Mihal Duri.
- Hudhri, F. (2000). *Arti i Rilindjes Shqiptare*. Tiranë: Botimet Onufri.
- Jorgaqi, N. (Ed.). (2001). *Faik: Konica: Vepra 4*. Tiranë: Botimet Dudaj.
- Jorgaqi, N. (Ed.). (2001). *Faik: Konica: Vepra 5*. Tiranë: Botimet Dudaj.
- Ndoja, Leka (2017). *Gjyqi i Grupit Tekniko-Intelektual: Procesi i Maliqit, 1946*. Tiranë: ISKPK.
- Nikaj, D. N. (2016), *Kujtime të një jete së kalueme*. Tiranë: Botime Onufri.
- Kastrati, J. (2022). *Faik Konica: Monografi*. Tiranë: Shtypshkronja Kristalina-KH.
- Kocaqi, E. (2020). *Shqipëria dhe Fuqitë e Mëdha: 1878-1918*. Tiranë: Dodona Press.
- Pango, A. ve Kosta, S. (2014). *300 autorë të huaj për Shqipërinë*. Tiranë: Botime Maluka.
- Skëndi, S. (1967). *The Albanian National Awakening: 1878-1912*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Zavalani, T. (1998). *Histori e Shqipnis*. Tiranë: Shtëpia e librit Phoenix.

Urban and Architectural Alterations in Elbasan from Ottoman Period to Modernity

Brunilda Basha, Zafer Sağdıç


Abstract: This research paper examines the transition of urban spaces and architectural changes in Elbasan, Albania, from Ottoman influence to modernity. By analyzing urban development and architectural styles from both the Ottoman and contemporary periods, the paper aims to provide a comparative perspective on the architectural language between these two periods. The study explores the alterations in characteristics of city urbanism and architecture in Ottoman and post-Ottoman times, spanning from the early 19th century to the present day. It also examines the implications of these changes for urban spaces and cultural identity.


Through case studies and comparative analysis, the paper highlights the dynamic evolution of Elbasan's architectural landscape and provides insights into its future development. The data was collected using a multi-faceted methodology, including archival drawings, scholarly works, maps, field visits, and observations. The results reveal significant variability in the urban and architectural patterns of the city. The differences between 18th- 19th- century Elbasan and that of the 20th and 21st centuries are profound and distinct. However, the central area of the city, which remains the most historic part due to the survival of structures such as the castle, the clock tower, old bathhouses, and the king's mosque, still retains traces of the Ottoman city.


Keywords: Urban Transition, Ottoman Architecture, Modernity, Elbasan, Cultural Identity, Urban Development

✉ PhD Candidate, Department of Architecture, Yildiz Technic University, Lecturer at University of New York Tirana, Tirana-Albania, Email: basha_ilda@hotmail.com

Assist. Prof.Dr., Department of Architecture, Yildiz Technic University, Istanbul-Türkiye, Email: zafersagdic@hotmail.com

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3685-6655>
<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4068-9135>

 Balkan Studies Foundation
DOI: <http://doi.org/10.51331/A047>
Journal of Balkan Studies, 4 (2), 2024
balkanjournal.org

 Received: 30.05.2024
Revision: 01.07.2024
Accepted: 12.07.2024

Introduction

Archaeological and historical sources confirm that most Albanian cities have been inhabited from ancient times until Ottoman period where each period has left very significant traces in the cultural, architectural, and social organization of the cities. As classified by Shkodra (1984, pp. 17) the Ancient period demonstrates the birth of prominent urban centers such as Shkodra, Lezha, Durrës, Berat, Vlora, and Saranda. The medieval period before the coming of the Ottomans indicates the development of cities such as Kruja, Gjirokastra, and Janina. The Ottoman period, moreover, enhanced the urban environment to cities such as Dibra, Kavaja, Peqini, Tirana, Elbasan, Korça, Përmet, and Delvina, among others.

Albanian cities were formed mainly within the walls of the fortresses during pre-Ottoman days. After the Ottoman conquest, Albanian cities stretched beyond the walls of the castles and formed new districts, referred to as *Varosh*. (Shkodra, 1984, pp. 18) This urban expansion outside the castle walls with new districts also brought many architectural accomplishments. One of the most significant changes during Ottoman rule in Albanian cities was the establishment of metropolitan centers and the design of new channels that connected the cities' core or center to the surrounding peripheral areas. During this time, urban centers commenced a process of expansion and rejuvenation. This urban evolution manifested in two distinct ways: in certain instances, new urban cores were constructed atop existing foundations, while in others, entirely new urban development emerged from scratch (Caka, 2021, pp. 245).

Elbasan's history begins with the ruins of an old Roman citadel, Scampia (Ceka, 1975, pp. 148) which provided the required foundations for the establishment of the city in 1466 under Sultan Mehmet II, (Buharaja, 1989, pp. 504) who named it Ilbasan (Caka, 2016, pp.101) and transformed the city into a flourishing metropolis. The city's significance and importance grew throughout time, and it was designated as a critical and significant center for the region (Kiel, 2012, pp.137). Elbasan began as a fortified city

first and later, during its early years started growing with residential houses settled within its protective walls. As the city gradually expanded, by the 15th century, the urban development began expanding beyond the fortress. This expansion was enabled by its strategic location at the crossroads of crucial commercial and military routes, leading to rapid population growth in the urban centers (Meksi, et.al, 2016, pp.625).

However, Elbasan, re-founded by Mehmet II (Buharaja, 1989, pp. 504; Kiel, 2012, 137; Caka, 2016, pp.100) and considered one of the most important cities during the Ottoman Empire, was largely demolished after independence due to several factors, leaving it with few traces of its past. Some reasons include natural factors like the earthquake in 1920 (Pasmaqi & Hasekiu, 2014, pp. 556) and the biggest changes happened during the approach to industrialize the city under the communist regime, with the establishment of numerous metallurgical factories that altered the urban landscape drastically (Mitrojorgji, 2014, pp.53). Many structures erected during the 15th to 19th centuries were demolished to make space for new development. Despite these changes, the central area of the city, which remains the most historic part due to the survival of structures such as the castle, the clock tower, bathhouses, and the king's mosque, still retains traces of the Ottoman city.

Urban spaces and architectural landscapes in Elbasan, Albania, have undergone significant transitions from Ottoman influence on modernity. This research paper aims to analyze the urban development and architectural styles from the Ottoman to contemporary periods, providing a comparative perspective on the architectural language between these two eras. The significance of this study lies in its ability to highlight the dynamic evolution of Elbasan's architectural landscape. By using case studies and comparative analysis, the research offers valuable insights into the city development. The findings reveal considerable variability in Elbasan's urban and architectural patterns, highlighting profound and distinct differences between the city before Independence, in the early 19th century and its form in the 21st century. By examining the characteristics of Ottoman urbanism and architecture in Elbasan and contrasting them

with post-Ottoman developments, the study aims to understand the implications of these changes for urban spaces and cultural identity.

Methodology

This research employs a multifaceted approach to investigate Elbasan city's urban development and architectural evolution. Firstly, a comprehensive literature review synthesized existing studies on the city's urban landscape. Secondly, archival analysis of historical maps and drawings provided foundational insights. Additionally, extensive field visits documented current urban conditions and architectural changes. These methods were applied independently and in combination to analyze Elbasan's developmental trajectory. Findings were presented through descriptive analysis, supported by maps and photographs where necessary, enhancing understanding of urban planning and architectural development.

Urban and Architectural Development of Elbasan during Ottoman Period

Urban Development

Papa illustrated Balkan ottoman cities as a collection of several main elements (fig. 1) of fortress for protection, residential areas, a marketplace (bazaar) for trading, public buildings, and mosques and *hamams*. This layout was typical in Ottoman-influenced cities across the Balkans, including those in Albania. These cities were designed to harmonize the natural landscape, utilizing the topography and terrain features. This allowed neighborhoods (called 'mëhalla') to evolve and adapt freely. (Papa, 2020, pp. 127-128)

As grouped from Shkodra (1984, pp.17-18), Elbasan is considered an Ottoman established city, since with its previous existence disappearing before 1466. Unlike other cities where the castle was typically situated in the highest geographical area and life expanded outside the fortress walls, Elbasan was situated on a flat surface atop Roman foundations (Scampis).

Here, life was formed inside the walls of the fortress, giving Elbasan the designation of a castle-type city. Ottoman cities typically adapted to their terrain, and according to Mitrojorgji (2016, pp. 86), Elbasan's urban planning reflects this traditional settlement and urban design.



Figure 1: Ottoman cities components in Balkan diagram. Source: Papa (2020)

The Ottoman influence on Elbasan's architecture was profound, shaping not just the physical landscape but also the city's economic, social, and cultural fabric. Elbasan, in particular, has experienced rapid urban development, as evidenced by archival data that recording population numbers and the variety of professions practiced during the 15th and 16th centuries and later (Caka, 2023, pp.71). According to several scholars (Shkodra, 1984; Caka, 2016), Elbasan was a dynamic center of activity encompassing agriculture, livestock, crafts, trade, industry, and administration. Daja (2022, pp.38-43) states that Elbasan's urban morphology is characterized by distinct neighborhoods, mosques, churches, bazaars, plazas, and civic buildings.

However, in analysis of Elbasan's urban development, Depicted in Figure 2, reveals a central mosque surrounded by residential zones protected by castle walls. Parallel to fortress walls, the main bazaar extends, with additional residential nuclei, each featuring its own mosque or church, *hammam*, and connecting roads. The layout and organization of Elbasan's urban morphological elements demonstrate a careful balance between residential, commercial, and religious spaces, creating a cohesive and dynamic cityscape.

During the Ottoman period, Elbasan experienced significant urban development, expanding beyond fortress walls to create new districts. This outward expansion led to demographic and architectural growth, nurturing cultural diversity and economic prosperity within the city.

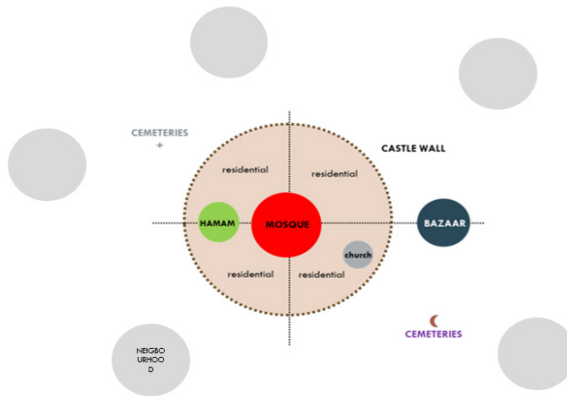


Figure 2: Elbasan city urban components diagram. Source: Author

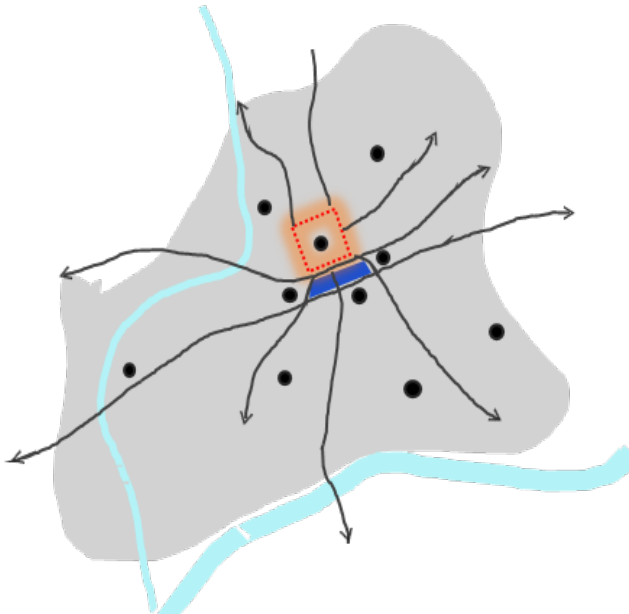


Figure 3: Elbasan urban structure growth & its main components: fortress, mosques, and bazaar and road directions. Source: Author.

The Ottoman influence can be seen in historical artifacts and the types of buildings typical of an Ottoman city, such as mosques, schools, markets, hammams (public baths), clock towers, and complex “külliye” structures. Çelebi notes the presence of mosques, numerous tekkes, schools, fountains, a very prosperous bezistan, and over 1150 large mansions (Çelebi, 2000, pp. 91-90). Additionally, the “waqf” system played a pivotal role in the city’s transformation, enabling the construction of mosques and other essential infrastructure (Caka, 2021. pp. 246). For example due to “waqf” system, Sinan Pasha built mosques, tekkes, schools, imarets, and hamams in Elbasan, similar to the külliye complexes in Rumeli and Anatolia during the first centuries of Ottoman rule (Caka, 2023, pp. 60).

An early 19th-century drawing from the Albanian State Archives (fig. 4) illustrates the layout and expansion of the city. The map (fig.4) shows the main road system and the neighborhoods developed both inside and outside the castle walls. The main axis of the road system passes through the castle, which serves as the heart of the city’s development.

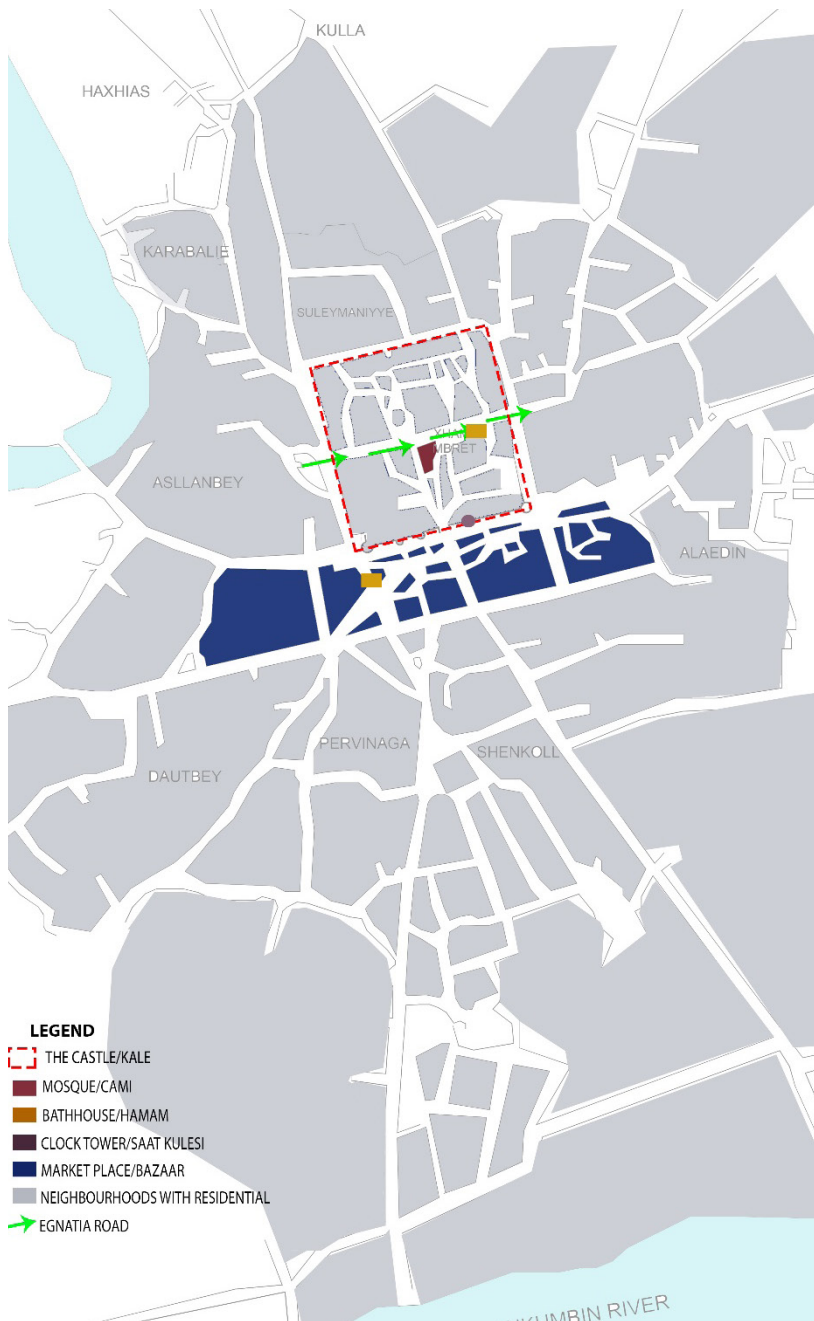


Figure 4: Illustration map of year 1800. Redrawn from the author referring to the original file found in Elbasan Digital Archive.

The map illustrates the city's arterial roads emanating from the castle, extending in all four directions. One of the most significant commercial and economic routes, the Egnatia Road, passes through the middle of the castle. The main roads connect community buildings with religious and commercial structures. Within the castle, the mosque is centrally located, with the bathhouse (*hamam*) adjacent to it, surrounded by clusters of neighborhoods. The clock tower is situated on the southern wall of the castle and still stands today. Opposite the southern gate of the castle used to lie the marketplace, which consisted of numerous shops, inns (*han*), the bazaar bathhouse, and the bazaar mosque. The marketplace is connected to other parts of the neighborhoods and residential areas.

The city's skyline, as evidenced by old photographs from various postcards found in the Austrian State Archives and the digital archives of Albania, was low, with the tallest elements being the clock tower above the castle walls and the minarets of the mosques. Every other development maintained a proportionate relationship to this height. Minarets were a dominant architectural element in the city, their numerous vertical structures adding vitality to the cityscape and reflecting the predominantly Muslim society. In a way, the urban planning and architecture of the city, with all its constituent components, mirrored the social and religious structure of Elbasan's society.



Figure 5: Photo of Elbasan city taken from above by Edwin Jacques in 1930.

Source: [archieve.org](https://www.archieve.org)

Architectoral Development

Regarding the architectural stylistic approach to the buildings, it predominantly featured early and classical Ottoman styles. The early Ottoman style is seen in the mosques built during the 15th and 16th centuries, such as the King Mosque and Tabaket Mosque. These structures are characterized by their simple designs and were covered with pitched roofs. The classical Ottoman style, which emerged later, was applied to religious Islamic buildings as well as hammams. The greatest craftsmanship of classical architecture is evident in the Naziresha Mosque and Aga Mosque, both constructed in the 16th century (Meksi, 2015).

pp.72). These mosques were built with stone, featuring a lead-covered dome on top and an elegant pencil minaret on the right side.

Another prominent architectural structure is the clock tower, originally built in the 17th century. However, after being destroyed by fire, it was reconstructed in the early 19th century (Coku, 2022, p.134), maintaining the same style and appearance it has today. Residential houses were pitched roof one- to two-story building, with “hayat” or “cardak” (a type of porch or balcony), and were often complemented with garden inside the fences. Additionally, these structures demonstrate the blend of functional and aesthetic elements typical of Ottoman architecture, emphasizing both the spiritual and communal aspects of the buildings.



Figure 6: Photo of King Mosque, Author



Figure 7: Photo of clock tower. Source: Author



Figure 8: Fortress bathhouse (*hamam*).

Source: https://albanien.ch/albanien_info/elbasan/elbasan_hamam



Figure 9: Naziresha Mosque.

Source: Author

Urban and Architectural Development of Elbasan Post Ottoman Period

Urban Development

After gaining independence from the Ottoman Empire, Albania underwent significant changes, although these were not immediately evident in the early years following independence. Basically in 20th century urban transformations occurred into three (3) phases:

The First Phase (1912-1924): There were no significant developments in either urban planning or architectural constructions during this period (Daja, 2020, pp.44). In the initial period following the declaration of independence, we observe almost the same urban planning and architectural state left by the governance during the Ottoman period. The cityscape was characterized by the minarets of mosques, approximately 31 mosques in the city, with the market and the social, cultural, and commercial life resembling that of the Ottoman era. There were schools and madrasas, hammams, and inns everywhere. Houses with gardens were one or two stories high, both within and outside the castle walls.



Figure 10: Photo of Elbasan city looking towards the Bazaar from above by Edwin Jacques in 1930.

Source: archieve.org



Figure 11: L. Forstner, Landscape from Elbasan, drawing from the year 1918. Source: Hudhri, F.

(2021)

The Second Phase (1924-1943): This phase is associated with Ahmet Zogu's rule and the Italian occupation of Albania. During this period, Elbasan saw major development in several areas, including infrastructure. This included building roads to Tirana, Durrës, Korçë, Gramsh, Dibër, and other places. The city also saw the construction of an electric power plant and a water supply system. The economy flourished during this time with the establishment of various facilities such as factories producing oil, soap, alcohol, and tobacco products, while traditional artisanal work continued to thrive. (Mitrojorgji, 2014, pp.53).



Figure 12: Elbasan panorama city view in 1935. Source: <https://memorie.al>



Figure 13: Photo of Oil Factory taken by Edwin Jacques in 1930. Source: archieve.org

The Third Phase (1944 - 1990): After the communist regime came to power. The Communist Party oriented the country towards the Soviet model of development, emphasizing centralized economic planning and urban development. Collective housing was assigned, and private construction was banned to maintain aesthetic consistency. The Cultural Revolution led to the closure of religious sites, transforming them into cultural and sports centers, significantly altering the urban landscape. The 1970s also saw the construction of the Metallurgical Complex in the Shkumbin Valley (Daja, 2020, pp. 46).



Figure 14: Elbasan boulevard in 1966.

Source: <https://www.delcampe.net/>



Figure 15: View from Skampa Theater and old tourism. Elbasan in the 1980s.

Source: Elbasan Digital Archive

Today, Elbasan is an important industrial center and one of the largest cities in the country, with a population of approximately 141,715 inhabitants (AZ Nation, 2024). Considering the population in the 1960s, which was around 20,000, we see that the population has increased sevenfold. This population growth demonstrates not only the city's expansion but also increase in the density and scale of the construction. As a result of demographic growth, many constructions took place in Elbasan. These constructions were often carried out without the proper permits from the relevant offices, disregarding urban planning regulations and frequently failing to blend with the surrounding environment. Comparative maps, which show the distribution of the city's development in various periods, illustrate the significant changes in the urban form of the city.

Figures 16 and 17 depict a comparison of urban sprawl between the 18th and 20th centuries, utilizing archival maps (Fig. 16) and a 20th-century map of the castle neighborhood. These illustrations clearly highlight the increased building density, loss of open spaces and greenery, and demographic growth over time.

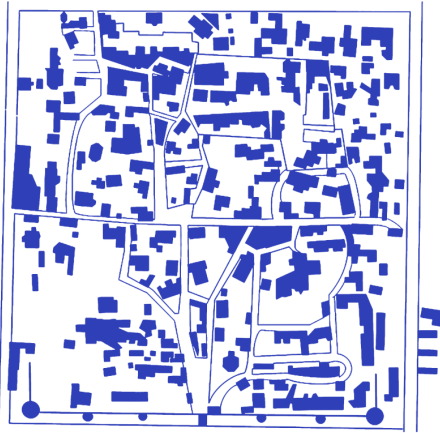


Figure 16: Site plan of Kala neighborhood in 18th century, Source: Source: Drawing from author referring to State Archive)

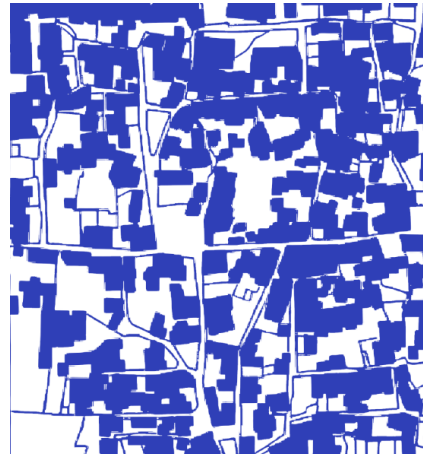


Figure 17: Site plan of Kala neighborhood in 20th century, Source: Author.

This type of growth pattern is observed in all morphological districts that constitute the entire city of Elbasan. The map below in Figure 18 presents a distribution of buildings and structures throughout the city. It overlays structures with the road network from 1960. Meanwhile, the map in Figure 19 depicts the current state of the city, its current growth, and density.

In the past 50 years, Elbasan has experienced significant urban growth, leading to infrastructure modification as well. These modifications are characterized by the construction of more roads, the expansion of major thoroughfares, and the development of numerous new residential buildings. However, this expansion has led to a noticeable reduction in green spaces throughout the city, affecting both the urban landscape and residents' quality of life. The construction of new roads and the widening

of main streets have improved transportation and connectivity, showcasing Elbasan's efforts to accommodate its growing population and enhance infrastructure. Yet, the surge in residential buildings has come at the cost of green areas, potentially impacting environmental sustainability and overall well-being in the city.



Figure 18: Urban distribution in the year 1960 and road network. Source: Author working on layers from the work of Mitrojorgji, 2014, pp.55)

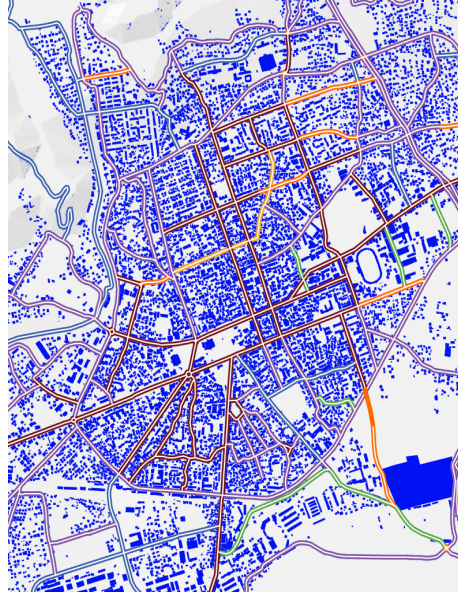


Figure 19: Part of the general territorial plan of Elbasan from 2016 approved by the Prime Ministry, overlaying the road network with the urban expansion of buildings. Source: Author

Based on the literature reviewed and the documented architectural structures in Elbasan before the regime, it is evident that the urban fabric has significantly changed. Observations of the current city reveal that many important buildings, which once supported the city's routine and needs, have been altered.

The city skyline of Elbasan has also undergone significant transformation. Historically, the tallest elements were the clock tower and the minarets, which dominated the skyline. This changed with the establishment of communist rule, during which more than 80% of religious buildings were demolished. Additionally, schools (medrese), water taps, fountains, and the bazaar were destroyed, and the Namazgah field was converted into a bus stop. The demolition of several inns and Beyler mansions paved the way for new construction, leading to the city's transformation into an industrial and modern urban center.

Today, the few remaining buildings from the Ottoman era are mostly located within the castle walls, with the Naziresha Mosque standing at the city's exit. Elbasan's shift from Ottoman influence to modernity was marked by several socioeconomic and cultural changes.



Figure 20: View of skyline fo the city. Source: Wikimapia/Elbasan

Urbanization, industrialization, and westernization played critical roles in transforming the city's architectural environment. Modern architectural influences led to the creation of new buildings and the modification of older ones to suit contemporary aesthetics. These urban changes are reshaping Elbasan's cityscape and impacting the daily lives of its

residents. While improvements in transportation and infrastructure signify progress, the loss of green spaces and the demolition or transformation of historical structures raise questions about the city's future development and cultural identity.

One detail we noticed during our visit was that the area where the bazaar used to be, now transformed into city plazas, still maintained the tradition of a commercial zone by hosting an open market throughout the area on Sundays. This adaptation underscores the city's commitment to maintaining cultural practices and nurturing community ties within urban development. It also highlights the crucial role of public spaces in promoting social cohesion and community interaction.

Architectural Development

Referring to the architectural style of the buildings, it is observed that there is a significant transformation and departure from the Ottoman style that predominated until the close of the 19th century. In the post-Ottoman era, a new paradigm emerged in the treatment of architectural stylistic language, encompassing not only the verticality and scale of buildings but also their design and aesthetic principles. Previously characterized by predominantly low-rise structures, the urban landscape began to accommodate the need for taller edifices.

This shift was accompanied by the adoption of European architectural styles, notably those influenced by fascist Italy. As mentioned in urban section, the new political order brought changes in architectural style and expression too. In Albania, after the 1920s, a distinct local and regional expression became prominent. This type of architecture can perhaps be classified as regionalist architecture, reflecting the region, symbolizing local customs, and responding to the local context. This influence is manifested in landmark structures such as the Skampa Theater built in 1938, the city library built in 1934, and the sports palace built in 1982, which exemplify the grandeur and stylistic rigor of this new architectural ethos.



Figure 21: Scampa theater view.
Source: Wikimapia/Elbasan



Figure 22: Sport Palace view.
Source: Wikimapia/Elbasan

Later, architectural language evolved to embrace a more modern and contemporary approach. Even in religious architecture, there emerged a desire to present Islamic buildings in a style that is both contemporary and Eastern. It can be said that we witness a blending of styles without a clear definition of any specific movement. Among the examples, we can mention the reconstruction of the Pasha Mosque, which, while diverging significantly from its original design, retains the mosque's fundamental elements such as the minaret, arch, and dome. Another example is the Ballie Mosque, which represents a completely new reconstruction in both its layout and architectural style approach.



Figure 23: Ballie mosque today.
Source: Wikimapia/Ballie mosque



Figure 24: Elbasan flat development. Source: <https://adria.fun/en/elbasan-an-ancient-city-rich-in-history-and-culture/>

Architecture also reveals a transformative approach to construction materials, notably the integration of concrete and steel. These advancements have facilitated the development of high-rise edifices, particularly residential apartment complexes. Consequently, in suburban areas beyond the city center, the construction of 15 to 20-story apartment buildings became prevalent post-2000. Additionally, on lands repurposed from agricultural to industrial use, numerous factories were established, characterized by their red brick façades and adherence to industrial architectural styles.

Discussion and findings

Urban Changes and Transformation

The urban structure of Elbasan has been greatly modified over the course of its evolution, which reflected a range of successive historical-socio-political developments. Being initially a fortified town, the urban structure of Elbasan was earlier restricted within the defensive walls of its Roman and later Ottoman citadel. During the Ottoman era, the city exhibited a well-integrated organization of residential, commercial, and religious functions, resulting in a dynamic and multifunctional urban landscape of the period when was developed. Distinctive urban quarters emerged, each anchored by mosques, bazaars, and civic buildings, collectively fostering a vibrant urban life.

The post-Ottoman era, particularly under the communist regime, saw a radical shift in land use and urban density. The strategic development of an industrial rather than an agrarian economy necessitated large-scale infrastructural networks and industrial institutions, leading to the disintegration of Elbasan's former compact urban fabric. . The installation of numerous metallurgical factories and other industrial infrastructural units transformed the city's landscape, often resulting in the destruction of historical edifices dating from the 16th to 19th centuries to accommodate modern development.

Urban transformation has continued in the recent past through the urbanization of residential neighborhoods and the construction of up-scale high-rise apartments. This transformation is particularly noticeable in peri-urban areas, where between 2000 and the present, 15 to 20-story buildings have become a common feature. The conversion of agricultural farmland to industrial use has been evident, with new industrial buildings featuring red brick and industrial architecture forms, contributing to the evolving urban skyline. The activities reflect a significant increase in urban density, resulting in the transformation of the city's spatial form and impacting its cultural and historical identity.

Architectural Changes

Elbasan's architectural evolution from Ottoman to contemporary influences represents a larger narrative of stylistic evolution and adaptation. During the Ottoman period, the city's architectural language was characterized by low-rise structures with ornate detailing, constructed from materials like stone and clay. Structures from that era, such as the Naziresha or Aga Mosque, exemplify the classical Ottoman style, alongside residential houses featuring gabled roofs and tiled finishes, contributing to a skyline adorned with minarets and the clock tower.

The post-Ottoman era marked significant departures in the styles and construction materials. The communist regime's push for industrialization facilitated the construction of utilitarian buildings, primarily made of reinforced concrete and steel. The period saw the demolition of numerous historical edifices, including some religious buildings, to make way for new industrial and residential developments. The architectural style increasingly leaned towards European influences, particularly regionalism. It is during this era that notable buildings in the city, such as the Skampa Theater and sport palace, were constructed.

In the recent past, the architectural language of Elbasan has modernized to incorporate modern and contemporary approach. Additionally, newer buildings typically maintain a modern outlook while traditional additions, creating a hybrid architectural sensibility. For instance, the new

Pasha Mosque is designed with modern aesthetics but still retains traditional elements like arches and domes. This blend of old and new reflects an architectural approach that respects the past while embracing the present. Elbasan's architectural evolution is a dynamic mix of historical continuity and contemporary adaptation. The transition from low, intricately detailed Ottoman buildings to tall, modern structures highlights the city's changing identity. This evolution isn't just about new building materials and styles; it also reflects broader socio-economic and cultural shifts that have shaped Elbasan's urban and architectural character over time.

Conclusion

Elbasan's transformation from its Ottoman roots to its modern form tells a rich story of historical, socio-economic, and cultural changes. Originally, during the Ottoman period, the city flourished not only within its fortified walls but also beyond them, developing well-planned residential, commercial, and religious areas that contributed to a strong cultural and architectural heritage. After the Ottoman era, particularly during the communist regime, Elbasan experienced a dramatic shift towards industrialization. This shift led to the demolition of many historical buildings to make way for modern industrial complexes. The use of concrete and steel brought about high-rise residential towers, significantly altering the city's skyline. Unfortunately, these changes also resulted in the gradual neglect and decay of old Elbasan, with many historical structures falling into disrepair.

Today, Elbasan showcases a mix of modern and traditional architectural styles. However, this blend often lacks cohesive aesthetic planning, creating a disjointed cityscape. This highlights the urgent need for strategic urban planning and design. It is crucial for policymakers and architectural professionals to focus on preserving Elbasan's architectural heritage and improving its urban aesthetics. With thoughtful restoration and innovative contemporary development, Elbasan can be reimagined as a prestigious example of architectural integrity and cultural representation, celebrating its rich history while embracing a vibrant future.

Contribution Rates and Conflicts of Interest

Ethical Statement	It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited
Author Contributions	
Data Collection	BB (60%), ZA (40%)
Data Analysis	BB (60%), ZA (40%)
Research Design	BB (60%), ZA (40%)
Writing the Article	BB (60%), ZA (40%)
Article Submission and Revision	BB (80%), ZA (20%)
Complaints	journalbalkan@gmail.com
Conflicts of Interest	The author(s) has no conflict of interest to declare.
Grant Support	The author(s) acknowledge that they received no external funding in support of this research
Copyright & License	Authors publishing with the journal retain the copyright to their work licensed under the CC BY-NC 4.0

References

- AZ NATION, (2024), Population of Elbasan 2024. Retrieved on 15 May 2024 from <https://www.aznations.com/population/al/cities/elbasan>
- Buharaja, V. (1989). *Rreth mbishkrimeve të fortesës së Elbasanit*. In *Studime për epokën e Skënderbeut*. Vol. II, pp. 504. Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë, Instituti i Historisë. Tiranë.
- Caka, E. (2016). *Vakëfet dhe Funkzioni i tyre në Qytetin e Elbasanit gjatë Shekullit XVII* (The Role and Function of Waqf's in the City of Elbasan during the XVII Century). *Studime Historike*, 1-2, pp.99-113.

- Caka, E. (2021). *Vakëfjet dhe ndikimi i tyre social në Shqipërinë e periudhës osmane*. Botimet Albanologjike.Tiranë.
- Caka, E. (2023). The making of a bordering town: The city of Elbasan during XV-XVI centuries. *Albanian Studies*, Vol 2, No. 2, pp. 59-78.
- Ceka, H. (1975). Nga historia e lashtë e Skampinit (Elbasanit). *Studime historike*, 1. Tiranë. pp. 147-156.
- Çelebi, E. (2000). *Shqipëria: para tre shekujsh* (S. Vuçiterni, Trans.). Besa Publishing House, Tirana
- Coku, D. (2021). *Kullat e Sahatit ne Shqiperi*. Alsar.
- Daja, Z. (2020). Zhvillimet urbane të qytetit të Elbasanit në periudha të ndryshme historike. *Revista Albanon*, Vol 2, No 2, pp. 36-47.
- Elbasan Digital Archive.
- Hudhri, F. (2021). Selvitë e elbasanit sipas artistëve të huaj. *Albanon*, 2(1), pp. 22-27. <https://doi.org/10.54273/ra.v2i1.138>
- Institute for Albanian & Protestant Studies. (n.d.). Jacques Collection — Elbasan Postcards. In Edwin Jacques (Contributor). Retrieved on 1 April 2024 from https://archive.org/details/iaps_elbasan_postcards/2016_05_27_14_27_28.jpg
- Kiel, M. (2012). *Ottoman Architecture in Albania, 1385-1912*. IRCICA, Istanbul.
- Meksi, A. (2015) *Xhamite e Shqiperise shek. 15-19*, AIITC, Tirana.
- Meksi, A., Baçe, A., Riza, E., Karauskaj, G., & Thomo, P. (2016). *Historia e arkitekturës në Shqipëri: nga fillimet deri në vitin 1912*. Ministria e Kulturës, Instituti i Momumenteve të Kulturës “Gani Strazimiri”.
- Mitrojorgji, M. (2016). Morfologjia dhe struktura e hapësirës urbane në qytetet shqiptare. *Monumentet*, Vol. 54, pp. 79-96.
- Mitrorojri, M., & Mitrorojri, J. (2014). Elbasani, identiteti i humbur i një qyteti. *Monumentet*, Vol, 52, pp. 51-74
- Papa, D. (2020). *Historic city image: An urban landscape approach to integrate the decayed margins of the historical area: Gjirokastra case study*. Universiteti “Polis”.
- Pasmaqi, O., & Hasekiu, J. (2014). The characteristics of urban and architectural development in Elbasan in the beginning of the 20th century. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(13), MCSER Publishing, pp.555-559
- Shkodra, Z. (1984). *Qyteti shqiptar gjatë Rilindjes Kombëtare*. Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë, Instituti i Historisë.

(In) the Name of the Other; Albanian Migrants in Contemporary Greek Fiction and the Role of Naming

Marios Moros

Abstract: This paper explores the experiences of the main character in Michalis Malandrakis' short novel, *Patriot* (2018). The protagonist, an Albanian migrant in Greece, is compelled to change his name and (re)invent his identity to achieve his goals in the new country. Agim becomes Yiannis (John) and ultimately dies as Yiannis. The novel engages in an open dialogue with theoretical questions about the self and the Other, subjectivity and objectivity, as well as the feeling of "belongingness." This paper addresses several questions: What role does the self-narrator play in constructing an identity? To what extent is the protagonist welcomed into this new world after his name change? What must he sacrifice to become accepted? And to what extent can a person (re)invent their identity?

Keywords: Contemporary Greek Fiction, Albania, Other, Self, Name, Identity



Dr., Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki-Greece, marioskmoros@gmail.com,



<https://orcid.org/0009-0000-4872-732X>



Balkan Studies Foundation

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.51331/A048>

Journal of Balkan Studies, 4 (2), 2024

balkanjournal.org



Received: 12.04.2024

Revision: 27.05.2024

Accepted: 03.07.2024



Introduction: Thirty years after

2023 marks 30 years since Albanian migrants crossed the border between the two countries and found themselves confronted with a new reality, which required them to reconstruct a new narrative around their identity. Greece, of course, had already begun accepting migrants from Eastern European countries such as Poland in the previous decade. The coming changes in the very structure of Greek society raised a series of questions around identity issues (Christopoulos 2002: 98-168, Christopoulos 2019), from issues related to the concept of citizenship, and questions about the formation of a state, to ethnic components, and concepts such as ‘multiculturalism’ or ‘inclusion’ (Taylor 1994). The ferment in the not-so-spacious Greek society is by no means unchanging; the migratory flows encountered several resistant ideological barriers and entrenched views and positions that were difficult to overcome.

However, even if relationships smooth out over time, it only takes one event to set or change the mood. Exemplifying this is the incident of 2004, when the national football teams of the two countries competed as rivals. On the afternoon of September 4, the Greek team was defeated 2-1 in Tirana. On the same evening, in many central places in the Greek capital, such as Omonia, but also in almost all cities around the country, the slogan “You will never be Greek, Albanian” dominated the streets (Golfinopoulos 2007, pp.151-152). Equally indicative is the broader treatment of immigrants as potentially being dangerous. Precisely because of this status, which in the rhetoric of many produces the dominant meaning here in Greece (Lymperaki and Pelagidis 2011, pp.11). The change that Europe had experienced a short time earlier was still not fully understood. “How prepared were we, the citizens of Europe, for this change?”, asked the Polish writer Richard Kapuściński, only to reply, “Not so much, I am afraid. We see the Other above all as a foreigner (but Other does not necessarily mean from a foreign country), as a representative of a separate species, but the most crucial point is that we see him as a threat.” (Kapuściński 2011, pp.66).

The conditions of the de-democratization of the Albanians in the period we are concerned with, the 1990s, are radically different from previous periods since Albania experienced its consequences already before “actually existing socialism.” The first period of mass Albanian migration occurred before the Second World War, when a large productive part of the male population left the country due to unemployment. The second period, during socialist Albania, was much smaller in terms of population movement, precisely because of the strict framework of the authorities and is accompanied by the word “betrayal,” since those who managed to cross the border could hardly return. The third period, the one that concerns us, is the period of mass migration. Albanians gathered en masse outside the embassies of Western countries, asking to find a better place within their own territories. As a result, in ten years from the beginning to the end of the 1990s, some 450,000 people left the country (Lambrianidis and Lymperaki 2005, pp.176-178). They are, to borrow the title of a recent work somewhere between history and fiction, the ones who grew up in the “End of History.” (Upi 2022).

The Gaze of the Other

The *Other* within and at the same time outside the host country, whether from Albania, Iran, or Pakistan, is in almost all the projects under consideration difficult to access. Indeed, at some point, literature tries to work on the axis of facilitating this access; Telemachus Kotsias, for example, a writer whose main element in his poetry is to approach the Other, mainly Greeks of the minority in Albania, tries to show in his novel *The Last Canary* (1995) that we have more to gain than to lose, on both sides, from a harmonious cooperation and a seamless coexistence (Kotzia 2020, pp.349).

Of course, literature did not remain confined to this ethical framework. Responding to the ferment of the society that produced it, it also presented the *Other* as a potential threat,¹ as a body to be exploited (Paprousi 2012, pp.151-174), and as a pariah (Varika 2017, pp.117). All of this emanated precisely from the status of the immigrant, their distinctive difference from other literary (co-) protagonists. As Demosthenes Kourtovik points out, “[...] with a considerable delay and in only a few cases so far, Greek prose has provided complete characters of such people, that is, characters that are not entirely traceable to their migrant or refugee status” (Kourtovik 2021, pp.321-322). Indeed, there are very few works in which the immigrant acquires a voice of his own. Usually these characters are heterophonic, approached through the privileged and canonical gaze of the familiar. Thus, for example in Sotiria Stavrakopoulou’s *Drunken Woman* (2005), Lela, the Albanian heroine, is described exclusively through the first-person narration of the Greek protagonist. The relationship, of course, between the two individuals does not seem at all optimistic about a common future.

The creation of this new diversity (Christopoulos 2002, pp.154-160) should not be missed by one’s reading. New, as in the case of the immigrant, means reception implies subjugation. The Foucauldian thesis about subjugated bodies, bodies that, to enter the sphere of the useful and productive, must pass through the complementarities of subjugation, in the sense of investing themselves with relations of domination, is well known (Foucault 2011, pp.38). It is precisely in these relations that the bodies of the Others are imprisoned and literature becomes a privileged space for their expression. However, the question recurs and is differentiated: if the ‘subject’, a term introduced by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, can speak (Spivak 1985), what does that matter to us? This additionally adds to the speech of the *Other* immediately moving him from the position of object to that of subject since he can now freely (?) express

1 A typical example is Thanasis Chimonas’ novel, *Broken Greek* (2000), in which a young trainee lawyer falls in love with an Albanian woman who seems to be taking advantage of him. In fact, later, we meet the Albanian woman accused of murder and the young lawyer struggling to exonerate her.

himself. It is this return of the *Other's* gaze to one that differentiates this literary work. The subjectification of the hitherto object raises, in turn, a series of questions about the familiar. What constitutes it? What are its endogenous pathologies that underlie it? How durable are some of the myths upon which a narrative is built? (Hobsbawm 2004: 24). All legitimate questions posed precisely because of the reception of the *Other*, in this case the immigrant within the fictional universe.

The Self as (the) Other

Reception, however, does not necessarily mean acceptance. The *Other* must be freed from some elements of their *otherness* to be accepted. The appropriation of *otherness*, then, a practice known since the ancient times of the Greek deities (Vernant, 1992), presupposes a series of actions that perform the familiar. They detach, in other words, the other from its *otherness* so that it becomes accessible and integrated, more or less. And one of these performers is grounded in identity. The constructability of identity is explored in a wide range of literary works. For the sake of space, I will adhere to a relatively recent text which, while not concerned with the migrant experience, is one that is nevertheless typical of the *process* required. The text is entitled *Change: Method* and was written by the French writer Édouard Louis in 2021. In its pages, readers follow step by step how the subject constructs a new narrative around his or her identity to integrate into the new environment.

The identities available in the new space exclude Louis' protagonist because the sought-after one is latent. Integration, therefore, will require re-framing and re-narration. Of course, the 'narrative self', or rather, the narrated self, the self-constituted within discursive practices cannot be seen independently of performance since *usus facit legem*. Thus it may be that in our own quest, gender is of concern to us, but the stakes are different for all of us. In the pages that follow, one will focus the reading on the case of a literary hero- the protagonist of a novel written in 2019 by Michalis Malandrakis entitled: *Patriot*. Malandrakis' protagonist is an

immigrant who comes from Albania to Greece in the 1990s. His name is Agim. This affirmation however is not entirely true. Agim crosses the border, but within Greek territory he disappears and is assigned the name Yannis. So, what is going on? One might question “How many protagonists are there?” One might be confused by the back and forth of names and thus, the role of the protagonist himself.

As is well known, Western culture places great emphasis on the practices of discourse, the most representational practices since antiquity (Foucault, 2008, pp.426). By naming something, I allow it to exist within and outside of discourse. Therefore, by naming a subject, I attribute to it characteristics that relate to a wider context of relations, cultural and otherwise. The acquired name functions within an organized social set, establishing constants and relations between individual and group (Georgoulas, 1997, pp.17). These constants, precisely through the process of deterritorialization, are changed, re-signified and in turn subjected to the normative principles and relations of subordination.

The “Agim” as a signifier differentiates the bearer from the other subjects with which he is called upon to coexist in the new reality of the host country, and therefore, it must be eliminated and its place taken by a new signifier. In the case of Agim, the naming will be full of irony. “Agim” in Albanian means dawn, dawn, sunrise, sunrise. And the Agim of Malandrakis’ novel, once he leaves the name behind, will enter, (thanks to his talent for music), the world of the night, but as John. The name, then, as Roland Barthes puts it, attributes to the literary character who deservedly bears it a main characteristic that complements him, completes him fictionally (Barthes, 2007, pp.208).² How to read on a first level, this renaming, then? Malandrakis takes care, before allowing his protagonist to enter the nocturnal territory, to rid him of the light

2 Summarizing the findings of the literature on character names, Spyros Kiosses writes: “Reading experience confirms that ‘declarative’ names of literary characters, that is, names that seem to have a particular functional value in the narrative, may refer to some particular trait or habit of the character, emphasize some aspect of the character that will play a role in the plot, function as symbols, metaphors or metonymies, or refer to some other literary or mythological character/type (or natural person/type) from which they derive clues about their character” (Kiosses, 2018: 240).

that accompanies his name; of course, it should be noted, the invention of the name does not belong to the protagonist. The novel begins with the meeting of Agim, who plays the clarinet in the street, with Anthony, also an Albanian, one whom we assume has changed his name. Antonis has already been living in Greece for ten years and takes care to introduce the young musician to the “ways” of survival.

However, the scene of the two men getting to know each other, which takes place in the first-person verbal, as the whole novel is written from Agim’s point of view, is about identity as an idiomatic difference. Anthony watches Agim playing and approaches, addressing him directly in Albanian:

- Pse po vrapon patrioti? Nuk je Patriot? I look at him in horror. He laughs.
- Why are you running, brother? He reaches out his hand to pick me up. [...]
- [...] Where are you from? I knew you the moment I saw you. I said he’s a patriot. We look like it from afar. You’re a patriot, aren’t you?
- Yeah, but...
- I knew it. Hey! I’m telling you... he’s patting me on the back, I can spot us a mile away. (Malandrakis, 2019, pp.10-11)

What is not said at the beginning, the affirmation of common origin, the proof of paternity, will be said in the language of the *other*. Agim will not speak Albanian, as he will almost never speak it in the entire novel, apart from a few phrases he will exchange with his two homeland room-mates. The acquaintance will quickly turn into a job offer, since Antonis seems to be better versed in the night world of Athens, to which he introduces Agim. Initiation, however, requires sacrifice.

- And how much do you have in Greece?
- Eleven years. Twelve years old I came. My name is A...

- Hey, he cut me off. Did I ask you what your name was? What are you telling me? Listen to me. You can tell me your name. But if you wanna make money here, you gotta be awake. You're not some whore advertising your name. Just answer only what you're asked, okay, patriot? Now tell me your name.
- My name is Agim, but I don't understand anything. (Malandrakis, 2019, pp.12)

Antonis' ban, seemingly, does not concern the origin of his interlocutor, but it is indicative of his attitude towards Agim. The name, it has been said, in Western culture has great value, as several codes, social and cultural, are inscribed in it. Agim, then, the bearer of these codes, must discard them, at least for the moment, to communicate with his interlocutor. Later, of course, Antony, for reasons we will understand before reading, will intervene in Agim's main signifying tool, his name.

- So, I'm supposed to be in the shop at six o'clock the day after tomorrow?", I asked him.
- Yes. And as we said: you will introduce yourself as Yiannis from Ioannina or Patra or Arta, I don't know, something like that, Greek. The boss there is weird and doesn't want Albanians. I'm sure they won't understand you; you speak better Greek than they do. But keep in mind: you don't tell anyone where you're from. Yannis from Ioannina. (Malandrakis, 2019, pp.13)

What, then, does Agim lack from the moment he receives the significant "John"? The signifier "Agim" is a way of contacting the bearer with the nation to which he belongs, that is, with the identity we can call national. An identity that, in turn, performs; it provides the subject with a sense of belonging to a social subset (Smith 1991), as it attributes to him some social characteristics associated with it, making him acceptable and secure within it (Taifel, 1981). Agim, for almost the rest of the novel, will constantly straddle between two selves. So which group does he belong to? Probably, neither, since he is constantly wavering about

the actions he (will) take, which is directly related to the performance discussed.³ As Agim, he (must) act differently than as John.

John, now protected under the umbrella of the new name from experiencing otherness as a stigma (Papageorgiou, 2011, pp.391), will be able to enter the night world, will be hired as an organist in a nightclub and will be able to improve his living conditions. Malandrakis will several times call upon his protagonist to categorically confirm this new identity.

- John. My name is John [...]
- John. My name is John.
- Where are you from, Yankee?
- From Ioannina. I grew up there. Now I came down to Athens. [...]
- Sit down, he says and points to the chair next to me. Remind me your name.
- John. My name is John. (Malandrakis 2019, pp.15, 18, 36)

The magnifying “Yannare” can, of course, not sound ironic to the ears of the readers. Nevertheless, the further the action of the novel progresses, the more we see that Yannis is fully functioning within the confines of his new identity. The affirmative function of repetition, moreover, leaves no room for maneuver. This falsification of identity, which began with an external cause, now involves the subject himself. After all, as Anthony Giddens has shown, subjects in the spaciousness of the modern age are constantly called upon to make similar re-realizations of themselves. By “correcting” certain parts of his autobiography, John is free to taste the consequences of the new situation (Giddens, 1991, pp.72).

3 Agim, of course, does not seem to maintain, or at least this is not the case in the novel under review, strong ties with his country of origin. Apart from his roommates, with whom he occasionally exchanges a few phrases in Albanian, only at one point in the work do we see him refer to his past, recalling moments from his past summers. Again, however, we could not easily speak of an “Albanian identity” that would somehow appear otherwise beyond these. Similarly, unlike his other literary peers, he does not seem to be inspired by any myths surrounding Albania (Schwandner-Sievers, 2012).

Consequences, however, will not be limited to just fame and profits, but will soon prove to have another, darker side. Yannis will find himself facing a clash of identities, as his colleague Dina will end up in hospital when it comes out that she is of Albanian origin, which she has been hiding.

- At her house, she realized that Dina was from Albania. I know she told you she was from here, we didn't tell anyone, but she's from Albania. She had frames with pictures above of her family and some friends. Andricos pushed her and she admitted it.
- Before he left, was that?
- No, no, no, before they get laid. Then he got up to leave and told her not to say anything to anyone. He told her very badly, the asshole, you know the tone. Dina asked why, he asked back, and he turned around and told her it's because you're a dirty Albanian. He called her names, told her a few other things, and Dina reacted. She swore to him that she would tell everyone and even the boss would know. As soon as he said that, he jumped her. (Malandrakis, 2019, pp. 66)

The revelation of the identity, which Yiannis must avoid at all costs, has dire consequences for Dina. Earlier, Dina introduces herself to John as follows:

- Dina, where are you from? I ask her, since Maria has talked a lot about Tripoli, where she grew up.
- From Serres. Until fifteen that is. Then Kavala and now Athens. (Malandrakis, 2019, pp.34)

So, we see the same story again, only this time John plays the role of the spectator. Dina, since we learn nothing else about a different name, now John's object, is his potential mirrored image since he could have well been in her place. Concealment, then, is not always functional, since it seems memory reverses and betrays it (Papageorgiou, 2011, pp.195-203).

We can now attribute another signifier to the signifier Agim, that of necessary concealment, of necessary withdrawal from the light.

Play it again, Sam

Agim introduces himself to the readers of the novel by playing the well-known folk song “My John, your handkerchief,” a song which will be constantly recurring in the pages of the novel and, indeed, in a circle format that was chosen as the most appropriate background music for its conclusion.

My John, the, my John, the, my John, the, aide.
Johnny, your handkerchief, come on.
What’s so dirty, my Giannis, my Giannakis.
[...] Dirty, dirty, dirty, go on,
...the foreign country has made it dirty, come on,
the desolate foreigners, you Yannis, my Yannakis,
the desolate foreigners, my little fellow. (Malandrakis, 2019, pp. 81)

Agim dies as John. As John, fully integrated into the world of the night, who acts his own death, taking on the burden of the bomb he was handed. The choice of the song in question, inextricably linked to Agim’s name, is no accident. In the lyrics of the folk song, John’s handkerchief is “stained” by foreignness. In the case of *Patriot*, we can say, what is stained by the de-denaturalization is Agim’s whole self. Ultimately, what is assigned along with the name is Agim’s entire character. The other self, the one now called John, is the dominant one in the novel, eliminating Agim early on. The signifier “Yannis” corresponds to the lyrics of the folk song. Foreignness, to recall Viziynos and his “Moskov-Selim”, from whom Malandrakis distances himself, makes the Albanian die as a Greek; Agim dies under/in the name of the Other.

References

- Ampatzopoúlou, Fr (2002). *O Állos en diogmó. I eikóna tou Evraíou sti logotechnía kai ston kinimatografó*. Zitímata istorías kai mythoplasías, Athína, Patáki.
- Barthes, R (2007). *S/Z*, Athína, Nísi.
- Christópoulos, D (2002). *I eterótita os schési exousías. Ópsei tis ellinikís, valkanikís kai evropaíkis empeirías*, Athína, Kritikí.
- Christópoulos, D (2019). *Poiós éinai éllinas polítis? Dyo aíones ithagéneia*, Athína, Vivliórama.
- Foucault, M (2008). *Oi léxeis kai ta prágmata: Mia archaiología ton epistimón tou anthrópou*, Athína, Gnósi.
- Foucault, M (2011). *Epítirisi kai timoría. I génnisi tis fylakís*, Athína, Pléthron.
- Georgóulas, A (1997). *Afaneís Diadromés. Diaforopoiísi, Taftótita, Onomatthesía*, Athína, Gutenberg.
- Giddens, A (1991). *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, Cambridge, Polity Press.
- Golfinopoulos, G (2007). “Éllinas poté...”. *Alvanoí kai ellinikós Týpos ti nýchta tis 4is Septemvriou 2004*, Ioánnina, Isnáfi.
- Hobsbawm, E (2004), «Eisagogí» in Hobsbawm, E. and Ranger T (ed), *I epinóisi tis parádosis*, Athína, Themélio.
- Kapisínski, R (2011). *O Állos*, Metaíchmio, Athína.
- Kiossés, S (2018). *Eisagogí sti dimiourgikí anágnosi kai grafí tou pezoú lógou. I symvolí tis afigimatologías*, Athína, Kritikí.
- Kotziá, El (2020). *Ellinikí pezografía 1974-2010. To métro kai ta stathmá*, Athína, Pólis.
- Kóurtovik, D (2021). *I eliá kai i flamouría. Elláda kai kósmos, átomo kai istoría stin ellinikí pezografía 1974-2020*, Athína, Patáki.
- Lamprianídis, L and Lymperáki, A (2005). *Alvanoí metanástes sti Thessaloníki. Diadromés evimerías kai paradromés dimósias eikónas*, Athína, Patáki.
- Lymperáki, A and Pelagídis, TH (2000). *O «fóvos tou xénou» stin agorá ergasías: anochés kai prokatalípsei stin anáptyxi*, Athína, Pólis.
- Malandrákis, M (2019). *Patriot*, Athína, Pólis.
- Oúpi, L (2022). *Megalónontas sto Télos tis Istorías*, Athína, Patáki.
- Papageorgíou, B (2011). *Apó tin Alvanía stin Elláda. Tópos kai taftótita, diapolitismikótita kai ensomátosi*, Athína, Nísi.
- Paparóusi, M (2012). *To sóma kai i diapragmátefsi tis diaforás sti sýchroni ellinikí pezografía*, Thessaloníki, Epíkentro.

- Schwandner-Sievers, S and Fischer B (2012) (ed.), *Alvanikés taftótites. Mýthos kai Istoría*, Athína, Papazísi.
- Smith, A (1991). *National Identity*, London, Penguin Books.
- Spivak, G (1985). *Can the Subaltern Speak? Reflections on the History of an Idea*, Columbia, Columbia University Press.
- Tajfel, H (1981). *Human groups and social categories*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Taylor, Ch (1994). *Multiculturalism*, Princeton, Princeton University Press.
- Varíka, El (2013). *Oi apóvlitói tou kósmou. Morfés tou Paría*, Athína, Pléthron.
- Vernant, J-P (1991). *La mort dans les yeux*, Paris, Hachette.

One Vicinity, Two Neighbors, and Two Different Stories: A Comparison of Mortality Experiences in Greece and Bulgaria since the 1960s

Konstantinos Zafeiris, Mariana Mourgova

Abstract: Greece and Bulgaria are neighboring countries. In the 19th century, the two countries became independent after the Greek-Turkish and Russian-Turkish Wars, respectively. After several territorial transformations, the modern territory of Greece was formed in the 1920s, and that of Bulgaria after WWII. In addition to territorial transformations, both countries underwent socio-economic and political transformations differently. Between the two countries as well, there are geographical differences as well as cultural and lifestyle differences. Differences in mortality between Eastern and Western European countries have been and still are, of scientific interest to many researchers. However, differences in mortality between Bulgaria and Greece, in particular, have not been well studied. The paper aims to analyze the differences in life expectancy in Bulgaria and Greece from 1961 to 2019. We used data provided by EUROSTAT. The main results show significant differences between Bulgaria and Greece in mortality and longevity due to socioeconomic development, diet, lifestyle, access to medical care, etc.

Keywords: mortality; life expectancy, life expectancy decomposition, Bulgaria, Greece



Assoc.Prof.Dr., Democritus University of Thrace, Komotini - Greece, kon.zaferis.tie@gmail.com
Assoc.Prof.Dr., University of National and World Economy, Sofia-Bulgaria, mmourgova@unwe.bg



<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2587-6565>
<http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9380-9471>



Balkan Studies Foundation
DOI: <http://doi.org/10.51331/A049>
Journal of Balkan Studies, 4 (2), 2024
balkanjournal.org



Received: 25.05.2024
Revision: 21.06.2024
Accepted: 07.07.2024



Introduction

The historical, social, political, and economic periods during which Bulgaria passed determined trends in mortality among the population. At the beginning of the 20th century, Bulgaria was a typical agricultural country. Between 1901 and 1905, life expectancy (LE) was over 42 years, with a difference in LE between men and women, respectively, 42.1 and 42.2 years.

Despite the five wars in which Bulgaria participated, by 1940, the LE of men and women had increased by 10 years and reached 52 years (51 for men and 52.6 for women.) In Greece, LE at birth was 56.8 years for females and 54 years for males in 1941. By 1951, it increased to 66.8 and 63.7 years, respectively, and from 1960 to 73.2 and 69.9 (Zafeiris et al., 2020). Greece has experienced several territorial and socioeconomic transformations since the first decade of the 20th century. First, the country expanded to recent territories (except for the Dodecanese Islands in 1947) in the 1920s. After defeating in the Greek-Turkish War, numerous refugees entered the country, enriching its population dynamics. In 1940, Greece participated in World War II, was occupied by the Nazis and their allies, and was liberated in 1944. A bloody civil war followed, which lasted until 1949. Afterward, a massive emigration wave towards Western Europe was accompanied by a rapid urbanization process, mainly enlarging Athens and Thessaloniki. In the 1960s, many countries entered a new era. In the 1960s, political instability and minor economic development gave way to an extreme military dictatorship during 1967-1974. After the restoration of Democracy, Greece rejoined NATO in 1980 and became a full member of the European Union in 1981. In 2001, the country adopted the euro as the national currency. In 2004, the Olympic Games in Athens were organized. After a rapid developmental process that lasted at least until 2008, the country entered a vast economic and social crisis. All socioeconomic indicators of the country were burdened (for example, GDP, unemployment, people at risk of poverty, etc.) (see Clogg 2002; Zafeiris and Kostaki, 2019).

After WWII, Bulgaria's political and social conditions changed, and there was a transition to socialism. This period was also the beginning of the industrialization of Bulgaria, accompanied by migration from rural to urban areas. Advances in medicine, including the invention of antibiotics, increased access to medical care, and improvements in living conditions and hygiene, are among the most important factors that explain the decrease in mortality and increase in LE.

From 1945 to 1960, infant mortality in Bulgaria decreased from 120.6 per 100,000 to 45.1 and that of the entire population from 14.9 to 8.1 per 100,000. The morbidity associated with infectious and parasitic diseases has decreased significantly. Thus, by 1960, Bulgaria had completed the first and second stages of the epidemiological transition formulated by A. Omran (1971). Since the mid-1960s, Bulgaria has entered the third stage of epidemiological transition, i.e. in the age of degenerative and man-made diseases. Morbidity and mortality from parasitic and infectious diseases have decreased and almost disappeared, and mortality from chronic and degenerative diseases has become the leading cause of death (Mourgova, M., 2005). A similar situation prevails in Greece, as communicable diseases decrease in favor of degenerative diseases (Nikolaidis et al., 2004; Kollia et al., 2018). Simultaneously, infant mortality decreased from 133,81 per thousand in 1931 to 118,15 in 1939, 43.58 in 1951, and 39.85 in 1960. The crude death rate of the general population decreased from 11.47 in 1931 to 7.51 in 1951 and 7.61 in 1960 (ELSAT, 1986).

Similar trends were observed in other Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries. In Western European countries, this process begins earlier (Mesle, Vallin, Andreyev, 2002). While Western European countries are currently in the fourth stage of the epidemiological transition, as defined by Olshansky and Ault (1986), Bulgaria is still in the third stage. Greece, in contrast, has many affinities with Western European countries regarding its epidemiological characteristics (see Zafeiris, 2019, 2020a, 2020b).

The differences in mortality and life expectancy in Eastern and Western European countries after WWII were significant. This gap began to decline between the early 1950s and the mid-1960s. In the early 1970s, life expectancy in some CEE countries, including Bulgaria, approached that of Western European countries. For example, in the early 1970s, life expectancy in Bulgaria was higher than in France, the FRG, and Portugal, as well as in most CEE countries (Mourgova, M., *op. cit.*). After this period, however, the decrease in mortality slowed down, and in some CEE countries, it even begins to increase. By 1990, the life expectancy of men in Eastern Europe was on average seven years lower than that of Western European countries and that of women by nearly five years (Velkova et al., 1997).

According to Cornia, G. & Pannicia, R. (2000), the most unexpected and unexplained population crisis in the 20th century was the rising mortality rate in most CEE countries, which accompanied the transition to a market economy. As the authors point out, mortality in all countries increased at the beginning of the transition to a market economy and then began to decrease, though not equally in all countries. The men most affected by the increase in mortality were middle-aged, low-educated men living in rural areas and in an unstable family environment. The main cause of death was cardiovascular disease, both in countries where mortality increased and in countries where it decreased. The risk of poverty-related diseases in these countries has significantly increased since 1989.

Despite numerous scientific studies, the issue of the increase in mortality of men of active age since the mid-1960s in all CEE countries has still not been resolved from a demographic and epidemiological point of view. A similar increase was observed in other countries, such as the US, Japan, and Chile, but the period for which it was observed and its magnitude, like that of CEE, remain unparalleled in demographic history (Stolnitz, 1974). While the mortality of the working-age population has mainly increased, the mortality among infants and children has

decreased, while the mortality among older people aged 65 or over has remained almost unchanged.

Thus, the scope of this paper is to comparatively analyze the temporal trends of the mean duration of life (expressed as life expectancy at birth, e_0) and apply it following Arriaga (1984-1989). To our knowledge this is the first time that this method has been applied for comparative reasons between Greece and Bulgaria, two neighbouring countries of south-eastern Europe, with discrete socio-economic and political history, development and significant episodes of crisis, as briefly discussed above. Of course, several other countries could have been added to this paper; though, it must be stressed that this is the first paper of a series of others aiming to investigate and understand the mortality regimes, convergences, and divergences in it. At a later stage, the analysis will be extended to include countries such as Turkey, Romania, and others.

Data and Method

Data were obtained from the Eurostat database, including the average annual population by sex and age, and the corresponding number of deaths. Full life tables per sex were calculated according to Chiang (1979).

Based on these life tables, the probabilities of death of infants and people in broad age classes were studied (0, [1-14], [15-29], [30-44], [45-64], [65-84]), along with the relevant life expectancy at birth and other ages (15, 30, 45, 65 years).

Subsequently, the life expectancy at birth and sex between the two countries were examined in light of mortality differences in each age group of the human life span. Numerous methods have been published in the literature for this purpose, such as those by Andreev (1982), Pollard (1982, 1988), Pressat (1985), Arriaga (1984), and Andreev and Shkolnikov (2012; see also Andreev et al. 2002). Arriaga's method was used in this study because it is easy to apply and provides consistent

results (see Auger et al. 2014; Le et al. 2015; Sunberg et al. 2018; Zafeiris 2020a; 2020b).

Arriaga's decomposition method was used to decompose differences in longevity at birth. According to Arriaga (1984, 1989), there are two categories of the effects of mortality change on life expectancy. The first is related to the change in mortality in each age group and can be divided into direct and indirect effects. As Arriaga (1984) notes, "the direct effect on life expectancy is due to the change in life years within a particular age group as a consequence of the mortality change in that age group." The indirect effect "consists of the number of life years added to a given life expectancy because the mortality change within (and only within) a specific age group will produce a change in the number of survivors at the end of the age interval." The second category was the interaction between the exclusive effect of each age group and the overall effect.

The direct effect, named *index* is calculated as:

$${}_{i}DE_x = \frac{l_x^t}{l_a^t} \left(\frac{T_x^{t+n} - T_{x+i}^{t+n}}{l_x^{t+n}} - \frac{T_x^t - T_{x+i}^t}{l_x^t} \right)$$

The indirect effect, named ${}_{i}IE_x$ is given by:

$${}_{i}IE_x = \frac{T_{x+i}^t}{l_a^t} \left(\frac{l_x^t l_{x+i}^{t+n}}{l_{x+i}^t l_x^{t+n}} - 1 \right)$$

The interaction ${}_{i}I_x$ is given by:

$${}_{i}I_x = {}_{i}OE_x - {}_{i}IE_x$$

and,

$${}_{i}OE_x = \frac{T_{x+i}^{t+n}}{l_a^t} \left(\frac{l_x^t}{l_x^{t+n}} - \frac{l_{x+i}^t}{l_{x+i}^{t+n}} \right)$$

In these equations, the terms x and $x+i$ refer to age groups, t and $t+n$ correspond to time points (years), l to the number of survivors at an exact

age and T is the number of person-years lived and a is the age at which the life expectancy is calculated.

This paper will study the differences between Greece (denoted as EL in the text) and Bulgaria (denoted as BG). The analysis will be presented in extended age groups except the first one, corresponding to infant mortality. These age groups are 1-14 years, roughly covering mortality during childhood, 15-29 years corresponding to the well-known accident hump, 30-44 years (the middle maturity), 45-64 years (the late maturity), and 65+ years (the elderly, i.e. pensioners). An example of how to interpret the results follows.

In 1996, the probability of death in the age group 30-44 in males of Greece was 0.03 and 0.051 in males of Bulgaria. The relevant decomposition results for this age group revealed that these mortality differences contribute +0.85 to the overall differences between the two populations. The opposite happens when mortality is lower in Bulgaria.

Results

Probabilities of death

The recent political history and differentiation in the socio-economic environment and development in the two countries are pictured reasonably in the temporal trends of the probabilities of death in large age classes (Fig. 1). These probabilities are much higher for most years and large age classes studied in Bulgaria within the two sexes. Additionally, the mortality of women in Bulgaria aged 0, 1-14, and 65-84 years exceeds that of males in Greece. As the phenomenon of excess male mortality is well known worldwide, such findings indicate the enormous differentiation of the mortality patterns between the two countries. Mortality is always higher in males than in females in each country.

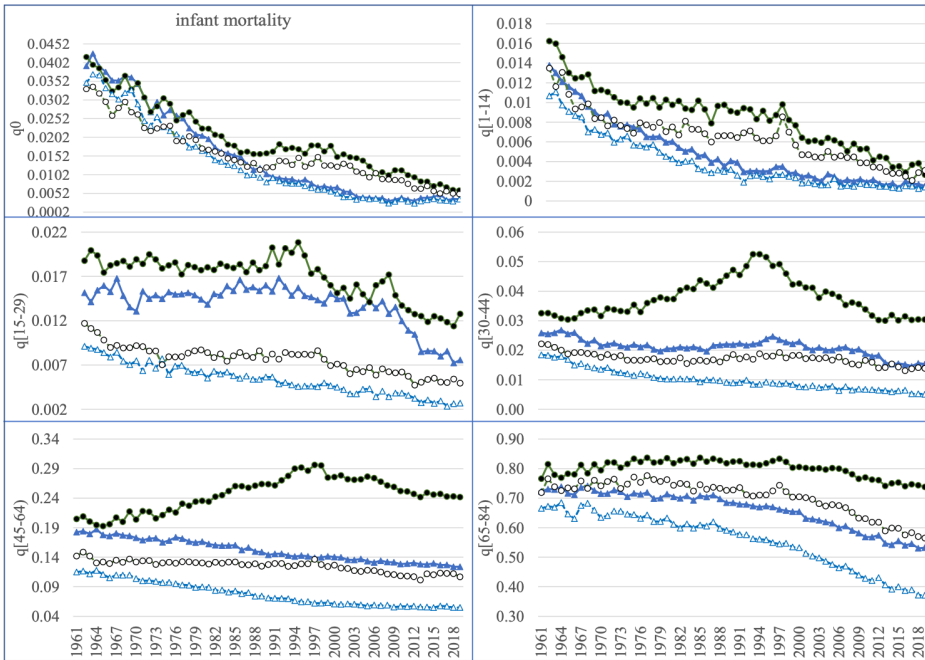


Figure 1. Probability of death in the large age groups (1961-2019)

Infant mortality is strongly correlated with economic development. Both countries had minor differences in the probability of death of infants until the late 70s-early 80s, but they started to diverge in the 1980s. In the early 1990s, this trend accelerated significantly as infant mortality increased in Bulgaria, whereas it continued to decline in Greece. It was a time of intense political reformation in Bulgaria, which deteriorated its health levels and socio-economic conditions. This divergence lasted until the beginning of the 21st century when Bulgaria began to converge with Greece after an apparent decrease in infant mortality rates. At the same time, infant mortality increased slightly in Greece due to the economic crisis that has afflicted the country since 2008. However, infant mortality rates in the modern era still differ significantly between the two countries, in addition to some minor fluctuations.

The probability of death is higher at the ages of 1–14 years, and any developments in Bulgaria stagnate in the mid-70s / late-90s. In the

subsequent years, they decreased almost constantly. At the same time, it decreases constantly in Greece, even if the pace of reduction gradually decelerates. As a result, Greece increased its differences to a point, and afterward, a convergence trend prevailed.

In contrast, the transition timetable for ages 15-29 is similar in both countries, corresponding mainly to the accident hump. However, the burden is higher in Bulgaria than in Greece, as in males than in females. The male accident hump decreased in both countries a few years before or after the eve of the 21st century, while the decrease was constant in females.

However, the story is different for people 30-44 years old. More visible to men than women, mortality was steadily rising in Bulgaria until the first years of the 1990s when it started to decrease. On the contrary, it remained virtually unchanged in Greek males until approximately the same period when it started to decrease slowly. The mortality rates of males of these ages have more affinities with females than with people of the same gender. In contrast, mortality decreased steadily in Greek females. A similar trend characterizes male mortality at the ages of 45-64 years in Bulgaria. A stagnant picture prevails for females. In contrast, mortality in this age group constantly decreased in Greece.

The most profound differences between the two countries were found at older ages (65-84 years). Despite the temporal trends being similar between the two countries, older people in Greece have consistently lower mortality.

Life expectancy at birth and other age groups

According to our analysis, in 1961, male LE at birth in Bulgaria was 68.5, while in Greece it was 70.3 (Figure 2). The relevant figures for females are 72.3 and 73.8%, respectively. Thus, the differences were relatively small during the first few years of the analysis. However, after some fluctuations, the average longevity trend diverged between the two countries a few years later. Since the mid-70s and until 1997, the pace

of LE improvement was lower in Bulgarian females than in Greece. Characteristically, the average longevity increased by 4.9 years in Greece between 1970 and 1997, while in Bulgaria, it increased by only 0.6 years. As in most CEE countries, the LE at birth of men in Bulgaria continued to decrease at the beginning of the transition to a market economy period and reached its lowest level in 1997, when the country was in a period of the most severe economic crisis, comparable only to periods before WWII. In Bulgaria, for males, LE decreased between 1970 and 1997 by approximately two years, while in Greece it increased by 3.9 years. Overall, as shown in Figure 2, the longevity differences between the two countries progressively became more significant until 1997. It was not only the political transformation in Bulgaria in the late 1990s that shaped them; their etiology must be addressed through several other factors. This question is briefly discussed in the discussion section of this paper.

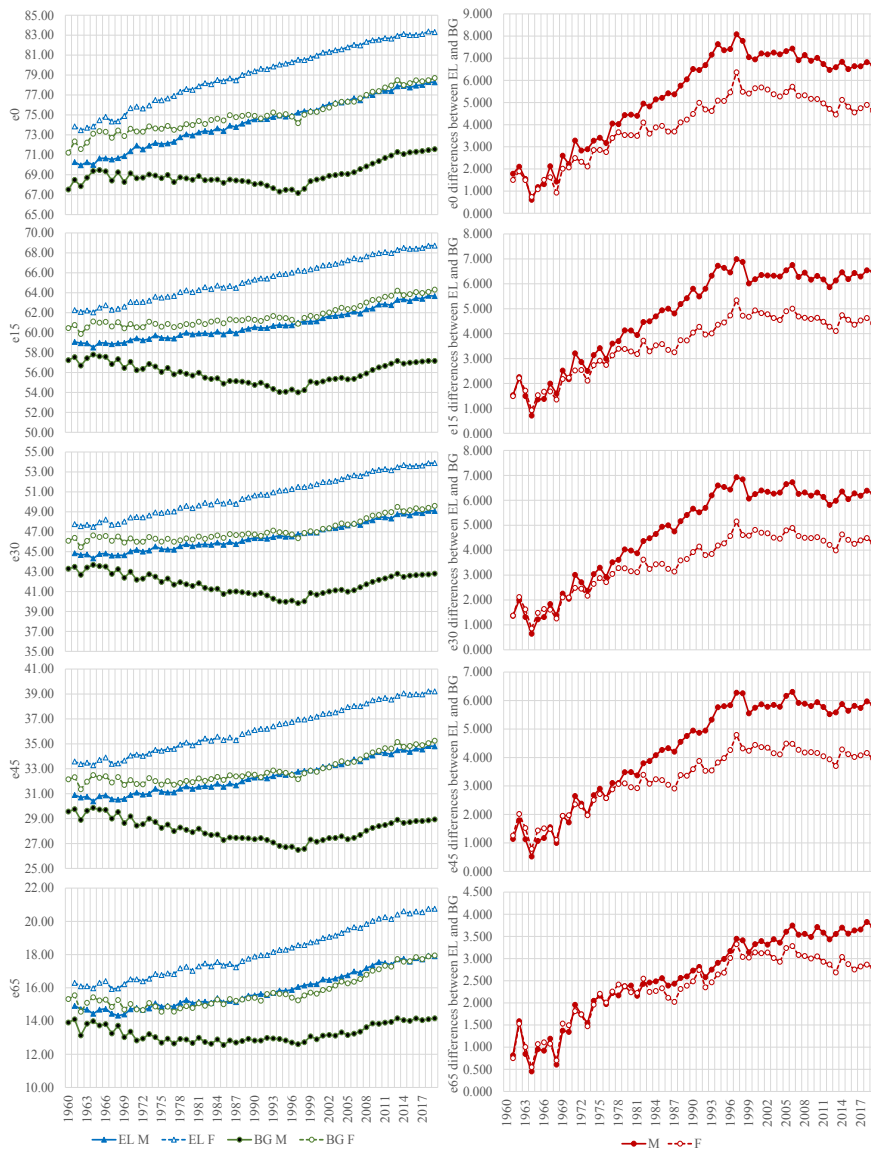


Figure 2. Trends in LE at birth in Bulgaria and Greece (1961-2019)

After 1997, the situation changed: the average longevity increased in Bulgaria for both sexes. However, the differences in the probabilities of death discussed in the previous paragraph were large, and thus, the

longevity gap between the two genders and between the two countries remained high. Between 1997 and 2019, the average longevity increased in Bulgaria by four years in males and 4.5 in females. Longevity gains in Greece were smaller; three years in males and 2.8 in females. Thus, as the mortality transition in Greece has moved considerably ahead of Bulgaria, any improvements decelerated in Greece.

In contrast, they accelerated in Bulgaria, but this was not enough for the two populations to fully converge. Thus, in 2019, LE at birth was 6.7 years shorter in males and 4.6 in females in Bulgaria. An indicator of mortality differences is that the average longevity of Bulgarian women was approximately equal to that of men in Greece after 1997.

Similar observations can be made for other ages, as shown in Figure 2.

Decomposing the differences in life expectancy at birth

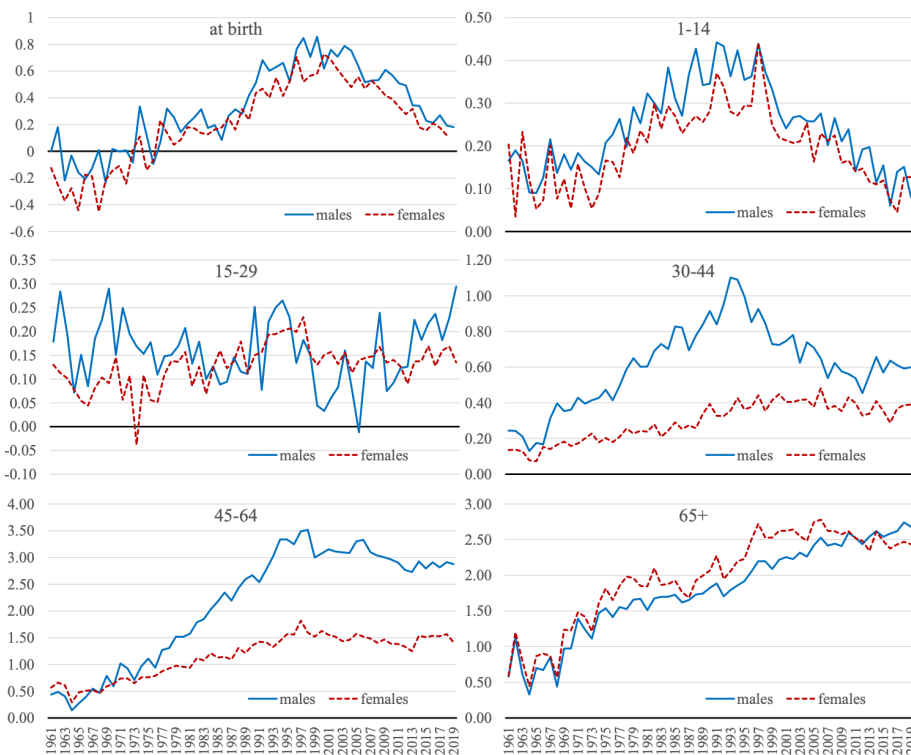


Fig 3. Contribution to changes in LE for males and females in Bulgaria and Greece (1961-2019)

The decomposition of life expectancy at birth by age group is shown in Figure 3. The first group, corresponding to the contribution of infant mortality to the overall differences in life expectancy at birth, exhibits a similar pattern in both sexes. In the first years of the study, these effects fluctuated significantly but tended to decrease the longevity gap between the two countries. However, since the mid-70s, the temporal trends of these effects have had a parabolic shape. Thus, the contribution enlarged up to the late 90s (0.9 years in 1999 in males and 0.7 in females in 1997) and have decreased afterward as expected, considering the temporal trends of the relevant probabilities of death described previously. In the last years, the effects remain positive, but they decrease significantly to 0.2 months in males and 0.1 in females.

The effects of the 1-14 age class are moderate. The same parabolic scheme denotes the initial and subsequent divergence of the effects of mortality differences in this age group. The maximum positive effect is 0.4 for males in Greece and 0.3 for females. In 2019, any effects have become minimal (0.2 months in males and 0.1 in females). In contrast, the effects of the age class 15–29 years fluctuate significantly, usually enlarging the longevity differences in favor of Greece. In 2019, a positive effect of 0.3 months was found in males and 0.1 in females.

In the remaining age groups, the effects gradually became more significant. In males aged 30–44 years, the parabolic scheme prevailed. In the most recent era, the positive effect in favor of Greece stabilized at about 0.6 years. By contrast, females in Bulgaria diverged until 2006. The effect of mortality on longevity differences is smaller, fluctuating in the last years of the study to approximately 0.3-0.4 years. One of the most crucial effects on longevity is in the 45-64 age group. These effects gradually became more critical until 1998 (+3.52 years for Greece). In the next era, they remain below three years. In females, these effects increased until 1997 and remained practically unchanged afterward. However, the two genders differ a lot concerning the effects of this age group's mortality on the average longevity differences. For males until

1982, the effects were smaller than those of 65+ years age group. The most crucial agent governing the longevity differences between the two countries is mortality developments in the age group 45–64 years, despite the decreasing trend of its effect in the most recent era. On the contrary, females' most crucial determining longevity factor always remains the older part of the population (65+ years). This differentiation is connected to the different exposure of men and women to health-aggravating factors, including occupational hazards, lifestyle agents, and others.

The effect of the older age group (65+) is almost linear in males, reaching 2.7 years in 2019 from 0.56 in 1961. It seems then that the most significant differentiation in males between Greece and Bulgaria comes from the people in their late working life and retirement. In females, the positive effect for Greece reached a maximum of 2.7 years in 1997, and afterward, it remained high but less changed. In any case, the differences in the mortality regimes between the two countries, predominantly among middle-aged and younger people, indicate the urgent need for public interventions and improvements in the social security and health systems aiming at the improvement of the quality of life and possibly the decrease in social inequalities, especially in matters related to access to the health system.

Discussion

After comparing the longevity of both sexes in Greece and Bulgaria, it was found that the two countries started from an adjacent point at which the differences were minor. This was the beginning of the 1960s. Afterward, their longevity differences increased towards the early 1990s. In the following years, they started to converge, and the longevity gap between the two sexes and between the two countries remains significantly high. Note that as *Hzic et al. (2020)* state, “the high mortality rates in the European Union (EU) Member States that acceded in 2004 sparked political interest in mortality convergence. Whether mortality

is converging in the EU remains unclear". Therefore, besides any convergences, Bulgaria still maintains a distant position compared to Greece.

During this course, the longevity differences stemmed mainly from the mortality excess in the 65+ age group in Bulgaria, i.e. the seniors; except for males aged 45–64 years, for which mortality in Bulgaria is much higher than in Greece and plays a major role in the regulation of longevity differences between the two countries. The mortality excess is also apparent for males aged 30–44 for most of the time. Because the differences between Greece and Bulgaria are smaller in females than in males, one must consider that the differential effects of occupational hazards and lifestyle agents have shaped this situation. On the contrary, the differences between the two countries in males and females aged 15–29 years are not systematic concerning their effects on longevity. While mortality in this age group is higher in males in both countries. For both sexes, mortality in Bulgaria exceeds that of Greece. Considering that most of the deaths in this age group result from road accidents (for Greece, see Zafeiris and Kostaki, 2019), one can reasonably hypothesize that the longevity differences due to this age group result from the lower quality infrastructure in Bulgaria (roads, cars, and others) but mainly from insufficient control of the car speed and the use of alcohol and drugs and probably some other reasons. Note that this is a qualitative approach, as the scope of this paper is not to examine the causal relationships between mortality and its determining factors. This is a multivariate phenomenon, and any kind of causal analysis is outside its scope. In any case, the effects of the age group 1–14 years are almost parallel in the two countries, with Greece being in a better position. Lastly, infants suffered significantly during the political change in Bulgaria, and for several years the longevity gap between the two countries enlarged. Afterward, the LE in both countries converges.

As in most CEE countries, the mortality crisis in Bulgaria has affected men more than women. From the mid-1960s to 2019, the gender gap in Bulgaria increased from nearly 4 years to more than 7 years. During

the same period, the gender gap in Greece increased by only about 1.5 years, from 3.58 in 1961 to 5.05 in 2019. The large differences in mortality between men and women in Bulgaria are mainly due to the excess mortality of men of active age. There have been numerous studies in recent decades of high and excess mortality among men in former CEE. Some suggestions that could explain the differences include lifestyle, eating habits, alcohol consumption, smoking, socio-economic factors, environmental and chronic stress, and the state of the health care system.

Traditionally, the meals in Bulgaria included fresh fruits and vegetables. In the past Bulgarian cuisine included saturated fat and high salt consumption. Nowadays a healthy lifestyle has become very popular in Bulgaria, especially among middle age population and young generations. In Greece, the Mediterranean diet still prevails, despite the substantial divergence towards the American lifestyle observed in the last decades. Generally, this kind of diet is responsible for better health and longevity in Greece (Sikalidis et al. 2021). Diet to some extent is responsible for the observed differences between in mortality and longevity between Greece and Bulgaria. These differences may explain the findings but further research is needed to evaluate them. The same holds for the discussion below.

The high number of smokers in Bulgaria also contributes to an increase in mortality, especially lung cancer and cardiovascular disease. Similarly, in Greece, smoking and tobacco-related diseases are the main forces behind mortality regulation (Zafeiris, 2020). A “Greek tobacco epidemic” still afflicts the country (Harvard School of Public Health, 2011). Because tobacco-related mortality may be classified as amenable or preventable, there is a great need to develop public intervention and smoking restriction measures in both countries.

Alcohol consumption is also an important factor in the increase in mortality, especially among men of working age. According to the Global Status Report of Alcohol and Health 2018 of the World Health

Organization (2018) from 1960 to 2016, alcohol consumption in Bulgaria increased from 5 to more than 10 liters per capita at ages 15 and over while in Greece opposite trend was observed – it decreased twice during the same period. According to Cornia and Paniccia (2000), the increase in alcohol consumption in the former socialist countries was due to several factors: already established habits in alcohol consumption, a change in income and the relative price of alcohol compared to other goods, a lack of government policy related to a restriction of alcohol consumption and environmental stress. Although the problem of alcohol consumption is of lesser importance in Greece, it remains significant. Alcohol consumption is usually higher among men than women. Data by sex from the same Report shows that in 2016 the consumption of alcohol in Bulgaria among men aged 15 and over was 21 liters per capita, while in Greece it was 17,2. Among women, the data indicates closer figures – 4,9 liters per capita in Bulgaria and 4,1 in Greece.

Some research has shown that mortality among men (manual workers and those with low education) in Bulgaria, Hungary, Russia, and the Czech Republic (Carlson 1989; Carlson & Tzvetarski, 1992; Blum & Monnier, 1989; Shkolnikov & Cornia, 2000; Blazek & Dzurova, 2000) was higher during socialism than among men with higher education and qualification. Mortality from cardiovascular disease is a major cause of death in Bulgaria in both sexes. The reason for this is lifestyle and psychological stress. Besides factors that lead to psychological stress such as unemployment, loneliness, low pay, family problems, economic insecurity, and others that are common for all developed countries, some authors (Watson, 1995; Bobak & Marmot, 1996) also point out the chronic stress as a cause of the increase in mortality and, respectively, for the decrease in life expectancy in former socialist countries. Chronic stress is explained by limited opportunities for realization, various obstacles, and prohibitions that people encountered during the socialist period, the lack of freedom to make a decision, and low pay. The high mortality rate in Bulgaria can also be explained by the quality of the healthcare system and access to medical care and services, which have

been deteriorating since 1989 (Mourgova, 2016; Sugareva & Mourgova, 2020). In recent decades, controls on health care and services have been reduced. Patients pay 50% for healthcare compared to an average of 15% for the European Union, which also limits their access to medical care.

In most Western European countries, heart attack and stroke mortality are minimized thanks to timely intervention by ambulance and well-equipped ambulances. In Bulgaria, the ambulance service has been negligible for decades.

It is also necessary to strengthen the prevention of diseases, especially cardiovascular diseases. The prevention of these diseases is essential given the decrease in mortality because of these causes of death, which is highest in Bulgaria and significantly lower in the countries of Western Europe (Sugareva & Mourgova, *op. cit.*). Promoting a healthy lifestyle (reducing smoking and alcohol consumption, banning ads on unhealthy food, and providing the appropriate conditions for sports and active rest) can be the beginning.

Several other facts must be added to all the above, including socioeconomic differences, differential access to the public health system, structure and coverage of the health care system, living conditions, and more.

Conclusion

Life expectancy in Greece is nowadays one of the highest in Europe while that in Bulgaria is one of the lowest but it has started to converge. Bulgaria and Greece are two neighboring countries that experienced different events in their recent history and this has determined their socioeconomic development. Lifestyle, diet, and access to health care are also important factors contributing to the difference in mortality in both countries. However, due to their complexity, they will be part of more detailed research to take place in the future.

Ethical Statement	It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited
Author Contributions	
Data Collection	KZ (%100), MM (%0)
Data Analysis	KZ (%100), MM (%0)
Research Design	KZ (%100), MM (%0)
Writing the Article	KZ (%65), MM (%35)
Article Submission and Revision	KZ (%30), MM (%75)
Complaints	journalbalkan@gmail.com
Conflicts of Interest	The author(s) has no conflict of interest to declare.
Grant Support	The author(s) acknowledge that they received no external funding in support of this research
Copyright & License	Authors publishing with the journal retain the copyright to their work licensed under the CC BY-NC 4.0

References

- Andreev, E. M. (1982). Metod komponent v analyze prodoljitelnosty zizni. [The method of components in the analysis of length of life]. *Vestnik Statistiki* 9, pp.42-47.
- Andreev, E. M., Shkolnikov, V. M. & Begun, A. Z. (2002). Algorithm for decomposition of differences between aggregate demographic measures and its application healthy life expectancies, parity-progression ratios, and total fertility rates. *Demographic Research* (7), pp.499–522.
- Andreev, E. M., Shkolnikov, V. M. (2012). An Excel spreadsheet for the decomposition of a difference between two values of an aggregate demographic measure by stepwise replacement running from young to old ages. *MPIDR Technical Report 2012-002*. April 2012.
- Arriaga, E. E. (1984). Measuring and explaining the change in life expectancies. *Demography* (21), pp.83-96.

- Arriaga, E. E. (1989) *Changing trends in mortality declines during the last decades*. In: Ruzicka, L., Wunsch, G., Kane, P. (Eds.) *Differential mortality: methodological issues and biosocial factors*. Oxford, England, Clarendon, Press, pp.105-129.
- Auger, N., Feuillet, P., Martel, S., Lo, E., Barry, A. D. & Harper, S. (2014). Mortality inequality in populations with equal life expectancy: Arriaga's decomposition method in SAS, Stata, and Excel. *Annals of Epidemiology* 24, pp.575-580.
- Blazeek, J., Dzurova, D. (2000). The decline in mortality in the Czech Republic- during the transition: a counterfactual case study. In: G.A.Cornia, R. Panizza (Eds.) *The mortality crisis in transition economies*, Oxford University Press, 303 – 327.
- Blum, A., Monnier, A. (1989). Mortality in the USSR. *New evidence*, *Population studies* (2)
- Bobak, M., Marmot, M. (1996). East – West mortality divide and its potential explanations: proposed research agenda. *British Medical Journal* (312), pp.421 – 423.
- Carlson, E. (1989). Concentration of rising Hungarian mortality among manual workers. *Sociology and social research*, Vol. 73, (3), pp.119 – 128.
- Carlson, E., Tzvetarsky, S. (1992). Concentration of rising Bulgarian mortality among manual workers. *Sociology and social research*, Vol. 76 (2), pp.81 – 84.
- Chiang, C. L., & World Health Organization ((9791.sisylana ytilatrom dna elbat efiL . /siri/tni.ohw.sppa//:spth :ta elbaliava .noitazinagrO htlaeH dlroW .gnaihC gnoL nihC 6601/eldnah
- Clogg, R. (2002). *A concise history of Greece* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cornia, G. A., Pannicia, R. (2000). *The transition mortality crisis: evidence, interpretation and policy responses*. In: Cornia, G. A., Pannicia, R. (Eds.) *The mortality crisis in transition economies*, Oxford University Press, 3 – 37.
- ELSTAT. National Statistical Service of Greece. (1986). *Statistical Yearbook of Greece*. Athens.
- Harvard School of Public Health (2011).19 The Greek Tobacco Epidemic. Prepared by the Faculty of the Harvard School of Public Health in collaboration with colleagues at the Hellenic Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity, the Hellenic Ministry of Education, Lifetime Learning, and Religious Affairs, and the Hellenic Anti-Cancer Society. World Health Organization. Available at: https://www.who.int/fctc/reporting/party_reports/greece_annex1_the_greek_tobacco_epide-mic_2011.pdf.
- Hrzic, R., Vogt, T., Janssen, F., & Brand, H. (2020). Mortality convergence in the enlarged European Union: a systematic literature review. *European Journal of Public Health*. 11;30(6):1108-1115. doi: 10.1093/eurpub/ckaa038.
- Kollia, N., Tragaki, A., Syngelakis, A. I., & Panagiotakos, D. (2018). *Trends of Cardiovascular Disease Mortality Could you please provide me with more context? The text “about” doesn't convey any clear meaning by itself*. *Population Aging in Greece (1956 - 2015)*. Bentham Open 12, 71-79. DOI: 10.2174/1874192401812010071.
- Le, Y., Ren, J., Shen, J., Li, T. & Zhang C-F (2015). *The Changing Gender Differences in Life Expectancy in Chinese Cities 2005-2010*. PLoS ONE 10(4), e0123320. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0123320

- Meslé, F., Vallin, J., Andreyev, Z. "Mortality in Europe: The Divergence between East and West. *Population* (English Edition, 2002-) 57, no. 1 (2002), pp.57-97. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2307/3246630>.
- Mourgova, M. (2005). *Cause-specific Mortality and Life Potential in Bulgaria (1965-1999)*, Ph.D. Dissertation thesis, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (in Bulgarian)
- Mourgova, M. (2016). The Impact of avoidable mortality on the life expectancy in Bulgarian population. *European Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, Vol. 4 (2), pp.279-283.
- Nikolaidis, G., Zavras, D., Bonikos, D. & Kyriopoulos, J. (2004). Trends of mortality rates during the last thirty years in Greece. *Journal of Medical Systems* 28(6), pp.607-616.
- Olshansky, J., Ault, B. (1986). The Fourth Stage of the Epidemiologic Transition: The Age of Delayed Degenerative Diseases. *The Milbank Quarterly*, Wiley, 64 (3), pp.355-39.
- Pollard, J. H. (1982). The expectation of life and its relationship to mortality. *Journal of the Institute of Actuaries*. 109, pp.225-240.
- Pressat, R. (1985). Contribution des écarts de mortalité par âge à la différence des vies moyennes. *Population* 4-5, 766-770.
- Sikalidis, A. K., Kelleher, A. H., & Kristo, A. S. (2021). Mediterranean Diet. *Encyclopedia* 1(2), pp.371-387. <https://doi.org/10.3390/encyclopedia1020031>
- Shkolnikov, V., Cornia, G. A. (2000). *Population crisis and rising mortality in transitional Russia*. In: Cornia, G. A., Pannicia, R. (Eds.) *The mortality crisis in transition economies*, Oxford University Press.
- Stolnitz, G. J. (1974). *International mortality trends: some main facts and implications*. Background paper for United Nations World Population Conference (E/Cof.60/CBR/17), Bucharest.
- Sugareva, M., Mourgova, M. (2021). *What are the real demographic problems of Bulgaria?* *Staitika* (Statistics), National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria (3) (in Bulgarian).
- Sundberg, L., Agahi, N., Fritzell, J. & Fors, S. (2018). Why is the gender gap in life expectancy decreasing? The impact of age- and cause-specific mortality in Sweden 1997-2014. *International Journal of Public Health* 63, pp.673-681.
- Velkova, A., van den Bosch, J. & Mackenbah, J. (1997). The East-West Life Expectancy Gap: Differences in Mortality from Conditions Amenable to Medical Intervention. *International Journal of Epidemiology* 26(1), pp.75-84, doi: 10.1093/ije/26.1.75.
- Watson, P. (1995). Explaining rising mortality among men in Eastern Europe. *Social Science and Medicine* 41 (7), pp.923 - 34.
- World Health Organization (2018). *Global status report on alcohol and health 2018*. Geneva: World Health Organization.
- Zafeiris, K. N., & Kostaki, A. (2019). Recent mortality trends in Greece. *Communications in Statistics - Theory and Methods*, 48 (1). 112-126. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03610926.2017.1353-625>.

- Zafeiris, K. N. (2019). Mortality differentials among the Euro-zone countries: an analysis based on the most recent available data. *Communication in Statistics: case studies, data analysis and applications* 5(1), pp.59-73. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23737484.2019.1579682>.
- Zafeiris, K. N. (2020a). Gender differences in life expectancy at birth in Greece 1994–2017. *Journal of Population Research* 37(1), pp.73-89. DOI: 10.1007/s12546-019-09239-4.
- Zafeiris, K. N. (2020b). *Tobacco-Related Mortality in Greece: The Effect of Malignant Neoplasms, Circulatory and Respiratory Diseases, 1994–2016*. In: Makrides, A., Karagrigoriou, A. & Skiadas Ch. (eds), *Data Analysis and Applications 4: Financial Data Analysis and Methods*, Volume 6. London: E WILEY, pp. 223-247.
- Zafeiris, K. N., Kostaki, A. & Kotzamanis B. (2020). *Mortality developments in Greece from the cohort perspective*. In: Skiadas, C. H. and Skiadas, C. (eds). *Demography of Population Health, Aging, and Health Expenditures*. The Springer Series on Demographic Methods and Population .

book
review


Admir Lisica “Bošnjaci Pred Izazovima Globalnih Političkih Procesa: Političko Stasavanje Jedne Nacije”


2nd Edition, Ibn Sina Institute, Sarajevo,
2024, 229 pages

Reviewer: Omer Merzić

The book “Bosniaks Facing the Challenges of Global Political Processes: The Political Maturation of a Nation” provides a synthetic overview of the development of Bosniaks as a nation amidst various historical and societal challenges. Author Admir Lisica explores significant political, social, and cultural events in Bosniak history, focusing particularly on the period from the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia and

 Researcher, omer.merzic@bosnjackagim.edu.ba

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7518-2193>

 Balkan Studies Foundation
DOI: <http://doi.org/10.51331/B13>
Journal of Balkan Studies, 4 (2), 2024
balkanjournal.org



Herzegovina to the creation of an independent Bosnia and Herzegovina. Lisica conducts a detailed analysis of different political currents, activities, and attitudes of Bosniak political parties and leaders in various historical contexts, as well as the Bosniaks' relationship with authorities and political circumstances.

The first chapter, "The Bosniak Perception of Austro-Hungarian Occupation," examines how Bosniaks reacted to the arrival of Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Lisica describes divisions among Bosniaks, portraying how some expressed gratitude to the new monarchy for the unhindered functioning of religious life, while others showed dissatisfaction through protests, boycotting the education system, engaging in armed resistance, and emigration to the slowly dissipating Ottoman Empire.

The second chapter, "Priorities of the Bosniak Autonomy Movement During the Occupation," analyzes the key priorities of the Bosniak autonomy movement, focusing on the role of religious hierarchies and political leaders in the political organization of Bosniaks after the fall of the Ottoman Empire.

The following chapter, "Bosniak Political Parties and the Issue of the State-Legal Status of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Their Politics," explores the Bosniak political parties' stance on the state organization of BiH during that period. The author examines the role of the Muslim National Organization (MNO) and the Muslim National Party (MNS), as well as their attitude towards the autonomy of BiH within Austro-Hungary.

After this, the fourth chapter, "Bosniak politics at the time of the Annexation Crisis" discusses the events leading up to the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary on October 5, 1908. It mentions the preparations made by Austria-Hungary, including support from Russia and Germany, the planning of the Minister Alois Lexa von Aehrenthal and the meeting of Dr. Krass with Bosniak and Serbian politicians in August 1908 to discuss the annexation. The author points out that while some Bosniaks might have welcomed the perceived economic stability

under Austro-Hungarian rule, the annexation was widely condemned by Serbs and many Bosniaks.

The next chapter, "Parliament, the Political Stage" is a prelude to the first serious pluralist political engagement of Bosniaks. While the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary in 1908 exacerbated existing divisions among Bosniak politicians, a shared sense of territorial identity remained a unifying factor. Bosniak political demands centered on achieving equal citizenship rights for Bosnian-Herzegovinians, who were viewed as second-class residents compared to their Austrian and Hungarian counterparts. The chapter also showcases the relationship between Bosniaks and the various national policies in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Continuing from that, the sixth and seventh chapters deal with times of unrest. Firstly, the Balkan Wars in chapter "Balkan wars, consolidation of a new course in Bosniak politics" and secondly the First World War in the chapter "The First World War - A Fair of Political Conceptions on the Solution of the State-Legal Status of Bosnia and Herzegovina". In the aftermath of the annexation (1908) and the subsequent Balkan Wars (1912-1913), which saw the Ottoman Empire's defeat by a Balkan alliance, Bosniak political strategy underwent a significant shift. The author highlights a growing reliance on Austria-Hungary for protection against perceived Serbian territorial ambitions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This strategic realignment likely involved collaboration with Croats who shared similar concerns. The pre-World War I period witnessed the rise of Šerif Arnautović's influence within the Bosniak political sphere. Lisica suggests that Arnautović's leadership style, characterized by a focus on personal power and deal-making (the personalization of policy), ultimately led to the dissolution of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Assembly.

The text further explores Bosniak anxieties concerning their future within the region. The decline of the Ottoman Empire, a traditional source of support, likely heightened these concerns. Lisica suggests

that Bosniaks actively sought new alliances to safeguard their interests. The author highlights the visit of Dr. Anton Korošec to Sarajevo in 1917 and his meetings with prominent Bosniak figures. These interactions likely played a role in securing Bosniak participation in the formation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes in 1918.

The eight chapter, “Bosniak Politics Between the World Wars” is primarily focused on the Yugoslav Muslim Organisation, its leaders, and the role it had in Yugoslavia’s politics as the leader of Bosniaks. Lisica places special emphasis on Mehmed Spaho, the leader of JMO and a minister in the Yugoslavs government. His passing and sudden death in 1939, coinciding with the Cvetković-Maček agreement, left a void in Bosniak political leadership. Criticisms have been leveled at Džafer Kulenović, another prominent Bosniak political figure, for his perceived lack of decisive action during critical moments.

Following this chapter is “Bosniak Anti-Fascism Before the Challenges of the Second World War” in which Lisica follows a segment of the Bosniak elite who actively resisted the fascist ideology and atrocities perpetrated by the Ustasha regime in Croatia. This resistance manifested through the drafting and publishing of Muslim resolutions in major Bosnian cities, including Mostar, Sarajevo, Zenica, Banja Luka, and Tuzla. The author acknowledges the debates held between leaders of the Yugoslav partisan leadership and their perception of Bosniaks as an unequal partner while simultaneously highlighting the Bosniak Muslim elite’s active resistance against fascism.

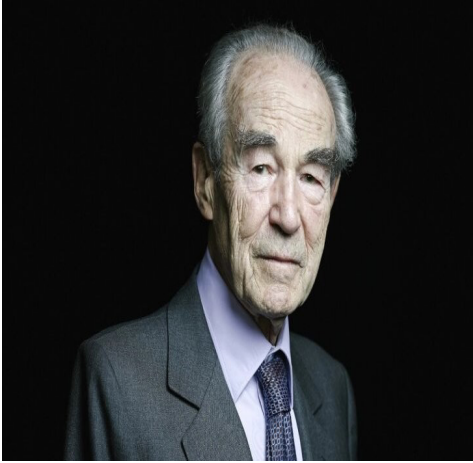
The tenth chapter, “Life in Socialist Yugoslavia – The New Political Reality of Bosniaks” deals with the situation of Bosniaks in the Socialist Yugoslavia and its emigre factors. The author views that the lack of official recognition of Bosniak national identity by the Yugoslav state motivated some Bosniak emigrants to advocate for this cause on a global stage. The recognition of Bosniaks as a “nation” with a capital ‘M’ in Yugoslavia did occur, but was not without limitations, and the path to full national equality within Yugoslavia remained complex.

In the eleventh and twelfth chapters “The Road to the Dissolution of Yugoslavia” and “Independent, Sovereign and Indivisible – Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina” the author follows the event which led to the dissolution of the Socialist Yugoslavia and creation of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The rise of nationalism and the gradual deterioration of cooperation among member republics led to the dissolution of Yugoslavia and referendum for the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In conclusion, the book offers an overview of Bosniak policies and political actions from the end of Ottoman rule up until the 1990s. The author chronologically follows the emergence of a political elite which started to manifest during the Austro-Hungarian times and continued to develop in the inter-War period. Lisica explores the ups and downs which coincided with external factors such as the World Wars and the changes of the political climate and how these factors affected Bosniaks and their leaders. Lisica concludes his book with an analysis of the Yugoslav wars and their effect on Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Bosniaks and thus represents a beneficial addition representing a significant addition to ethnic and national identity discourse..

in
memorium

РОБЕР БАДЕНТЕР (1928 – 2024)



Фатима Салифоска

На 9 февруари 2024 година, на 95-годишна возраст почина францускиот правник и политичар Робер Бадентер (*Robert Badinter*), еден од најпознатите промотори за човекови права во светот. Тој беше професор по право на Сорбона, поранешен министер за правда



Dr. ,Institute of Spiritual and Cultural Heritage of the Albanians (ITShKSh) – Skopje,
salifoska.f@gmail.com



<https://orcid.org/0009-0000-6989-4362>



Balkan Studies Foundation

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.51331/M01>

Journal of Balkan Studies, 4 (2), 2024

balkanjournal.org



и автор кој донесе укинување на смртната казна во Франција во 1981 година.

Робер Бадентер е роден на 30 март 1928 година во Париз, Франција. Формалното образование го започнува во својот роден град каде што завршил студии по литература и право на Универзитетот во Париз. Магистрирал на Универзитетот Колумбија во Соединетите Американски Држави во 1949 година. Докторирал компаративно право на Сорбона во 1954 година.

Богатата кариера ја започнува како адвокат во апелациониот суд во Париз (1981-1951). Во 1965 година, беше назначен за професор на Универзитетот во Сорбона. Продолжува како почесен професор до 1996 година. Бадентер вовеле големи правни реформи во земјата откако Франсоа Митеран беше избран за претседател во мај 1981 година, именувајќи го за министер за правда, функција која ја извршува до 18 февруари 1986 година. Еден од неговите први реформи бил законот за укинување на смртната казна за било кои злосторства од страна на Францускиот Парламент, за кој Парламентот гласал по расправата на 30 септември, 1981 година. Во периодот од 1986 до 1995 година бил претседател на Уставниот совет на Франција, а од септември 1995 година бил сенатор од департманот Сенски Висови.

Во времето на распадот на Југославија, Бадентер беше претседател на Арбитражната комисија во рамките на Мировната конференција за Југославија во 1991 година, која стана позната како Бадентерова комисија. Комисијата беше составена од пет члена од редот на претседателите на уставните судии на земјите членки на ЕУ врз основа на Декларацијата за Југославија од 27.08.1991 година, за да го дефинира престанокот на СФРЈ, да го оцени степенот на задоволување на критериумите, кои се поставени со Декларацијата, за признавање на нови држави и да му предложи на Советот на министрите кои од нив треба да бидат меѓународно признати. Во периодот 1993-1992 година комисијата усвои 15

мислења. Во мислењето број 6 од 11.01.1992 година, Комисијата ја оценува Република Македонија која што ги задоволува условите за признавање наведени во Декларацијата.

Како водач на Арбитражната комисија тој добил голем авторитет меѓу Македонците и другите етнички групи во Република Македонија заради тоа што тој препорачал дека „користењето на името Македонија не може да имплицира територијални барања на било која друга држава» како и полно признавање на државата во 1992 година. Заради тоа, тој бил вклучен во изработката на Охридскиот договор во Република Македонија.

Бадентер стана дел од секојдневниот политички живот во Република Македонија со неговиот предлог за воведување на двојното гласање во Собранието на Република Македонија. Поради тоа, мнозинството гласови од малцинските заедници се нарекува „Бадентерово мнозинство“.

Роберт Бадинтер е добитник на бројни награди и признанија во Република Македонија и светот. Прогласен е за почесен доктор на правни науки на Универзитетот „Св. Кирил и Методиј“ во Скопје во 1996 година. Добитник е на орденот „8 Септември“ за исклучителен придонес во остварувањето на независноста, јакнењето на меѓународната положба и углед на Република Македонија, за развојот и афирмацијата на меѓунационалните односи во земјата, како и заради неговиот придонес за развивањето и зацврстувањето на пријателските односи и соработката на Република Македонија со Република Франција, кој му беше доделен од страна на претседателот на Република Македонија Бранко Црвенковски во 2006 година. Во 2001 година во Чешката Република го добива престижното одликување Order of Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk. Како долгогодишен активист за укинување на смртната казна, Роберт Бадентер беше назначен за почесен член на Меѓународната комисија против смртната казна. Последното одликување го добива во 2023 година, признанието International Abolition Award од страна на Death Penalty Focus.

Во текот на неговата академска и професионална кариера, Бадентер беше автор и ко-автор на различни книги и написи меѓу кои позначајни се следните: *L'exécution* (1973), за судењето на Клод Бафе и Роџер Бонтемс; *Condorcet, 1743-1794* (1988), ко-автор со Елизабет Бадентер; *Une autre justice* (1989); *Libres et égaux: L'émancipation des Juifs (1789-1791)* (1989); *La prison républicaine, 1871-1914* (1992); *Un antisémitisme ordinaire* (1997); *L'abolition* (2000), во кое ја раскажува неговата борба за укинување на смртната казна во Франција; *Une constitution européenne* (2002); *Le rôle du juge dans la société moderne* (2003); *Contre la peine de mort* (2006); *L'Exécution (rééd. LGF, 2008)*; *Les épines et les roses* (2011), за неговите успеси и неуспеси како министер за правда; и *Idiss* (2018).

Вечна слава и благодарност на Роберт Бадинтер за неговата улога во двата најзначајни датуми за сите македонските граѓани, независноста на Република Македонија, како и Охридскиот Рамковен договор и воспоставувањето на функционална мултикултурна демократија во 2001 година.

Нека почива во мир!